

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication  
Copyright 1993 -- 2003 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and  
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with  
the restrictions stated in the B4UCopy.txt file on this CD.

**CULPEPPER SERMONS**  
**By John B. Culpepper,**  
**And O. B. Culpepper,**  
**Father And Son**

Pickett Publishing Co.  
Louisville, Kentucky

Copyright 1906  
By Pickett Pub. Co.

\* \* \* \* \*

Digital Edition 07/05/2003  
By Holiness Data Ministry

\* \* \* \* \*

**CONTENTS**

- 01 -- Value Of The Soul
- 02 -- Samson
- 03 -- I Will Be Sorry For My Sin
- 04 -- The Prodigal Son
- 05 -- Backsliding
- 06 -- The Church Walking With The World
- 07 -- The Rich Fool
- 08 -- Power
- 09 -- That Meeting; Or, Are You Prepared?
- 10 -- The Wandering Lover; Or Christ Enthroned
- 11 -- Before The Ball
- 12 -- After The Eagle Screams
- 13 -- That Black Horse [Of Sin]

\* \* \* \* \*

**FOREWORD**

Dear Reader: -- This volume of sermons are a few of the many which Rev. Burke Culpepper and I have preached in the South and West, together for the last eight years, and I, before him, for thirty years. Concerning his part, in this humble contribution, I would say that I have known of the origin of each of his sermons, and with a father's pardonable pride, I rejoice in two facts -- First, they are the products of his own brain and heart. Second, God signally uses them, in the salvation of souls.

Trusting that you will get a dollar's worth of good out of them, I am,

John B. Culpepper.

\* \* \* \* \*

INSCRIBED

To The Twentieth Century Evangelistic Movement.

John B. And O. B. Culpepper,  
Father And Son

\* \* \* \* \*

01 -- VALUE OF THE SOUL -- By J. B. C.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul." -- Mark 8:36, 37.

With a subject like this, one might talk for days together, and might preach about much connected with every man, woman and child, and everything. But I want to talk about a matter which can be brought within more reasonable limits. I wish to talk about just one thing -- your soul, and one feature of that soul -- its value. And I want to narrow the matter still, and discuss your soul's worth from a constitutional standpoint.

If we judge of its value by the treatment it and its claims receive at our hands, we would conclude that it is worth less than anything else, whereas God teaches us that, compared with its high claims and noble destiny, nothing besides has any value.

I once read of a nobleman who shipped for this new country, with all of his vast possessions compressed into a jewel of rarest value, which he carefully kept in a well-guarded trunk. On the vessel, a lad passed apples for sale. This nobleman took one, two, three, four, five, six, and kept them bouncing from his palm, in air, to the delight of ladies and gentlemen. They praised his skill until it intoxicated him. Dropping the apples, he brought out this rare jewel, displayed it, then stepped to the edge of the floating vessel, tossed it into the air, caught it -- tossed and caught, until the crowd remonstrated, saying, here, take an apple -- anything, but you might drop that lovely thing. Don't do that. He kept tossing, saying: "I wish to show you what perfect confidence I have in my skill." He tossed and caught, until he tossed and failed to catch. He gasped

and caught at, caught at -- as the beautiful jewel, embodying all he owned, dropped into the water below. Two hours later, he was found pacing the deck, smiting his breast and saying, "What a fool I was to risk my all on the idle plaudits of a gazing throng and a passing hour, without any possible gain to me." Ah, me! This tossing act is repeated about us all the time. It is not an apple; neither is it a rare pearl. It is our undying souls and their passing but most precious opportunities.

When we look at a human body, we find it fashioned after an intelligent plan, organized. Our feet tell of a path to be trodden; our hands tell of objects to be lifted; our shoulders, of burdens to be borne; our eyes speak of the light. You can reason from a sound to an ear drum; from light and object to the eye. Our whole physical being is adapted to nature about us, and nature is adapted to these organs or members. Just so, we are organized spiritually, or in our souls. As you can reason from the light to the eye, you may reason from a soul to prayer and worship, or from prayer and worship, back to a soul. We find the same fitness; the same eye upon an end in view, in the one case as the other. It is therefore most natural to be religious. A man who cannot be religious is monstrous. Original nature is right nature, religious nature. Man was made to commune with God. Then I predicate righteousness, including the highest worship of the soul, of creation. God made us to be good.

In our Bible, it looks sometimes as if the understanding were put for the soul; again the judgment, or power to weigh facts; the will or power to say yes or no; faith, or the power to believe; memory, or the power to retain; conscience, or the "moral sense;" affection, or the power to hate or love.

Suppose, for the good of the hour, we make a partial definition of the soul to consist in -- the imagination, understanding, judgment, will, memory, imitative faculty, affectional nature, faith, power, con. science. This will, at least, aid us to some useful studies.

\* \* \*

### The Imagination

This is the lowest, or first, faculty. It is the image-in-a-tion -- the image room. It is, here, mother, nurse, nature, hangs the first little pictures, from which come the first thoughts, from which come the first words, from which develop the first acts, from which character is molded, from which destiny is reached. Or if you start with God, you find destiny -- then character, conduct, speech, thought, down -- down back to the image-room whence we started.

You hear it said a man can't live right. Fewer believe you can always speak correctly. Still fewer that we can always think as we should. But if the "blood which cleanseth," is let into the image room, and it cleanses, and the walls are beautifully frescoed, and the fresh air from the spice laden gardens of paradise are let in, then right thoughts, speech, conduct, character, Heaven, follows, with the natural sequence of cause and effect.

I once read that racy little book, called "Goldfoil." The author tells of a lovely island, washed by waters pacific. Flora and Fauna vied to wear the crown. Fruits in abundance, flowers of every hue, trees from every paradise, blended in one common garden. The moon is large and

looks in zenithal wonder down upon this castle of loveliness. A maiden gently steers her wave-kissed keel, drops anchor, and is lost in this labyrinth of bewitchery and beauty -- thinking she is all alone. But along a parallel path, there goes a matron; there goes a lad, and yonder a young husband. They, each ignorant of the presence of the other, claim this garden of delights as all their own. This girl would blush to tell her mother where she spent the last half hour. This old lady would not like to detail her walk of the last hour. This husband would deny to his wife where he spent his time. Where, says Goldfoil, is this isle? "It is the isle of the imagination." It is here, too, Satan gets in his direst work. I beg the young, especially, to keep the image room of the soul clean.

\* \* \*

### The Understanding

This is a window. It must be kept open. The mother must be understood by her babe or it will not advance. How the teacher labors to be understood! How dependent I am at this hour upon that window! If you don't understand me, I need not speak. God wants to be understood. The prophets labored to that end. The blessed Christ was a mighty condescending effort on the part of God to be understood. This Bible is written in simple language. Who ever said the ten commandments were above our comprehension? How painfully, but gloriously plain, is the sermon on the mount. Thank God, the waters of salvation burst from the rock, so low that a child can understand, while the philosopher may stoop to slake his thirst. We have fallen upon superficial days. The people are in a hurry. They glance over the paper, skim books, cram on a few specialties at school, rush into business, rush through life, and most of them could say in the hour of death -- I am an agnostic, for I don't know. We read of men, who were lost in thought -- became abstracted -- forgot the passing of time. Such are rare now. We see a little of everything, but know little. The window of the understanding is nearly closed to any given matter, however important.

While preaching to you, there sits a young woman who wonders why that young man across there is with another girl tonight. She is recalling all she said and did last night, which may possibly have given offense. She has already compared faces, dress, etc. That girl can't tell much of my sermon, when asked.

See that young man? That girl across there answered his note by saying she had an escort. But she is sitting with her brother and mother. That young man won't understand much of my sermon, and if questioned, will call it very poor. Truth is, he is not listening, but is wondering whether he is kicked or not. Don't understand -- window shut. There sits a mother who is not clear where she left the matches. The children may get them and burn up her end of the world, before she gets home. I won't help her much. See? Don't understand. It looks as if men try to misunderstand God. I was once talking with a man in Dawson, Ga., urging him to give up profanity, when he remarked that he could not be religious, because he could not understand the Bible. I asked for the difficulty, to learn that he was bothered over where the Negroes came from. I asked him which he considered the more important question where the Negroes came from or where he was going. "Well, where I'm going, of course." Have you settled that yet? Well, no. There it was -- a poor fellow, with no assurance of Heaven, and no title to comfort in death, distressed over the origin of the color of another man's skin, rather than the salvation of his own undying soul. Another man wanted to know where Cain got his wife. I told him he had her already -- that he took her with him.

"No, the Bible says he got her in the land of Nod." You are mistaken, said I -- you can't find the statement, handing him my Bible. He rambled round a while, in both testaments, then closed it, saying: "I can't find it, but it is in there, all the same." Quoting the words, and he knew his wife in the land of Nod -- I said, that is what you saw. "Yes," said he, "but that is all the same; there is no such country." I said, "Neighbor, we will leave the question of whether there is such a land as Nod -- but I want you to turn to the fly-leaf, or margin of your mother's Bible, and look, and you will find that Nod means vagabond or wanderer. God was not then calling attention to a place, but emphasizing a state, or condition. He was trying to impress the fact that Cain knew his wife, or became the father of Enoch by her, after he sinned." "Now," said I, "to be plain, you were born in the land of Nod, yourself, and from your ignorance of the Scriptures, I would say you are still nodding -- don't know your own home, or the land of your nativity, or the plainest teachings of God's word."

\* \* \*

### The Understanding

I was once walking through the Vanderbilt grounds in Nashville, with Bishop McTyeire. when we came to where some colored people were resting, at the noon hour. One brother, a Baptist preacher, among them, was introduced to me by the good bishop, when he said: "You gemmens is boar preachers; I wants to ax you a question." What is it? said the bishop. "Dis here man Melichisideck -- whur did he cum from, anyhow?" Who? said the bishop, looking at me. "Dis here fellow Melichisideck." Ah, said he, "Melichisideck is a hard nut to crack, Brother Walker; we have been after him a long time, but are not certain we have him."

We passed on. The good bishop seemed lost in thought, when he turned and said: "Culpepper, is it not strange, that not only colored folks, but white people, will pass all the important, simple things in God's word, and get away over there and bog down above their ears in some Melichisideck or other?" It is strange, but true. There sits a man out there, looking at me, who just won't quit cursing; just will 'drink; just won't quit gambling; just won't be true to his wife; just will land at last in hell all because he can't tell where Melichisideck came from.

I meet a man at the base of that beautiful mountain, who astonishes me with some wonderful stories of what he saw on its summit, of apiaries, aviaries, waterfalls, rare birds, reflected and refracted rainbows. I tell him I neither see, nor smell, nor hear any of these things. He says, "You are too low down." I pass on, meet a second man, who tells me more: Again I express my inability to see, hear or smell what he so fluently speaks of. He says: "Too far away yet -- go on up." The third man would stop me, but I say, "No!" I caught the note of a rare bird -- I saw a beautifully refracted rainbow -- I heard the music of a cascade -- let me enter this Eden and regale every faculty of my soul. Now, what is the difference in my feelings when I met the first and last man? A difference of faith? No -- one of position. In the first instance, I was too low -- too far off to appreciate. So it is. I don't expect a man who doesn't believe in the purity of woman, to believe much in the immaculate Jesus. I don't look for a man who is obscene or profane of tongue, to understand the invisible, but Holy Spirit, or the new birth. But there are matters, sir, on a level with you. You can see that it is wrong to get drunk, swear, or in any way debauch your body or damage your neighbor. If you will cease from these grosser sins, it will clear up the atmosphere

and you will behold the more refined sins. You will also behold the purity of Jesus, the reasonableness of regeneration -- and ere long, by faith, you can read your title clear to a mansion in the skies.

\* \* \*

## The Judgment

This is a throne of decision, erected in the mind, by which the morality and value of all questions may be settled. God recognizes the Judgment as an attribute of the soul, for He says, come and let us reason together. Religion is a reasonable matter, and our good Lord would come to our level, and talk it over with us.

For example -- is it better to have these pastors, or to have dance halls, gambling hells, with all such worldly and wicked things? Is it better to have the Christian Sabbath, the continental Sabbath, or no Sabbath? Is it best, after supper, to roll out the center table, throw out a deck of cards and spend the evening thus with your children, or lay the old family Bible there, read from its inspired pages, kneel in family prayer, arise and spend the time in talking about pleasant things, profitable things, things which make your home brighter here, and happy forevermore?

Is it better to have many wives, a Christian wife, or no wife? Is honesty the better principle and the better policy? Is a man the better off at the club, or with his family? Is a man more apt to be a good citizen by following Voltaire or Jesus -- which? "Let us reason."

This a marvelous condescension." God seems to say: If that nation, or family, or individual is not the better and happier, in this life, by serving me, you are at liberty to repudiate this code of morals and manners, which I have left for your guidance.

Is it reasonable -- that God exists, and is the maker of man, and that He has put him under wholesome laws, attached to which are penal sanctions? If He made us for any purpose and is all powerful, had we not better have him for our friend?

Is it reasonable -- that there is a judgment to come? If so, had I not better prepare to meet it?

Is it reasonable -- that man fell and created an entailment of sin upon his posterity? Is it not reasonable, that by believing the devil, man fell from the favor of God? Is it not just as reasonable that our Creator should arrange a plan of recovery, and that since belief of the seducer ruined man -- belief in God would reinstate him? Is it not reasonable that a being, made under the law, who kept it -- one who was equally of our nature as well as of the nature of God should come as a mediator, and undertake a reconciliation? I do not say our season or that of any mere man would have conceived such a glorious scheme of recovery -- but now that it is before us, and we see its mighty workings. Is it not reasonable? Let us reason.

God says in Ezekiel: If the wicked man will forsake his wickedness and will do that which is lawful and right, all the wickedness that he has done, and all the sins he has committed, shall not be mentioned unto him. Is this not reasonable and merciful too?

Look at that acorn which comes bouncing from its shell home in the top of that majestic oak. It strikes the ground and seems to say: "Let me in, Earth." "Stop," says the Earth, "and tell me why I should encumber myself with you, little acorn." "O, Earth, I have a mission to fill; I am destined to people your broad and barren bosom with an ample forest." "But," says the Earth, "you require substance and support from me while you are doing this. What will I get?... I will give you every leaf and limb, and finally I will return the trunk of every tree to enrich the soil which has so generously supported me." The trade struck. Is it not reasonable?

"Stop there," cries the Atmosphere, as a tiny green shoot starts heavenward. "By what authority do you invade my dominion?" The little acorn-shoot exclaims -- "O, I am commissioned to build a forest throughout this latitude, and I will need your permission and assistance." "But what do I get?... I will command every tree and branch and leaf to bow in graceful recognition when you pass. They shall ever laugh when you are near. Each leaf and limb shall be key-board, organ, orchestra -- through which your zephyrs and gales shall make sweet and loud music for man and angels. When your winds are furious and running away, I will command the field, and slow them up and hold them in and tame them down." "Welcome," says the Atmosphere, "to fifteen pounds of pressure, to the inch, as long as you need it." Is it reasonable?

"Stop," shouts the Sun, as an intruder begins to use his beams for coloring and for development. "O," says the acorn-shoot, "Great Sun, I am commissioned to people this earth with a great forest. I ask for your help." "But," says the Sun, "what do I get?" "O, sir, I will cool your overheated beams; I will make beautiful pictures on carpets of green by day for you, and for your lovely queen by night. I will rest man and beast in my shadow, and I will let every chirping fly-by-night and every flying songster by day, who owe their life and joy to you, build their homes amid my branches, and solidify all of your spare light and heat." "Welcome," shouts the Sun. Is it reasonable?

This is only a vegetable, but it comes into existence and forges to the front, with a threefold mortgage on it.

God says -- Son of man, I have made you. I have redeemed you. I have clothed and fed you. I propose to make a companion of you, after a short, simple test. If you obey me, I will elevate you; if you disobey me, I will degrade you. Is it reasonable?

\* \* \*

## The Will

The I will, in man, is stronger than mountains are high or oceans broad. He levels the hills or makes them; sends the lightning in the earth, or gears it and takes a ride, if he wills. The I won't in man, is the same power reversed. It is this power which gives man his nobility. I have seen God

or man capture every redoubt of fear, hope, pride, ambition, but have never seen a human will taken by storm.

It is thinkable that our God could build up, in the creative scale, until he made a creature so little less than Himself, and so much like Himself, as to be above the laws of force. This is man. God reasons with him, encourages him, pities him, threatens him, but never coerces. If man were made to sin, he could successfully dispute God's justice; if He forced virtue upon him, it would cease to be virtue, and would not merit reward. Virtue is rewarded, because it is voluntary. Vice is punished, because it is willful.

With all the help of grace, I can live right, if I will. With evil about me, I can be a sinner if I wish.

But if I act righteously, it will be my act, not Christ's. If I sin, it will be my act and not the devil's.

Just as I twirl this handkerchief, shut and open this Bible; just as I drop on my knees, while you all know I can utter words of prayer or profanity -- just as I will, -- so you can decide and determine now, upon a religious life. I could take hours and tell you what I wills have done, and what the I can'ts, and the I won'ts, have failed to do in the financial and literary and political worlds. I could array our poets, orators, inventors, statesmen; but that would weaken, rather than strengthen my contention, except as I point you to their achievements, in the lower world, as an illustration of man's power to overcome. These things you see and know already. But God, who subjected the ocean to the Columbuses, the Stephensons, the Fields; the electric currents to the Newtons, the Morses, the Edisons; has subjected greater forces to him or her who operates in the moral world. "He who keepeth his own spirit, is greater than he who keepeth a city." A mayor has more power in his town than the president himself, but the mayor, God says, is out-ranked by the man who can curb his temper, bridle his tongue and give direction to the spiritual forces of his being.

\* \* \*

### The I Cants

A man arose in church conference, during my Georgia pastorate, and said, "Bro. Culpepper, I am very sorry I have been intoxicated again, but, sir, it is not so much my fault; I intended to come back sober, when I left home that morning, but just could not resist." I said "Brethren, you have not done your duty; you should not let a man come out here, six miles, tie one of your neighbors hog fashion, haul him off, buck and gag him, and pour that vile stuff down him." He said: "O, it didn't happen that way, sir, but --" "Well," said I, "how did it happen? who hitched your horses to the wagon?" "I did." "Who drove them?" "I did." "Who helped you out of the wagon?" "O, I got out myself, Mr. Culpepper." "Well, don't grow impatient; I am after the party who carried you into the house." "O, I just went in." "Well, who called for the drinks?" "I did." "Was it forced down you, or did you take it of your own choice?" "Well, of course, I drank it." "Well, who paid for it?" "I did." Then I said, "Brother, the facts are you were at home and at work, but decided to have liquor, and so took your horses from the plow, put them to the wagon, got in



and drove to the barroom, and got drunk on purpose. There is not one to blame but you, and no being is responsible but you. You had rather be a slobbering drunkard than a decent, sober citizen, or you would have remained the one, instead of becoming the other." Plain words, but the case, I thought, demanded it, and the sequel sustained me, for it awoke him, and he is a Christian today, and a preacher.

\* \* \*

### Wasted Prayers

I am often asked to pray that a loved one may have strength to stop drinking. He has it already, if he would use it.

A lady came down stairs to find the servant girl crying and dipping water, which was three inches deep in the kitchen. She said she had been sweeping and dipping for two hours, and it got deeper all the time. "Well," said the mistress, "have you seen if it is turned on at the spigot?" "Why, bless the Lord, I hadn't thought of that." Sure enough it was open. Evil currents pour in through the eyes, the ears, the imagination, the passions, and you will be drowned out unless you step to the spigot -- the will, and shut off the flow. See?

\* \* \*

### When Keeley is Needed

I sometimes feel like saying -- If Dr. Keeley is in the audience, I have a patient for him. But I don't go much on your "gold cures." If you take treatment, then you must do what you might have done before -- LET IT ALONE. Of course, if you have drank up your intellect, your manhood, your family pride, the grit in your courage, your desire for respectability, and there is nothing left of you but a stomach, then some one must take a spoon and treat you stomachally.

It will work, too, for I once had a dog who was very fond of eggs. I drugged some. He grew suspicious of the hens' nests and would not go about them; but if he found an egg lying loosely about, he would devour it. I medicated eggs and pursued that dog until he got to where, when a he cackled he'd jump the fence. Therefore I say it will work-this spoon business -- if you have grown that low. But I hope there is some of the man left. If so, get on your feet, sir, and say I will.

\* \* \*

### Morality with Backbone

The world today needs a better type of morality. I use morality here like God uses ribs and backbone and skull-bone -- a very depository for the vital but delicate organs. One of the ways to become righteous is to practice righteousness. Our blood is like what we eat. We become like what we do. Act like Christ and you become Christian -- practice temperance and you become temperate; adhere to the principles of honesty and truthfulness, and you become honest and truthful;

this is the muscular, the I will side of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Creation, originally, stood on a level with righteousness. The original life is, or was, the upright life. Man is fallen, but is still man. If he needs a motive to action, he has it in the threat of a hell and in the promise of a heaven. If he needs a model, it is supplied in Christ. If he needs inspiration, it is supplied in the Holy Spirit. But it is then left for man to say I will. This I will makes destiny. You may not be able always to trace its rapid and powerful movements, but, like an emperor, it commands all the same. If I stood before you in bare feet, and a spark should fall on my toe, a bell would ring in the office of the will stating that the animal was on fire at the lower end, and an order would be sent out to the toe to shake, to the foot to move its toes, to the hand to knock the fire off, to the eyes to look out, to the whole man to take up quarters elsewhere. None the less powerful is the action of the will, because inconceivably rapid.

So, while I am talking, you can decide to become a Christian, and in pursuance of that determination can count the cost, look at every bad man, woman, habit, and, defying them all, can say I will be a Christian.

\* \* \*

### The Memory and Imitative Faculties

This is an attribute of the soul, and God so recognizes it, for He says, "Think how thou hast seen and heard."

This is man's storehouse. It is also God's storehouse. Without your memory, you have no past. Cut off the past and you have a very narrow and uncertain present and can have but a small tomorrow. I would say to young men and women -- cultivate memory. I believe much of the many exercises should consist in developing this great faculty. In fact, I believe the memory ranks all the soul's attributes, if indeed it is not the mother of them all.

\* \* \*

### A Discovery

When I entered the South Georgia Conference as pastor, I was warned of certain young men who were plagiarists. Some of them, I was told, would "take the texts and sermons and voice and gestures of their seniors and peddle them out over the country." One good D.D. brother told me it was just as bad as to take the corn from a man's crib under cover of night. I ventured to suggest that when a man preached a sermon it was like pouring the corn over the fence, and that in such case any hog was entitled to all he could carry off. It only brought on more talk. Supposing my seniors to be both good and wise, as well as utterly unselfish, I resolved to be original or nothing. I soon found myself both. As the years went by, I found these same young men, called copyists, at the head of church affairs and considered the original thinkers of the day. I naturally philosophized. I think I have learned that the great painters first copied; the "original" poets first recited rhymes; the world's famous sculptors first were admirers and imitators of others. I now think the best "mimics" or "copyists" in youth are the most "original" in after life. In fact, I believe the proof of originality is a disposition and ability to duplicate something about you. Take the Negro and Indian

racess. The Indian won't imitate the white man, and so remains an "original" failure. The Negro apt -- trying his hand at anything he sees, is forging to the front, producing such men as Booker Washington in one generation after emancipation.

Abraham told Dives to remember. How could he account for his presence in hell but through memory. God tells us that at last He will call our attention to our service here as a basis for rewards.

Will you draw from this well-filled storehouse, in after years, things new and old, but all good, or will you have only an old plunder room to look into when life is over.

The imitative faculty is strong in the child. The little boy or girl imitates mother or father, as they remember, or they follow some other copy as they reproduce it from memory. If we are faithful as parents, these little creatures who are like wax to receive our impressions, will strive to be like us. Later we can point them to some better example of Christlikeness about us. Later still, they will discover that Jesus Himself is a model after which they are to fashion their lives, until they "grow up into Him, their head, in all things." Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ." We are told that if we have not the mind of Christ we are none of His.

This all teaches us that the religious life is not so supernatural as to be unnatural. God made us on a level with Godlikeness. In fact, Godliness is one of the levels from which we fell when we lost out in Adam. Don't forget that I am arguing to you your soul's value from a creative standpoint.

\* \* \*

### The Affections

Through these we like or dislike, relish or disrelish; love or hate, are happy or miserable. They can hardly be overestimated. The father must not only teach his boy to obey, but love obedience; not only work, but love work; not only to read, but to love books; not only what is right and what is wrong, but to hate the wrong and love the right. Mother, if you have trained your children to respect you and their father, but have failed to secure their undying love, I am sorry for you and more so for them. In fact, what we hate and what we love is a correct gauge of what we are. In Collosians, 3d chapter, we are commanded to take our affections off the things of earth and place them on things above -- making us responsible for our very tastes. If I can learn to love tobacco, I can learn to hate it; if I can learn to love to swear, I can learn to love to pray; if I can learn to love a vile or trashy book, I can learn to love good books, and God's book; if I can learn to love a love story, I can learn to love the "tale of the Christ" and Him who is all love. See? Made us under the laws of self-control. You may not love the house of God, but you can set yourself down by yourself and have a little talk with yourself -- just there between yourselves and bring yourself to see what is best for yourself -- until later I hear you say, I'd rather be a doorkeeper or sexton or usher in the house of God than have any position the world can bestow. A little later I hear you say, "I am glad when they say, let us go to church." Later I hear you say, "A day in thy house is better than a thousand outside days." Learned to love it -- got your affections right-set. See? There is much in getting your heart in a matter. An old country brother told one of our good

preachers "that was a purty good sermon, but it made me feel like I was eatin' beef cooked right dry, and didn't have no sop to go with it." Duty without the love of it is roast without gravy. When one of Napoleon's surgeons was probing over a wounded soldier's heart for a bullet, he said, "If you go much deeper you will find the emperor." Had him in his heart -- hence it was no trouble to fight or die for him.

\* \* \*

### Set Your Affections

That is, strike for high ideals. The struggle may be hard -- sometimes long, but the will is on the throne. You are never whipped until you quit fighting. When we remember that it is through the affections that we pursue to the goal any object in life, that it runs the playground, the nursery, makes and runs the home, moves labor for the ditcher and hod-carrier to the banker and king of great syndicates; that it sustains the soldier and makes the martyr; that it gave us Christ and will make our Heaven -- we no longer wonder that they are classed with the soul's attributes.

\* \* \*

### The Conscience

Some animals may reason -- as the horse or Newfoundland dog, but they can never feel remorse or the thrill of divine approval. Herein lies the impassable gulf.

The empire of conscience has been misunderstood as its functions, abused or misapplied. I have already said that people try to misunderstand God. While some stab their conscience until it speaks no more, others again refuse to read God's word, go to church, or let the preacher advise them, saying, "I follow my conscience, and if I do that I'll go right." I ever hear good men say, "We must obey the voice of conscience." I once preached against excuses usually offered for not accepting Christ, and chanced to say, "Masons will not save you; K. P.'s will not save you," etc. The next day the worshipful master called me to him in a group of worldly men and said, "Mr. Culpepper, you will make nothing in this town by flinging at that ancient and honorable order-Masonry." I resented it, telling him I was as true to the principles of Masonry as he, and I believed I was a brighter Mason. "Wherein?" said he. "Well, sir," I replied, " my Masonry teaches me that nothing but the strong grip of a lion's paw can raise from a dead level to a living perpendicular, and you don't seem to have found it out. Then again, when you and I were raised there was an understanding between us and our cable to that Masonry would not 'interfere with the duties we owe to our family, our country or our God.' Masonry told us in that 'lion's paw' reference that she could not save your soul, but you must look to the Lion of Judea for a resurrection grip. In that cable to Masonry arranged for you to go with your wife to the house of God and to prayer-meeting, yet I have never seen you bring her." I had him. A lot of you so-called Masons won't go to church, but tell your wives you have to attend lodge. You can't be a decent Mason and attend lodge on prayer-meeting night. Masonry is against holding lodge when it in any way conflicts with religion. There is nothing to me more disgusting than these old whisky-soaked anti-church Mason bums.

\* \* \*

## Conscience

Well, along the same line is the man who says, "I follow my conscience. If I follow my conscience I'll be all right." Who told you so? If you train a man to think Jesus is divine, his conscience will hurt him if he don't worship Christ. Train him as the Jew is, and his conscience won't let him worship Christ. Strange guide that. The followers of Mohammed will slay the Christian and die as cheerfully for the false prophet as ever martyr went to the stake for Christ. Strange guide hat.

My India sister has qualms of conscience if she doesn't throw her first-born into the sacred Ganges. My conscience would torment me if I should drown my babe. Strange guide that..

My Seventh Day Adventist friend has a difficulty with his conscience if he doesn't keep Saturday. I have trouble with mine if I don't keep Sunday. Strange guide that.

Conscience will urge both armies to pray for success. Conscience will insist as hard for the wrong as for the right. Strange guide that.

Here are ten men lost in a dense swamp -- a week without food. One of the ten says to the other nine, "Men, I will lead you out; follow me." "But are you not lost too?... Yes, but I will lead you out." "Have you found any new trail?" "No, I am just what I have been all the week lost, but I will lead you out." "Men, he can't do it, can he?" Listen: If the judgment is fallen, if the reason is fallen, if the soul is lost, is it not lost in each and all of its members? Then how can the conscience, a fallen part of my fallen self, lead the other fallen parts of my fallen self out of the difficulty? It can't. The bare proposition sounds like the drivelings of an idiot or the ravings of a maniac. I had as soon kick a green gourd and follow it. Had much rather follow my unaided judgment. Truth is, conscience is no guide any way, and is not so scheduled in God's Word. Paul says the conscience either accuses or excuses. But from God's standpoint, you can't accuse a man of a thing before he is guilty; neither can you excuse him for doing a thing he has not done. From this it appears that conscience speaks AFTER the act. Think back to some great temptation like taking an apple or playing truant at school. You heard nothing from conscience until you ate the apple or started home after the runaway -- then conscience began to accuse.

\* \* \*

## A Spur

Conscience arraigns for not having lived up to the light afforded or for not having done one's best. But if you misinform the intellect and call wrong right, then conscience will urge the claims of wrong. Conscience is a good criminal lawyer but a poor guide, and none, except through the memory of some former victory or defeat. Fire is a good thing, if you keep it to its legitimate use; but it will scorch your face, as well as broil your meat; it will burn up your house as quickly as your wood-pile. Your horse will run for the doctor for your sick baby, then next day take those

same heels and kick the life out of the baby. In its place, fire is valuable, so is the horse. So is conscience, but perverted or misused, it works death.

\* \* \*

### Conscientious

I hear it often, "I was conscientious." So was Paul when killing Christians. Uncle Zack Gordon was conscientious when he baptized one thousand into the Baptist church. His illustrious son, General John B., was conscientious when he led his rebel charges; but one was saving sinners into Heaven, while the other was shooting Yankees into hell. See?

A druggist put up a doctor's prescription for a baby, but wrote on it, "I'd not give it to my baby for five hundred dollars." Next day the mother showed the unused medicine with the note. The doctor swallowed it himself to prove it harmless and was dead in two hours. Conscientious druggist-conscientious doctor. See?

Conscience will insist on a standard of right and wrong, but will not lead you.

Then, you ask, what is to be my guide? I will tell you directly, but now I want to speak of another faculty or attribute.

\* \* \*

### The Faith Faculty

Just as you possess a faculty of reason, judgment, etc., so you have faith power. Bear in mind I am still arguing that God made us to be religious. The scheme of redemption brings no attributes to the soul, but addresses itself to the lifting of the created submerged.

Millions wait today for God to give them faith. He gave you faith, with imagination, judgment, memory, etc., when He made you.

God gives in two ways -- by creation and impartation. He will not give us anything else by creation. We have all of our members and faculties. What may we expect from Him by impartation? He certainly will not impart to us a thing which He has not. Well, He can't believe anything, because He knows everything. Faith is the exercise of a human faculty -- the cry of human want -- the clutch of human need and human weakness. Faith being the result of gathering up evidence, it follows that faith has to do with facts, real or supposed. How may I have faith in my mother? By thoroughly knowing her. How may I believe in you? By getting well acquainted with you. Jesus recognized this when He said: "Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of Me." He said, "Believe Me for the work's sake."

Did you ever take a seat in a court of evidence, fully persuaded of the innocence of a party, but listened to witness after witness of undoubted veracity until you could no more believe in the innocence of the party than you could fly? What wrought this great and sudden change? Facts

turned on the faith faculty did it. To be more explicit on this point, suppose your pastor here was accused of stealing a load of corn. You are indignant and burn his assailant in effigy. However, the prosecuting attorney proves that Mr. A\_\_\_\_, living out here five miles, lost a load of corn on a given night. This makes a case and gets us into court. One of your neighbors, in whom you believe, testifies that on this night he came a near way through the plaintiff's lot, and saw, by bright moonlight, the prisoner loading a wagon with corn. A second witness states that he passed by A's lot gate, en route for his own home, just as the defendant drove from the lot of A, and he had a wagon load of corn. Being asked, he rode with him and opened the gate for him at his own home. Still another perfectly reliable witness states on oath that he spent the night in the home of the prisoner, and that after supper he drove off in a two-mule wagon, coming back about 11 o'clock -- drove quite near his window and unloaded corn into his crib -- so near him that he easily recognized him in the moonlight; that he saw him ungear the team; that he passed near him as he entered his wife's room, and he heard him distinctly as he said: "Wife, I have done tonight what you won't endorse, and what I once thought that I'd never be guilty of. I tried to buy a load of corn from Mr. A., he would not sell it, and I slipped over to his crib while they were away and took a load." Now, doubt this theft, if you can. But what has happened? I will tell you. God made you capable of weighing evidence and coming to just and right conclusions, and you have done it. If you are an unbeliever, it is because you are ignorant of Christ and His life. Honest unbelief is heathenism, and needs pity and light. Willful unbelief is such a purpose and deserves to be damned.

In any case, the responsibility is shifted, for we all have evidence at hand if we will gather or receive it.

\* \* \*

### A Guide

Then if I am not to expect a miraculous downpour of faith, which will force my conviction, and if I am not safe in following my conscience, then what is to be my guide?

\* \* \*

### The Bible

You tell me the book contradicts science. If it does, so much the worse for science; but wiser men than I preach to and wiser than you listen to think science comes more and more to confirm this book. It seems to know us and is up with us in all we think, say or do; keeps abreast of all times and is the only satisfactory remedy for sin known to the world. Its writing covers a space of about sixteen hundred years, but it reaches back to the beginning and forward to our eternal destiny. It contains the real things which we need to know and be, and these things are found nowhere else. You are more interested in this volume of sixty-six books, written by thirty-six authors, than in all the libraries of earth.

It has been much attacked. So has Christ. Take its first five books. Modern critics say Moses did not write it. For over three thousand years the Jewish nation have said Moses wrote the

Pentateuch. Josephus said so. Thilo, an Egyptian and a Jew, living in the first century of the Christian era, said Moses wrote it. The most ancient manuscripts name Moses as the author of the first five books. So do the three most ancient versions. (A MSS. is a copy in the same language with the original. A version is a copy in a foreign language). The Targums (there are at least ten extant, they being the comments of the old Jews to the younger ones -- these comments becoming necessary largely because the Hebrew had suddenly become obsolete as a spoken tongue on the Crisis of We Babylonian captivity) say the same.

The Septuagint, executed at Alexandria about three hundred years before Christ by seventy of the most scholarly Hebrews of the day under the patronage of Ptolemy Philadelphius -- these seventy versionists all say Moses wrote the Pentateuch. Jesus used the Septuagint and recognized it as genuine.

The Talmud, composed of Mishna and Gemaram the law as spoken to Moses, with God's explanations, the one to be written, the other to be remembered and handed down, says Moses wrote the books ascribed to him.

The Jewish Calaba says Moses wrote the old Bible.

About a thousand years ago, the Rabbi Mamonides drew up a summary of their doctrines, which he insists had been handed down through secret and traditional channels and which every orthodox Jew subscribes to.

- (1) That God is the Creator and active supporter of all things.
- (2) That God is one and unchangeable.
- (3) That God is incorporeal and cannot have any material properties.
- (4) That God must eternally exist.
- (5) That God alone is to be worshipped.
- (6) That whatever is taught by the prophets is true.
- (7) That Moses is the head and father of all contemporary doctors, and of all those who lived before and shall live after him.
- (8) That the law was given by Moses.
- (9) That the law shall always exist and never be altered.
- (10) That God knows all thoughts and actions of men.
- (11) That God will reward the observance and punish the breach of the laws.



(12) That the Messiah is to come, though He tarry a long time.

(13) That there shall be a resurrection of the dead when God shall think fit.

The Vulgate, a Latin translation from the Septuagint and in use and high esteem by the Romish church, says Moses wrote the five first books.

Nearly one hundred men, with the ripest scholarship of the ages and with all the facilities, hidden and revealed, at their command, have given us the Revised Version. They say Moses wrote what he says he wrote.

Hear me! The scholarship, the conscience of the ages, says the Bible is the book of God and the book for man.

I know science, as some men count it, 'speaks of rotundity and velocity and gravitation and other big words; but in the oldest piece of literature extant Job said, "God hangs the world on nothing." Columbus, a great Bible reader, said: "Well, if God hung the world on nothing, it is on nothing yet, and I can go around it." So, taking a cue -- not from science, but from this book -- he pointed his boats westward, and held them there till October 11, 1492, when he ran upon this new world. What book on latitude, longitude and shape was used? The Bible.

A Frenchman undertook to overturn the Christian faith and the Christian church by counting the stars, saying, though the Bible says they are innumerable, "I can count them. He found 1,120, but, being a gentleman of broad culture, he threw in enough to make the number 1,500, then doubled that and announced his deduction, viz., that there can't be possibly over 3,000 stars.

Gallileo, La Rosse, et al, have turned their telescopic eyes to our nocturnal heavens and reported back to their busy,, shorthand scribes until science shouts, Stop! They can't be counted! Where was that first said? In the Bible.

Jesus did not teach geography, yet He says: "When I come I will find two in the bed," and says He will take one and leave one. It is night when folks are in the bed. At the same coming He says, "I will find two in the field," and will take one and leave one. He comes near to saying, The world is round, is inhabited on both sides, and when I see the people asleep in one hemisphere I see them awake in the other. Where, then, do we get our first hint of the shape of the earth? In the Bible.

On an eventful morning the disciples called Jesus' attention to the magnificent temple -- the world's wonder. Our Lord remarked: "The time will come when there will not be left one stone upon another, but my words will abide forever." Surely the fortuitous guesses of this Galilean prodigy have now reached their limit. The attritive winds will never reduce those stones to dust; the steel teeth of time in vain will comb those polished boulders.

But what has history revealed? A controversy as to the limits of the city, the exact and entire site of the temple, with absolute uncertainty as to the identity of a single stone. One stone was not left upon another. What of the latter phrase, "My words shall abide forever"?

The longest telegram this old world ever paid for was 127,000 words of Jesus Christ in 1881. And every sort of a conveyance, from a maiden's lap apron to a railroad locomotive was used to publish to the waiting, willing, wanting, wondering, worshipping world the sayings of Jesus Christ. Where are those sayings found? In the Bible.

When an American lawyer has exhausted all codal sanctions and legal reference, he appeals to English laws. When the English lawyer or parliamentarian has appealed to the last legal construction and legal fiat, he then appeals to the Bible, so that every principle operating in legal jurisprudence has this old book for its foundation and authority.

Do you want wealth? I heard a rich man say his accumulation was due to his close adherence to the Proverbs of Solomon.

Do you want poetry? Lew Wallace, as well as older and better critics, say the best is in the Bible.

Do you love biography?" Here is the authority for biography as well as the most valuable. Would you know your origin? Go to this book and learn of all creation, yours as well. Would you know of what you are composed? That you are body, soul, spirit, is taught in the Bible.

Are you desirous of a long life? All laws assuring it are first and best known in the Bible.

Does the word destiny, with an interrogation point ever stand and gaze into your soul? This book is the only treatise on immortality, eternity, the judgment and destiny.

\* \* \*

### Literal Fire

But you ask, What does Christ mean by the loss of the soul? Does He teach the doctrine of a literal hell? I can't answer you, but will say I know of no lower form or degree of joy or pain than that to which the body can be subjected. Mental agony. The mind can suffer more than the body. Indeed, it seems to me that I had rather stand in fire to my neck a century, then get well out, than be a driveling idiot about the throne of God, playing with a pair of bridle reins forever, while men and angels soared and explored. There to me is great punishment and no suffering. But to suppose a case. I am fifty miles from home. It is dark. I, through a miraculous vision, see a red-handed assassin climb through the window to where my helpless wife and child lie. He has drawn that ugly blade for a plunge. The policeman is on the other corner, but I can't make him hear me fifty miles. A minute is a week. My hair, if black, would turn gray. I would leap into liquid flame to save them in this moment of the most excruciating mental suffering. In one hour I have experienced more pain than flesh seems heir to.

Here, then, are two hells, more intolerable than one of mere physical pain.

\* \* \*

## A Conscience Hell

Near my boyhood home lived a mother with three daughters who were ill. She sent, at night, for some quinine to a country drugstore. A sleepy clerk arose and sent a bottle of morphine, with directions for a dose to be given at 6 and 8, etc. The fond mother gave each their first medicine, and in two hours amused them sufficiently to swallow the second dose. This was their last conscious moment. They died. While lying in three coffins that mother walked her yard and in self-accusatory language called herself a murderer. At one time she said: "I would walk to Oglethorpe and back in fire to my neck if I could only say, "They are dead, but I did not murder them through my carelessness. O, my conscience will kill me!" There was conscience torture in a mother far beyond physical pain. I can't answer your question about a physical hell, but I know of nothing milder in sound philosophy or revelation.

Watch me as I diagram something on this white paper. What is that? A house, you say. Correct; but will it turn water? Can I live in it? You say No! It is only a figure of a house. Then a figure is necessarily weaker than the thing it prefigures, is it? Certainly, you answer. Then when you tell me that a hell "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" is figurative; that the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever, is only a figure; that weeping and gnashing of teeth is only a figure, I must ask you to look out. If a house or a horse is stronger than the figure of them, you will make hell as much more intolerable as brick and plank are stronger than pencil marks on paper. If these Bible statements are to be taken literally, the punishment of the wicked is insufferable. If these are only weak figures, what will the reality be, and how can a poor, lost soul endure it!!

\* \* \*

## Lazarus and Dives

A legend says they died near the same time, and journeyed towards the heavenly world. Lazarus out-traveled him, but sat and awaited his arrival. On coming up he shook the gates heavily. When Peter came out he said: "Dives, that was you who so rudely jarred these gates. I fear it will repay you little; however, come in." Taking them into an open court, or vestibule, he said: "Well, what do you want to make you happy forever?" Dives was the first to speak, saying, "I want plenty of money, the current news, a choice table, bed, amusements -- but don't forget the money." A door opening, they walked into a large room, when he found himself alone, but with all the good things he had named. He ate until appetite was gone; he read himself out of all knowledge of what seemed to be passing events; he counted money till a merry clink became a sickening thud; he slept until sleep sickened into insomnia. A thousand years ground away and Peter walked in. Dives sprang up and said, "How dared you put me in such a place as this and call it heaven?... Why," said Peter, "this is not Heaven, this is Hell." "Well, I should say it is; but I thought I came to Heaven. Why I belonged to the church and never counted on anything else but getting to Heaven." "Here," said Peter, "put your finger in this crack above you, pull yourself to tiptoe and maybe you can see into Heaven." He did so and exclaimed, "O, how beautiful! How far and yet how near! O, how transcendently beautiful! Peter, who is that by the feet of Him on the throne, Jesus excepted, the most beautiful being in human form I see?... Why, that is Lazarus." "Lazarus, who came along

with me?" "Yes." "Well, tell me, what has made him so very beautiful?" "When I went out from here a thousand years ago and asked him what he wanted, as I did you, he said, 'Good angel, if you have a stool or something which won't take up much room, where I can sit at the feet of God and look into His face to my heart's content, that will satisfy me fully.' That simple, unselfish request has wrought the change you notice."

Peter slipped out and returned at the end of another thousand years to find Dives still on tiptoe -- looking! looking! looking! He was trying to solve the problem of my text -- "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

\* \* \* \* \*

## 02 -- SAMSON -- By O. B. C.

Although the children of Israel had again done evil in the sight of the Lord and had been delivered into bondage for forty years, God once more pitied them and determined to rid them of Philistine oppression. Hence that angelic visit to the wife of Manoah, announcing the coming of Samson, whose eventful birth would be the beginning of deliverance. O, how thrilling is the strange record of this mighty man! I do not think it would hurt humanity if the whole world would ponder that great lesson on dietetics given Samson's mother before his birth. I am sure posterity would be better off. For in the miraculous generation of this great physical giant, even God had to respect certain physiological laws.

Samson was the strongest man that ever lived. You might have taken every pugilist, and gladiator, and champion wrestler of the world and pitted them against Samson, and they would have fallen before him, helpless as a babe. How we read in wonder and admiration of the way he resists the treacherous attempts of his enemies to take his life, and puts them to flight; how he so uniquely burns their cornfields; how, with the jawbone of an ass, he slays a thousand men; and of how, at midnight, he bears away on his broad shoulders the very doors and posts of the city gates! But we are sorely shocked as we read how this great giant suddenly becomes an imbecile in the hands of a little weak woman. He who could put to route an army of men, lifts the "white flag" and falls powerless before the flattery of one woman. But in this, Samson is a type of all mankind. Each person on earth has a weak place in his character somewhere. And right there the devil will unlimber every gun of hell. Paul recognizes this fact and exhorts us to "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us." The Negro preacher was not far wrong when he said, "the sin which doth easily upset us." We all have our "upsetting" sins. To illustrate: There are many men to whom Delilah would not have been a temptation. Their weakness is strong drink. There are others over whom liquor usurps no dominion, but who will fall before the passion for gambling. Then again, I have met men who would die rather than gamble, drink, or be impure, yet they declare it impossible to keep from swearing. Yes, every man and woman has at least one weak spot which should be very strongly fortified.

Samson's weakness is very apparent. And I think for treachery and deceitfulness Delilah "wears the bell." I think she would enter smart society, were she living, judging from her life and the lives of the so-called society women today. Hear me! Though she had warmed him in her snowy bosom; though her beautiful arms had been clasped lovingly around his neck; though her

ruby lips had thrilled him again and again, -- yet she had a heart as black as hell! Just listen to the recital of this tale of treachery and lies as recorded by the sacred historian, and you will agree with me.

"And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

"And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and we will give thee, every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

"And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound, to afflict thee.

"And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and shall be as another man.

"Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

"Now there were men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

"And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

"And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

"Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

"And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

"And she fastened it with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awakened out of his sleep, and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web

"And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and thou hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth.

"And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him. so that his soul was vexed unto death;

"That he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb; if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.

"And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand.

"And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him and his strength went from him.

"And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself.

"And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him."

O, the mighty power of woman for either good or evil! Few indeed are those men who can stand before the flattery and bewitchery of a beautiful and cunning woman. O, the reckoning awaiting woman at the bar of God, for her influence over man! I am glad to throw beside this "lewd woman of the baser sort," the gentle, modest, Ruths and Esthers of the Bible and of life, which exemplify woman's power for good.

\* \* \*

## I. The Blinding Nature Of Sin

"But the Philistines took him and put out his eyes." Sin is unexplainable. It is appalling and stupendous. Why will a man prefer his lips blistered with oaths rather than have them hallowed by prayer? Why will a man gamble, drink, or upon the altar of lust, sacrifice that which he so much appreciates in his mother -- purity? Can you explain why a sweet, pure, innocent girl will permit some black-hearted, lecherous scoundrel to put his vile arms around her in the ball room, when probably the skunk had them around some "scarlet woman" the night before? I dare you explain it. Some one please tell me why a woman will give cards respectability by her presence and magic touch when she knows that social card-playing leads only to black-leg gambling? Why will any man or woman sin against their God? I believe it can be explained in one way only: They have been blinded by the "god of this world."

There are two beings who are ever striving for the supremacy in man's heart. One moved by love and pity, the other by revenge and envy: -- God, and His arch-enemy, the devil. Paul long time ago asked a question which was to the point: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" He called it "bewitching them." It means the same thing, who hath blinded you? Surely the old world is under the mesmeric spell of Satan today, judging men and women by their daily conduct. Yes, there are two mighty competitors for man's heart and life. Let me give you a test by which you may prove whether it is God or Satan appealing.

The devil always offers immediate reward; God never does.

Not that there is no reward for righteousness in this life, for there is; for "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come." But the great reward, the final reward, that glorious reward, reserved for the faithful of all ages, is to be awarded on the last day. Now the devil is a great old devil and is mighty smart, but he is too smart to offer you something hereafter. He knows every one will know he is a liar, if he offers anything beyond this present life, for he will be too busy receiving his own just reward of eternal damnation to look after you or anyone else. Hence his appeal is altogether earthly and present. I am free to admit it is strong. He is forced to make it so. His only chance is in offering reward immediately. Like the pottage Esau ate: it was for the present only. There can be no pleasure in yonder's world, remembering your sins here. What good will your dancing do you in eternity? Do you expect to derive dividends from your impure life here, after you are dead? Why, men, you shudder now when you think of some of the dark deeds you have committed! They haunt you tonight! How much would you give to be able to blot from memory's record your past sinful life. And the longer you live the more you will abhor it. The pleasures of sin are but for a season. Sin is sweet in your mouth but bitter in your memory. Now look at the other side a moment. There is comfort in recalling the good acts of your life. How they cheer you along its dusky way! Did you ever drop a nickel into the cup of the blind beggar who sat by the way? How that little act gladdens your heart tonight! But remember the ultimate reward for such acts is to be given yonder. Yes, we are really rewarded for righteousness twice: here and hereafter. My girl, you know you would not be willing to have placed in your obituary, "she was the best dancer and carder in town." You flinch! Why? Because you know all such belongs only to this world. The devil blinds the young woman with the glitter and glamour of social life, and whispers softly to her: "enjoy yourself now while you are young and pretty." She is thrilled with the idea of present reward and happiness! Of course he very artfully keeps from her the awful result of such a course hereafter. She is blinded! Into the cesspool of worldliness she plunges, oftentimes never to rise again!

Take this young man just budding into strong manhood. The devil tells him that it is degrading to work and that the goal is so far away; just gamble, and then you will have fine clothes now, money now, diamonds now, success now! It looks reasonable. He is caught, blinded, poor fellow! At last he goes down in awful disgrace and ruin and irremediable woe and anguish! But, men and women, what are the foolish pleasures of this foolish world compared with the eternal joys of Heaven?

"Go wing your flight from star to star,  
From world to luminous world,  
As far as the universe spreads its flaming wall;  
Then take all the pleasures of all the spheres,  
And multiply each through endless years:  
One minute of Heaven is worth them all!"

But the devil blinds them to the grand glories of Heaven, by appealing to their lower natures with present reward. And it does seem to a poor, blinded sinner that present pleasure excels present self-denial. He fails to see through to the greater reward for righteousness; for the devil has impaired his vision.

Talk to the average sinner about meeting his God, and you will see that he has been completely blinded by some infernal power, and that he can appreciate only the present. I once heard of a wicked woman who was addicted to strong drink. She had two sweet little girls, one of whom was blind. She would send them out daily to beg money in order that she might buy rum. One evening when they had returned from their street begging, the mother asked how much they had gotten. Little Helen, the blind one, said: "Here is mine, mamma, please don't scold me." "How much have you got, Pearl?" demanded she of her other daughter. "O, mamma," cried the trembling child, who was only used to oaths and blows, "please don't beat me; I have not got as much as sister, for she is blind, and when she says: 'Please help the little blind girl,' why they just put a heap in her cup." "Yes, you little hussy," cried this brute, "I'll make you blind, and then you can get the money." Pearl seeming to know what was coming, ran under the bed. But this mother caught her child by the feet, pulled her out, and with a hat pin gouged her beautiful little brown eyes out, and they fell on the floor. And amid the terrific, heart-rending screams of the poor, unfortunate girl, the mother hurled her away, saying: "Now you can beg, you little devil."

But do you not know the devil is blinding men and women just as effectually as did this insane woman her child? O, the blinding nature of sin!!

If we could get you to see yourself as we see you, as you really are, and God sees you, I believe you would be saved!

I once read the story of a beautiful, sweet girl of only sixteen singing summers, whose tresses were golden, and whose eyes were honest and blue. She loved a noble boy; his name was Jack. One beautiful, moon-bathed evening, while aeolian music gently filled the spacious church building, she leaned proudly upon his arm, and walked to where the minister was standing, who pronounced them man and wife. Congratulations were many, and this couple were happy: They moved to a distant city. One night Jack came home with his breath tainted with wine. Lillian cried and begged him not to touch it again. He gently kissed his girl-wife aside, declaring that he would never make a drunkard. The same old story -- he made a drunkard. From their beautiful, palatial home on the principal street in the city, down, down, down, down, till they lived in a little hovel on the bank of the river. Money all gone, friends all gone, but she loved him still. One rainy Christmas morning she was standing at the window, wondering what she must do. Cold, hungry, deserted, she thought of mother, and of her girlhood home. The tears were falling fast. Staggering, stumbling along, she saw Jack coming. "O merciful God," cried she, "is that the boy who was once no noble and brave? O, Jack, I love you, darling; why do you drink?" She hastily opened the door and he fell in a drunken stupor at her feet. She looked at him lying there in his filth and vomit, and contrasted him now, with his once imperial bearing. "O," cried she, "if he could only see himself now, he would never drink again." With a woman's intuition and love she ran quickly to a photographer's and said: "Come with me, sir." When he arrived and learned what she wanted, he said: "Madam, you don't want his picture taken as he is now, do you?" "O, sir," said she, "that's just what I do want. I want him to see himself as he really is."

When the picture was finished and given to the woman, she burst into tears of joy and exclaimed: "This will work the cure." She placed the picture on the mantel and awaited results. The next morning he was sober, but sick. He was about to start out for the day when his eyes fell



on the picture. He looked at it a minute. It seemed to dawn on him who it was. "Lillian, Lillian," cried he, "who is this?" Lillian knew her time had come. Said she: "Jack, who does it look like?... It looks like me. Where did you get it? Who took it? Lillian, is that really me?" She threw her arms around his neck and cried out: "O, my darling Jack, its all that's left of you. I had it taken so that you could see yourself as you really are." Pressing his happy girl-wife to his manly bosom, he kissed her lips, as in days of yore, and said: "Lillian, if I look like that, by the grace of Almighty God, not another drop of the damnable stuff shall go down my throat." He saw himself as he really was!!

A certain society, in order to gain admission for a missionary to some African tribes, sent some trinkets to be bartered with the natives. Among them was a pack of those little hand mirrors that ladies use. The natives had never seen their faces before, except in the waters of some lake or stream. The news of this wonderful instrument was spread abroad until the missionary was invited by tribe after tribe to visit them with his wonderful glass. It happened that, away in the interior, there was a princess who had been told that she was the most beautiful creature the sun ever shone upon. So when she heard of the missionary and his glass, she sent for him that she might see her beautiful face. But the truth was that she was a most hideous creature! When he arrived she took the glass and went into her hut to take a good, long, rapturous view of her charming face. But when she looked into the glass and saw the truth concerning herself, with her royal fist she dashed the glass to pieces, and then banished the missionary, and made a law prohibiting looking-glasses to enter her domain. Some people just don't want to know the truth about themselves. That's the reason men hate to read the Bible. It tells the truth about them, and condemns their wickedness. I know that some of you men would be scared nearly out of your senses, if you could see yourself as you really are. I heard of a man who thought the judgment day had come, because he saw the stars falling, or rather thought they were falling. He called to his wife to get up and get the Bible right quick. He made a mistake by getting a little black-back mirror instead of the Bible, which had a black back. When the poor, pallid, stricken sinner saw his white face and blood-shot eyes in the glass, he screamed: "Wife the devil has come, the devil has come." O, if you could only see yourself as you are, it would wake you up!

Mr. Moody tells the story of his little son who wanted to go to Lincoln Park with him. Mr. Moody told him he was too black to go. "Papa," said the little fellow, "if you will let me go I will let mamma wash me." Now you know he was anxious to go, was he not? "Alright, son, go and let mamma wash you, and when I come back from town, I will take you." The little fellow had his bath, and went out on the front porch to wait for papa. Boy-like, he got tired waiting, and seeing the pump in the yard he went to it and turned the faucet on and began making mud-pies. Of course his hands got dirty and he didn't want to wipe them on the front part of his dress where he could see it, so he wiped them behind, thinking if he could not see it, it was not there. Thus he played and played, till he heard the buggy coming and running to the gate exclaimed: "Papa, I am ready to go." Mr. Moody, seeing his dirty face and soiled dress said: "My son, you are as black as a pot; I can't take you." "O, no, papa," said his son, glancing at the front part of his dress, "I am not dirty. Mamma just now washed me." Mr. Moody declared it impossible to convince him till he took him into the house and stood him up in front of a great big looking-glass, and said: "Now don't you see you are too black to go?" So it is with men and women. They think because they present a pleasing front before the world, that their life is all right. O, how anxious we are to appear clean before men, but how little we care how we appear before God! O, sinner, stand in front of God's

looking-glass and see yourself as you are, and then cry like blind Bartimaeus of old: "Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." O, the blinding nature of sin!

There is a sad story told of the Rev. W. H. Milburn, the blind and eloquent preacher, so many years the popular and much beloved chaplain to Congress. He went to London to consult some eminent oculists, and to ascertain if it were possible for him ever to see. They could offer him no hope. However, one of them suggested that he attend the great meeting of oculists from all over the world, to be held in Paris the next week. Mr. Milburn went, and there he met a world-renowned oculist from Germany. Milburn knew if anyone could help him, this famous specialist could. He told Mr. Milburn to come to his office in Germany, and there he would discuss the matter with him. He went. There he was told he must be put on a certain diet for six months and be prepared for the first operation. Nothing daunted, Mr. Milburn remained right there for the six months on a certain diet. At the end of which time the first operation was performed. "Now," said the specialist, "you must be placed on treatment and diet for one year longer, at the end of which time I will again operate, and you then will be able to see, I am sure. You may go back to America if you like; just follow the directions, and come back in one year, and I will operate." The preacher was happy in expectation. He followed closely the orders, and looked longingly to the day when he would be made happy as he was freed from his blindness. Imagine the shock when told one morning before sailing for Germany that the famous oculist had just died! And with his death had died all hope of ever seeing in this world. Only one man capable of healing him, and for that opportunity to slip, was indeed genuine sorrow, and bitter disappointment. But poor, blind sinner, there is only one Being who can give you your sight. Don't let the opportunity pass. Jesus can help you. He is anxious to help you. Will you let him? While He will never die, you will, and with your death dies all hope.

Tomorrow 's sun may never rise  
To bless thy long-deluded sight;  
This is the time, O then be wise,  
Be saved, O, tonight!

I read somewhere this beautiful story. A little boy named Charlie, who had been born blind, said to his papa one evening: "Papa, is the oculist coming to examine me tomorrow?" "Yes, my boy; I went to see him, and he is to come and examine you in the morning." The next morning the specialist, whose fame had preceded him to America, arrived at the home of little Charlie, the only child of rich parents. When the examination was over, Charlie said: "Doctor, do you think I will be able to see?" The oculist said: "I would not inspire hope where there is none, but I don't see why your son may not see? Don't give him any supper, or breakfast tomorrow, and in the morning at ten I will come and perform the operation. It was not hard to get Charlie to abstain from eating, so charmed was he by the hope of seeing. He was in his snowy bed when the surgeon and his assistant arrived. When the anesthetic was applied, Charlie said: "Take it away, it tastes so bad." He was told he must inhale it that he might not feel the pain. "Well, mamma, you and papa hold my hand, and I will take it," said the little fellow. So on either side of the bed stood the fond mother and father, each holding a little trusting hand. When he had become thoroughly narcotized, the doctor bade the parents leave the room. Then, dipping his knife into the antiseptic, he lifted the lid and began cutting away that foreign, filmy substance which had prevented sight. He then quickly placed thirty-two bandages over his eyes. Opening the door, he beckoned the anxious parents and

said: "It is over; remove one bandage each day, and when you remove the last one your son can see as well as you or I." When Charlie awoke, he said: "O, mamma, it's dark as ever; I can't see." They explained the situation to him. How long the days were to him! When all the bandages had been taken off but ten, he said: "Mamma, I am going to tear these off, and see your sweet face right now." "O, no, my son," said she, "the light would be too strong and might re-blind you." Finally the last day dawned. The oculist came to see the result of his work. "Madam," said he, "let the first thing he sees be something beautiful, it will make a lasting impression on him." So they took him out to the flower garden where the air was filled with intoxicating fragrance from prodigal flowers, and where the sun was pouring down a golden sea of loveliness. The mother, gowned in a beautiful morning dress, stood just in front of him, while the expectant father stood near by. As the doctor clipped the bandage and it fell to the ground, Charlie looked around a moment, and then cried out "O mamma, is this Heaven, is this Heaven?" "No, my darling son, this is your home." "O, Mamma," said he, "why didn't you tell me it was half so beautiful?" "We did try to tell you, my boy, but you were blind and could not see it." Ah me! We talk about the golden paved streets of Heaven; her jasper walls, and gates of pearl; the songs of the holy angels and the pure white throne of our God, -- and you say, "I don't understand you, what do you mean?" O, sinner, you are blind, and in the dark! Come to Christ, the great eye opener, the great oculist of Heaven, and receive your sight. Go wash in that fountain opened in the house of king David for sin and uncleanness, and then join that innumerable host which today sings so triumphantly:

At the cross, at the cross, where I first saw the light,  
And the burden of my heart rolled away,  
It was there by faith I received my sight,  
And now I am happy all the day.

\* \* \*

## 2. The Binding Nature Of Sin

"And they bound him with fetters of brass."

Not only did they blind Samson, but they bound him. How much like sin! I am preaching to men and women here tonight who are bound in every faculty of your mind and attribute of your soul. O the binding nature of sin! How we Americans love to sing,

"Our country, 'tis of thee,  
Sweet land of liberty,  
Of thee I sing."

And yet you can scarcely find a man who is not bound by some vicious habit. America is a land of slavery rather than freedom. We have cigarette fiends, morphine fiends, cocaine fiends, coca cola fiends, coffee fiends, whiskey fiends, patent medicine fiends, and fiends too numerous to mention. There are boys in this town who have been bossed by their passions, till they look like idiots! Manhood all gone! Bound, bound, bound!!

I was once preaching in the state of Florida when I asked a little boy about ten years old to come to the platform. He did so. I asked him to sit down in a chair near me. As he sat down I grabbed him and almost before he knew it I had him tied hard and fast to that chair. I told him to get up. Of course he couldn't. I told the audience that was the way the devil had done two-thirds of the people in the state of Florida. Then to emphasize the utter helplessness of a person once in the devil's power I pulled the boy's hair and twisted his nose and finally turned the chair over with the boy in it. Of course the lad thought I had gone mad. He was thoroughly seared. I then turned to the crowd of boys sitting on the front bench and said, "Shall I let him go or hold him?" "Hold him, hold him," cried the boys. I said, "That's what the devil and his infernal gang says about every sinner in this town, 'Hold him, hold him, hold him.' And what about it, girls?" About fifty sweet little girls shouted out, "Let him go, please." "Yes" I said, "that is what God and the good people always say. 'Let him go, please.' But," I said, "no, I will not let you go. I am going to hold you. I don't care whose boy you are, I will not let you go." About that time we had a sensation sure enough. A little woman came running toward the platform with an open knife, quickly cut every rope that had held him, and then kissed him and said, "Now you are free." She then faced the audience and said, "I have a boy some where in this cold world today who is bound with sin. O, that some one would cut the cords that hold him, and let him come home to me." O, the binding nature of sin!

A crowd of young people were out walking one afternoon when one of the young men saw a huge rattlesnake lying in a corner of the fence. He slipped up and quickly seized the monster by the neck, and, holding him tightly, waved him toward the party of young people saying, "You had all better run, I am going to put him on you." "Throw him down, George, he will bite you," cried a young girl. "O, I am a man," said George, "I could squeeze his head off. Look at me." He then began shaking the reptile till it was in a furious rage. You could see his black dancing eyes, his quivering forked tongue. His body was wriggling for freedom. While George's hold was steadily weakening, the snake was silently, slowly but surely crawling through his hand. George saw what was coming, but alas! too late! He called for help, but the snake had already thrown his tail around George's arm and turning his vicious head, he plunged his venomous fangs into the boy's body, -- and he was soon dead! O, what a true picture of sin! I have seen the young men of today take the pack of cards and play with them. "O, I will never make a gambler," they say; but alas, they do! I have seen them take the sparkling wine cup and sip it. Mother has said, "My boy, that serpent will bite you." "O, mother, I will never make a drunkard." But I have seen them buried in a drunkard's grave, and tonight they are in a drunkard's hell! I have seen the young girl toy with the dance, and declare it would never hurt her. And I have seen her mother bowed down in sorrow to the grave. O, the old serpent of hell, how he binds our precious boys and girls with fetters of galling brass! O, the binding nature of sin!

What is liberty? Men make it mean, to do as you please. Never was there a greater mistake. Liberty has its foundation in morals. It is founded in the eternal oughtness of things. The man who is living as he ought to live, is a co-ruler with God himself. A man has no right to do wrong. There is a law of health. A man has no right to eat just anything he pleases, he must first learn what is best for him; what agrees with and what does not; he must eat by law. Civil law is on the same principle. I must regard others or I will be taken to prison. I have no right to live as I please. But hear me! There is no freedom except in Christ! Science proposes to emancipate the physical man. She has worked wonders. "Today we have steam and electricity and machinery in a thousand

forms doing the work that once fell on man. They now have only to guide these mighty forces, and like invisible but untiring slaves, they do the world's drudgery."

Education proposes mental emancipation. It has accomplished the marvelous. Not many years ago an educated man was rare, now ignorance is a crime. We are an educated people. Look at our universities, and colleges, and public school systems; at our great libraries and our thousands of daily newspapers all disseminating knowledge. But when science and education and all kindred forces have done their best for man's liberation, they have but reached the prison door of the royal captive, and must wait till "One comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, mighty to save." "But if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed!" The love of freedom is in every man's breast. God made you a free man, and you cannot be happy unless free. But sin is degrading and enslaving. Come to Christ tonight and he will break the fetters of brass which bind you, and then you can go home to mother, or wife, a free man indeed. Be a slave of sin no longer.

A poor man who had just been liberated from the penitentiary after serving his sentence, met a boy with a cage of birds for sale. He bought them and opening the cage door, he let each little bird fly away. The astonished boy said: "Mister, what made you pay for them and then turn them loose?" "My boy," he said, "if you had been in jail as long as I have, and had suffered what I have, you would not ask me why I let the little birds go."

Sinner, Jesus looks lovingly, longingly, tenderly, toward you tonight in your prison of sin. Only let him and he will open the door to everlasting joy, where you can sing:

Now I am from bondage freed,  
Every bond is riven;  
Jesus makes me free indeed,  
Just as free as heaven.  
'Tis a glorious liberty,  
O, the wondrous story,  
I was bound, but now I am free,  
Glory, glory, glory!

\* \* \*

### 3. The Grinding Nature Of Sin

"And he did grind in the prison house."

Sin is not only blinding, and binding, but it is grinding. Did you ever see an old time cane mill? It has a long lever to which a mule is attached, and around and around he goes in a circle all day. So Samson, harnessed in fetters of brass, and blinded, is grinding at the mill for his and God's enemies. A man stands nearby with whip in hand to lay a stinging blow on his bare back should he dare stop. How humiliating to the fallen hero! Yes, there is a picture of fallen greatness!! Made to honor God and to deliver Israel; but he betrayed his high trust, and is now doing menial service. What a shame! But he is reaping what he sowed. Around and around he goes all day; nearly dead

at night, he falls down and tries to sleep. I wonder if he dreams of Delilah! Up again at daybreak to grind, grind, grind!

Why will a man serve the devil? "The wages of sin is death." When you have given him your best service and are worn out he then mercilessly turns upon you, when you are powerless to resist, and grinds you. He not only grinds you, but he then causes you to grind your loved ones. Some of you devil-blinded, -- bound, -- ground men have been grinding the blood from your wife's heart, the luster from her eyes, and the peach from her cheek, until tonight she looks like a ghost! What a happy release death would be to her poor soul! Grinding, grinding, grinding! O, the mill of sin is grinding all the time! Young man, you have nearly killed your darling mother. Look at the gray hairs, the furrowed cheeks, and bowed form. Mother has not laughed in five years, boys. What are you doing! Grinding her to pieces! Listen, boys, the mill of sin is grinding all the time. What is the product? Tears and heart-stings and groans! Great God, help us to stop this infernal mill of sin! And when your body has been ground to pieces, the devil will then take your panic-stricken soul and with a demoniacal laugh, he will drop it into hell where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth!

One beautiful Sabbath morning during our late exposition at St. Louis, a man walked into a barber shop to be shaved. Just as his face was lathered and ready for the razor, the church bells began to chime, calling the people to the house of God. The man rushed wildly from the chair and rushing out at the door shouted, "Stop those bells, stop those bells, they shall not ring!" A policeman caught him and said: "What do you mean; what's the matter?" "O, sir," said the frightened man, "twenty years ago in old Vermont I killed my father. We quarreled one Saturday night, and on Sunday morning when he started up to ring the church bell, I followed him, and away up in the belfry I stabbed him, sir, and left him dead. And every Sunday morning for twenty years the church bells accuse me. O stop them, sir; they shall not ring!" Ground by sin for twenty long years! O, the grinding nature of sin! But, I would not be true to the commission of an all pursuing gospel if I did not tell you that God heard the prayer of this old warped, and blinded, and bound, and ground reprobate of sin in his prison house, and enabled him to catch up the threads of his former strength and weave them into a muscle with which he overthrew that great building packed with sports, so that it was said he slew more in his death than in his life.

To the aged, the vile, or the despairing of my audience, please let me say that such are the paradoxes of grace; such are the stretches of God's mercy; such is His yearning pity toward poor, fallen man, that if you will but call on him he will abundantly pardon your many transgressions, so that you can leave this world right with God and all mankind. A bequest. before which pales the legacies of the Stuarts, the Astors, the Vanderbilts, the Rothschilds, and the very diamond fields of Cecil Rhodes.

\* \* \* \* \*

03 -- I WILL BE SORRY FOR MY SIN -- By O. B. C.

"I will be sorry for sin." -- Psa. 38:18.

Like a nightingale, David sits upon some Judean hilltop and sings:

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Then fingering deftly his golden harp, he touches the sweet, low, murmuring minor, and he whispers in accents of divine assurance: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with" me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." Then striking his harp, he lustily proclaims: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Such singing and such a singer! Henry Ward Beecher says the twenty-third Psalm has "charmed more grief to rest than all the philosophy of the world; it has remanded to their dungeon more felon thoughts, more black doubts, more thieving sorrows than there are sounds on the seashore; it has comforted the noble host of the poor; it has poured balm and consolation into the heart of the sick, of captives in dungeons, of widows in their pinching griefs, of orphans in their loneliness. Nor is its work done; it will go on singing to your children and mine through all the generations of time."

David was a musician and, musician-like, was very sensitive. Discord grated upon his delicate sensitive nerves. And when he had wandered away from God's commandments and was in disfavor with heaven, he found it impossible to sing. But he looked at God's love and then at his own foolish, sinful, backslidden state; at the superiority of righteousness over sin; at the fading things of this life and the fadeless crown of joy yonder. Then escaped him that wail of genuine repentance, my text: "I am ready to halt and my sorrow is continually before me. I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin."

I want every sinner in this vast audience to make these words your own today. Let all the Christians pray that God may touch their hearts and cause them to yield.

Yes, these words should be yours for several reasons. The first I will mention is: Sin separates you from God.

God loves the sinner, but He hates sin. He declares He cannot look upon sin with any allowance. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "He that committeth sin is of the devil." And thus we might quote Scripture for hours, showing you God's hatred of sin. It was sin that produced rebellion in heaven, which caused one-third of the angels to go on that infernal revolt, It was sin that drove our first parents out of that lovely garden planted by the hand of God. And it is sin which today keeps us at such a distance from Him who made us and loved us, and who gave His Son to die that we might escape from sin.

A friend of mine sat by the bedside of a dying man who had in early life committed murder. Just before the breath left his body he sat up in bed and cried out: "Take him away, O, take him away." My friend asked, "What is the matter, Will?" "O," said the dying man, "Every time I start to

go in at the gate of heaven, that man I killed, falls down in front of me and cries 'Murder!' Then God points to him and says to me, 'Your sin separates us. You cannot come in.' " O how sad for God, in the dying hour, to turn away and say to us, "Your sin separates us," and yet he will say it if we do not repent of our sins and turn to him for mercy. But you say, "I do not believe a merciful God will put me in hell." Now listen a moment and I will try to help you. Here is a man who has ten children. He loves them all alike. One day one of them takes smallpox, and he is compelled to take that child and put him in the pest house. Not that he doesn't love him, but because he loves the other nine. He may grieve and even weep over the fact that he is forced to do this, but he does it nevertheless. So it is with the good God. He loves you, but He will be forced to separate you from the glories of heaven where the pure and holy dwell. Were it thinkable, imagine yourself today, sinner, with your adulterous, profane and wicked heart, in heaven. Would you be happy? No, you would be miserable. Why? Would you not hear the songs of the angels? Would you not see every good man and woman who ever lived? Would you not actually behold the face of God? What then would cause you to feel miserable and unwelcome? O, sinner, it would be your sins. They would make you miserable even in heaven. Now remember, there are no big sins and little sins with God. Sin is sin. Though you may be perfect in everything but one, still you will not be saved. Though you may be guilty of but one sin, and that a thing which the world would not call sin, yet you will not see the pearly gates opening to you.

Your sins will separate you from God. For the sake of those who have forsaken their sins and love God you will not be allowed to enter. I would not want to go to heaven if I knew that liars and thieves, adulterers and gamblers, debauchees and drunkards were going to be there. Why, you yourself would not allow them in your home in this life. How then do you expect God to allow them entrance there, where all is holy and pure? The laws of our land, lax as they are, will not allow some people to run at large. They are separated from law-abiding citizens. Now God has put us under divine law, with the death penalty hanging over us for its violation. He holds out also a glorious reward to those who keep the law. Furthermore he has promised to pardon all transgressors who will call upon Him. Now, sinner, would you not yourself say that a man or a woman who will persistently continue to violate this law should, in the face of these facts, be banished from heaven? Suppose the governor of your State should go to the penitentiary and promise pardon to all who would confess their guilt and promise to live right, and no one would confess himself guilty or promise to amend his life, would you blame the governor for keeping them separated from good people? O, sinner, your sins separate you from God. And some of you will wake up to the fact too late, I am afraid.

There was an infidel in the State of Arkansas who had lived a desperately wicked life, and had caused his good Christian wife a great deal of anxiety. He pooh-poohed the idea of a God, a heaven or a hell. He was taken sick, and after an illness of three weeks, died. Every time his wife would ask him to give his heart to God before he died, he would curse her and drive her from the room. In vain she admonished him to think upon his condition and to seek his soul's salvation. Just before he died he lost the power of speech. But as he was dying he tried hard to talk. Friends around him strove hard to understand what his wild gesticulations meant, but were unable. Suddenly he arose in great weakness, walked to his desk, and taking his pen, wrote these words: "Do not judge me harshly. I have been woefully deceived."



But he need not have been. His sins had separated him from God. The second reason I Offer is that Sin brings sorrow.

There is no path but that has been crossed by the serpent's trail; no eye that has not been wet with tears. There is not a gray hair, a furrowed cheek or an aching heart that sin did not cause it. Go home and pull out that dresser drawer and look at those run down baby shoes, the velvet-tasseled cap, and those little toys, and as the tears run unbidden down your face remember that sin brought all your sorrow. Take a stroll to the silent city of the dead and look at the grave of your loved one and then go into the dining-room and look at the place where he or she sat and remember that sin did it.

We had a sweet little baby brother, with golden hair, laughing mouth, dimpled chin and cheeks and heaven-blue eyes. Only thirteen lunar lips had kissed him when he was taken suddenly and seriously ill. The angel took him away that night while we children were asleep. When papa awoke us the next morning and broke the news, we came in and looked at the little form, lying in breathless sleep; at the hands, which, though folded over the still heart, pointed us to the skies; at the lips that, though hushed, clearly told us to prepare for death and follow him. We have left a lock of golden hair, a little grave on a hillside in Georgia and an aching void this world can never fill. Sin brings sorrow.

My father was once called on to attend the funeral of a mother's only child. When the family drove up she had the little white coffin in her arms and was talking to the dead baby just as if it could hear her. Seeing my father standing by the grave, she called him to her and said: "Brother Culpepper, they are going to put my baby in that hole; don't let them do it. I won't have anything to love me -- and my arms will be so empty." Poor woman! Sin had brought sorrow to her home.

Recently father and I were called to Grand Junction, Tenn., to conduct one of the saddest funerals I ever witnessed. It was that of little Mark Wells, an only child, and the idol of his parents' hearts. He was only sick three days before he died. That was the saddest funeral procession I ever accompanied. Mark's beautiful little saddle pony followed right behind the hearse. On reaching the cemetery, where we laid him away till Jesus shall call and whisper: "Get up my child," we found our hearts again wrung with sorrow. Just as we placed the sad smiling flowers on his grave his little pony ran up and began to paw the dirt away from the grave which held his once proud rider. They took a picture of the pony standing over the grave wondering why his rider didn't return. As that poor, heart-sick father and mother returned to their sad home where no more they would hear the merry whistle of Mark as he came bounding home from school; where his plate at the table would remain unturned; where stood undisturbed the bed upon which he slept, after kissing them a sweet goodnight; where daily they must feed that little pony and meet his questioning eyes; they believed they had all the sorrow their poor hearts could carry.

The third reason I offer is, that Sin brings death; eternal death.

You say that you know death brings sorrow. True; but, my friend, sin brought death. "The wages of sin is death." Sin is a mighty contractor. When you enter his service, you do it with the distinct understanding that he is to pay you off in old age, pain and sorrow and tears, a winding

sheet and a coffin. What an amazing remuneration. I have heard men and women say "I am not afraid to die." Let me tell you, I don't like this thing of dying. I hate death with a bitter hatred. I don't want to die. I hate the idea of having my hands folded over my breast, while my weeping wife and darling little Oscar and sweet baby Katherine follow me to the cruel, cold grave, where the worms will crawl through my body as it undergoes dissolution. God has told us that the last enemy to conquer is this heartless monster. There is planted in the bosom of every sane man and woman a love of life and a corresponding fear of death. Satan spoke truly in saying: "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Look at the millions spent annually for medicine; for trips to the mountain; for the healing curatives of our life-giving springs. All in the hope that we may defeat death and rob the grave. DeSoto sought for the spring from whose waters he might but drink and live forever, enjoy perpetual youth and be free from pain and sorrow. We all hate to die. Certainly we may consent to die in order to reach that land where they never die again, but we shrink from death all the same. Death is so humiliating to proud, imperial man, made in God's image and after His very likeness. Just think about it a moment: Man, who computes the distance to the stars, weighs accurately the dancing little sunbeam, reaches up and chains the flashing lightning and silences the muttering thunders; man who reasons, remembers, is conscious and is so great that he nearly approaches omnipotence, yet for him to be forced to finally succumb to death is indeed humiliating. But sin did it. "Sin entered the world and death by sin."

But that is not half of it. To die physically is very bad indeed, but to die spiritually and eternally is beyond the human tongue to describe. Weigh that word eternity, calculate its bigness and estimate its vastness if you dare. Some one has said if an angel from heaven should visit this world once every million years and take away one grain of sand between his fingers, that some time in the dizzy, unknown future he would make his last visit and take away the last grain. O, poor sinner! eternity would then have just begun. And to think of dying eternally -- how awful! But you ask, Would God damn me, a finite being, eternally? Mr. Munsey says that sin is an infinite act against an infinite God, and requires an infinite sentence. You know how God hates sin and yet He has promised to pardon all who call upon Him, and if you fail to do it, don't blame Him for at last saying, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

But the man of my text looked at this question of sin until he saw what it meant to not give it up, and hence the language of the text: "I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin." Imagine every sinner in the world today saying, "I am ready to halt." It would make the angels of heaven come down to earth. Men say right where you sit now, "I will run up the white flag;" but the Psalmist expressed another thought which shows that he was desperately in earnest. Hear it, Sinner: "I will declare mine iniquity." When a man gets ready to confess his sins he is about ready to quit them. Go home, young man, confess your sins to your parents and tell them you have quit. Young lady, if I sat tonight where you sit, with that skeleton in the closet of my soul, I would get up right now, run home and tell my mother just who and what I was. Husband, tell your wife everything mean you ever did. Listen a moment. If you do not confess now and get that matter straightened out it will come out on you yonder, where you can not get it straightened.

"As the tree falls so shall it lie,  
As death finds us so shall we die."

Now, I do not believe in promiseous confession, but I do believe in confessing to those whom we have wronged or against whom we have sinned. David did it. And he was so afraid he would not confess aright that he actually put his confession on record, where the whole world could see that he was sorry.

The last part of the text is the key to the situation. "I will be sorry for my sin." It was a personal matter with David. He wasn't bothering with the sins of his neighbors. It was his sins that were giving him anxiety, that were wringing out his confession. When a man gets really convicted he doesn't bother with anybody's sin but his own. Sorrow is the coinage of the skies. All that God requires of a man is for him to be sorry enough to confess and forsake his sins and He will abundantly pardon him.

Now there are two kinds of sorrow -- true sorrow and false. A man may be sorry that he is caught in his wickedness, and yet never be sorry for the act at all. You must have a Godly sorrow for sin, must be sorry you have broken God's law and displeased Him.

I heard of a man who was dying and wanted to settle all differences with his neighbors before he met God. There was a man with whom he had had a difficulty and to whom he had not spoken for many years. Sending for him he said, "Neighbor, I am dying and want to settle our dispute before I leave this world." The friend was a good man at heart, and was really not to blame. "Yes, indeed, I am so glad that you are willing to have it settled." They shook hands. Just as the friend was leaving the sick man said, "Wait a minute. If I die, remember it is settled, but if I get well bear in mind I hate you just as much as ever." Now that man was not really sorry but was just scared. A man, had committed murder and made good his escape, after ten years came back and surrendered. Some one asked him why he did it? He replied: "I had rather be hanged or sent to the penitentiary than to have that murdered man hanging to my conscience. I told God if he would forgive me I would confess." He was really sorry for his sins.

I remember a young man came to our room when we were in the State of Virginia and made a confession which had the right ring to it. He said: "I am a church member, and no one knows that I am a sinner, for I have kept my meanness hid. But I am a wicked young man and my mother would be surprised to know of the life I am living. Mr. Culpepper," said he, "I am a heavy night drinker. I drink at least a pint of whiskey every night. And not only that, I have stolen the virtue of a sweet young girl who trusted and loved me. Her mother would die if she knew it. Her father and brothers would blow my brains out if they even suspected the truth." We knelt and prayed for him and after we got up from our knees he said: "I am going home and tell mother my entire life, and I am going to marry that girl and make her the best husband a girl ever had." He was sorry for his sins.

I am ready to halt -- conviction. Are you really convicted, unsaved friend? David was. Hear him as he wails so sadly: "Mine iniquities have gone over my head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me." He could not carry the load any further. He was really sick of sin. And David, though a king, didn't have much of an opinion of himself. "My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness." "I am bound down greatly; I go mourning all the day long." The royal Psalmist was a chronic seeker; he was not afraid of the mourners' bench. His was not a skin-deep, "hold-up-your-hand-and-be-counted" sort of conviction. HE WAS CONVICTED SURE ENOUGH. Before he ever got pardon he was determined to quit sinning. "I am ready to halt." Then

this earnest penitent not only resolved to quit sinning, but he said, "I will declare my iniquity." I will confess what I have done. He didn't try to sneak into the kingdom of God. He was willing, Zacchaeus-like, to make restitution; and that is the only kind of repentance current at the pearly gates.

When we lived in Wilmore, Ky., I was miserably backslidden for four or five months. My father was sick abed from a malignant fever, from which his recovery was for months doubtful, rendered more so, no doubt, by my wayward course. I had fallen in love with a girl as silly as myself. To add to the home complication, my mother was much worn by weeks of care for my father and care for my soul, and was in poor health besides. None of this -- all of this, did not seem to touch my strangely hardened heart. I remember coming in one night at eleven o'clock, to have the door opened by my tired, anxious mother, who said: "My boy, your father has not slept tonight. He knows you are out. He can never get well if you persist --" I pushed her aside and hurried upstairs without giving her a promise or a word of hope. The next night I was out later. She again opened the door. She had been crying and said: "My darling boy, you are killing me and your precious father. Won't you --" but again I left her standing by the door. I could not sleep, so slipped down, under pretense of getting a drink of water. My mother was in her room kneeling in her night attire. I heard her say: "O, my Lord, whatever it takes, save my poor, wandering boy." She arose to find me standing there, and came and put her arms tenderly about me and said: "My precious son, won't you!" but such is sin, such is stubbornness, such is a boy with a wicked companion, that I tore myself from her embrace, passed the door where my father who was so near the gates of death lay, and went to my room, without one word of comfort or ray of hope for my Godly parents. I did not gamble, did not know such sins, being only sixteen years old, but I dropped into such company, and when the authorities got after them, I was subpoenaed as a witness. Those young gamblers told me there was a "bench warrant" out for us all. I ran off and hid with them for three or four days, against my father's entreaties and my mother's tears. Slipping back one night, I tipped up to the window and looked in through the blind to where my father lay. The rest of the family were about him. I found I was being discussed. My oldest sister said: "' Papa, you have done your duty by him, now let him loose." My brother spoke up -- "That is what I say, papa; there is nothing to him anyway." My gentle, beautiful, long-suffering mother said: "Darling, I think they are right. You are killing yourself, and he doesn't appreciate it -- let him go." My father replied: "Wife and children, I will never turn that boy loose until I hear the pearly gates click on his back." A trembling, sin-bound, girl-struck boy, peeping through the blinds and through blinding tears, saw and heard. Those words melted my heart and made me say, " I will change my manner of life."

Withal, I had gone deeply into debt for buggies to give my girl a good time,, for many boxes of candy and such things as confectioners furnish boys during their verdant days or more verdant courtship. I had even borrowed money from my father's friends to lend to mine, not dreaming then that I was their victim. Thus I spent money or acquired debt without thought until one day the liveryman asked me to settle the bill. Before going to college I had made my own money and could be independent. When I stopped making I should have stopped spending. These bills came in on me like a troop and thoroughly alarmed me. After much thought, and, shall I say prayer (?) I went to my father, now convalescent and getting about the room on two sticks. He came into the parlor for a private interview at my solicitous request. Now fully awake to my difficulty, with the enormity of my sin and the real worth of a friend dawning on me, with downcast eyes and a voice which sobbed out my anguish, I said: "Papa, I'm in trouble."" Why, what is it, my

boy?" asked by father. "I hate so much to tell you, but I have disobeyed you in many ways, and among them I have gone into debt all about here in town, and they are calling for their money and I can't pay it." "How much is it?" was my father's first question, after saying, "I will help you out of any trouble in the world if I can." I stammered out, "It is a right smart." "Is it ten dollars?" "Oh, it is more than that." "Twenty-five dollars?" "More than that." After another guess or two my father said: "Wait a minute, Burke." He then turned and walked slowly out and into mother's room and said: "Pet, open the trunk and let me have that sack." I knew he referred to an emergency sack containing a little gold, that which stood between my mother and starvation, that which kept my young sisters and baby brother from a hunger cry, that which she cherished much in view of my father's probable death. With a voice that trembled, my mother asked father not to take that from her. He simply said: "Give it to me, pet, our boy is in trouble." He came in and handed it to me and said: "Take this, my boy, go settle your debts and bring what's left back to me; it is all we have. Do this and promise me you will live for God and the right from now on, and it will be all right with me and your mother, and I'll never mention it again." O, how mean I felt as I reached out my hand to take the little bag of gold. I knew he had told me the truth about it's being every cent between my mother and starvation should he die. I paid every debt I owed, and when I walked back home the little bag of gold had diminished, but my gratitude and love for my father, who had pitied me and loved me, his disobedient, wayward son, had so grown I resolved then and there to ever walk in the paths of obedience.

That was ten years ago. He has never mentioned the incident to me. I, too, thank God, have kept my sacred vow and for eight years I have swept over this country with my dear father, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, sinner, just as my earthly father saw my sorrow, heard my confession of disobedience, pitied me and redeemed my life back to sweet union with his, so will our Heavenly Father, whose love is mightier and whose pity is deeper, forgive every sin, pay your every debt and flood your soul with divine joy, if you will but say with David, "I will declare mine iniquity; I will be sorry for my sin."

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 04 -- THE PRODIGAL SON -- By O. B. C.

Text -- Luke 15:11-18: "And he said, A certain man has two sons:

"And the younger of them said to his Father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

"And not many days after the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

"And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

"And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat- and no man gave unto him.

"And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee."

As I read this thrilling narrative, there were several striking thoughts which came to me: --

1st, Home.

2nd, Home without mother or sister.

3rd, Home Breaking Up.

4th, A Boy Away From Home.

5th, Returning Home.

\* \* \*

## HOME

Jesus was the greatest and grandest preacher that ever lived. He knew exactly how to reach the hearts of men and women. I wish I did! I think if I could have sat near him and could have heard the intonations of his voice, could have seen the gesticulations of his hand, could have seen the low beaming forth from his eye as he preached, I am sure I could have been a better preacher.

On one occasion, as a great crowd was thronging around him, he said substantially to them this: "You lawyers, doctors, farmers, merchants, mechanics, listen! A certain man had two sons." Right then and there he had the attention of every man and woman before him. Why? Because he had thrown before them the most beautiful of all pictures -- a human home.

Some one has said that mother, home and heaven are the sweetest words in the human vocabulary. I have never met a man or woman who did not love home to some extent. We all do. You are now thinking of the home of your childhood. Perhaps it was away down in the sunny South, where the mockingbirds sang and the magnolias bloomed; or it may have been in some Northern clime. Somewhere, I do not know where; you do, though, and to you it is home. Your home may not have had Brussels carpet on the floor, your table may not have been always full to overflowing, but it was home, and you love its memory. "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

I am now thinking of the home of my childhood. It was there the ego of life dawned upon me; it was there I owned my first pony, my first dog and gun; it was there I started to school; it was there I learned to pray --

"Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep;  
If I should die before I wake,  
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take."

It was there my character was formed, my destiny made. Oh, I am so glad I was reared in a Christian home, where family prayers were heard twice a day. Oh, those golden days, how I love their memory!

We had several rules which I think would be good to practice in all homes. First, we had to be down to prayers each morning, or we would miss our breakfast. We were always there. Second, we had to get up as early on Sunday morning as on week days. Third, we were compelled to attend church, and to sit with our mother. Fourth, we were not allowed to go outside of the yard without the permission of our parents. Fifth, we were not permitted to spend the night away from home. I remember on one occasion some of my boy friends said to me, "Burke, what makes you sit with your mother in church? Why don't you sit back here with us other boys?" I told them I preferred to sit with my mother. They teased me and said I had to do it, that I was tied to my mother's apron strings. So I said, "Well, next Sunday I will show you that I can sit back here with you." I said nothing to my mother about it, but the next Sunday morning as we reached the church door my mother was holding me by the hand. The boys were looking to see if I would keep my word, and just as my mother and I started in, I tried to pull away from her, but she only gripped me the tighter, and swinging closely to my hand, she began to drag me up the church aisle, to the astonishment of the people and to my confusion and embarrassment. On she carried me, I bucking like a Texas pony. My mother, however, was the stronger, and finally succeeded in getting me to the front bench, our usual place, and sat me down with a good bump. My face was burning; I knew the boys were laughing; I dared not look around. My mother, however, seemed to have forgotten the incident and listened to the preacher. After reaching home, she took me into the little study and there she proceeded to impress me several ways, and when she got through "impressing me" I was thoroughly converted, and the next Sunday morning when we entered the church door I didn't wait for her to drag me, but I got in front of her and went trotting on up to the front bench. I presume you might mention a great many things in your home life which would both interest and help us.

You think you had the best home on earth, the sweetest mother and the dearest father and the kindest sisters and brothers -- I know I did. Why am I so positive? Because it was Home, sweet home. Every little ant loves its home, the little bee loves its hive, eves our faithful dog shows how much he is capable of loving home. There is a home instinct planted within us. God is the author of the home, and from it grew the government and the church. Settle the home question right, and all other questions will be settled. The first home was in Eden, the last one will be in heaven.

\* \* \*

## HOME WITHOUT MOTHER OR SISTER

I once read the story of an angel who winged his flight from the palaces above in search of the most beautiful thing that lived on this earth. One day he thought he had found it; it was a bouquet of flowers, and with them he soared toward the bars of gold and the throne of God. But when he had reached the City Triumphant, he found his flowers had withered. "Oh," said he, "I was mistaken; surely this was not what I gathered!"

Again he came and searched for many years; and one day he thought he surely had found it -- a sweet, golden-haired, blue-eyed baby boy. As he lay upon his mother's bosom he smiled the sweet, childish smile of innocence and truth. "Oh," cried the angel, "I have found it at last! It is the smile of childhood!" And with this he again winged his flight toward the throne of God. But when he had gotten there, the smile had changed to a cry of pain. Then said the angel, "I will go one other time." And with the beauty and noiselessness of light he alighted once more upon the earth, and searched here and there; one day he found it; it was in a sick-room; a mother held in her arms a darling little girl who was dying of scarlet fever. The doctor had said, "Madam, do not catch the child's breath; if you do, you will inhale the disease and will perish also." Just then the little thing turned to its mother and said, "Mamma, I am dying; kiss me good-bye." The mother remembered the doctor's words and looked at her darling as it breathed its last, and with the mother-love bubbling from her heart, she pressed her lips against those of her child, and soon she, too, had died. "Oh," cried the angel, "I have found it. I have found it! A mother's love! A mother's love!" And he winged his flight once more toward the bars of gold and the throne of God, and there the mother's love was just as true and just as grand and just as great as when he plucked it from the sick-room.

"No painter's brush nor poet's pen, in justice to her fame,  
Has ever reached half high enough to write the mother's name.  
Make ink of tears, and molten gems and sunbeams mixed together,  
With holy hand and golden pen, go write the name of Mother."

The boy of our text was unfortunate in this respect. I do not see how he stayed at home as long as he did. To my mind, a home without mother or sister is the last place on earth where one could be happy. Mother heard my evening and morning prayer; mother bathed my face and hands; mother sympathized with me when I was in trouble; mother shared my joys; mother fixed my lunch when going to school; mother whipped me when "I was bad"; mother would take me in the room and pray with me. Mother did everything! I do not know how he stayed at home as long as he did, I say, without a mother.

I was passing through Macon, Ga., not long ago, and went out to see my old home place. The house was vacant; as I drew near, loneliness crept over me. The moon was shining so sadly down; I walked up to where a window was open and looked in; it was mother's room. Oh, the tears unbidden burst forth. I thought of the many times mother had sat in that room and talked with me, had held me in her arms, had kissed away my tears; and how she had placed her hand on my head and prayed that I might be a good man. Oh, I am sure I would not have gotten along at all if I had had no mother to have helped me.



I saw a little boy not long ago down in Mississippi come up and look into the coffin at his mother's dead face, and I heard him cry out, "Oh, mother, why did you leave me!" Poor boy! I know he will miss mother. The boy's best friend is his mother. If the boy of my text had had a mother, he would not have left home, in all probability.

A man was sentenced to hang; the judge asked him if he had anything to say. He arose to his feet, looked around a moment, and bursting into tears, he cried out, "Oh, judge, if I had had a mother!" If your mother is living, treat her kindly, my boy; you will wish some day you had.

I was in Savannah, Ga., in a great meeting with my father. One night after my father had finished preaching, I arose and began to sing the little song, "Tell Mother I'll be There," and when I came to the last verse where it says --

"One day a message came to me  
And bade me quickly come,  
If I would see my mother,  
Ere the Saviour took her home.  
I promised her before she died  
For heaven to prepare;  
Oh, angels, tell my mother  
I'll be there,"

a man arose in the audience and cried out, "Oh, Brother Culpepper, when you pray, tell God to tell mother I'll meet her there!" Down the aisle he came, he kneeled at the altar and gave his heart to God.

I am sorry the boy of my text didn't have a sister. I think the reason Cain was so mean was because he didn't have a sister. What is so refining and helpful to a boy as a kind, sweet sister? I can nearly always tell when I meet a young man if he has a sister, I think this young man, instead of gambling and drinking and carousing and spending his money on evil passions would have been more gentle, genteel and refined, if he had had a loving sister to have played with.

But sometimes even a sister can cause home to be unpleasant for a boy. Some girls don't even permit their brothers to go in the parlor. Yes, they keep it closed and arranged for some other girl's brother, but not for their own. Some boys aren't even allowed to go in the front way, for fear of getting mud on the porch. I don't blame such boys for getting fired of home. I can always tell whether I am stopping in the boy's room or the girl's room, off in these evangelistic meetings. If they put you in the girl's room, the floor will be carpeted, the walls will be frescoed, and beautiful pictures will smile down upon you. The finest dresser, a beautiful brush and comb, and all that heart could wish for will be there. But when you stop in the boy's room, you will find it different. There isn't a carpet on the floor, there are no papered and frescoed walls, no beautiful pictures smiling down at you, and if you are fortunate enough to have a mirror, it will be pretty small, and if there is any brush or comb, it is a brush and comb the girl wore out several years ago, the brush has six hairs in it, and the comb three teeth. And I'll warn you now, don't lean very far back on that chair, because it has only three legs. It's a boy's room you are in, remember.

Oh, girls, if you have a brother, be gentle and kind to him, be affectionate, occasionally kiss him, and tell him you love him. You may save him from the fate of the prodigal.

\* \* \*

## HOME BREAKING UP

Precious as is the name of home, and sweet as are the memories which cluster about it, it is likely any day to be broken up -- by death, marriage, poverty and sin. In some one of these ways our little symbol of heaven -- home -- is shattered. That sad, grating word, good-bye, is uttered, and home is never again the same.

\* \*

### Breaking Up -- Death

We had a sweet little baby brother, with golden hair, laughing mouth, dimpled chin and cheeks and heaven-hued eyes. Only thirteen lunar lips had kissed him, when he was taken suddenly and seriously ill. The angels took him from us that night while we children were asleep. When papa awoke us and broke the news, we came in and looked at the little form lying in breathless sleep; at the hands which, though folded over the still heart, pointed us to the skies; at the lips that, while hushed, clearly told us to prepare for death and follow him. We have left, a lock of golden hair, a little grave on a hillside in Georgia, and "an aching void the world can never fill." Our home has never been the same since.

My father was once called upon to attend the funeral of a mother's only child. When the family drove up she had the white coffin in her arms, and was talking to the little darling who had gone so lately to inhabit it. Seeing my father standing by the grave, she called him. He went to her, when she said: "Brother Culpepper, they are going to put my baby into that hole; don't let them -- I won't have anything to love me, my arms will be so empty -- I won't have anything to do, or anything to live for." Poor woman! Cruel death had broken up her home.

\* \*

### Breaking Up -- Marriage

I stepped off the railroad cars in Memphis and took an electric car out to Mr. Fred Reginald's. As I approached, I said: "Oh! what a beautiful family group!" They sat in a social cluster, after the day's work. When I left the city I had plucked the sweetest flower from that garden. Kate and I are happy-feeling that Providence designed us for each other. But her mother says, "Home is not the same since you left."

Breaking up -- Breaking up!

\* \*

### My Sister's Marriage

I remember just before my sister married, the house was all decorated with beautiful ferns and flowers, the musicians were there to play the Wedding March, and all seemed to be happy. I walked into my mother's room a moment before the ceremony was to be performed, and to my astonishment I found her crying. "Oh, mother," said I, "what are you crying about now? You ought to be smiling; this is the time to be glad." Said she: "My darling boy," as she put her arms around my neck, "you do not understand. I hate to see my daughter go. Home will not be the same when she leaves."

Breaking up -- Breaking up!!

\* \*

Breaking Up -- Poverty

Sometimes a boy or girl has to leave home and go to work to help support the family or educate the smaller ones. I feel like praying heaven's richest benediction upon such a one. You are noble, brave and true.

I think it's right that a boy should look after his parents when they need his help. They helped you when you couldn't help yourself. Now return it.

But you must not think because you are away from home working, they don't miss you. Yes, they do. There is an unturned plate and an empty chair -- your home is broken up.

\* \*

Breaking Up -- Sin

Sin breaks up a home as much as death, marriage or poverty. Whenever a boy begins to go wrong and to get out into sin, then he is breaking up his home. Mr. Moody tells of a man whose wife had been dead only a week. His boy started out one night and the old man said, "Son, for your dead mother's sake, don't go out tonight and debauch yourself." The boy replied, "I am going if you die, too." The old man lay down across the door, saying, "If you do, you will go out over my body." The boy walked out over his body. Instead of helping his heart-broken father, he was breaking up the home still more.

A certain young man in Virginia and his father quarreled over a little matter of scarcely any importance, when the boy angrily exclaimed, "Father, I will leave home." "Oh, no," said the father, "let's just let the matter pass." The boy refused. The father, who was not in the wrong at all, said, "Son, if you think I did wrong, forgive me." The boy refused, and under protest left home. Three years passed; the father lay dying. A telegram was sent -- "If you desire to see your father, come at once." The boy hurried home and threw himself down by the bedside and said, "Oh forgive me, father!" The father laid out his hand and said, "Son, I forgive you before you left" -- and died. That boy had ruptured that home as far as this world is concerned.

A young man, out in Texas, in a fit of anger, killed a man. He was tried for murder. The jury brought in a verdict of "Not guilty." The judge pronounced him free. The mother came forward and kissed him, saying she knew he was innocent. The young man's betrothed came and embraced him and cried, "Oh, I am proud of you." The many friends congratulated him. Listen! that evening as the queen of night kissed the old plains of Texas with her silvery light, the boy sat down and wrote his mother this note: "Mother, I'm guilty," and committed suicide. That mother's heart is broken. The home is broken up.

And let me tell you another thing. All the prodigals are not boys. There are some girls who have wandered as far as the boys. When a woman falls, I think she falls lower than a man, because she falls from a higher place. Hence the fall is more dangerous and degrading. I once knew of a girl in Chicago who, during a revival, was asked by her mother not to go to a little "hop" which she was dressing to attend. She said, "Oh, mother, you needn't ask me to go to church, for I am not going to do it." Her mother went to church, the girl to the hop. When her mother returned at 10:30, the girl hadn't. At 12:30 she had not returned. The mother lay down across the bed and fell asleep. Just as the chilly streaks of dawn were seen in the east, this girl came home, passed in quietly and went to her room. The mother awoke the next morning and finding her daughter's room closed, knocked. Getting no response, she knocked again; still no response. She broke the door open, found her daughter in bed. She pulled the cover from her face -- she was dead. She looked around and found this note: "Dear Mamma, I no more can be your sweet, innocent Lillian. I have killed myself." Oh, the prodigal boys and girls of our land, how they break up home!

\* \* \*

## BOY AWAY FROM HOME

When a boy is away from home, numerous temptations beset him. Of course, he is invited to drink and play cards. Being somewhat lonely, he naturally takes whatever company comes around, and usually it is bad. Probably he is placed in a boarding-house where they don't attend church, and has to room with godless room-mates who swear every other breath. Of course, he can't be religious with such environment, without a great struggle. Then the chances are that in order to while away the time on Sunday, he will read novels, and finally he is adrift before he knows it.

The boy of my text had every temptation you can think of thrown around him, and hence he fell.

Some of you are away from home and are beset with many temptations; I pray you to remember the story of the prodigal, and I want you to remember one other thing also; it is this -- Mother is praying for you. Your mother may be living, she may be dead; but wherever she is, no doubt she is praying for you right now. Oh, my boy, do nothing which will bring dishonor to your precious mother's name. Mother loves you, mother believes in you. Will you not live true to that mother's love? I want you to go home tonight and sit down and write your mother a letter and say, "Mother, I appreciate your love and interest; I promise you that from this time on, I will live as you want me to live."

While my father and I were holding a meeting in a little town of Georgia, a mother told us this story: Said she: "My boy nearly broke my heart and darkened my life. He said to me one day, 'Mother, I am going to Macon with a crowd of the boys tomorrow to attend the circus,' but I told him, 'Son, you must not go; mother objects.' He very angrily cried out, 'Oh, mother, why do you want to keep me tied to your apron strings forever? I am big enough to take care of myself; I am no baby!' I only said to him, 'Son, if you go, you will go against mother's word. I command you to stay here at home.' But said he, 'Mother, the other boys are going, why can't I go?' I only said, 'My son, mother objects; you cannot go.' Then said he, 'I will go,' and he did. However, before leaving, I said to him, 'My son, I want you to remember one thing, that when you leave in the morning to go to Macon to attend that circus with that crowd of godless, wicked boys, I am going to go into the parlor" and kneel down and pray while you are away. I do not intend to get off my knees until you come back. You may be gone all day, you may be gone a week; I will not eat, sleep or drink until you return. Remember that mother will be praying for you.' 'Oh,' cried the boy, 'I don't care; I am going, that is all there is to it.' " The young man rose early the next morning and started out the front door to take the train. Just as he reached the door his mother said, "George, I am now going into the parlor to pray for you. Remember mother will pray till you get back." He went with the crowd of boys to Macon, but all the way up there a voice kept saying to him, "Mother is praying for you right now! Mother is praying for you right now!" When they reached the city, one of the boys said, "Let's go and take a drink," and away they started toward the saloon. Just as his feet started across the threshold of that damnable place, a voice said to him, "Mother is praying for you right now." Said he, "Boys I will not drink," and he turned back. Again when they had started into a pool room to have just a social game, just as his feet reached the door-sill a voice said to him, "Mother is praying for you right now." Again he turned back. Some of the boys followed him and asked the reason, and said he, "Mother told me she would be praying for me until I got back; I know she would not want me to go in there." Before going to the circus, one of the boys suggested that they go to the house of the fallen woman, and away they started. Just as their feet were about to cross the threshold of the painted woman, again something whispered in his ear, "Mother is praying for you right now." Said he, "Boys, I am not going in; mother is praying for me." They laughed at him, they jeered, they tried to scorn him, but mother's prayers had won a victory. He didn't even attend the circus, but getting on the first train back to Dublin, he started for home. When he reached his little town, he literally ran up to his home. He opened the door and asked for mother. His little sister told him that mother was in the parlor. He stepped up and knocked on the door, and when the mother came she said, "My boy, I knew you were coming back." "Oh," cried he, "mother, mother, I could not get over the fact that you were praying for me!" He then threw his arms around his precious mother's neck and kissed her and said, "My darling mother, if you love me that way, never again will I cause the tears to come to your eyes or sorrow to your heart. I will try from this time on to walk in the path of rectitude and righteousness." Oh, the power of a mother's love!

\* \* \*

## RETURNING HOME

Were you ever away from home and started back after you have been gone some time? I have been away in this revival work as high as six months at a time and started home. Then it seems the train can't go fast enough. It's going sixty miles an hour, but I am anxious to see home. Oh, how I love to go home!

I am so glad the boy in my text got back home. It meant so much for him and for his father. I once read of a girl who threw herself away and had been gone from home for two years. Her mother wrote and advertised for her, and finally had a photo of herself taken, and wrote under it these words: "Daughter, come home," and sent them to the leading cities of the United States. One cold, stormy night this girl was walking down the streets of Cincinnati, and was looking at the windows and saw her mother's picture and the words, "Daughter, come home"; and she said: "I will go," and she started at once. Oh, don't you know that mother's heart was rejoiced when she returned, and don't you know the girl was happier than when in sin?

I heard of a young man who ran away from home in England and came to America. He became a tramp and a vagabond. One day a Y. M. C. A. man said to him, "My friend, come in here and let me read to you from the Bible, and I will give you your dinner." He was hungry, and consented. After he had eaten, he sat down and began to read to him. He read to him about the prodigal son, and when he got to "I will arise and go to my father," the young man jumped up and with streaming eyes said, "Sir, I ran away from my English home -- I am a prodigal -- but I want to go back." The Y. M. C. A. man wrote his parents and told them all about it, and told them he had been converted and wanted to come home. The answer came -- "All right, my son, come home at once. I will have you met at the train. You may have your same room and your pony and buggy. We will try and make home happy for you. Come at once. But, my precious boy, mother is dead."

Oh, while he was away in a far land spending his life in riotous living, mother had died.

But you say: "Oh, sir, I never broke up my home like those boys and girls you have told about. I never spent my life gambling, drinking and carousing. I am no prodigal. I never even left my home." Wait a moment! When you reached the age of accountability you looked up into God's face and said, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." He gave you memory, he gave you will-power, judgment and a tender conscience. Now tell me, have you spent your memory in God's service, treasuring up things that are good and holy? Has your will always been on his side? Does your conscience tell you you have always acted right? If not, then you, too, are a prodigal. And you ought to say, "I will go to my Father and say, 'I have sinned.' "

But if you have broken up your home, young man or woman, remember there is but one way to fix it, viz., give your heart to Jesus. Our homes down here are given us that we may get ready for the Home above. If you, by your life, have ruptured your earthly home, don't rupture your heavenly home by failing to appear at the judgment, prepared. I don't care what you have done, if you will come to your Heavenly Father, he will forgive you, just as the prodigal's father forgave him. There will be joy in heaven as there was joy in the home of the prodigal. Oh, won't you say, "I will arise and go to my father."

An old man and woman and one beautiful daughter lived six miles from a certain city. This girl had an acquaintance, a young man in the city, who came out to see her. She became infatuated with him. Her mother and father forbade his coming out any more. This made the girl angry. She threw herself away and went to the city. She entered a house of ill-fame. In vain her mother and father sought her. Two years passed by; she was deserted and loathsome. She was thrown out on the streets. She was told by a doctor that she could not live many weeks more. She decided to go

out and tell her parents who she was, and seek their forgiveness and die in peace, if possible. She started out, and when within two miles of her home, she came to the little church which she attended when a little girl. An old man was in the sacred desk, and leaning against a tree close by she heard these words.. "By his stripes we are healed." And she said to herself, "Oh, that I might be healed." She turned and walked on toward home, saying to herself, "Oh, that I might be healed." She doubtless thought of the many happy days when a girl she had gone to that same church. Then she was as pure as snow. She reached home. The home of her happy childhood. A light was burning in the window. She opened the door quietly and saw her parents lying on the bed. She uttered a groan and fell to the floor. The old mother jumped up and ran to her -- looked at her a moment and said, "Oh! it's our Pearl! it's our Pearl!" There was joy in that home that night. Pearl confessed her sin and got their kiss of forgiveness, and said she faintly: "Then by His stripes I am healed." She died that night. They buried her in the little orchard near the house, and put this inscription on her headboard: "By His stripes I am healed."

And prodigal, you, too, can be healed; wont you say, "I will arise and go to my father, and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee?"

When my father was in Kansas City in a meeting there, Mr. Mitchell, the president of the Helping Hand Mission, told him this beautiful little story. Said Mr. Mitchell: "Brother Culpepper, I was reared out here about twenty-five miles in the country. There is an old man out there called Uncle Bob. My first recollections of church were connected with him; I never attended church but that I would hear Uncle Bob get up and ask prayer for his wayward, prodigal son who had run away from home, and he would always end it up by saying, 'Pray for him, brethren; I know God will bring Charley back some day.' I heard it Sunday after Sunday for many years, and often wondered where the boy was. After I became a man and moved here to Kansas City and took hold of this Helping Hand Mission, I helped a great many prodigal boys, and whenever I would go back to my little country home, I would often go over and see Uncle Bob and tell him about my work, and when I would tell him about some prodigal boy who had been blessed at my mission, his eyes would fill with tears, and he would say, 'Oh, listen, listen, isn't that sweet! Some day Charley will be saved just that way, I know.' Then he would say, 'Wife, listen,' and then he would again request me to tell the same' sweet story over of how the prodigal boy was blessed. Then he would say "Don't you think God could save my boy?" I would always tell him I hoped so; if I found him I would let him know. Several years had gone by, and one day a man came to the mission and said to me, 'My name is Charley \_\_\_\_\_; I have just served my term in the penitentiary at Jefferson City; I have \$15 which was handed me as I left there this morning; I wish you would please keep it for me. I want to stay here and rest up and get ready to go back out home and see my father.' And to my astonishment and my great wonder he told me that Uncle Bob was his father. I knew it would not do to write Uncle Bob that I had found his boy, the joy would be too great and might kill the old fellow. I told Charley to stay right where he was for a few days and get on his feet, so to speak, and I would take him out to his father and mother. Charley was converted. One day I said to him, 'I am going out and tell your father and mother about it; you stay here.' I got on the train and rode out and called old Uncle Bob; I then delicately touched the subject, as I knew to tell him at once, the shock would be too great. I said to him, 'Uncle Bob, I had a man converted the other day at my mission; his name is Charley,' and the old man said, 'How old is he?' I told him. 'That is just about the age Charley would be now,' said he. I said to him that he said he ran away from his mother and father when he was quite young. 'Oh,' said Uncle Bob, 'it may be Charley! it may be Charley!' 'And,

Uncle Bob, the man was converted; he has given his heart to Jesus, and doesn't seem like the same fellow that he was when he came.' 'Wife, wife,' cried he, 'come here a moment!' And when his wife had come from the room, said he, 'Now tell that again; that may be my boy! that may be my boy! How old did you say he was? Are his eyes blue?' And when I had told him yes, his eyes were blue and that the boy looked a little like it might be his son, he said, 'How do you know but that it is my son?' Oh, how he loved that prodigal boy. I said, 'Uncle Bob, I will tell you the whole story; it is your boy, it is your Charley; I have found him.' The old man leaped from his chair and ran hurriedly to his room; I did not know what he had gone for, I supposed to cry. In a moment or two he came back with his grip in his hand, and he said, 'Come on, let's go; I'm going to go see him; come on, let's go.' But I said, 'You stay here and I will bring him out.' 'No,' said he, 'I'm going to my boy! I'm going to my boy!' Oh, the joy that came to that father's and mother's heart when they found their boy!"

And just that way, oh prodigal, if you will arise and go to your father's house will there be joy in heaven. Say right now with the prodigal of old, "I will arise and go to my father."

\* \* \* \* \*

## 05 -- BACKSLIDING

"And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter. So he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." -- Jer. 18:4. Read from first to 12th verse. Also Prov. 14:14.

As we enter upon the discussion of a subject, hoary with age, bursting with historic fact and phenomena and big with destiny, we had better define the term.

In brief, I do not care to deal with Julians or Judases. These are known as apostates, or extreme backsliders. I prefer the more hopeful task of preaching to those who have not gone so far. Lay your hand on the word of God and look up to heaven and answer this question: Have you ever seen a better day, religiously?

If so, I bring you a message from God. Will you hear it? For those who play with words -- fence with theological pickets -- wrest scripture, and flippantly say -- "once in grace, always in grace," I have but few words and little time. Such are not serious, much less under the convicting power of the Spirit. I leave all such little punsters, with the statement that the Devil was once in grace, but is thoroughly out. Adam by sin came into disgrace. Then he must have come out of grace. He never was the man after he left that garden that he was when he entered it.

The history of individuals, of nations, of the world, is painfully and largely one of gain and loss, of progress and retrogression. As for the church, the church of Adam, the church of Abel, the church of Enoch, the church of Noah, the church of Abraham, the church of Jacob, the church of Moses, the church of the Judges, the church of Samuel and the prophets, the church of Saul and the kings, the church of Aaron and the priests, the church of the Apostles, the church of the martyrs, the church of Luther and the reformers, the church of the catacombs, the church of Wesley, --



methodical living, methodical giving, and holiness -- who that knows anything, don't know the history of the church? Backsliding. sliding back.

Ah me! Well may this whole world sing, "Prone to wander, Lord I feel it." May this hour bring us to feel it, and to repent of it, with a repentance which will not have to be repented of.

\* \* \*

## A BACKSLIDDEN CHURCH

It is believed by many men of piety, and erudition, that the Holy Ghost selected the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, to represent, or set forth, the different stages of the Christian churches, from that time to the return of Christ to the earth.

It would be more interesting than apropos at this time, to tarry awhile in scripture symbology, and weigh the relative force of names and numbers. Suffice it to say that three represents divine, while four represents human governments. The number Seven, therefore, stands for dispensational fullness.

A historic retrospect shows that the church has passed through an Ephesian period, a Smyrna, a Pergamite, a Thyatiran, a Sardian, a Philadelphian period.

There is nothing clearer to my mind, than that we are now in the Laodicean age. If you remember, it was characterized by such lukewarmness as to make God sick at stomach. They made him vomit. The word, scholars tell us, means mob-ridden, or people-ridden. Democracy gone to seed. Republicanism rampant. Personal liberty adulterated to license, expressed in street vernacular, "go-as-you-please."

God has warned us that in the last days, we would have perilous times.

\* \* \*

## INCONTINENCE

Incontinence is one of the evils spoken of. It marks our day. I went into the soul-saving business thirty years ago, and have not turned aside, or divided time with any other calling. I have watched soul tides, whether they washed the church, or broke upon the beach of business, or returned from the rotten carcass of politics. Fifteen years ago, I began to realize that the difficulties in leading a soul to moral reformation and to the intelligent adoption of the Christ-habits of life, were multiplying. At the same time I noticed that the facilities for backsliding were increasing. I assert here, that as far as my observation goes, it is three times as hard now to get a soul converted, and five times as hard to keep him saved, as it was fifteen to thirty years ago. The difficulties are not decreasing.

I remember that we have millions of church members -- such an overcrop of preachers as to supply the law offices, the profession of medicine, dentistry, real estate and sewing machine

agencies. That we have much machinery, from Leagues, Unions, Endeavors, out to that mixed breed, called King's Daughters. But with all of this, and much more, we are very far gone backward, and are still sliding.

I preached a few months since on the act of Nicodemus, in voting for Jesus, on his trial, and then of taking a part in his burial. He stood by a lost cause.

As he contributed so largely to the burial expenses, he seemed to say, "True, it looks as if he was deceived in himself, or was an impostor; but he helped me that night when we sat together, and talked about the new birth. I don't know just what happened to me, but I felt much. I feel it yet. He did more for me than these meager testimonials can faintly indicate. He acted the part of a friend when I was in mental perplexity, and soul distress. I am his friend now." After church, the subject came up in a social group. I asked this question of each one: "How many friends have you, who would stand by you, after you quit befriending them; after you could not assist them; after it would put them to expense and inconvenience to help you; after you had been unfortunate, and had so conducted yourself as to come into disfavor in your community, and especially with that 'FRIEND'S FRIEND?... In other words," said I, "have you built up a friendship, anywhere, in these years, which one misstep would not undo?" One brother said he had several friends who would stick to him through thick and thin; one had two; all had one, until it reached me. Preferring silence, I did not attempt to answer the question I had asked: Mark you, I don't speak here, of the ordinary friendship, which ranges from popping your finger at a dog, and watching him wag his tail -- up to the weavel-eaten article, found in the streets and in business every day. I mean a fire-proof article. It looks like our best friends are the ones we have never used.

\* \* \*

## FIDELITY

You and I have a very warm place in our hearts for the TRUE. More than the beautiful or the grand, do we admire the true. A true man, or a true woman, a true wife, a true husband. I have heard that Bob Toombs, of Ga., at his golden wedding, forbade the presence of any man who had ever been untrue to his wife. The story runs, that, speaking after the manner of men, ABSENCE was golden that night. TRUE! TRUE!

If a man is untrue to his word, we call him a liar. If untrue to his oath, we call him perjured. If untrue to his party, we -- we -- we used to call him a turncoat. Now, we think he has a grain of self-respect left, and is looking for a clean place to stand, whichever one he quits or joins. I have lost my point then, but the principle stands. If he is untrue to his church obligations, we call him a hypocrite.

We think it is worse to be untrue to one's oath than one's word; to one's husband or wife than to all others; to a sick companion or child, than if they are well, In other words, the circumstances heighten our love for the true, or deepen our hate for the untrue.

\* \* \*

## ROBERT E. LEE

How he is admired! The North, whom he withstood for four bloody years, love him, as we do. Not that he was the greatest of Generals. We would mention Caesar, Hannibal, Bonaparte, Washington and others, before thinking of him in connection with great leadership. But if asked to point out a man of high ideals, with corresponding courage and fidelity, we would place him among the first, on such roll of honor.

When that infamous Louisiana lottery company asked Lee to preside over them at ten thousand dollars a year, he modestly declined, on the ground that he did not understand the business. They insisted, saying all they wanted was his name and influence.

He replied -- "Gentlemen, my name and influence are all I have left from my mother. They are not for sale." They found a couple of Confederate Generals, who could afford, for money, to connect their name with this infamy, while poor, but brave and true Robert E. Lee made his way across the country and taught the boys yonder to step to the more than martial music of American manhood. TRUE.

Our hearts respond so readily to fidelity that we don't confine our admiration to the human family.

\* \* \*

## CANINE FIDELITY

I once owned a dog. I was a small boy; he a puppy. The first night I took him into the woods, he "treed a 'possum." He became famous among all the settlement boys. They relied on Nero. We have been rushing through the brush, following their trailing dogs, when possibly my dog would "tree" a half mile on our back. At once every boy would forsake his dog and go with me to mine. Why? Just because he was so much like George Washington. They knew he had the opossum. The same was true when I took my gun out for squirrels.

I was a genuine mourner when he died. That dog taught me some as good lessons in faithfulness as I ever learned anywhere.

\* \* \*

## BOVINE FIDELITY

I owned an ox, when a boy. Jake was a good puller on either side of the tongue, in shafts, in the spike. He pulled up hill, trotted on level ground, held back going down hill. He was a good plow steer, a good buggy horse and a splendid saddle nag. I felt a genuine and ennobling sorrow, when he died. If steers share in the compensatory glories of the resurrection, I expect to walk up to him and say, hello Jake: I am glad to see you here, old fellow, in this knee-deep Canaan clover. You were true to me, over many a hill and through thousands of miles back yonder. Welcome to

heaven. You were a better ox than I was a master, but we won't speak of that now. Welcome to this rich steer heaven. You earned it.

\* \* \*

## NEIGHBOR FIDELITY

Out in Texas a few years ago, a man said to a local preacher, who was going into town, please call at the express office and bring me a money package, containing \$5,000. The preacher started home with the money. On the road, a robber stepped out, threw a pistol on him and demanded the package. How do you know I have a package, said the preacher. "You have it, and I will have your life in a minute, if you don't surrender it." The preacher sat in his saddle, head down for a brief time, then looked the robber in the eyes, and said: "Sir, you will have to kill me. I can't surrender the money." They stared at each other, till the robber said: "I expect to have that money, but before I shoot, I would like to know why you will be killed rather than surrender it and keep your life?" "It is easy to tell," said the man of God. "I have spent thirty years in a successful effort to build up a character for truthfulness. If I go home and say, I started with your money, but a robber took it; the owner of the package will doubt a thing, the like of which has never happened in this settlement before. My wife is the only one who would not be tempted to doubt me. In after years, my little boys would come to wonder if papa was assaulted by a robber, or a temptation to steal. No, sir, if it is death, or smut on my good name, I will take death, sweet as life is, and much as my little children need me." The surprised robber blurted out, "You are the biggest fool I ever saw," and broke off through the woods, leaving the brave, true man to go home.

A few years later, while under the shadow of the gallows, this same robber confessed his life of crime, naming this occurrence. It drifted under the eye of the man who owned the package. He read it to a friend sitting by. Together they rode over and showed it to the local preacher, and asked him if it occurred. Being assured that it did, he said, "Why did you not give it up?... For the reason you find stated in the paper. The robber has reported the case about as it happened." "Then," exclaimed the admiring neighbor, "why did you not tell us about it when you came home?" "Well, I don't care to say," said the preacher. "But we must know," said the men. "Then, I will tell you." Looking at the man for whom he brought the package, he said: "Sir, I believe you would have given up the money before you would have lost your life. I couldn't think of anybody who I thought would have done as much for me. Then from your standpoint, the story would have been unreasonable, so I decided to keep it to myself."

\* \* \*

## A TRUE MAN

Backsliding; We Methodists call them 'backsliders.' You Baptists call them 'wanderers.' You Presbyterians say they are 'a little cold.' You Episcopalians say they are 'a little off.' You Campbellites say he has 'just been overtaken in a fault.' The Hard-shell Baptists say 'he is out of order.' It all means the same thing, you are not "getting there."

If the whole includes all of its parts; if the greater includes the lesser; if spiritual things are those of greatest moment, then I must say that whoever trifles with his or her religious vow, is the greatest of triflers.

No oath is so binding as your church oath. No obligation is so sacred as a religious obligation. If you can trifle with these, you can trifle with anything. I know I am on unpopular ground, but truth forbids the mincing of words. The book from which I read my text, calls the relation between Christ and the soul, a married life. He calls backsliding, going a whoring from him. When one backslides, that has transpired in the soul which happens in society, if I forsake my wife and go off with another. To backslide from my earthly marriage vow, brings disgrace. To backslide from my church vow, ought to be considered as much more degrading, as Heaven is higher than earth, and as Jesus is greater than a wife or husband.

I once took the vow of a Granger. I am a Mason, [Shame on him! -- DVM] I am a married man. These vows I have kept to this hour. But if you could put my Granger vow, my Masonic vow and my marriage vow all into one and draw them to greatest strength and bring them to largest significance, they don't mean as much as I meant when I stood at the altars of the Methodist church and pledged loyalty.

I will not apply the remark to you, but for myself I wish to say that when you can get me to trifle with my church vow, you can get me to pop these other obligations like pipe-stems. How comes it that so many people pass for strong, seem strong, in these earthly relations, but are so fickle and so weak, when it comes to keeping the church vow, which touches heaven, and links to the throne itself? I say candidly, that I don't think you are holy or strong as you think you are. When I find a man or woman trifling with Jesus Christ, I say to myself, I fear those folks owe their earthly standing more to cowardice or mere surroundings than they dream of.

When I was in Kansas City, I received a long letter from a woman (did you ever get a letter from a woman?) in which she scolded me for saying I had rather my daughter would die than dance, attend card parties and visit the theater. She asked me to explain or apologize. I explained by saying that it was not a question of keeping step to music, shuffling pasteboards in a game of chance, or seeing something historic reproduced, with questionable background; but having joined a church which interdicts such things, the question is this: Shall my daughter be truthful and true to herself, her preacher, her church, her community, and her God, or must she drop to nadir in the scale of self-respect, knowing she has proved herself unreliable in her highest nature, and when she touches not only the greatest of earthly verities, but comes into contact with eternal principles. To put the whole matter in the form of a question, Is it a little thing that my daughter break her marriage vow to Jesus? Is it a thing to be lightly esteemed that my daughter, in her spirit and being, forsake the purest and truest of all lovers and husbands, for some trifling, but former lover? This whole question of worldliness is whoredom. God says so.

You may break your church vow and retain your standing among men. If so, it is because they expect but little of you, to start with, but with the angels, whose veracity is at par, and to be in favor with Jesus, everything, up there, I say, your character is what it would be among men, should you deliberately choose the role of harlotry. One false step serves to convince that faithful husband of his wife's treachery. So one visit to the dance, convinces each and every angel, that you have

forsaken Jesus for your old lover. You say you mean no harm by attending the fashionable dance or card party. So a faithless consort might say, I meant no real injury to my partner. True, you did not. You just took a lustful pleasure in illegitimate commerce. But these are the things which God hates. Here is the core of REBELLION. It is along here that disintegration sets up, and damnation sets in.

\* \* \*

## BACKSLIDING

One of my texts says it begins in the heart. This means two things. The heart stands for the emotional nature, which is at once our weakest and strongest side. Our affections, like a beautiful, wily enchantress, often lead us astray before we are aware.

Again: They are inward -- hidden -- out of sight. The backsliding process has gone on some time before we could detect it by any ordinary method.

I saw, the other day, where a family had shut up their house and took a year abroad. When ready to start home, they ordered by wire, that the house be put in condition for occupancy. When entered, everything looked as when the key was turned in the lock, twelve months before. But on walking across the floor it gave way. This revealed the fact that the Termite, or African white ant, had eaten the inner part of the flooring. They had largely devoured the walls; had consumed much of the furniture. The building awaited but an ordinary wind to announce, by collapse, the ravages of these destructive creatures. Yet, so hidden was their work, that absolute ruin came before discovery.

That tree did not fall last night, in that storm, but two years ago, a worm bored in and a secret decay sealed its doom. The news reached us from an island that a ship, loaded with cotton, had blown up. Combustion was the reported cause. That vessel was doomed though, when on a drizzly day two thousand bales of cotton were rolled aboard that ship, without regard to the death-damp taken in with each bale.

\* \* \*

## BACKSLIDING

What are some of the signs of backsliding? How may I know that this beast of the deep is now near? How can I detect the germs of this disease that is sweeping whole families to death, depopulating whole countries and causing jubilation in hell, and weeping in heaven?

That girl did not disgrace herself or lose her soul virtue, with Jesus and the angels, last night, when she danced. It really happened months before when she got her consent to look on.

That man did not get drunk the day he was seen staggering on these streets. It really happened when he entered the bar-room and yielded to a social treat. Here is the worm that bores the hole in the tree, turns in the water and causes decay in the fiber, and prostrates the tree years later.

\* \* \*

## TRIFLING

When you can trifle with the tempter, you are on dangerous ground. I have often been asked, Is it any harm or sin to be tempted? I once, thoughtlessly, answered -- no. Let us see. Is it any harm or sin to expose a quick tooth to a biting blast? You say, why, yes; there is where the toothache and neuralgia lie. Is it any harm to expose a weak lung to a driving, northwest blizzard? You say, why, yes; the hacking cough, and hectic flush, and consumptive's death, all lie in the exposure.

\* \* \*

## SHORN LOCKS

Samson is not the only man who trifled with some Delilah -- thinking that temptation had no moral quality. I preached once in the State of Missouri on this subject, when the pastor came to my room and confessed that he had been backslidden for eleven years. During this time he had filled leading places, and neither his parishioners, or brethren of the ministry, would have accused him of being below former attainments in grace. In fact, it took the revival to reveal him to himself. I told the confessions of this honest preacher of Missouri to one whom I considered the leading preacher in Texas, for whom I was preaching, not revealing the name, of course. My Texas brother grew suddenly reticent, and soon left the room. The next day he called on me and said, I want to refer to the confession of your Missouri friend, and say, I am two years worse off, for I believe that I made a spiritual drop thirteen years ago. I have never seen so good a day since. I verily believe these honest statements of these two brethren might be taken as the experience of thousands of preachers, to say nothing of laymen.

\* \* \*

## COASTING

My warm friend and brother, Jarrell, of Georgia, once said to uncle Simon Peter Richardson, a strong, unique preacher of the same State: "Uncle Simon Peter, you are not the great spiritual force you once were." "How do you know?" said Brother R. "Why, I have been on your track, down in Florida, where you, in other days, shook whole sections with judgment day earthquake." Uncle Simon dropped those great intelligent gray eyes to the ground for a full minute, then turned, and in measured and emphatic words, said: "Jarrel, you are right about that thing. I once manned as good a ship as ever buffeted gulf billows, or plied Pacific ocean. I went into any port with open or sealed orders. I cast anchor where I pleased, and weighed anchor when I got ready. Whether I run under the Devil's flag off the shores of immorality, or formality, of heathenism or backslidden Christianity, I at once shot up my Master's banner, and from my flagship dictated terms of surrender. When I left that port, the enemy had sworn allegiance to Jesus Christ." He paused, looked long and longingly towards the horizon, as if searching the archives of Georgia, Alabama and Florida for two decades back. He was. He turned again and seemed to pick up the

thread he had dropped, and said, "But one day -- it was a sort of off day -- not much to do-I left my ship and took a boat and went out coasting. I remember till this hour, with what curious relish I sounded along through the waters of Swedenborgianism, Mahometanism, higher criticism, etc. I must say I enjoyed that day in the boat. Toward night I thought to return to my good old ship. I cared not to sleep, except under her old flag, and on her strong timbers, I turned and looked to that quarter from which I thought I had sailed. To my utter surprise I failed to see her. I first scanned, then scrutinized the entire circle of the horizon. In a sort of fright, I turned and pulled on oar. With dripping brow and searching eyes amid deepening gloom, I pulled on oar. Jarrell, that was twenty years ago, and do you know, I have never seen my ship since."

\* \* \*

## SECULARIZING

The case with which you can secularize, or profane sacred things, is a sure index to spiritual drifting. For instance, when you can take Saturday into Sunday, and profane it more easily than you can take Sunday into the business week, and hallow it, you are on the backslider's road. The way the Sabbath is kept now, is not a decent parody on my boyhood holyday. God was in those days. Those Sabbaths had a spirit, which you could detect, wherever you went. How is it now? Preachers and church members ride on the cars on Sunday. If you get after them, they say with offensive flippancy, "If the Devil comes along, and is going my way, I'll ride as far as I am going his way." Poor, backslidden preacher! The Devil will always hitch at your gate. He will be going your way. He will return with you, too, and give you a free ride home. He will praise your sermon. Some day, when he takes you to your appointment, he will refuse to stop. With clamped bit and a poor, deluded, backslidden preacher on his back, he will go by, and will take you over the precipice. This class of people always have an ox in the ditch. For thirty years I have looked when they told me there was an ox in the ditch, and have found in nearly every case, it was a donkey.

I verily believe that the preacher who will take a Sunday train, is backslidden, if he was ever regenerated. I have never yet met with a decent excuse for breaking the Sabbath.

\* \* \*

## MOTIVES

It is not enough to say, my motive was good, if I did disregard, or seem to disregard the holy day.

All that counts for nothing. Saul had good motives for persecuting Christians.

You say you have a good conscience in what you do. Well, you certainly need a good one. It will take one of the best to stand such hard service as you impose upon it.

It takes more than ordinary care and insight to tell the difference between an easy conscience and a dead one, anyhow. Maybe yours is dead.



\* \* \*

### LITTLE THINGS

You get your mail on Sunday; start or complete a journey on Sunday; read secular papers on Sunday; take buggy rides on Sunday; buy soda drinks on Sunday; cook big dinners on Sunday; make social calls on Sunday. When I attack it, you say, O, that is such a little thing. It is as little to quit, as it is to practice. Remember that.

\* \* \*

### LITTLE THINGS

David's look at Bathsheba was a little thing, just carelessly looking at a woman in dishabille. But it led to his kidnapping of her; it forced her into prostitution; it led to the crime of murder in his heart, to conceal his sin; it led his General into the sin of accessory BEFORE and AFTER the fact; it led to undue slaughter in the army; it stirred up the just wrath of God and drew the prophet's fire; it caused the destruction of thousands of people, whose lives it took to expunge the guilt of one.

\* \* \*

### LITTLE LOOK! SEE?

Achan did a little thing, when he got to looking. He did not see much, either. He just took a little piece of money, and a nice garment for his wife. Yet it caused disgrace, defeat, and great destruction in the army of God, great boldness on the part of the enemy, and the blotting out of a whole family, and destruction of much property.

\* \* \*

### LITTLE FORSOOTH!

Hairs are small, but God made them and counts them. Dust is small, but it weighs enough for him to speak of it.

A little thought and investigation would show that. The Creator has swung the worlds, if indeed, not the universe, SABBATICALLY. I don't refer to the (period) Sabbath of science (?) but the old evening and morning Sabbath.

Did you ever study the figure Seven? Seven days, Seven weeks, Seventy weeks, Seven times Seven weeks? until the centuries pile up? The moon waxes and wanes on Seven; the tides respect the law of Sevens; the female system responds to a system of Sevens; the laws of health, act according to Sevens. If typhoid fever breaks, it will be on the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first or twenty-eighth day. Chills will not violate this law in yielding to treatment. Not only is this law

of Sevens visible and universally in operation, but the experiments of man have tested its complete wisdom; therefore its divine appointment.

In view of all of this and a thousandfold more, what must the angels think of a little Sunday-train-boarding, cigar-buying preacher?

What is the real difference between buying a cigar or dime's worth of ice on Sunday, and a plantation? Did Eve have to eat up the apple orchard before an all-wise God could see which way she was headed? If it don't grieve the Holy Spirit, or hurt our souls to buy milk, ice, cigars, and ride on Sunday trains, then it is not a sin to plow or fish. I was preaching on Sabbath-keeping in Anniston, Ala., when a man rose up and said: "Sir, we are obliged to have ice on Sunday." He was about my ago. I asked, "where did your father get it?" It was before the days of ice plants. I knew his father didn't see ice, from the time the last melted in the spring until it froze again the next winter. But still wishing to justify himself, he said, "but the water comes a half mile through a pipe to my house." I retorted, "it comes two miles and a half through a pipe to my house, but I will fan it with my old hat until it gets cool enough to drink, or I will quit the church. I won't be a fraud and hypocrite." I then said, "if you will buy an extra dime's worth of ice on Saturday evening, put a newspaper, then an old wool blanket around it; put it in a dry place, each time you go to it, if it don't run you through the day, I will eat half the blanket." On the next Saturday, a lady purchased the extra piece, treated it as I said. There was so much of it Sunday night, that she put it in a dry part of the blanket. She kept it in a dry place on Monday, not using from it, of course, after Sunday. There was a piece as large as an egg on Tuesday. Now listen. We are not compelled to have ice more than four months in the year. There are four Sabbaths to the month. Forty cents a month, then for four months, \$1.60 will enable us to keep God's Sabbath law, a whole year, so far as ice goes.

\* \* \*

## CAUSES

What are some of the causes of backsliding? One reason why many go backward in the divine life, is that they fail to unite with the church. We need the organization which the church affords. Any argument which you can bring against the church, or becoming a member thereof, I can turn with telling force against the family, municipal and state governments, and all organized forms of society. To remain out of the church is to be a "bushwhacker," religiously. In a little while you will be a "free-booter" -- yea, an Ishmaelite.

\* \* \*

## HITCHING POSTS

On one of my first circuits, we had Brother Johnson up for drunkenness. He was penitent, and said he was ashamed and disgusted at his own weakness. I told him I was not surprised at it. He said that hurt him, as he thought I believed in him, and was expecting him to hold out. I said, "Johnson, I did believe in you, and was expecting you to hold out, until the first time I saw you in town after you joined the church. But you hitched your horse to the same old post, that you had tied to, in ten feet of the barroom where you had spent thousands." I said then, to myself, "if Johnson

don't change his hitching post, he will be drunk again in six months. Had you been afraid of yourself, and your old associates, and the liquor dealer, and the Devil, and had tied your horse way round yonder to the Methodist church horse-rack, and asked me or Bill Hays to go down town with you, for the first few times, I would have expected you to make this steep grade."

\* \* \*

## OLD HITCHING POST

Ah me! That old post explains the difficulty with" thousands all over the land. You must change tracks, change drives, change loads, change your very standing ground. If the Devil can do no more, he will point to where you hitch. That post will carry with it the entire weight of your influence. There is no more in what you do in this world, than where you stop, when off duty. Indeed, your likes and dislikes come out along here. What you ARE, is fully known by whom you gang with from choice.

I told this hitching post incident in Greenville, Alabama. It impressed the mayor, who announced publicly, his purpose to cut down all he had, as they were driven at the wrong place.

The last morning of the meeting, he arose and said: "Mr. Culpepper, I have been converted during this meeting. I have got out some new hitching posts. I shall drive down one at family prayer, one at the Wednesday night prayer-meeting, one at the Sunday-school, and one at the preaching services." This statement ran like an electric shock through the audience. Your very destiny lies in where you hitch.

You laymen think a preacher has but little financial ability, and less knowledge of the affairs of State. I believe a republic of officers, composed of one pastor from each church in any town or city of this great country, could take the place of the present incumbents at the White House, and if they had their authority, something would happen. They would put whisky out of the land. That would change the direction of two billions of dollars. They would put every gambler to plowing, or into some honest business. That would work wonders, from the SHE gambler who runs a very gambling hell, calling it a "euchre party," to the Mississippi Delta cotton-future gambler, to the Kansas wheat gambler, to the bloated bond gambler in Wall street, up, up, to the Clevelands and McKinleys and Bryans, and their heelers, who gamble in spoils and office, up, up -- out, out, to the great game the Powers are now playing with the Philippines, South Africa and China as stakes.

\* \* \*

## UNHALTERED

Ah me! If the faithful pastors of this country could hitch you members to the post of honest dealing in business, and go back and find you; to the post of brotherly love, and go back and find you; to the post Sabbath keeping, and Sabbath service, and go back and find you; to the family prayer and prayer-meeting post, and go back and find you; to the prohibition voting post, on election days, and go back and find you; it would not be twelve months before the angels could

afford to light on this world, or fly through its atmosphere, without holding their nose in weeping transit. They halter and hitch you, but when they come around later, there hangs the bridle against the post, but the good Lord only knows where you are.

You are capering over the plains with Zebras, Bronchos, bucking Texans, wild steers and stupid asses; saddled and subject to be ridden by anything than can catch you. The Devil has runners out for all such.

\* \* \*

#### UNHALTERED -- UNLETTERED

For years, in most places where I have held meetings, I have taken or had taken the "religious census." I have found over one thousand people in one town, who had been once in the church, but had slipped the bridle; had gone off without certificates, or had put them in their trunk. I have often found three and four times as many church members outside, as inside. Witness many western towns and cities. But this is a GREAT evil and a GROWING evil everywhere. And for each one of these willful

\* \* \*

#### STAY-OUTERS,

You may count one backslider. And as they mix with those who still have respect for their vows, they chill their ardor and adulterate their loyalty, until the community is soon cursed with a crop of

\* \* \*

#### COME-OUTERS.

My association with this class of people makes me think of a horse with his ears backed; of a mule with his heels in the air; of a goat standing on his rear legs; of a cat with curvature of spine; of a bee that has gone out of business at one end and opened up lively at the other; of a churning of milk, the next day after it is "turned;" of a blind snake in August, striking at everything. Of the Irishman who was washed ashore on a strange island; walking inland he saw a citizen, and coming up to him, said:

"Have you a government here?" "Yes," was the reply. "Well, I'm agin it," said Pat.

\* \* \*

#### SPOILED WARES

Did you ever visit a pottery? It is interesting to see the patient potter, with his lump of dirt on a revolving wheel transferring the ideal vessel of his mind and heart, to that block, turning dirt

into all sort's of vessels and for varied purposes. You would be impressed by the ease with which this man can bring this pile of shapeless dirt into use and beauty. You would be surprised at how large a jug a little piece of mud could make. You would be astonished as the potter told you of how scarce first-class dirt is. When you saw how small a flaw would ruin a vessel; of how a pimple would make him discard his mud, or work it all over; when you saw how many vessels well made, were broken or marred in getting them off the wheel; how many more cracked in drying, or were damaged in transferring to the furnace where they are to be burned, or fail to take the "glaze" so as to be proof against leaking. Then of the still larger quantities, which lose their handles, or ears, or sides, or bottom in burning. Could you see this, you would have a larger view of the prophet's words, when he said: "Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought his work on the wheels. And... the vessel of clay was marred in his hands."

\* \* \*

### ANOTHER VESSEL

When a vessel mars in the potter's hands, he doesn't always throw it away, but recasts it, works out all the rocks, and tries for another, and smaller vessel, sometimes of the same kind, sometimes something altogether different. I have seen the potter start out to make a large milk bowl, or flower vase, but strike impediments which, when worked out, would leave only dirt enough to make a spittoon. Have you not found God driven into the spittoon business with a lot of his dirt?

\* \* \*

### DODGERS

It would be laughable, if not so sad, to hear the reasons(?) which different people give for leaving their membership.

One class says: "The grave of a parent or child deterred them from breaking all connection with the old place -- hence I did not call for our letters." I ask, did you sell your property? "O yes." All of it? "Yes." Then your church membership is the only sign left of your former residence there. "Well, yes." Have you paid as much to the church here as you did back where you came from? "Well, no." Do you attend church regularly here? "No," is the almost invariable answer. I ask another class, Why are you here without your church letters? "Well, we had so many friends back there who were opposed to our taking our letter. They said if we kept our membership there, they would have some hope of our returning some day." Do you contemplate going back? "Oh, no; we are settled here." Don't you think, if you were after accommodating your friends, that you had better have remained with them? Don't you think you moved too far? The people don't seem to be raving over you here. Had you not better move back among your friends? I think they could spare you from here. "He, he, he," or silent, dry grins, is often their only answer to these searching interrogatories. Then I say, Since you went so far to accommodate friends, as to leave the marriage certificate of your soul to Jesus, back with them; since you were remembering friends, did you not forget or slight the best Friend you ever had, or ever will have? Would your wife appreciate it if you took hers and your picture, taken together, the day you were married, and leave it as a

keepsake with some other woman? Then how must Jesus feel when you have done that thing, in leaving your letter?

I ask others, Why are you here without your letter? "We forgot to call for it, Brother Culpepper." Well, that beats all. Just forgot. Suppose I should leave my wife and ramble off several hundred miles. She finds me, and asks why I have done her thus. I say, My precious wife, you must excuse me; I clear forgot that I had a wife. I really did not aim to offend or inconvenience you. I just forgot. That brings me face to face with a fool or a hypocrite, I can't tell which. Either is bad enough, God knows. I ask, Do you hold family prayer? "No." Do you have grace at the table? "Well, no. We used to, but" -- Yes, I see. Are your children in your church Sunday-school? "Well, no. Sallie kinder got to running with some girls round at the Presbyterian church. Mary likes the Campbellites (Christians I believe they are called), and she goes there. John and Will, they've sorter got tired, and don't want to go anywhere; and I don't believe in making 'era go, for fear they may get gorged on religion and not like it when they are older," How old are the boys? "One is ten, the other twelve." I ask, Sister, do you really believe there is religion enough under your roof to gorge your children? I ask again, How long since you took the Sacrament? Generally, it has been years. When I ask, Do you take a church paper? Do you belong to any benevolent society? Do you contribute to any of the mission fields? "No," is the answer.

All of this brings me to remark that I could have but one real good reason for holding my membership in one town while residing in another. Here it is: The steward comes round after money for the support of the preacher. I tell him that my membership is elsewhere, and that I am expected to pay over there. I get rid of him. When the steward over yonder reminds me that my name is on the roll, and that my quarterage is due, I kindly write him that I have been called on by the steward here, that they expect me to pay where I live. I get rid of him. See? Then, if I want to attend theaters, they can't discipline me where I live, and won't know it where I am held responsible. There are hundreds of drummers who pass off for single men all over the country. Wife will never hear of it. That is not as wicked as to leave your church obligations -- then gang with the world. The Devil is in all such double-dealing. In other words, you are backslidden.

\* \* \*

## PRAYERLESS

"Ask and ye shall receive," is tantamount to saying, "Ask not and ye will not receive." The prayerful Christian is the full Christian. If you don't pray much, you won't have much, and you won't be much. There are no exceptions to this. The way of prayer is the way to spiritual health, happiness and heaven. Pray or backslide, is one of the laws of our life.

\* \* \*

## THE BIBLE

When we pray, we talk to God. When we read the Bible, we let God talk to us. Wonderful book! I hold in my hand the only chart which has safely guided all former navigations of this treacherous sea. Here is the sublimest poetry; the oldest and only code of morals; ancient and

accurate account of our ancestors and our origin; the only revelation of our duty and destiny; the only reliable definition of goodness, and of God; the Only authoritative statement of seasons and relationships, of causes and consequences. It marks out the only road from sin to salvation, from sour to sweet; from bad to better and best; from fear to freedom: from a hovel to a home in heaven.

Blessed book! Bond of union between me and mine; between the shadow and the substance; between the seeming and the substantial, the smoky here, and the sublime hereafter.

\* \* \*

### WONDERFUL BOOK!

I let it fall open before me, and I see my sinfulness and my Saviour; my helplessness and my help; my criminality and my holy calling; my condemnation and my Christ; my cross and my crown; my Calvary and my coronation; my ruin and my resurrection; my fall and my Father; my life's brevity and Jordan's bridge; my last sickness and my eternal soundness.

\* \* \*

### MY BOOK!

I want nothing more cooling when burned by the last fever. I want nothing warmer as a cover, in the chill of death, I want no softer pillow in my coffin. I want no brighter light in the dark valley. I want no better staff when feeling for Jordan's crossing. I want no sharper sword when assaulted on the last field. I want no diviner rod of comfort. I want no better legacy for my children. I bequeath only this to posterity. I will span the crossing to Canaan with its girdings. I will pontoon Jordan with its pages. I will take it as my passport to the entrance gate yonder. I will plead the merits of its central figure in the Judgment. On its authority, I will die in hope and rise in expectancy. Through its teachings I expect to know how to assist in crowning Jesus Lord of all. Guided by it, I will know my house in heaven, and my place among the angels.

To keep much in this book, is to glide forward in grace, in knowledge, into heaven. To neglect it, is to backslide.

\* \* \*

### THE OTHER MAN

Beware, lest the angel at the gate, ask you why you came alone. Beware, lest you find when too late, that your ticket reads

\* \* \*

ADMIT TWO.

Don't forget that it takes you and at least one other to be YOU, in the Christian life. It takes Jesus, a rich man and a poor man, to be Christianity. It takes Jesus and a grown person and a child to be Christianity. It takes Jesus and a well person and a sick one to constitute Christianity. It takes Jesus and a full person and an empty one to be Christianity. It takes Jesus and the good Samaritan and that poor fellow among thieves, to be Christianity. It takes Jesus and some one who loves him, and some one who don't, to be Christianity.

Jesus has no eyes with which to see the shame of sin and the sorrow of souls, but human Christian eyes. He has no heart to feel the desperation and destruction and despair, which the Devil has wrought, except human Christian hearts. He has no ears to hear the languid bleat of the lost lambs, except human Christian ears. He has no hands to reach down and lift up the sin-smitten, except human Christian hands. No shoulders has he to bear back these blessed burdens to the blessed fold, except human Christian shoulders. No feet can he find, to bleed and blister and blacken, on boulder of mountain, or deepest dust, or direst desert, except human Christian feet. Hence, he says, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." Not to do it is to mar in the potter's hands, or to backslide.

You have heard the story of the wrecked vessel, whereon only two men were saved by taking to a lifeboat. For days they were adrift, without food or water. They lost consciousness, but before death had finished his work, the boat was discovered and hauled to. One of the men was found and lifted to the vessel's deck -- restoratives given, which soon caused him to open his eyes and look about him. He whispered something to the friend who was bending over him. He uttered the sentence several times before the words were understood. Then the man bending over him turned to the others and said, hasten, he says "there is another man in the boat." They hurried down, searched in a pile of canvass, found and rescued the other man.

Ah, brother! That OTHER MAN is your royal road to righteousness -- your highway to heaven.

A few years before I left Georgia, I went to West Point to hold a meeting. A great flood came in Chattahoochee river, which ran through the town. It broke up the meeting. A few miles above this place, there lived a poor man on the banks of that river, which was soon overflowed and had surrounded this dwelling, cutting off all escape. He said to his wife, "I believe this is to be the greatest flood we have witnessed," Later, he said, "Wife, I believe our house will be in danger." Rapidly rose the angry waters. He soon said, "Wife, our only chance for life and the lives of the children, will be to climb that china tree." So, arranging the ladder, he fastened a little one securely to his wife's shoulders. She fastened one to his. He then helped her up to the first limb, seated her, and placed the babe in her arms. He then descended, took the remaining child, a girl of several summers, and ascended the ladder, and placed himself as comfortably as possible, while the wind blew a hurricane, even threatening to uproot the tree. The rain poured in torrents, and the enlarged river mimicked, in destructive billows, old ocean, in fury. Drenched and shivering they sat and watched the waters rise, until their dwelling yielded to the pressure, and drifted away. The wife said: "Husband, there goes the hard earnings of years." Already the little girl on her mother's shoulder was complaining much. Already, for some time that mother's feet had been soaked in the flood that had risen almost to the limb on which she sat. In an effort to make her little one more comfortable, her benumbed hand lost its cunning, and she, with the two dimpled darlings, dropped



into the water and were lost to view. The husband and father was about to throw himself into the angry flood, to attempt to rescue his companion and children, but he remembered that his arms were full, and that there was one upon his own shoulder. His duty seemed plain. So, with a breaking heart, he made an effort to locate himself more safely and for the better protection of his two surviving children, when, horrors I his child dropped from his benumbed grasp. He was about to follow, with suicidal intent, when he remembered that the one lashed to his shoulders, was the very image of his wife, and was her favorite, and his, could favoritism be predicated of parental love. This restrained him. Besides, he saw already that this awful night, which had seemed like one long black month, had at last given place to welcome day. Thus he sat, widening the scope of his vision, as the dawn deepened, hoping against reason, to see his wife and babes.

Two men came pulling over the flood in a paddle boat, speaking of the heart-breaking disclosures, which the day was doomed to make. Presently, one exclaimed: "What is that?" "Why, its a woman, with a child tied to her back." They soon lifted her into the boat. She held close in the grip of death: but embrace of mother love, the babe of months. After arranging the mother and her children in the boat, one of the men looked toward a lone tree, and remarked: "I think I see something in yonder china tree." They ran the boat under it. As the poor crushed owner of the tree looked down and saw his wife and children, he dropped down and fell upon his wife's lifeless form and sobbed out. "Oh Julia! I've saved one I've saved one!"

O, my brother, my sister, have you ever suffered half this much for your church? Has your religious duty ever stirred you thus? If called to your account today, could you say: "O My Lord I have saved one." If not, you must let me tell you plainly that such unconcern is found only in the way of the backslider.

\* \* \*

## WRONG END

I fear some of our Lord's soldiers are like the one I heard of, who was shouting very loudly, "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! I've cut a man's foot off! I've out a man's foot off!... Why didn't you cut his head off?" interrupted a man near by. "His head was already off. Hurrah! Hurrah!"

Many of our Lord's soldiers do no more than cut a dead man's foot off.

\* \* \*

## NEW WOOD

Joseph Parker says God's lower kingdom always explains his higher -- so that if we can understand the things about us, we may know much of those above us. Following that thought, we have noticed that the vine utilizes the first spring sun, and showers, and breath of balm, in development of itself. Then, upon this tender, new wood, she hangs her jugs of delicious new wine. I have seen, in the beautiful Florida orange groves, blossoms, young oranges, oranges half grown, full grown, half ripe and fully ripe -- all on the same tree, and at the same time. Here is my idea of what a thriving Christian should be. If we are not making new wood, we will not bear

much fruit. But in John, fifteenth chapter, we learn that the bearing of much fruit is one of God's tests of discipleship.

Then, we must grow in grace ourselves, that upon this new wood we may bear fruit, thus glorifying God, the thing for which we were made, and without the doing of which we must inevitably backslide.

\* \* \*

## COMING BACK

One memorable night, after I had been converted but a few days -- days of deep concern for a fearfully backslidden father, he came home from a round among his sick patients. He had shown some signs of spiritual concern for a day or so. On this night I went out to take my father's horse. He impressed me as in a peculiar state of mind, but passed in. When I returned from the lot he had gone in and lain down across the bed, and was in a state of great mental excitement or spiritual agony. My mother was alarmed. She revealed her fears to me, viz., that father's great agony of soul had dethroned his reason, as many of his utterances were incoherent. I had not prayed aloud in public, so I hurriedly repaired to an adjoining room and poured out my full soul into the lap of mercy. My grief was great, and much increased by my fear and filial concern. After the most earnest appeal of which I was capable, I returned to father's side, to find that he had gotten up and kneeled by the bed. Here he remained, in great distress of soul, his mind being very clear, and his cries very direct and distressing. The children were now all up, and sharing the pallor of mother's face and the tears of her eyes. On being urged to get up and retire, he said: "No! no! I wandered away from my Saviour four years ago. They have been years of darkness, and drought, and despair. But one little thread has been left me, viz., a promise to my dying mother to meet her in heaven. Don't ask me to get up until this chasm between me and my Lord is bridged again." Although this was new ground to my untrained feet, yet I registered the presence and workings of the Holy Spirit with great accuracy.

A great calm possessed me as I felt that my sin-sick father was in the tender care of the Great Doctor. When he arose from the floor, it was near the morning, but he had crossed the intervening gulf, and was happy in the restored joys of God's salvation. We were happy, too. Night of precious memory! One of the nights of the Son of God -- a night which pined not for the morning. The table talk was changed -- the family altar swung into place -- the birds of Paradise resumed their perch -- all the affairs of the family were held in common -- the preacher's visits grew thicker -- the angels came oftener and stayed longer -- Sunday was again the head of the corner, among the days, and heaven once more came within family reach and family touch. All because father had come back.

\* \* \*

## RALLYING AT LAST

A few years ago, my brother was low, from fever. One night the family retired early, leaving him in my hands. His fever registered one hundred and four at ten o'clock. At eleven it was

one hundred and three. At twelve it was one hundred and two. At one it was one hundred and one. At two it was ninety-nine. At three it was ninety-eight. At four it was ninety-seven. At five it was ninety-six and a half. At half past five it stood at the last named point. Thirty minutes later, the feeble waves of life began to return, and slowly my precious brother was lifted out of the dews of Jordan, and is alive today. I had stood on my feet and fought death back, every moment of that long, lonely night. When he rallied, and the family arose, I fell down to rest and sleep, utterly exhausted, but so happy that it had been my lot to catch the dripping, wasting tides of existence and throw them back into the reservoir of life.

Ah, me! That sinking pulse and failing heart, with bead of sweat, and chill to knee and elbow, glaze of eye, flit of breath, and awful indifference to the gravity of the hour, but faintly illustrates thousands of struggles to keep life in the soul. Well may we sing:

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.

To cross that limit is to die--  
To die as if by stealth.  
It may not quench the beaming eye  
Or pale the glow of health.

Well may we cry:

O, where is that mysterious bourne,  
By which my path is crossed,  
Beyond which God himself hath said  
That he who goes is lost?

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

You can backslide; but thank God, you can come back.

\* \* \*

FLOWERS OF HEAVEN

When I lay sick of typhoid fever in Macon, Ga., and yellow fever was raging at Jacksonville, Florida, this little incident appeared in the paper. A young man in Jacksonville and his betrothed quarreled and "broke off." He took fever a few days later and was removed to the Sand Hills, where he came near unto death. One morning his doctor was in the city, and meeting his girl on the sidewalk, he said to her: "I have a friend of yours on the Sand Hills." "I know you have -- I am so glad to hear he is much better." "He is no better, Lydia." said the doctor. She exclaimed in tones of manifest surprise and concern, "Why, doctor, you startle me. I heard he was better -- that the fever was broken; what is the matter?" "Lydia, he is simply dying for your love." She dropped her beautiful eyes to the sidewalk a minute, then turned and walked into a floral apartment, saying as she did, "Come in here, doctor." She selected a beautiful basket of choice flowers, prominent among which were some lilies and roses. She wrote her name on the delicate board card, handed it to the doctor, saying, "Please, sir, give him that with my love," as she blushed and looked out across the lovely St. John's river. He said: "I will, and it is the very thing to help him, too."

When the doctor returned, his patient was in a nervous, restless sleep. He set the girl's contribution on the table, and stepped behind the door, knowing he would sleep but a minute. When he awoke, he turned his head and discovered the flowers, which he drew to his face, inhaled their fragrance, replaced them. As he did this, the card turned so that he saw a name. He brought it near enough to see that it was that of the (to him) only woman on earth. He clutched it with both hands -- tried to rise -- looked quickly about the room. The doctor stepped out, with a broad smile. "Doctor! where did you get this? .... You know where I got that," said the kind physician. "But, doctor, did she send them to me? Did she call my name? Doctor, tell me -- what did she say? .... She selected the basket, wrote her name, and told me to give it to you -- with her love."

Suffice it to say, there was a quiet, but very happy marriage on the Sand Hills, a few days later.

You and your Father have quarreled -- you have wandered off. He says, "I am married to the backslider." He sends me to you at this hour. I bring this text -- these songs -- this sermon -- these incidents. Look at this basket of his special arranging. I call particular attention to the Lily of the Valley and the Rose of Sharon.

Dear reader, you have followed me through this talk. I have preached it before many thousands throughout the South and West. I never delivered it without signs following. Perhaps you never heard me. We may not meet in this world. I have put before you the best appeal my heart and pen can make, that you may return to God, if you fall in the unfortunate but large class, who have lost ground. Through Jeremiah, our Father says: "It is an evil and bitter thing that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God?"

It is an evil, a sore evil. It is evil done against your own soul; it is a sore evil against time and opportunity, which comes to us all, and which none dare waste; it is an evil done to all who may be influenced by your example; it is an evil done to those who would be influenced by you if you were walking without fainting, and running without weariness; it is a sore evil wrought against your guardian angel, who for all of these years, has so faithfully attended you and helped you; it is

the sorest of evils against your dear Father above, who loves you so tenderly, your Saviour who yielded up his life for you, and the Holy Spirit who sealed the plan, and pledged this divine.

My kind friend, may I take you back to some family altar, or to some penitent form, or some woody grove, where you first read your title clear to a mansion in the skies? Standing again on this precious spot and realizing that that was a better day to your soul, than many you have seen since, and better than this one in which I plead with you -- won't you, my backslidden friend, my vacillating, my drifting, my dissatisfied friend-won't you now give me your solemn promise to regain all lost ground? You can do it. Won't you start now? Jesus awaits your return. He will help you. I will pray for you. Say -- will you -- won't you promise me to come back to God? Say now.

"Holy Spirit -- heavenly dove,  
Sweet messenger of rest,  
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,  
And drove thee from my breast."

\* \* \* \* \*

## 06 -- THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD

The Church and the World walked far apart  
On the changing shores of Time;  
The World was singing a giddy song,  
And the Church a hymn sublime.  
"Come, give me your hand," said the merry World,  
"And walk with me this way."  
But the good Church hid her snowy hands,  
And solemnly answered: "Nay,  
I will not give you my hand at all,  
And I will not walk with you.  
Your way is the way that leads to death;  
Your words are all untrue."

"Nay, walk with me but a little space,"  
Said the world with a kindly air;  
"The road I walk is a pleasant road,  
And the sun shines always there.  
Your path is thorny and rough and rude,  
But mine is broad and plain;  
My way is paved with flowers and dews,  
And yours with tears and pain;  
The sky to me is always blue,  
No want, no toil I know;  
The sky above you is always dark,  
Your lot is a lot of woe."

There's room enough for you and me  
To travel side by side."

Shyly the Church approached the World,  
And gave him her hand of snow;  
And the old World grasped it and walked along,  
Saying in accents low,  
"Your dress is too simple to please my taste,  
I will give you pearls to wear,  
Rich velvets and silks for your graceful form,  
And diamonds to deck your hair."

The Church looked down at the plain white robes,  
And then at the dazzling World,  
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip,  
With a smile contemptuous curled.  
"I will change my dress for a costlier one,"  
Said the Church with a smile of grace.  
Then her pure, white garments drifted away,  
And the world gave, in their place,  
Beautiful satins and shining silks,  
Roses and gems and pearls;  
While over her forehead her bright hair fell,  
Crisped in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World,  
"I'll build you one like mine;  
Carpets of Brussels and curtains of lace,  
And furniture ever so fine."  
So he built her a costly and beautiful house,  
Most splendid it was to behold;  
Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there,  
Gleaming in purple and gold.

Rich fairs and shows in the halls were held,  
And the World and his children were there;  
Laughter and music and feasts were heard  
In the place that was meant for prayer.  
There were cushioned pews for the rich and the gay,  
To sit in their pomp and pride;  
But the poor, who were clad in shabby array,  
Sat meekly down outside.

"You give too much to the poor," said the World,  
"Far more than you ought to do,  
If they are in need of shelter and food,

Why need it trouble you?  
Go, take your money and buy rich robes,  
Buy horses and carriages finer  
Buy pearls and jewels and dainty food,  
Buy the rarest and costliest wine.  
My children, they dote on all these things,  
And if you their love would win,  
You must do as they do, and walk in the ways  
That they are walking in."

Then the Church held fast the strings of her purse,  
And modestly lowered her head,  
And simpered, "Without doubt, you are right, sir;  
Henceforth I'll do as you've said."  
So the poor were turned from her door in scorn,  
And she heard not the orphan's cry;  
But she drew her beautiful robes aside  
As the widows went weeping by.

Then the sons of the World and the sons of the Church  
Walked closely, hand and heart,  
And only the Master who knoweth all,  
Could tell the two apart.  
Then the Church sat down at her ease, and said;  
"I am rich, and my goods increase;  
I have need of nothing, nor ought to do  
But to laugh and dance and feast."  
The sly World heard, and he laughed in his sleeve,  
And, mocking, said, aside,  
"The Church is fallen, the beautiful Church,  
And her shame is her boast and her pride."

The angel drew near to the mercy-seat,  
And whispered in sighs her name.  
Then the loud anthems of rapture were hushed,  
And heads were covered with shame,  
And a voice was heard at last by the Church:  
From Him who sat on the throne;  
"I know thy works, and how thou hast said,  
'I am rich,' and hast not known  
That thou art naked, and poor, and blind,  
And wretched instead, before My face;  
Therefore from my presence I cast thee out,  
And blot thy name from its place."

Your brother who loves you,

J. B. Culpepper

P. S. -- If this tract helps you write me about it at Lebanon, Me.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 07 -- THE RICH FOOL -- By Burke Culpepper

But God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? -- Luke 12:20.

My text introduces us to the world's most famous trilogy. A trilogy being a tragedy in three acts. The curtain was first lifted in Mark 10:17, when there came running to Jesus a young man, who fell down at His feet and said, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus looked at him and loved him and, the commentators tell us, wished to make him His disciple. But the Great Teacher saw in a moment this young man .did not have the proper conception of religion, and was really depending on his morality to save him. Therefore to show him that he wasn't as anxious to be saved as he thought he was Jesus said to him, "Go sell what you have, give it to the poor and come, follow me." "And he went away, with a sorrowful spirit for he had great possessions." He asked Jesus what he could do to be saved and the first thing Christ told him to do, he backed down. I think he really thought the Son of God would compliment him and tell him, "Why, there is nothing you can do. You are now as good as the best." But Jesus saw him as he was, and touched him where he was sore. And as the young man walked away he knew there was One who really understood him. I guess that morning when he was getting ready to see Jesus of whom he had heard so much, he was egotistical enough to be proud of his record and thought he doubtless would astound this young Galilean. But after Jesus got through with him, I guess he felt natural -- like a fool.

The next time the curtain is lifted, we again see this young man. He is in middle life now, and is still acting the fool. I guess when he left Jesus that never-to-be-forgotten morning, he said to himself, "Well, if I have got to give up all to be a Christian, I'll just give up Christianity. Here goes to have a big time in this world." And he has it. And do you know I admire the man who will not mix religion and worldliness? Some people join the church, hoping to be saved, but still cling to the world. They don't get much out of this life, and of course they won't get anything out of the world to come. Let us forget all there is out of one life anyway. Don't mix them. But the reason God called him a fool, was because of the FOUR MONUMENTAL BLUNDERS he made.

\* \* \*

### 1. HE LEFT GOD OUT OF HIS PLANS

"And he thought within himself, saying what shall I do; because I have nowhere to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do, I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all of my fruits and my goods." He left God out of his plans. God had given him sunshine, had given him rain, had given him health. And yet he does not propose to pay back one cent no, "I'll build me bigger barns and there I will put my goods." "I don't need you, God. You are not in



my plans at all." 'POOR FOOL. And yet there are thousands today, who have done and are doing the same thing. I care not what vocation or avocation you may have selected, GET GOD INTO YOUR PLANS. If you would be a physician, call in consultation the Great Physician. If you would be a lawyer, let the great Advocate of heaven look over your briefs. If you would be a farmer let him who sows "the good seed" impregnate your life. O, whatever you do, or be, get God into your plans. I once read the story of a very bright young man, who, through the benefactions of a wealthy old gentleman, was enabled to attend college and graduate, which he did with much honor. He concluded before going to Denver, his chosen field of labor, to visit his benefactor, and tell him his future plans. After reaching the old gentleman's home and thanking him again and again for his great kindness to him, by placing within his grasp a weapon with which he could successfully fight the battles of life, he said; "Major, I thought it really due you, to let you know my plans and to get your acquiescence." "Well," said the Maj., "What do you propose to do?" "O," said the young man, I have chosen law, as you know, and am going to Denver, to put out my shingle and begin." "And what then?" asked the Maj. "Well," replied the young man, "I hope to be successful, even from the first. Of course I expect to save my money, buy books, be studious and make a name." "And what then?" again asked the venerable man. "By that time I will likely marry some sweet girl, build me a home, be happy and enjoy a lucrative practice." "Well, what then?" "O, by that time I'll have enough money saved to be comfortable and my reputation will be so that I will only take five and ten thousand dollar fees; and as my wife and children ride down the street, the people will say, 'Yonder goes the Colonel's family.' In other words I hope to be famous." "Well, what then?" insisted the old man. "O, I guess by that time my children will be grown, and I'll see them through to success, like you have done for me." "Wells what then?" O, I'll be quite old by that time. Guess I will sit in the corner 'til the death angel comes." Then the old man jumped up and shouted, "Well, what then, young man?" And do you know he had laid his plans one by one, step by step to the verge of the' grave, where he must meet God, and yet had left God out of his plans? O, young people, take God into your plans! Don't you marry, young lady, until you talk to God about it. And don't marry a young man, unless he is willing to let God into his plans, for -- hear me -- God will get into them somehow. You had better invite Him in. The first monumental blunder the rich fool made was to leave God out of his plans.

\* \* \*

## 2. HE WAS A MATERIALIST

Man has a body and a soul. And just as you have to take care of your body, so you must look after your soul and its interests: Your body is finite and perishable; your soul is imperishable, immortal. "To lose your wealth is much; to lose your health is more; to lose your soul is such a loss, as no man can restore." O, holy men strive to bring plenty and comfort to their body, which will vet in the grave, when their soul, which is to live when the stars are dead, is neglected! He thought his soul could subsist on the same things his body could. "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry, thou hast much goods laid up for many years."

How could his soul take its ease? There is but one thing which can satisfy a human soul, and that is Jesus. Just as the light is adapted to the eye; sound to the ear drum, so is your soul adapted to God, and God to it. Money cannot satisfy the soul. Beautiful, palatial brown-stone fronts, on be-flowered boulevards, will not bring peace and contentment in the dying hour. "Gad is

a Spirit and they that worship him, must worship in spirit and in truth." A friend gives me a beautiful little bird which I take home in a nice, neat, but wooden cage. I hang the cage on the wall in my room. But the little bird won't sing. I change him from one part of the room to another. Still he droops and pines. It bothers me and I say, "What's the matter, little birdie?" "Why don't you sing?" "O, I know what's the matter. He can't be happy in that cheap cage. I'll buy him a golden cage, with silver cups and basin from which to eat and bath his downy feathers. How magnificent you look, little bird, in your golden prison!! But still he droops. I take him out in the flower garden where the sun is shining and the air is balmy. Still he looks sick. Maybe he cannot sing. I gently reach my hand in the cage, take the little fellow out, and stroking his bright plumage say, as I open his tiny little mouth, "Can't you sing, my birdie?" Just then he jumps from my hand to the limb of a tree, and I try in vain to catch him. See him as he sits there so saucily looking down at me, picking his ruffled feathers! He gazes at me a moment, then leaps into the air and, with a song which almost bursts his throat, he soars to the sun, singing back to me, "Farewell, golden cage and silver cups, I have found my home .and now I will sing." How can your soul "eat, drink and be merry" when you only feed it on material things? What would you think of a man who, instead of giving his horse corn and oats, each morning before driving him, would go out to the stable and read the 23rd Psalm to him? Or instead of giving bran to his cow before milking her, would throw her a copy of "Old Mother Goose rhymes?" You say, Why such a man is a fool. And that is why God called the man of my text a fool. He thought his soul could subsist on the things which were only adapted to his body. Many a man tries to feed his soul on comer lots, stiff bank accounts and fertile farms, and then wonders why he is not happy. How can your soul be happy on such diet? Look at that foolish herd of simple women who feed their souls on silks and satins and ostrich plumes. "Eat, drink, and be merry" they say to their starved souls, while their souls faintly call back, "We want the Bread of Life." There are many kinds of fools in the world. There are intellectual fools, society fools, gambling fools, drinking fools, and many other kind of fools too numerous to mention. Some one has said, "Everybody is some kind of a fool." But the biggest of all fools is a money fool!

This man was a money fool. Very few people have sense enough to have much money. Did you ever see a man who suddenly came into possession of a fortune? Now just watch him! The chances are he will just about quit going to church, and will drop family prayer altogether. He is so important, and so conceited, it is disgusting to be around him. And listen at him, as he puts his hands in his pockets and talks learnedly about things great and small. See his ignorant wife and green children bloom into society. Money turned them fools. Take their money away and they will come to themselves. My father was pastor of a man down in Georgia who will furnish an illustration of what I mean. He was quite wealthy, but irreligious. My father had tried in vain/o be a blessing to him, but you could see he was suspicious of him, thinking he was after his money. One day the man was taken sick. He grew rapidly worse from the first. It was a pitiable sight to see the poor sinner lying there, talking about his money, which was in a large chest near his bed.. O how he hated to leave it! He became suspicious of his wife and children, sad forbade them in his room. The day he died he made the doctor take a key from off his wrist and unlock that chest, and pile the money on the bed by him. He then said, "Doctor, hand me my gun." The physician, knowing he could not use it, handed it to him, or, rather, laid it across .his lap. Then said this poor fool, "Now doctor, you get out of here." When the man of medicine returned, but a few moments later, he was dead. He had his money, didn't he? No!! His money had him! O, these money fools, who think not of their souls, but of money, money. Money is a useful thing in its place, and you can so use it while you live, that instead of being black vultures, probing your conscience in the dying hour, the

eagles on the dollars you have made will turn to singing nightingales, and make your death bed "as soft as downy pillows are."

My brother and I stopped in a home out West, on one occasion, where the man was reputed to be worth fifteen millions. He was out on one of his ranches when we got there, and hence we did not see him for five or six days. The day before he was to come home, his wife came to our room very much excited and quite pale. "Young men," said she, "my husband is coming home tomorrow afternoon and I wish to say a word to you about him before he comes." Then, bursting into tears she said, "I thought maybe you might not understand him, and his rough way of speaking might offend you." We assured her we fully understood, and that we would pray for him, and for her not to feel embarrassed. The next afternoon, just before supper, she came up again and said, "Young men, he is here, come down and meet him."

I noticed she had been crying. Following her down stairs we entered her room, where sat this "lord of creation," with a scowl on his face. I extended my hand to him saying, "I am glad to meet you, Mr. Blank. We have been enjoying your hospitality -- and" -- before I could go further he squealed out in a grating voice, "I wish you were in Halifax. Preachers will eat me out of house and home yet. Take them out of here, wife, take them out of here." We did not have to be "tuk out," but as we walked away from his house, I said to my brother, There is another rich fool.

Mr. Cole told me that when he was pastor in Chicago many years ago this very sad incident occurred. While out visiting one afternoon he called on one of his most prominent families. Just as he was about to leave, one of the young ladies said, "Oh, Mr. Cole, let me show you something exquisite," and one of the girls ran hurriedly up stairs, and returned when each held a tailor box in hand, which bore the stamp of some Paris dress-maker. Georgia said, "Isn't this the prettiest thing you ever saw?" (Taking a beautiful dress from the box and holding it in front of Mr. Cole.) "The trimmings alone on each of these dresses cost papa fifteen hundred dollars; he brought them from Paris last week. We are going to wear them to the German, Christmas." Mr. Cole said, Girls, which do you think would please God most: for you to wear them to the ball, or to give them to your pastor and let him advertise them in the papers, and sell them, and give the money to the mission field? "Not on your life," said Georgia. "I'd dance in this gown, if I knew it would cost me my soul." The younger sister said nothing, but turned rather pale and looked at Georgia. "Well, I just thought I would ask you the question," said Mr. Cole. "Good evening." The next day the preacher received a note from the younger sister in which she told him his question had startled her, and that she had not slept a wink that night, and further that she had decided he might take her dress and sell it, and turn the money into the mission treasury. Georgia went to the ball and had a big time. The papers complimented her lovely Paris gown. While dancing, however, becoming very warm she ran to the window and caught cold, which settled on her lungs and terminated in pneumonia, from which death resulted in eight days. The day she died she asked that Mr. Cole be called in. When he got there she was nearly gone, but seeing him she requested that her ball dress be brought to her. Raising white, bejeweled hand, she pointed to the dress and said, "O beautiful Paris gown, I gave my soul for thee!"

O men and women, I beg you not to place anything ahead of your soul and its welfare.

"Life is real, life is earnest,

And the grave is not its goal;  
Dust thou art to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul."

\* \* \*

### 3. HE THOUGHT HIS GOODS WERE HIS OWN

In a sense a man's possessions do belong to him, but in a higher sense they do not. To illustrate: A man may belong to himself, but let his wife or children get sick and he must give up business, pleasure, and everything that he may go to their assistance. He is subject to their call. A man may belong to himself, but let his country go to war, and he is subject to its call. Now, in this sense, a man's possessions may be his own, but we must remember that God, who has prospered us, and blessed us with sunshine and showers, with health and ether facilities for the acquisition of these earthly goods, has a right, a higher right, a just right, to call on us whenever He may see fit.

Now, remember that God through His Son called on this man when he was young, to sell what he had, give it to the poor, and to come and follow Him. He wanted him to be a preacher, but he rebelled against this higher right and went away. Now hear him talk, "I will pull down my barns and build greater, and then will I bestow all of my goods and my fruits." Having refused to acknowledge this higher right while young, we find him in old age hardened in sin and actually believing these things belong to him. Let us remember that all we have is subject to the call of God. Yes, whatever we have is God's first, then ours. Mother, if God calls upon you to give up your darling little babe, remember it belongs to Him. If He sees fit to take your health, remember He has a right, and knows best. And should He take your property, remember He loves you and is doing it for your ultimate good. Oh don't rebel against the will of God.

When I see such men as Carnegie, and Armour, and Rockefeller who are responding to the call of God, and such noble hearts as Helen Gould who are coming forward with their gold, frankincense and myrrh, and laying it at the feet of Jesus my heart is stirred, and I cry out, Amen.

\* \* \*

### 4. HE THOUGHT HE HAD A LEASE ON LIFE

"Soul, thou hadst much goods laid up for 'many years.'"

Of all the stupendous blunders of this reckless man, this was the most monumental. And it is the great blunder men are making today, as no man has any assurance of life, for

"Death rides oil every passing breeze  
And lurks in every flower"--

And no man knows who will be the next to die. I care not how robust and hearty, how fair and young, you may be, just listen, and you will hear death muttering,

"I have marked you for my own,  
I will claim you by and bye."

There are fully as many short graves as long ones. Death is no respecter of persons, he comes to the mansion as well as to the hovel.

In my town the other day our beloved pastor preached the funeral of one of our prominent citizens. Looking at the coffin he remarked, "I wonder who will be the next to die?" and in two weeks he himself was in the ground. How little did he expect it would be himself who was next followed to the grave.

When I was in Wesson, Mississippi, two years ago, holding a meeting, the organist said, You will have to excuse me this afternoon, Brother Culpepper, I can't be at church. Said I, Why? I need you very much. She replied, One of my friends has just died. I said you are excusable; you have my sympathy. The next afternoon at three I preached her funeral. How little did she expect to die so soon, when she was talking to me.

A lady, one who moved in the richest circles of society, became one evening convinced of sin and alarmed about her condition. Deep convictions followed. She struggled against them, but could not get rid of them. She thought of her many engagements and her social position in life. Conscience said, "Decide for Christ now." The world whispered, "Not just yet, but by and by, such a step should not be taken hastily." In this state of perplexity and distress she retired to her room. As she did not appear the following morning, and did not answer the call, her room was entered. O, what a sight to the family! The stillness of death reigned. There lay the body, cold and lifeless! Her diary lay open upon the table. Two entries had been made the previous evening. "I am determined this day six months to give up the world and become a Christian." But, as if the conflict in her soul had deepened, and conscience had cried still louder, she had made a second entry: "This day one month I am determined to be done with the world and follow Christ." "But God said, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." And what became of that soul? And what, O sinner, would become of your soul if you should die tonight? And perhaps you may? Be warned by this example of the danger of delay and hasten to get right with God.

He thought he had a lease on life. "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." If I could convince you that you might die tonight you would seek God. While my father and I were engaged in holding a meeting in Columbus, Ga., this sad occurrence happened. One night in the great tent, while hundreds were coming forward for prayer, I noticed a young man about thirty years old crying. Stepping over to him I said, "Friend, go forward and give your heart to God." But he replied, "Not tonight, sir, not tonight."

I insisted, but again he said, "Not tonight, I will go tomorrow night, I declare I will." I passed on. The next afternoon walking into the tent to preach I noticed that the people were hurriedly leaving and upon inquiry I found the excavations which had been arranged for the water mains, had closed in, burying ten men. I hurried down to the scene of horror. When gotten out all but two were dead. Imagine if you can, my surprise when I saw that the last one removed was the young man who had but the evening before said to me, "Not tonight, sir, not tonight." He said, "Tomorrow night," but God said "tonight."

\* \* \*

## 5. GOD'S VERDICT

"Thou Fool." Now that was not the verdict of his wife. Doubtless she considered him faultless. Many a woman will have to give an account for the influence she had over her husband or could have had. A great many women seem not to care how hard their husbands have to work, or what may become of their souls hereafter, just so they dress them in the latest "agony." There will be many men lost at last, of whom it can be said "wife-damned." The poor fellow had to work himself to death or not be welcome at home. I have no idea but that his children thought him perfect. Who knows but that the minister who preached his funeral "preached him straight to glory." Of course the Lord's verdict was not that of the town in which he lived. They considered him anything but a fool. Why, all were glad to be counted among his friends; envied were those fortunate enough to be invited to his mansion. O, how true, that "man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart." The last scene in this act is one of horror. "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Before God spake he was saying, "Where shall I bestow all my goods and my fruits." But now hear him, while he piteously cries, "Father Abraham, send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." Rich on earth, but a beggar in hell.

Remember, sinner, that "the earth passeth away, and the fashion thereof; but they who do the will of God shall abide forever." Did you ever stop to think of that word, "lost?"

Have you thought of the awful state of a soul banished forever from the presence of God? Of one whose only consolation is found in looking back through the past and thinking of the transient pleasures he enjoyed in this world, while God through His Holy Spirit, His word, and His faithful followers was warning him to forsake his sinful life, seek salvation and flee the wrath to come? But alas! he waited too long. Do not sell your soul for that which will perish with the using.

On one occasion when Rowland Hill was preaching to a vast concourse of people in one of the parks in England, Lady Erskine, who had heard much of him and was anxious to hear and see him, drove out in her carriage to where he was proclaiming the gospel.

Mr. Hill had been preaching some fifteen minutes when she drove up. She opened the door of her carriage and looked out at him. The great evangelist paused a moment, closed his Bible, and then announced to the audience that he "had something to sell. Every one was dumfounded to think he would stop in the midst of such a wonderful discourse to sell something. What could it be? was the question in every heart. Imagine Lady Erskine's consternation when the man of God pointing Ms finger at her, announced the soul of Lady Anne Erskine as for sale. "Do I hear a bidder? What am I offered for this proud, haughty woman's soul?" Lady Anne Erskine said, "Drive on, coachman," but he had his eye on the marvelous preacher, and seemed unable to move. "Ah!" said Mr. Hill, "yonder is a bidder for your soul. He offers you worldly honors, worldly pleasures, so-called peace, but you must take death and hell, in the end. Will you sell for that? Do I hear another bidder? Yes, there stands a Being whose face is as fair as the morning, but whose hands

have been pierced with cruel nails. He offers you happiness, peace and joy here, and a fadeless crown of righteousness beyond the river of death. Now which will you take, Lady Erskine -- the devil, or Jesus with the nail-prints in His hands." With tears dropping from her eyes she leaped from her carriage, and extending a bejeweled hand she said, "O, Mr. Hill, I will, I will take the One with the nail-pierced hands."

Sinner, I commend Jesus to you. Accept Him now and be ready when the death angel knocks, or when Jesus shall rend the heavens and come in His glory to judge the world.

\* \* \*

#### AT NIGHT

"When noonday's sun is buried low  
Within a casket in the West,  
When evening breezes come and go  
Like sighings of an anxious breast,  
When blackened shadows slowly creep  
O'er wooded moor and pathless sod,  
Then nature lays her down to sleep  
And all are well who trust in God;  
But what of him who, robbed of light,  
Trembles and starts with venom'd fright,  
The wretch who gropes, all full of sin,  
Tormented by the hell within,  
Alone upon the road at night;  
Whose life is full of theft and lies  
Who totters, falls and falling dies  
Upon the road of sin at night,  
Alone upon the road at night?"

"Yea, what of him whose sun shall set  
Amid the silvery clouds of time  
'Who sees the shadows, black as jet,  
Come thick and fast from that dread clime  
Peopled with shrouds, the well-fed tomb,  
'The rotting flesh, the broken bone;  
Who sees no star within the gloom  
Now hears ought save an endless moan?  
Oh, what of him who, robbed of light,  
Trembles and starts with venom'd fright;  
The wretch who gropes, all full, of sin,  
Tormented by the hell within,  
Alone upon the road at night;  
Who falls and falling ne'er shall rise,  
Who dies and dying never dies,

Upon the road of hell at night,  
Alone upon the road at night?"

\* \* \* \* \*

## 08 -- POWER -- A Sermon By John B. Culpepper

I ask you to think awhile about this word, and that for which it stands. If I say, Christmas, you think of the end of the year, moving, Santa Claus, hanging up stockings, gifts, reunions, Jesus -- redemption.

Words stand for many things. It is eminently true of this word power. All that we fear is in power. All we hate is in power; all we love is found here; all we believe rests right here; it explains the clinging of the lichen; the flowing of the dreamy moss from fronded palms; the coral mountains in ocean brine; the life-giving breath of the seas; the structure of the cell of the busy bee; the growth of the flower with its scented atmosphere; the home of the ant; the house of the beaver; the flash of lightning and jar of thunder; the lifting of the spray and its transformation into drops, rivulets, flowers, trees, fruit, bread, life; the flight of the eagle; the song of mocking birds; the defiant stand of old mountains; the roar and dash of Niagara; the spring of the lion; the lifting of the sap-tides in spring time-up to the flight of earth -- up to where Job looked when he heard God ask, "Canst thou restrain the sweet influence of Pleiades? Canst thou guide Arcturus, with his sons?" The brightest pleiad gives light equal to 12,000 suns like ours, although it takes its light seven hundred years at the rate of 186,000 miles a second to reach us. Our sun equals 12,500 globes like ours, making this one Pleiad (Alcyon) 58 billion times larger than our world. Around this one star our sun, with his array of worlds, goes spinning like a boy's top. And this is only one sun-system, among thousands held in the grasp of orbital law, by one Pleiad. -- Power.

I want you to look up, up, up, from where you are now, to the Source of all this -- then come back and let me talk to you of,

- (1.) Natural power, or the power of nature.
- (2.) Of personal power, or the power one has over himself or herself.
- (3.) Relative power, or the power one person has over another.
- (4.) Diabolical power, or the power of the Devil.
- (5.) Divine power, or the power of God.

\* \* \*

## POWER

What is it? I was thinking on this subject out in Virginia, and asked a preacher for a good definition of it. He said, take John G. Woolley's. What? "It is the expressing and living out of a



whole truth." I could not grasp it, but took as a definition -- Power is nature at her best, or Nature in climax. I walk through a floral garden, passing flower, vase, square, triangle. I walk in delight, till I come upon my favorites -- the rose and the "cape jasmine." Here I stop. I have seen nature, florally, at her best. Power.

I walk out through our zoological gardens, and am much entertained by these various specimens of God's workmanship, until I find the southern mocking bird, the Newfoundland dog, mild-eyed and kind, the gentle horse, noble and ready. Here I stop; these seem to be saying to me, zoologically, nature is in climax. Power.

I have traveled over our level prairies, breaking into foot-hills, swelling mountains, until I stood upon the broad brow of some great pile, to exclaim, -- Nature is again, in weight and, bulk, in climax. Power.

I have crossed a narrow stream, gone south and re-crossed it, gone further south and crossed it, and watched it grow, until I floated down into its great Mississippi mouth at New Orleans, as it threatened to engulf the ocean. Then I have stood on the shore and watched this briny ebb and flow, remembering that more fortunes lie upon her bottom than on her top; that more lives are beneath her cruel depths than laugh above her crested billows; that she stands for separation and for those who went away and came not again; that her saline breath gives life and tone to the animal and vegetable kingdoms; that she is in co-operative harmony with the moon and perhaps a thousand other worlds above us. When I see these things I say, Here again is nature in climax. Power.

I listen to a good song. Sing me another, I say. They sing until one is reached that just suits me and fills me. Then I say, Sing that one again. You will never beat that one. I go through some great art gallery, and pause before the masters, until I see

"One hanging on the tree  
In agonies and blood."

At once I say, Let me camp. This is where I will stay. Power.

I have gone into our great Armour packing buildings and seen them melt thousands of gallons of tallow, then melt and mix into it butter -- town butter, country butter, old butter, clean butter, unclean butter, butter with and butter without a rancid smell, taste and look. Then I have seen them run a few hundred gallons of that mixture off into a separate vat, then from several points shoot clean water into it till it was a perfect spray. The oil would float, of course. By pulling a wire, a cock would open in the bottom, and that water, hair, dirt, would escape. This process would be repeated until you could not take a microscope and find any dirt. I said, Well, it is clean, but it has the wrong smell yet. Then they run it up through a pipe clear above the city, and shoot sterilized air through it, until when it comes back, it smells right, and looks right. It doesn't taste right yet. Then they take good rich cream, and mix to a consistency, place in the refrigerator, stamp it, and it is ready for market or mouth, absolutely clean, cleaner than you ever ate from your mother's table. If God, can make a man who can make a machine that can Cleanse and palatize

butter, should it be thought unreasonable that the great God, Himself should clean and keep clean His own temple -- the soul of man? Power.

I watched them bore oil wells, when I was in West Virginia. Until just a few years ago, when they bored a well a quarter of a mile into the earth and found nothing, they had to abandon the "hole," and bore again. Oil might lie in great abundance nearby, but could not be tapped except by another tedious and expensive bore from the surface. Now, it is different. When they fail to strike the precious fluid, they withdraw the auger, and let gently down several capsules of nitroglycerin, that most powerful of explosives, discovered by Dr. Noble, of Germany; they then turn loose a bar of iron, several feet in length, pointed at the lower end, and called "Go-Devil." While the devil is going, you must go, too, until the earth jars beneath you, then -- well, the earth is cracked in all directions, for a mile, and there are as many chances for oil, as there are cracks in the rock. Power.

By the use of the X-ray I recently looked through Webster's large dictionary and saw a pin on the other side. Power. -- Nature in climax.

I recently saw a man, by the use of "liquid air," freeze my pocket handkerchief so that it broke like a dry reed. He froze a piece of fresh beefsteak till it broke into as many pieces as a glass would if flung to the floor. He froze some fruit nearly three hundred degrees below zero, while within an inch of the same spot, and in the same vessel, he melted steel points at a temperature three hundred degrees above boiling point. Power -- Nature at her best.

Nature reaches a high level, conjugally, when a gullible girl marries a fraudulent man and clings to him down the Alpine slides of indulgence, intemperance, drunkenness, cruel neglect, poverty, cruel beatings and heartless desertion, till she sells her bed to get him out of jail, or fishes his debauched body out of the brothel and gives it an honorable and wifely burial. High Level That! Power.

Nature reaches a high levels materially, when the mother divides bread with her neighbor's child. It reaches a higher level when the mother teaches her own child to go hungry, that she may care for the starving child of a dead Chinese mother. The highest level is reached when the mother kisses her own darling good-bye and goes to the Mission front to teach others of that Christ that she knows so well. Or, better still, when she kisses her darling child good-bye and bids him or her go and teach the heathen the way to God. This is love gone to pity, or love in sacrifice, or love in her best mood. Power. May I ask you to look up from love giving money, love giving self, up, up to Him who so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son.

For this love, let rocks and hills  
Their lasting silence break,  
And all harmonious human tongues  
Their Savior's praises speak!

\* \* \*

POWER

(1.) Personal power, or that over one's self. This is not unlimited, but is great. When a man says, "I will have an education," few things can stop him. He will come to an honorable estate in knowledge. When a man says, "I will be rich," and sticks to it, few things will hinder him. The rule holds good in the social world. When a man or woman says, "My birth and environment shall not hold me," he will, or she will, be a leader in social circle, if he, or she, so elects. The rule holds in the moral world. I have seen men rise up in the strength which God imparts in creation, and say, "I will not touch whisky again." They need not. I have seen men quit the vile morphine habit, in the exercise of a God-given will. Then I have seen men and women set their hearts on finding Christ, sweeping all opposition before them, until I have said, "Where is the limit?" Power.

(2.) Then there is the power which one person has over another. One boy with a cigarette in his mouth can put a whole block to smoking, stealing the wherewith and lying about it. I have been preaching to a group of lads, when a familiar whistle would sound on the outside. Boy after boy would prick up his ears, reach for his hat and slide out, until perhaps a dozen would join that whistler. One bad boy can upset in an hour what it took a mother ten years to inculcate; just as an exposure to smallpox may poison the blood, and break down the tissues which it took twenty years to build up. O, the power of one ungodly man! I remember being in a Florida town when a certain dentist was converted. He sent for me the next morning. Being full of talk, he said, "Sir, I have spent a dollar a clay for whisky for thirteen years; O, I did not drink it all myself, but it all went that way. Not only so, but I have committed murder every week at least, during that period." I said, "O, hush! What are you talking about?" He said, "Well, I mean this: I have had. two homes, and, connected as I was, I could not afford to be detected. So whenever I left my pure wife and went around there, I first belted on a pistol, fully bent on killing any man who recognized me there. I new see all this was murder." Seeing I was in the presence of an intelligent and candid man, I said, "How much is there of that in your little town?" He replied, "I don't know an exception among the business men." Said I, "Put that in figures, say two-thirds; don't be so sweeping." He answered, "I tell you, I don't know an exception." The next day I was talking with the leading merchant, our Sunday school superintendent, and the man who got me there. Without calling a name, I said to him, "A citizen here declares that the bulk of the business men of this town have two homes." Then this man said to me, "Brother, I don't know an exception." I looked, up in alarm, and asked, "Well, are you guilty?" He replied, "I was, sir, until this very morning. Having heard your sermon to men yesterday, I went around and paid her to leave town." Thoroughly alarmed, I began an investigation, and found that forty years before a French infidel had settled there, and reared a large family; but all the while he lived and talked against the sacredness of the family tie. (This last man I conversed with was a son-in-law of his). He had so obliterated the family conscience that men could, hold church offices, teach in Sunday school, claim to be religious, and be as vile as sin. The old man sought God in the meeting, joined the church, and set out on a reform line. But he hardly lived to undo one act in a hundred. Power for evil.

O, the power of an attractive, but unChristly woman! If I were the Devil and wanted to run a man into a low-down gambling hell, I would put my pack of cards into the hands of a nice, pretty girl up yonder in the parlor. I'd prefer that she belong to the church, too. Through her I would get my man, if he was to be had. I wanted to roll husbands on the floor in their own drunken vomit, I would tell my henchmen, the saloonkeepers, to occupy till I come again, and then I would go up into the fashionable homes, start suppers, evening parties, dinings, punch-bowls. I'd place the wine in the hands of some fair girl or charming hostess, and tell her to do her best. If I were the Devil,

I'd rather have the co-operation of such a woman as I have described, especially if she were a member of the church, than all the combined agencies of hell besides. Give me such a woman, and time, and I would land every man at the bottom, who could respect a woman who sips wine or offers it; who plays cards, or tolerates them. I tell you the power of a bad woman is the power of the Devil.

I walked into a drugstore in a Mississippi town and tied in with a young man about his soul. He frankly told me he had never prayed in his life. I silently prayed and pressed the claim of his soul upon him, until it was clear that he was surrendering. Just then a young lady glided by and stopped, out of my sight, but in view of the young man. He was much embarrassed. When she had passed on he said, "Now, Mr. Culpepper, there it is; could you have seen her laugh at me and slyly point her hand at you, you would say there was no use in starting; why, that's my best young lady friend. We dance, play cards and run together generally." I said to myself, As certainly as the Devil ever went to Eve through the serpent, so certainly did he come here in that young lady. God helping me I will break his spell. So I tied in again with that young man, until it was clear that he was serious again. That night after church, we met him, when he said, "Fellows, I want your help; I am going home to try to pray for the first time in my life." The next morning I found him in his store, soundly converted and very happy. He had spent the entire night praying for others after he himself had been saved. While exultantly telling me about it, he tore the end from a letter which he held in his hand. When he opened it I saw he was affected. He hurriedly folded it up, then said, "It is a strange thing to me that my last assault before giving my heart to God was my best lady friend, and that the first attack after being converted should be from my next best lady friend." He then read me enough to denominate it suspiciously jaunty. Nature is at her best in a sweet woman. But the Devil is at his best in a worldly woman. Power.

\* \* \*

## DIABOLICAL POWER

I now come to speak to you of Diabolical Power, or the power of the Devil. I approach the subject with trepidation. From my earliest recollection I have believed in the existence and direful operations of a great evil force. This force I early came to recognize as the Devil, and have easily attributed to him personality, a great sweep of intelligence, and, next to unlimited power. I have therefore not been in sympathy with those who call him by the trite name of "The Old Man," "Old Harry," "Sam Patch," "Old Nick," "Old Scratch," "Old Klooks," "Old Split-foot," etc., etc. I fear such have never realized his power or their danger. My Bible informs me that an angel who knew him formerly, in contending for the body of Moses, said, "The Lord rebuke thee." If a holy angel stood in awe of this fallen prince, does not much humility become us, who have been so often deceived and so nearly ruined by him? It should not be forgotten that while I stand here and discuss him, he has, in eternal duration, millions of our race, once as ignorant of his power and as unconscious of his presence as you. This Bible calls him the god of this world; the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now rules in the children of disobedience. That's the devil.

He is called a serpent. Who is not instinctively afraid of a snake? What mother never said, "Be careful, a serpent may strike you?" They are hidden; they are numerous; they are of many sizes;

they are of various colors; they are poisonous; they are full of envy; they are sneaking; they strike to kill. That's the devil.

He is called a deceiver, what is worse than that? Deceived. My wife deceived me; my husband deceived me; deceived by my child; my mother deceived me; my friend in whom I trusted, deceived me; the preacher deceived me. Business deception, deception in the home, deception in the church -- what is worse? That's the devil. Why, as certainly as the chameleon can adapt his color to the object he rests on, or the enemy it would elude, so certainly can the Devil change shape, color, appearance. Why, he can get into an old hen and have her scratch up your flower seed, or garden seed a dozen times a day. He can get into an old cow and train her to lift your gate off the hinges at night, or show an old sow a half dozen devilish tricks about the place, half of which she will get off while you are at church on Sunday. He can get into your cook. When he does, one of her tricks is to come up missing just when some distinguished guest is expected, or just as a revival meeting starts. And that's the devil.

He is called "a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." See that "king of beasts" as he escapes from his keeper, and goes roaring down the street, killing a cow and crushing a favorite dog, frightening into a deadly runaway that old family horse; de-limbing that beautiful girl; clawing to death that strong man, springing a full-grown panic a mile wide. And that's the devil.

He is called the red dragon. The Roman soldier wore upon his shoulder or helmet a little silver-colored, scaly dragon, pivoted so as to turn all the time, and with holes puncturing it, so as to make a squeaky, nerve-harrowing noise. This, with the sunlight reflected from every dancing scale, would often throw the enemy into hopeless route before the blow was struck. The old red dragon swept his tail around through Heaven and knocked one-third of the stars from their orbit, transforming them into demons of destruction. And that's the devil.

His trinity is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. Riches, honors, pleasures, so tempting with their flitting shadows as to catch the affections of the multitude. The difficulty lies within. He makes man his own enemy and his own destroyer. The mind is ignorant of God, the heart is full of sin, the eye sees no beauty except in earthly things, until all capacity for God or good seems to be gone. Pride of life. Why, people can be proud of their country, of their state, of their county, of their town, of their street, of their set, of their name, of their house, of their form, of their face, of their clothes, of their blood, of their church, of their preacher, of their very humility. And that's the devil

I met a woman who was proud that she was a descendant of Pocahontas. She informed me that her ancestress married Capt. Jack Smith. A woman boasted to me once that she came from the Huguenots. I knew that she came from where I did -- the pine knots. And that's the devil.

He is called the "destroyer." Wherever you find decay, you see his foot-prints; wherever you see the fading, you see the blight of his breath; wherever you find death, you see the touch of his withering hand. And that's the devil.

Had it ever occurred to you that he met Adam and Eve, fresh from God's hand, and in His very image, and in fifteen minutes had made abashed criminals and crouching cowards of them,

and had frightened every bird and beautiful animal from that garden -- the sum of divine power, wisdom and love -- and had changed the plans of God, changed the destiny of man, and reversed the course of history? That's the devil.

And has it ever occurred to you that he met God, our great Maker, there and fought him every inch of the way to the flood, and well knew his victory was almost complete in the antediluvian destruction? He then attacked Noah, got him drunk, got into his son, instigated a Babel -- fought God every inch of the way to Moses, without whine or let up. He renewed the attack, against symbols, ceremonies, and sacrifices, through the reign of Judges, prophets and kings, down to the dip of angels among shepherd bands, and the mysterious visit of the wise men, and the arrival of the beautiful Babe in the cattle yards. In all this he has not slept an hour, rested a day, complained of being the least tired, nor seemed the least daunted or disposed to let up. And that's the devil.

God's administration at first was personal; it next became angelic; then men were appointed to represent Him; He spake through patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings, types and symbols. But all this time it was the same old Devil, with or without change, but equal to the emergency. With a suspicious, if not a knowing and murderous, eye on Jesus he followed Him until He revealed to him, at least His true nature and mission. Instead of surrendering the question after Jesus was reinforced by the Holy Ghost and endorsed by heavenly thunder, he seemed to become more a devil, and at once compassed an attack upon Him. And that's the devil.

He doubtless remembered his speedy and phenomenal success four thousand years efore in the garden. Knowing that man was a trichotymous being, he attacked him first in his lower nature and compassed his complete overthrow. Accordingly he magnified Christ's raging hunger and showed Him the quick way to appeasement. Failing in this, but nothing daunted, he next attacked Him in His intellectual and higher nature. Signally foiled, but not conquered, he turned angel of light, and bid all of his possessions for one worshipful glance from this meek, but formidable, Antagonist. The offer was a real one, for the earth certainly fell to him by military conquest in the capture of Adam and Eve. There may have been a doubt as to the identity of Christ, but he well knew that one act of obeisance would at once seat him firmly upon the throne of earthly empire, forever prevent the salvation of the race, accomplish the capture of God's Son and partner in empire, and would make a successful attack on Heaven itself, a possible thing. Doubtless the quiet, but deeply-burning command of Jesus, to get behind Him, at the same time disclosing the fact that He knew who he was, appalled the Devil, for this was the most staggering blow he had ever gotten. But did he surrender? Did he at once and forever abandon his vile purpose of man's utter destruction, and God's overthrow? No, indeed. This Book only says, he left Jesus for a little season. And that's the devil.

Who, among Bible students, has not watched, with both admiration and alarm, the work of these two mightiest contestants as they contended the next three years for supremacy in the human heart, and the ownership of the world? Not one hour did the Devil sleep, not one stone went unturned, not one weakened front did he show, until concreted in disciples' doubt, burning in official envy, raging in national jealousy, roaring in the frenzied ignorance of the populace, fulminating in the wild clamor of party cliques, blazing in personal and factional interests,

religiously defending the temple and tenets of Moses, heading up in a traitorous Judas, culminating in a murderous mob, he again attacks Christ. And that's the devil.

Will he now stop? We shall soon see. He is the instigator of every plot, the inspiration of every lie, heads every procession from tribunal to tribunal, and from dignitary to dignitary, until poor, deceived, tired, ambitious, cowardly Pilate gives his consent for Jesus to be crucified. With all Hell in wild jubilation, he superintends the dead march to Golgotha, arranges the cross, gives strength to the arm that drives the nails, nerves the soldier that thrusts the spear, laughs at the thirst of his victim, ceases not before the sudden darkness, stops not the sudden revolt of the pale subjects of his -- till now undisputed kingdom, death, for he well knew that the death of Christ would be the death of all. A few sporadic escapes from the grave, therefore, do not deflect him from his one business -- the death of the Son of God. Thus with a zeal, courage and daring, worthy the best cause, he forges through darkness, earthquake, resurrection phenomena, prayer of disciples, sympathy of friends, cry of Christ, and thunder of God, till a shudder goes through the whole universe, every angel in Heaven stands appalled, and all Hell bursts into uproarious laughter over the news that the day-star has disappeared from the sky; the hope of the race has gone into irremediable eclipse; the Sun of righteousness has been blown out in disgraceful and crucifixional midnight; that the second great battle of the universe and of the ages has been fought, and that God's second great scheme for the human race has miscarried -- Jesus is dead. And that's the devil.

True, in a short time he and all his infatuated followers must have been thrown into consternation over the fact that Jesus, so far from being dead, was alive and stood in sacerdotal form, among the prisoners of Hell, and shot through their dark dungeons the first ray of light that had fallen upon them since they had died "without God and without hope in the world"; but in a short time, Satan had rallied his baffled and chagrined followers, and adjusted all Hell to the mysteries of the glorious incarnation -- nothing daunted, that from henceforth must oppose God for man, above, man around man, also in man. In thirty minutes he had concocted a scheme and by a most marvelous feat of diplomacy and deception, had prevented a widespread stampede from Judaism and Pharisaical cant, and priestly tyranny, and Hebrew bigotry, and Gentile idolatry, back through Christ to God. He scattered the disciples, headed up in Peter, and organized a fish-fry, set afloat many fanciful, unreasonable and extraordinary stories, filled Thomas with unreasonable and exacting doubt -- in short, ran everything, even capturing for the time. being, the Apostolate. AND THAT'S THE DEVIL.

He was cloudless relieved of anxiety, when he saw Jesus go back to heaven, but he watched closely that prayer-meeting, and while not quite comprehending the situation, he ventured to throw one card by suggesting to Peter, a man -- a figure-head -- to take the place of Judas. All things moved without cause for alarm until a storm of wind was heard in Zenithal caverns, sweeping through the clear sky and, contrary to all known laws, formed its center, and spent its force in and about that prayer-meeting group. At the same time, flaming tongues were seen to fall upon the head of each man and woman in the building. What must have astonished Satan, was the ease and grace with which the disciples received this Heaven-born cyclone, this heavenly cargo of fiery tongues, as if they were the legitimate outcome of the prayer-meeting and had been expected. Recognizing this as the Christ's promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost, he was, no doubt, nonplused as the disciples swept down upon a surging city, and with a zeal he had never seen in man, and a

burning he had never felt in words, began a most successful assault against his kingdom, frightening thousands of his human allies, while driving regiments of his imps from the field.

Did he surrender? So far from it he soon had a company of ready dupes, circulating the story of an all-night debauch among these men and women, and that this was just the frenzied overflow of it all, and would soon pass away. And that's the Devil.

With immeasurable aptness, he adapted himself to these new developments, and with unparalleled generalship, he mustered every soldier in the army, and every marine in the navy, into line, and ordered a charge. At once every soldier was a veteran and every marine an immortal. And from that day to this, they "do resist the Holy Ghost." There is not a word in the Bible which has not been attacked with bomb, lance, faggot; not a good paper, or sermon, or prayer, or purpose, or thought but he has been at his birth, and throughout its useful career, has been an open antagonist -- often winning the day. Every man called to preach has to contend with him for his own life, of both body and soul; has had to watch for his own character, while trying to snatch from him the souls of the millions enthralled. Not one missionary ship has escaped his eye; not one disciple but who has felt his keen dirk. Nine family altars out of every ten have gone down before his guns; he has bombarded the prayer-closet of every saint of God; he attacks every child that comes into life, relentlessly pursues it through its entire course, and if the children escape him, they hear his bullets and arrows flying about their heads and piercing the very gateposts as they run, half frightened to death, into the city of God. Well did old Bunyan say, "I perceive that from the very gate of Heaven there is a way to hell." No wonder the soldierly Paul feared that after preaching to others he should become a castaway. The Devil has become versed in the laws and arts of incarnation, and wields them as readily as Jesus Christ, the great Incarnate. He can't sell whiskey, but he can get into a Sunday school scholar, make him put on a white apron and spend his whole life besotting the race. He can make one so loyal to the Democratic party, that, in his zeal for its principles, he will really think it unwise to attack the liquor business. When have we had a President, or candidate for that high office, who was not too great a coward to open his mouth against this sum of villainies? Entrenched behind party patriotism, he is safe from successful attack. This one battery commands the field of the entire world, and fires into our race, irrespective of age, sex or previous condition, at the expensive rate of two billion dollars a year, with other and greater damage which can not be measured in cold type. And that's the Devil.

He can not run a gambling hell, but he can get into men who will. He can get into women who will join clubs, play cards, giving them respectability and impressing men with a vain thought as to their harmlessness, and thus he manufactures the "black-legs" of our day. There is not a sin so low, or a crime so vile, but he can easily induce men and women to commit. And in all this world he has not failed to instigate war, embroiling almost every nation of the earth in my short day: and these nations, many of them are called Christians, with Christian rulers, kill each other as readily as do the cannibalistic heathen. What religious order has not been the scene, and subject, of bitter controversy? What body of preachers never wrangled? What family never had a feud? What individual never carried a weapon, or wished for one, or was not mad enough to do or wish harm? And that's the devil.

While I stand here and talk of him, he is alive, and here, and is healthy, determined and active. This day but for the opposition of Christ, he would sweep through the vegetable world, and



scar and sear its carpets of green; crush every living leaf and limb, until from the lichen on the rock, to the rose on the wall, and on up to the giant oaks of California, on and on, until this kingdom was brown and dead at his feet. Then he would look up into the face of Christ and say, I have conquered one of your kingdoms. And that's the Devil.

He would then order his thoroughly-drilled soldiers to the front again, and, if he dared, he would attack the kingdoms of organic life. He would crush them all, visible and invisible. He would demolish every little ant-home, and slay every little resident, up to every beautiful little butterfly on painted wing, up to every faithful dog who guards his master's interests, up to every friendly cow who gives nurse to the little children, up to the noble draft horse, reaching up and sapping the life from every chirping and warbling bird, out through the seas, spreading death through their watery caverns and palaces, until in the midst of world-wide death and stench, he could look up into the face of Christ and say, I have conquered another one of your kingdoms. And that's the Devil.

Not yet satisfied, he would turn and dash every innocent babe before its mother's eyes; he would slay the entire human race from suckling to centenarian, from prison to pulpit, from orgy to orphanage, from embryo to empire, from criminal to Christian, from vile sinner to shouting saint. Then with all hell in a sure enough rebel yell, he would look into the face of the Son of God, and say, I have conquered another one of your kingdoms. And that's the Devil.

Nothing glugged, He would muster his infernal cohorts, blow out the light of every lamp, extinguish every gas-jet, turn off Edison's light, blow out the sun, moon, and stars, leaving this little ball in the darkness of midnight, while, withal, he, with pomp and sweep of daring well worthy of him, would move on the nearest planet where life was to be found, repeating the dire work, on and out, though it took him ages upon ages, his hate would not be appeased; his energy would not flag; his strategy would not desert him, until he could, amid the thunderous applause of his blood-feasted, soul-damning followers, look up into the face of Jesus Christ and say unto Him, I have conquered each and every one of your created kingdoms. And that's the Devil.

But think you all this death and destruction would appease his wrath, or cool his burning hate, or gratify his infernal ambition? Not his. In a few minutes, he would muster his dark minions, deliver to them a most cautious charge, then move in solid phalanx and dire plot against Heaven, the home of God and the beautiful angels. Do you see him, as he breaks through those jasper walls and shouts to his erstwhile friends and brothers -- Aha! aha! aha! I told you; I told you I would come again; I urged you to go on revolt with me six thousand years ago, but you were cringingly loyal to your King and my enemy. We meet again: And not until every beautifully-pinioned angel had in his own yard, been de-limbed, de-winged and defeated in battle dire, and lay dead, would this racial siege and sortie end, when again this implacable and arch foe of God would look across into the face of Jesus and say, "I have conquered another kingdom." And that's the Devil.

I think I hear him say, "Now, my braves, do you see that cloud gathering yonder on the horizon of glory? My superior eye recognizes myriads of the "spirits of just men made perfect." They are those who fought us successfully from the cradle to the river of death, and then escaped to these strongholds, from which until this day, we have been excluded. They know our arts of warfare; every one is already a conqueror. They are coming -- get ye ready for the shock. Your

motives shall be two-fold to prevent an overthrow here on the verge of unprecedented victory and to add to our many laurels by overcoming these who once overcame us. The day would never be declared, off, until every spirit from Abel to Paul, and from Paul to the youngest to be crowned, had been slain or bound in the very chains these rebels had worn. And that's the Devil. I hear him say, My companions in suffering, do you see that throne yonder? Unreef the black flag, under which you have so valiantly fought for six thousand years, and go with me in but one more struggle. If we are victorious, this universe is ours; if defeated, a hell such as we never dreamed of awaits us. Not until Jesus had been mete, overcome and utterly destroyed not until the cooing dove of every soul, the Holy Ghost, was no more -- not until God, our Creator and Father (were it a thinkable thing) lay dead at the foot of His own throne, and this arch hater sat dawn on the throne of universal darkness, universal destruction, universal anarchy, universal ruin, universal woe, universal Hell, would he or his confederates be satisfied. AND THAT'S THE DEVIL.

Don't look so lightly on him or his work. If God should call him up and offer him his old place back on conditions of good behavior, he, Miltonically speaking, would spurn the offer, preferring to rule in hell, rather than serve in heaven. And when he goes down at last, it will be in rage but not in weakness, or repentance. Mark that. AND THAT'S THE DEVIL. The blind poet had him--

"To bow and sue for grace,  
With suppliant knee and deify His power,  
Who from the terror of this arm, so late  
Doubted His empire; that were low indeed,  
That were an ignominy, and shame, beneath  
This downfall; since by Job, the strength of God  
And this empyrean substance, cannot fail;  
Since through experience of this great event,  
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,  
We may with more successful hope resolve  
To wage by force or guile, eternal war,  
Irreconcilable to our grand foe.  
Fallen Cherub! to be weak is miserable,  
Doing or suffering: but out of this be sure,  
To do ought good never will be our task,  
But ever to do ill our sole delight."

\* \* \*

## DIVINE POWER -- CHRIST

Divine Power -- Christ. After this meager, weak, but true description of the power and spirit of our common and ardent enemy, it is a relief, beyond language, to be able to find One who is more than His match on any field. He mystified him in birth, eluded him in infancy, astounded him among the lawyers in the temple, alarmed him at the Jordan, routed him in the wilderness, being at His weakest while His deceiver was at his best. No wonder

"He learned with awe to dread the Son of God;  
He, all unarmed, Shall chase thee, with the terror of His voice,  
"from the demoniac holds, Possession foul--  
Thee and thy legions yelling, they shall fly, and beg to hide  
Them in a herd of swine. Lest He command them down  
Into the deep, Bound and to torment, send, before their time.  
Hail, Son of the most high, heir to both worlds,  
Queller of Satan! On with thy glorious work,  
Now enter and begin to save mankind."

Paul told the Thessalonians that "our gospel came not in word only, but also in power." He gloried in the gospel of the cross, because it was God's power. "While this struggle with the Devil has been unaccountably long, and while today chains of heathen darkness and degradation are worn by one thousand millions, and while his infernal hand is still upon the home, the church and the pulpit yet, thank God, Christ is here and the battle is on. We look to Immanuel. The dazzling glory of God and the mild meekness of the perfect man, meet in Him. His excellencies of person and character are the one absorbing center of attraction among the angels above, and will be throughout the happy revolutions of eternity. The Devil has never ceased to fear Him, whether cooing in the cattle yards, laughing on mother's knee, quietly gliding through the serene and uneventful years of childhood, in laborious subjection to a poor and reputed father; suddenly springing into the temple with an air of authority; working the most unheard of and beneficent miracles; enduring alike the malice and the worship of the masses; submitting to an unexpected, capture; hailed as King before Pilate; fainting under His own cross; dying in short, fearful and yet very human agony, or thumping away the impediments of the tomb; walking forth and holding a few mysterious meetings, then suddenly quitting the world with a very definite promise to return. Satan trembles in his rage today, while he hears a million voices crying, "Look unto me and be saved, all ye ends of the earth." He knows that the sun will soon no more put on the livery of a mourner; that the Head once crowned with thorns will soon be encircled with the glory of universal empire; the face once soiled with spittle, bruised with smitings, and streaked in his own blood, now endazzles the workers of darkness, more than all the meridian suns of the universe; those hands which were once helplessly spiked to the cross, have reached out to take the scepter of universal and omnific, or human and holy empire. Up where Jesus is best known, we hear them say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." It is said this cry is caught up by "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands."

This long fight, which is one to the finish, is narrowed down to a contest between hate and love. Which is omnipotent? Which shall win at last? It is the wonder of three worlds that God should so love us as to give His Son for our salvation. This world being a rebellious province of Jehovah's empire we would expect His Son to visit it as the executive of the most castigatory judgments. But listen! "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Men tell us that love cannot win, else the love of the mother would keep her boy from going astray, nay, would fight death back from the infant and adult and drive it from every mortal shore: Else the love of wife would hold her husband in life and transform him who is boorish and wicked into a gentleman and saint: else the preacher would win this erring world back to duty and to God. Those who reason thus forget two facts: First, the

mother's love, though great, is only a faint glimmer of the love of Jesus. Second, there is no law or enterprise which stands for the betterment of the race but love is at the bottom of it. Every happy home, every institution of learning, every Lazar house, every orphan's home, each and every good man or woman, is another step in the conquering progress of love. -- Power. It is another monument to love; it is another proof that love will win. Power. Jesus is said to redeem us to God by His blood (Rev. 5:9.) Then we were lost to God. Indeed we were without God and without hope! No wonder then if God has recovered His own to a salvable ground, no wonder as half the race comes now flying into baby heaven through Christ, through love, there to develop under His eye, without a sin and without a temptation. No wonder if all others may be saved, and millions actually are: no wonder if justice has acquired a new and higher reason for punishing the finally impenitent, who have violated the first law, the highest law, and all law -- the law of love. O my soul! No wonder there is such an exultant display of Divine satisfaction in Him. Power -- God's power, in Christ.

Bear in mind, in this discussion, that it is Jesus who has arrested, is conquering and is to conquer the Devil. He is God in man the Divine man. Through regeneration, by the Holy Ghost, we are being reborn, are becoming the sons of God. Each one of these is a soldier. "One may chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight." The secret of the Lord is being imparted to those who fear Him. Psa. 25:14. Through them He is yet to do greater works than He did while on earth. The Devil must see this growing army, and must see Jesus getting ready to descend and retake the throne of earthly and universal empire. What an army is being mustered; what battles are just ahead; many of us expect to be on the ground, and, in the body, take part in this great scale-turning, destiny, settling day. Yes, we will be there in our material bodies. Matter is capable of many refinements. The sun is of the same original constituency as a clod of dirt. Our flesh and blood are but variations of earth and water. Our pocket handkerchief came from earth to flax, and on to linen. Yes, we will take part, in the body, a glorified body, in this gathering battle between Omnipotent love and diabolical hate. Is it not astonishing that we think so little of what is before us? Ye sons of God, ye soldiers of the cross, ye marines of the old ship of Zion, are you ready? O, ye unsaved, what prodigies of misery you will soon be! What monuments of divine blasting you will soon become! Do hurry to change sides and causes and leaders. While our weapons are not carnal, nevertheless "they are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10: 4, 5.)

Faith sees victory, not as Abel did, through the brush of seven thousand years; not as Moses did, through the rifts in law and ceremony. We stand in the open and expect victory. It is coming all along the line, and to all worlds. When Rev. J. O. Branch, of Georgia, was in his teens, he was a preacher and on a circuit in Fla., oscillating, however, between preaching and practicing law. His presiding elder ordered him to a camp-meeting. Being a beardless boy, he attracted much attention from the people, who considered him much beyond his years as a preacher. Being appointed to preach on the last night before returning to his charge, he took his Bible, went to the woods and lay down before God, and prayed that this life-work question might be settled that night. If he was to practice law he prayed to make a goose of himself as a preacher; if he was to preach he prayed that something out of the ordinary would happen. When the horn blew, he went up from prayer, fully appreciating the solemnities of the hour. As he passed through the weird shadows, caused by the torch-lights upon the dirt stands, and into the pulpit, his boyish frame was seized by a strange,

electrical pulsation throughout. It tingled through his entire body, until after the first prayer, when it was transferred to his brain proper. He took as his text that awful question, "For the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" He drew the judgment scene under a peculiar spell of earnestness and awe. The congregation sat motionless. When the preacher had finished his first division, he remarked that all who have names recorded in the Lamb's book of life will be able to stand. At this statement there was a general break in the audience, from that silent tension by which they had been held, and many exclaimed audibly, "Thank God." When the preacher opened his mouth to tell them how they might have their names written down, an unprecedented impulse seized him, and he vehemently clapped his hands and shouted several times, "Glory, glory; hallelujah to God." Fifty people caught the spirit of the preacher and sprang up and clapping their hands, repeated the same blessed words. Dr. Branch told me that this much embarrassed him. He stood wondering, until the people resumed their seats. He again opened his mouth to take the thread of his discourse, when again he was thrown into ecstasies and clapping his hands shouted, "Glory, glory; hallelujah to God." Scores of the audience being swept by the contagion, sprang up, moved about, clapped and shouted. This happened the third time, until great excitement prevailed in the audience, and the little preacher being overcome sank down in a swoon. This great man of God told me that he did not know how long he was unconscious, but that when he came to himself, it seemed that 3,500 people were singing, praying, clapping, and shouting. He immediately took in the situation, recalled the contract of the grove, and said, "Thank you, Master, that will do. The thing is settled. No law in mine." He fell like he now would preach, if he had to do it from the hurricane deck of a washtub, and exclaimed, "I am going at it at once." But when he went to rise his knees would not support him. Nothing daunted, he turned and crawled down into the straw to begin his life-work. On doing so, he found a young woman; almost prone along, who had said to him that morning, "Mr. Branch, before I will get down in the straw like those Methodists are doing, I will take my chances through the woods." He overheard her in prayer, saying, "Lord, if you will take this millstone off my heart, I will agree to lie in a mud hole for a month." I began to tell of this in Jacksonville, Fla., a few years ago, when an old country woman jumped up at this point, and said, "Mr. Culpepper, you 'hain't' half told that thing. It can't be told. I have tried it many times myself; I was there and stayed till sun-up the next morning, and so did, everybody else; and, there were over three hundred and fifty conversions." But friends, what was all this? It was the "old-time" power, the promised, power, the prophesied, power, the Pentecostal power, the Holy Ghost power, the power of love, the power of Christ.

\* \* \*

## DEVIL-CONQUERING POWER

I remember something like this in the life of Mr. Finney. After preaching one of his inimitable sermons one night, a desperado stepped up and asked him to go home with him. He readily assented, when a friend took him aside and, said, "Mr. Finney, that man is a multi-murderer and, will take your life; don't go. Mr. Finney, the fearless man of God that he was, unhesitatingly went along. Just before reaching his residence proper, his vile host led him down an alley, thrust a key into a lock, opened, a door, invited the preacher in, locked from the inside, and lighted a lamp. They were in the notorious bar-room of that section. With a burning in his eye hard to diagnose, and, pallor on his face symbolic of great internal commotion, he said, "Mr. Finney, this pistol has killed, four men while I held it. By proxy it has killed several others. Doubtless you know, sir, that

you are in the den of the most murderous desperado of this country. I did not bring you in here, however, to harm you, but to ask you if such a blood-guilty man can be saved." Mr. Finney said to him, "Sir, I will quote to you my text of tonight, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.'" The man then turned and picked up a greasy pack of cards and said, "Sir, through these cards I have won, misappropriated, misapplied, or stolen thousands of dollars. This work has driven men to poverty, theft, murder and suicide. "Can the gospel reach such a case as that?" Mr. Finney said, "O, sir, I am not authorized to do less than to quote my text, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.'" The poor culprit turned and took down from the shelf a black chunk bottle, and said, "Mr. Finney, for years I have sold whisky over this counter, debauching hundreds. There are not only many drunkards in this section through me, but many have died drunk; many have been drugged and robbed, and thereby driven into poverty, exile, theft and self-destruction. Now, sir, tell me plainly," as he fixed a burning gaze upon the preacher, "ought such a man, can such a man be saved?" Mr. Finney said, "My neighbor, you propound a dark problem, but I believe I am fully authorized to offer a solution in my text -- 'The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin.'"

With increasing concern depicted on his face, this poor prisoner of sin, crime, the devil, said, "Mr. Finney, I have neglected my family, I have kicked my own children about like a beast, I have beaten my own precious wife, as true to me as an angel of God. Now, sir, deal candidly with me, and tell me, do you believe that such a profane, lecherous, gambling, drunkard-making, murderous, wife-beating coward and criminal has any right to mercy, or any ground for hope?" The veteran of many battles, the ambassador of the Son of God, mentally re-read his commission, to offer salvation to every creature, and said, "My neighbor, you have swung before me the darkest picture I ever laid my eyes upon; but I have no authority, sir, from Him who sent me to preach, but to tell you 'the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin'." Looking the preacher in the face for a painful half minute, he slowly lifted his hand, turned the key, opened the door, and silently motioned the preacher out. The door closed upon his back, and he heard the click of the lock as he prayerfully walked away. The destroyed cards, spiked pistols, dehooped barrels, broken bottles, told how the man on the inside spent the remainder of the night. About breakfast time in the morning, he walked across the street and yard and took his seat in his wife's bed-room. His wife (Addie) sent little Addie, eleven years old, to tell him to come to breakfast. He said, "Addie, darling, tell your mama papa doesn't want any breakfast." The little girl went running back, falling as she hurried into the kitchen, and exclaimed, "O, mama, mama, papa called me darling!" After a few minutes she sent her with the same message, to come to breakfast. Again he said, "Darling, tell your mama, papa doesn't want any breakfast." The little girl went flying back and said, "O, mama, I wasn't mistaken, he did call me darling, he did." After waiting a few minutes the wondering wife sent her the third time. She stopped in the doorway, when her father motioned her to him and sat her down on his left knee and imprinted the first kiss of her life on her lips. His wife followed, cautiously on and peeped in at the door. Seeing her, he motioned her to him. She tremblingly approached, when he sat her upon his right knee, put his arms around her, and said, "My darling wife, it has been many years since you sat here, or received a gentle caress or kind word from me. This is the first time I have ever had in my arms this sweet little namesake of yours. I know you think strange; so do I. Wife, I don't want any breakfast, don't need any; but wife, I will need you to help me today. I have no bar-room. I have shut that den across the street forever. I am going to sell off most or all of my property and draw on my bank account until, as far as possible, I have helped every living person in this section, whom my business has damaged. I knew it will be

your sweet delight to aid me in this. I know you wonder what all this means. I do, too. It means you have a new husband, that our children have a new father, that this community has a new citizen, that right has a new friend, that the devil has a new enemy. But wife, have dinner a little later today, Mr. Finney said last night in his sermon, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from all sin.' I believe it, I know it. He will take dinner with us today, and will tell you all about it."

O, the power of Christ to transform a human life!

\* \* \* \* \*

09 -- THAT MEETING; OR, ARE YOU PREPARED? -- A Sermon By John B. Culpepper

Text: And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: ye have not returned unto me, saith the Lord. And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there was yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered to one city, to drink water: but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens, and your vineyards, and your fig trees, and your olive trees increased, the palmer-worm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and your horses I have taken away: and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me saith the Lord. Therefore... prepare to meet thy God. -- Amos 4:6-13.

First. There is a God. This I will not discuss, further than to say that there could be but two beings found who could deny His existence. The first such must be one who says, I have always been, I have continuously filled all space, occupied every material and immaterial point; not one moment of time, not one inch in space has escaped me; and from observations, taken on the ground, I can assert, There was no God. Not only so, but I now fill immensity; I now see everything, everywhere, and from observation, now taken, I know there is no God. Besides, I now occupy all the future; I am now everywhere, and everywhen to come. There can be no new creation, no mutation, no progress or retrogression, but I now see it and am now occupying it. From such observation, made from such universal standpoint, I now assert, There never can be a God. But a being less than God could not thus depose or inform.

The only remaining character who could make such unreasonable statement is a Bible character, and is called a fool. It is said he makes the statement, not after a careful weighing of evidence, but he speaks the words out of the heart. This can only mean that the heart is depraved, and from wishing to avoid God, comes to the dire straits and deeper depravity of denying His existence. Then God is.

Second. He Is Our God. If He is the God of any, He is the God of all; if He is of all, He is of each. If He is a general providence, He is a special providence. If He is the creator of worlds,

He is the author of atoms, elements and essences. If He is everywhere, He is here and takes account of us, now.

Third. He has put us under law -- which law, you who are unregenerate or backslidden, are breaking. Yes, you are constantly, and thoughtlessly, and purposely, and variously, and inexcusably, and viciously violating moral law -- the law of God and man.

This wholesale and universal violation, God has tried to prevent, as He did with this people, the Jews. Read the book of Amos. Why, He told them all along of His power and His love. He dealt with them as with no other people. The waters instinctively dried a path, by evacuation and evaporation, before their conquering tread; the sterile rock became the broken doorway of thirst-slaking, life-prolonging rivers; the birds left their wild haunts, forgot their inborn fear of man, became domesticated by intuition, clamored to leave their native element, drop their wings and leap into the red rivers, which had their source in Israel's heart, traversed the coasts of bone, muscle, nerve, brain -- giving strength to strength, life to life, that a nation, born in a day, might not fall short of the highest human achievement, viz.; the taking of a country, the receiving of a law, the making of a history, the building of a Bible, the overthrow of idolatry, the evolution of a Christ, the redemption of a world.

With these pilgrims, the angels, born full-fledged-who never knew a sin or felt a weakness -- were drawn into such beautiful sympathy as to divide breakfast, dinner and supper with them, for checkered decades, while the astonished beneficiaries looked, and gathered, and ate, and shouted, "What is it?"

The hornet left his gummy house and wooded haunts, sounded the tocsin of war, fell in, formed on the firing line, became the Zionist's vanguard, and with one whole end loaded with burning bombshells, they sailed away and each bomb exploded in a Canaanitish body, until hornet-stung, hornet-maddened, hornet-conquered, they fled, leaving the main army (God's children) the spoils. But why prolong? Time would fail me to tell of a healing serpent, of mysteriously swollen Kedrons, of standing armies, of twisting stars, of the battle-shod winds, of the shrapnel of clouds, of the fatal mirage, and the wireless telegraphy of angels, in vogue wherever man appeals or God intervenes. But against this splendid care, this distinguished love, this ennobling law, they sinned. Then the prophets came and reiterated the law, and brought to remembrance their former affliction's and the merciful interpositions of Providence, to which they owed their enviable position among the nations. They listened, but soon lapsed into deeper sin, until the prophets returned with their mouths full of menace. Some profited, some scoffed, many went headlong on, all soon forgot. Then the hurtling thunders of war were heard outside their walls. The avenger was at the door. When again they took their bearings, they were in an enemy's hands, the unwilling victims of poverty, servitude and heathenish degeneracy.

They cried to God out of their affliction. He heard, and came and delivered them. They reformed for a little season, but soon lapsed. Thus Infinite Love, Power, and Resource said, I have exhausted remedies and taxed heaven for you. There is but one thing left-Prepare to meet thy God.

Did you ever study the history of prosperity and adversity in God's hands, as He dealt with His children? Adversity is better than prosperity, but both have failed. This is America. We call it



the greatest country. This is the South, the garden spot of America. This is Kentucky, the garden spot of the South. This is Georgetown, the garden spot of Kentucky. Thus we reason. But you give more to beneficent claims out of your penury than out of your piles. You give God more and aid the heathen more, when the heavens withhold their rains, than when your barns are bursting and when your bankbook shows ascending assets.

You Kentuckians have the most, and it amounts to the least, of all other States, unless it is Missouri. I believe the figures will show that you spend more on yourselves and less on God than any other people. Hence the well-to-do among you are the least spiritual of all people. This is one reason why Campbellism flourishes among you. They represent the most unique form of selfishness to be found among religionists. They claim to have no creed, yet attack everybody's creed, and when they have told you what to do, you then have the biggest creed of all churches. They profess great fraternity, but if you follow them they will take you by a very narrow route, -- down through the water, and up and out into their numbers. When you look around, all other churches are dead, and Campbellism only is left. They talk about spirituality, but in a way that makes the Holy Spirit a mere emanation or influence. This prepares the way for barrenness of family altars, and of the Holy Spirit's witness, and paves the way for file life of self, even in the service of God. I believe some forms of religion are born under a law of degeneracy, and the very age, day or country in which it can thrive is itself in decadence.

Selfishness. You Kentuckians remind me of the man who remembered at breakfast that it was his wipers birthday, so he kissed her and went down town and bought himself a new suit of clothes. God rains wealth upon you and you go and buy you another fast trotter, or another blue-grass farm. But this is only true of you in an eminent sense -- for all are guilty more or less. No people, no church, can claim perfect immunity.

A man told me down in Birmingham that he sold "that lot over there" for fifteen hundred dollars, a high price at the time. The buyer, a brother Mason and Methodist, was not able to pay for it, and tried to beg off. He would not rues causing him to have to sell his little farm to meet the payment. "But," says he, "I saw that same piece of property, a little later, when the boom had struck it, sell for \$10,000, \$30,000, \$30,000, and \$45,000. I had other property which caught the inflation. I went wild. I quit opening my Bible; my family altar fell down; the weeds grew up in my prayer-meeting path; columns of figures and barrels of bonds floated between me and the preacher on Sunday morning; I forgot God. The deboom came; my property shrank up, till I found my Bible. I put my family altar up and hoed the weeds from my prayer-meeting path; I can see my preacher again, but, brother, this wrench of prosperity, followed by a wrench of adversity, has awakened me." There it is. It will take something more than money to awaken you. God says get ready to meet Him.

Adversity. A railroad man said he had two head-end collisions, in which seven lives were lost at one time, and fifteen at another, yet it did not occur to him that it might have been him.

Joe and Will went with a company to South America to get out mahogany. These young men left the others and penetrated far into the interior to find better wood. Securing a desirable location, they threw them up a little log hut, covering it with grass and brush. Early in the first night, Joe awoke and asked Will to make a light, saying he was sick. This done, he told him to get

his neglected Bible from their luggage and read to him. He secured the book, but Joe said, "I can't read to you; I am so ignorant that I can't find anything, and I am too wicked to read to you, anyway." Joe rapidly grew worse, and again called to Will for the reading of his mother's Bible. Then he said, "Will, I am going to die; I want you to kneel down here by me and pray." Will said, "Joe, I can't pray; you know I am too wicked to call on God." Joe said, "Will, don't you let me lie here and die like a dog, without a word from that book my dear mother put in my trunk." In speaking about it, Will said: "But, do you know, I had to let old Joe die; I couldn't pray, or read the Bible, as wicked as I was. But it was an awful night -- the longest I ever saw; it was raining, the thunders rumbled through those deep forests, while the rain pattered down on the low roof of that hut and trickled off; owls hooted, wolves howled, now and then a panther would scream. There I sat looking into the face of poor, cold Joe. That awful night at last wore away; I went out and dug a hole and wrapped both our blankets around poor Joe and laid him in that hole and covered him up, and took some of our things and went back to camp. But I will never forget that long, lonesome night." A friend of mine to whom he related it, asked, "Well, how did you feel? -- what did you think of your own case?" "I never thought much, if anything, about it," said he. He then asked him how it was with his soul now, and he replied, "O, I never think about such things."

There it is. God says to such a young man, Nothing but to come face to face with me will awaken you. GET READY!

Thus, in prosperity and adversity, has God dealt with each and every sinner here -- yet your hearts are cold toward Him, and your life is perverse. He now demands that you Prepare to meet Him.

Don't say there is no Hell. There is a Hell, wherever there is violated law. Sherman said, "War is hell." It is true, but wherein? The Prince of Peace taught us to love folks, even our enemies. He also teaches us that non-resistance is the way to victory. War is a violation of the law of love. Take that chandelier over your heads. It is obeying the law of suspension and gives us light. That is the Heaven side. Suppose it should break loose, fall and kill three or four, and throw burning oil over a dozen more. Then you have the Hell side of it. I am a thousand miles from home, take a Pullman, fall asleep and go gliding through the land of dreams to my precious family. This is the Heaven side of it. But what a rude shock, and sudden awakening! What's up? We are off the track. Twenty people are killed and fifty wounded. We lie here for hours and listen to the groans of the dying. What is this? Why, that engine, that engineer, or something, or somebody, has violated law and run us in on the Hell side of fast transit. Don't believe in Hell? Then you don't believe in Heaven, or in law. If obedience to the laws which govern electricity or navigation brings us comfort or Heaven, then disobedience to these laws will show you the Hell side of the same thing. If you don't believe there is Heaven in that electricity, some night when your child is frightened by a bad dream, and is almost in convulsions, just reach up and turn a button, and as the light floods the room and the little fellow grows quiet, cuddles down and goes to sleep -- say, is that not Heaven, or heavenly? But if you think that light has but one side, disobey its law and ruffle its nature by sticking your finger against the live wire that conveys it. In a second you are in Hell, or Hell is in you, or both. See? My little John B. says, "Papa, what are those nice, red-looking things?" I say, "Peaches, my boy." "Are they good?" "Yes." "Papa, get me some." "Well, hold your cap." I shake the tree and two fall in. As I watch him dispose of the luscious fruit, I say, "What a heavenly thing is gravitation." Has it another side? This same little boy is looking from the third

story of the college building where we live. He disappears, I run down and find his blood and brains on the brick walk. I look up and say, God is cruel to make a law like that. No; the trouble lies here -- my little boy violated, or disregarded the law of gravity and ran me in on the Hell side of it.

"But," you say, "I don't believe in Eternal punishment." All punishment is eternal. Is not Cain a murderer today? is not Abel a victim of his brother's jealousy? Is the flood not a fact today? Is the first man hanged not a hanged man today, so far as this world goes? And in eternity, won't facts be facts? Well, if sin, or crime, is of necessity an eternal fact, would the consequences thereof not be equally so? But, friends, listen to me: When you are crooked, meet God, who is straight; when you who are wrong, meet God, who is right; when you, an undone sinner, meet God, the Holy One, and the books are opened and your life's record is called for -- that will be Hell enough for you.

My old Georgia friend, J. D. Anthony, now in Heaven, had a daughter, who, when a maiden, dreamed she died and was taken by a couple of angels from her body and from the room. They had swept on and up for some time, when it occurred to her to ask them where they were going. "To meet God," spake one of her escorts. she fell a-thinking, and at once felt that she did not want to see Him. She accordingly said, "Beautiful angels, since I come to think about it, I am not ready to meet God, and don't want to go. Don't take me, please." "You have to meet your God," said the angel. On they swept Again she appealed to them, saying: "Put me in that world we are now passing; I can't see God as I am." The angel spoke again and mid, "You must meet your God." "But, here, I am not ready. I can't see Him. Angels, please turn me loose and let me fall, fall, forever, rather than go thus into the presence of one so holy." The angel said, "Why, young woman, all who leave the earth have to meet their God." On they swept. After a long pause she said, "O, beautiful angels, please put me in hell. I much prefer it, to coming into the presence of God. I will not complain of its darkest dungeons, or hottest fires -- only don't, don't take me before Him." They only quickened their flight as they said, "Young woman, you must see your God." After weighing her unprepared state against the immanence and awfulness of the presence of a sin-avenging God, it was more than she felt able to endure, so she made a lurch to escape from them, to fly or fall anywhere from His presence. She awoke to find it was but a dream, and yet a warning, too. Get ready. GET READY! Is your argument or answer now ready, should you be called to meet Him tonight?

Would you tell Him you did not know His character? You do know. You know that He is holy; that He loves the good and hates the evil; that He cannot endure sin; that He will punish it wherever found. You know His nature and character.

Get ready. Would you say that you did not know His demands? Can you not read or reason? Have you neither hearing nor heart? Then you know what He demanded of the ante-diluvians, and why the flood. You know what He demanded of the inhabitants of the "plain," and why brimstone from Heaven. You know what He demanded of the Jews, and why their exile, until this present time. You know why the devil was hurled from Heaven; why Adam and Eve were scourged from the garden; why Ananias and his collusive wife fell dead in meeting; you know why Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and left it to the conquering armies of the heathen. YES, YOU DO KNOW. GET READY!

Could you tell Him that you did not know that you were unprepared? Why, your condemnation is written on almost every page of the Bible. Are you dishonest? Read up on stealing, extortion, usury, oppression. Are you untruthful? Read up on liars, deceivers, incontinents, trucebreakers. Have you been impure? Read up on fornicators, adulterers, lascivious eyes and lustful leerings. Are you a doubter? Read here of your future home, and most undesirable companions throughout eternity. Are you a sinner? Read up on sin and its present and eternal consequences. Do you find yourself in the dark? Learn here it is because your deeds are evil. Unprepared!

Why, the Book condemns you; every better man or woman condemns you; every advance step taken in the world of nature condemns you; every faithful animal condemns you; your own intelligence condemns you; every good book, song, and saying, condemns you; your own conscience condemns you; the life of Jesus, your model, condemns you; the Holy Spirit condemns you-and I condemn you, right now. Surely you could not make the plea of ignorance of your condemnation. Then get ready!

But what would you say, were this the hour? Would you tell Him you did not know how to prepare? Could you make such a plea? Just think of the thousands saved during the dark ages even back to and beyond the flood. They did not have half of your light, yet lived holy lives and died in full view of heaven. Thousands around you, with no better opportunities, are outstripping you. Many below you in years and capacity have found Christ. Indeed, God says it is not by might that you prepare. He also says that the way is so plain that none need err. How many of you don't know better than you do? How many of you are not living below your ability? God says, "Cease to do evil" (Isa. 1:16, 17). What wrong thing in your life do you practice from necessity or compulsion? Which command are you forced to break? Which duty enjoined, is beyond your reach? No; you could not plead ignorance of the way. Jesus tells you He is the way (John 14:6). Then, how could you answer Him should He summons you into His presence this hour? Get Ready!

What would you say? Could you say that you did not know the meeting had been called? I trow not. The eternal nature of your soul has been drilled into you from infancy. You have seen people leave this life ever since you could remember. God has told you that there is a specific appointment for your death; also what comes after it. Your Bible speaks explicitly on the subject. Your preachers have warned you of that dread day. I now warn you. Yes; the meeting has been called and the place appointed. You are on your way. God is coming -- you are going. If you are not ready, your preparation must be made on the way. Put your hand on your heart. Trot, trot, trot -- up hill and down, trot, trot, trot sick or well, willing or unwilling, trot, trot, trot -- prepared or unprepared, trot, trot, trot. What does it mean? It means that God is coming and you are going, and that you will soon meet. Look out. How many birthdays have you seen? Call each a mile-post. Several are behind you; as many are behind God. He is coming, coming; you are going, going. Count the solar revolutions, the lunar revolutions, the sabbatical revolutions, the diurnal and nocturnal revolutions of your life and awake to the dread fact that you are on the move. I tell you plainly, you will come face to face with God just over the hill. Look out! Get ready!

What would you say were this the hour? Would you rely on His pity? It is great. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. His mercy endureth forever -- to

them that love Him, and to such as keep His commandments. Are you among that number? Why should He pity you? Has He not waited long enough? Has He not been good enough? Would added years of mercy win you to Him? Does not your own experience prove the contrary? "Mercy knows the appointed bounds, and turns to vengeance there." Tennyson said:

"Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,  
My tribute wave deliver;  
No more, by thee, my steps shall be,  
Forever and forever.

"But here will sigh thine alder tree.  
And here thine aspen shiver;  
And here by thee will hum the bee  
Forever and forever.

"A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
A thousand moons will quiver;  
But not by thee my steps shall be  
Forever and forever."

My friend, you are passing. So is your day of grace. This is June. She sits like a Queen between two lily-lined lakes; peevish April has gone; all the trees have unfurled their foliage and spread green sail for fruit land; the thrush calls the nightingale before She retires, and even then she warbles from sweet habit, amid HER percolated canopies; the sun on retiring asks his queen to make the night only a gentler day. But a blight will come to this summer, if she ventures too far North, or tarries on her voyage. The birds will migrate; the flowers will die of chill; every ship will reef her green sails; earth will take in her green carpet; winter, cold, bleak, black winter will come, PREPARED FOR OR NOT PREPARED FOR. So it will to you. GET READY!

Would you measure strength with Him? You could try it. The Babelites did. But what became of their thought, their proud schemes? A pile of mortar, confusion, and dispersion, only was left. Look back along the wreck of nations, cities, countries and systems, to learn that He will blow upon you, and you will wither like the flower before the reaping-hook. The devil, more than a match for man, tried it and went down before Christ. You can not successfully defy the great God. A few years, at most, and you must meet Him. What comfort, then, can you hope to find in sin? Could you say, "True, I am in Hell, but in yonder world I cursed!" Why, man, the memory of it will be a fire. "True, I am in Hell, but back yonder I danced." Why, woman, the memory of it will burn you of itself. "True, I am but on earth I was licentious." But the very memory of it will set you on fire. "True, I am banished into this darkness, and these intolerable burnings, but I enjoy knowing that in yonder world. I had my own way, hindered every good move, grieved Christ, and reveled in sin." Poor soul, that, in eternity, will be enough, were there no more. But add to it the knowledge of lost opportunities, see what you might have been, in the redeemed characters, possibly in full view of you -- though beyond the impassable gulf. Add the joys of heaven, in full view -- the presence, with you, of those whom your life deluded and damned, with the sure knowledge that it was your own fault, and is interminable. Oh, my neighbor, you cannot defy God; and if you could, such unreasonable and wicked defiance would only add to your irremediable anguish. A few

months ago we had a memorable storm in Galveston, Texas, which the pen of the most ready writer refuses to describe. It is only a usual noon-tide. Not one note of warning comes to the unsuspecting inhabitants of that rich, that wicked, that self-satisfied little princess among Southern cities from seabird on flapping sail; nothing unusual in the conduct of domestic animals; no warning from the weather-wise men of the island, or from those who watch the storm-pot at Washington. The moon (which means measure) has not confessed her inability to sway her tides. But a change comes. The wind springs up in the afternoon. The tides swell; they begin to roar and rise higher and break further inland. As the sun is hidden and night draws on, the people say, It will be a severe gale -- then, It will be an unusual storm. Later, the oldest citizens say it is nearly up to -- is up to the -- is up and beyond anything they ever saw. A little later, every weathervane and weather-cock went out of business, and the people panicked, cried, Where are we? The moon lost control, if she ever had it; the mutinied billows surged in defiance, and seemed bent on engulfing her, and so swept farther and mounted up life's frost-scalped mountains, to give place to one of more destructive size. On one side the island the frightened ships forgot their natures and awkwardly lumbered ashore. On the other, in widespread conspiracy, they snapped cables and plowed anchors, until where stood an ample merchantman, or equal man of war, or pilot, or rig, or fishing smack, there plows and plunges as many deck-denuded, nameless and ownerless derelicts, at once the menace of every navigator.

When the storm broke, the women and girls were in their night attire. Realizing that danger, if not death, was upon them, all rushed to their doors to find cats swimming and crying, dogs howling, calves bleating, cows lowing, mules braying, horses calling for release from their halters, men offering ten, twenty-five, one hundred, one thousand dollars for help. Prayers, calls, cries, screams, the report of guns, the rattle and splash of vehicles, the crash of timbers -- punctuated by the wild laugh of the maddened sea, or the sudden burst of a hundred lathered billows -- all swept on in relentless anarchy by a howling wind. The people seek shelter and find death in all directions, by drowning, by carriage, by horse or maddened cow, pushed off by a stronger hand, by fright. Some members of hundreds of families destroyed. Sometimes all die.

What a night! Who can describe it? "Will it ever end? Yes; but what disclosures! Home gone. Friend looking in vain for friend. A thousand vain efforts to re-establish the family; the outside world is outlawed and locked out by the "Prince of the power of the air."

Nearly every female who was not fastened under timbers, was as naked as when she was born into the world, their gowns being whipped off by wind and wave. When absent relatives and friends got to the ill-fated island, the piles of dead and nude forms were so numerous, so bloated, and therefore so unnatural, that brothers, mothers, fathers would find the loved one "here -- no, this is she -- -no, I was mistaken, this is she." And frequently, with aching heart, they would turn from the gruesome acres of dead and exclaim, "My God, I don't know, none look like her -- they all look like her."

I turn from this sickening, soul-withering scene, to ask you to contemplate one before which this is as the note of the wren to the peal of thunder -- as the distillation of dew to the roar of Niagara. It is the day coming in which every river and sea and ocean will be in awful turmoil; in which every inch in aerial space will be a storm center, and big with cyclonic impulse; when every square mile of earth will be delivered of an earthquake; when every ordinary hill will

become a burning, blazing Vesuvius; when the dust will take wings like lice of Egypt; when the green carpet of earth will be ripped up and thrown at the sea, only to be hissed into mud and spattered back over every affrighted thing; when the angels shall come upon the scene and take a part in the affairs of the earth; when the millions drowned at sea feel the commotion and are frightened into life; when every six feet of earth becomes an open grave, from which spring whole armies of astonished and expectant sleepers -- all, all looking upward at the opening of the heavens, from which come strange light, and stranger voices. Look! Listen! The storms of all time are in resurrectionary throes; every thunderbolt and lightning scathe is upon us again, to such a degree that Heaven is moving down, while we move up. What does it mean, ye careless, ye selfish, ye sinful men and women? I will tell you: That awful, that doom-settling, that destiny-fixing, that long-delayed meeting between you and a once gentle and merciful, but now angered God, will be on in five minutes. Are you prepared? No! Then get ready.

Do not vainly hope for intercession at last. From what source can it possibly come? You can not pray for yourself, unless it be to some flying sliver from yonder dissolving mountain. Your own preacher, your faithful wife, your unfailing mother now seems out of hearing of your cries and is busy with the account which she must now render. Praying goes for nothing now. Why, Jesus who offered the prayer of the saints from the throne of holy intercession, has now left it for one of judgment. There He is -- there He comes, but with military escort, angelic, with the books of record, with bugler and army, and call to judgment. Flight is out of the question. Death is denied you. Then while I stand here and faintly describe these awful, but surely coming scenes, Get ready.

Don't foolishly and wickedly say -- I will stout it out. You might for a day, a week, or a year, but a century, a decade of centuries, a millennium of millenniums would wear you out, break you down. Do not try that. A few months ago, I was in one of the towns of the Indian Territory, and in conversation with Judge Grady, one of the three marshals of that section. He told me many things of interest, such as that he had dealt with a thousand criminals in three years, and 90 per cent of them had been brought under censure through whisky. I asked 'him if any of those hardened men were utterly heartless. He quickly answered that men wore a brave exterior for awhile, but soon grew tired of it, broke down and confessed. One man, the most obdurate, by name of MacDonald, (assumed) was wounded 38 times in chase and final capture. All of the wounds but two, were flesh shots and flesh cuts, and many being but slight, he was able to pursue a dogged resistance for hours, and when, after he had exhausted his ammunition, and was cornered, he fought with every receding inch of ground, waning ounce of strength) and fleeing moment of time, until literally covered and captured. He then kicked until tied -- then spit on us and swore at all us the way to prison. We had to confine his hands to prevent his efforts to reopen his numerous wounds, which we had dressed. He was bent on death even at his own hands. When I would visit him, he would spit on me and swear at me. This lasted for weeks, while he rapidly improved. One day, I said, MacDonald, have you a mother? He suddenly flitted his face to the wall, and kept it there for some minutes, then turning back said: "Mr. Grady, if you fellows hadn't got me that morning, you wouldn't have gotten me. I saw it was all up with us, and was on my way to Mexico. But I don't blame you; you did your duty and I deserve to die. Yes, Mr. Grady, I have a mother -- the best woman in the world. I wouldn't for the world have her know where I am now. Excuse me sir, for my treatment of you. You are not to blame. I deserve all I have suffered and more too." Thus, a few days sufficed to take all the starch out of this stout-heated, rebellious fellow. Much more will it be true of the most incorrigible and obdurate that ever did or ever will face destiny and God. Let me

beg you before that eye-opening, conscience-arousing, teeth-gnashing, heart-melting hour comes --  
-O, let me beg you even now, to think and Get ready.

From my window in John McDonnell's home, I look out upon the Ohio river, and upon the very spot, where a number of years ago, two large, triple-decked, double-cabin boats collided. There was a dance on, the celebrated "Ole Bull" was aboard and at his best. It was the 8th of January, very cold, and at night. When the crash came, "Ole Bulge" was ready to exchange his violin for a life preserver; the dancers, drinkers and cussers were now ready to pray or be prayed for; the two hundred or more who were burned or drowned, stood ready to give themselves to a better service, but God had called time on them and they had to go. They cried, but their cries came too late; the sorrow stricken people of Warsaw gathered on the bank and looked on, powerless to help, while amid a medley of prayers, wails, oaths, splashing waters, crashing ice, colliding life-boats, flowing oil which set the waters afire, they realized that they had pushed the battle of fun and foolishness a little too far on God. They had to go. So will you.

One young woman, who had put on a life preserver, either from fright, or because the ice along the shore kept her from landing, kept to the current and kept afloat till she had passed Carrollton, which is twenty miles by file river. Her subdued, pitiable and helpless cries were heard as she drifted by. She was found dead a few miles below. Poor girl -- she made a fight entitling her to a monument of patriot, or crypt of martyr had she been doing anything worth living for. But while to this distant day the people refer to that feat and while I long to go to her rescue, as you do, do not miss the point. She had to succumb and meet God, prepared or unprepared. So will you. Get ready.

One poor man was seen clinging to the side of one of the vessels while crying with every breath, "O, Carrie! Carrie -- -I am burning up; O Carrie! Carrie! I am burning up, burning up." I don't know whether Carrie was there or hundreds of miles away; I don't know whether Carrie had already preceded him from fire or water to her reward. But this poor fellow, when Carrie couldn't help, had to go to meet his God, whether prepared or not. So will you. Get read, get ready.

Many years age I came across the story of a California stage-driver, who lay serious and dying of fever. It was about the middle of the day. His wife observed him put his foot out from under the cover and feel all about, then put it back, while confusion deepened upon his pallid face. After a few moments he put it out again, let it lower down and felt further around, then, with growing sorrow punctuating his brow, he took his foot in. He turned restlessly about, then put his foot out the third time and made a deeper and longer search for something. His wife went to him and said, "My precious husband, what is the matter?" I will leave you to decide whether he was in his right mind or not when you hear his answer. He said, "O, wife, you know I have been driving over these mountains for years. But tonight I am on a strange road, and wife, I am driving four of the blackest, wildest, most unmanageable horses I ever saw, or pulled a line over; and wife, it is the blackest night I ever drove through; and wife, that is the blackest cloud coming yonder (rising and, with horror on his face, peering about him) I ever saw; and wife, since God made me, I never heard such thunder or saw such keen, blazing lightning; and wife, with each blinding flash, I see that I am dashing along right on the edge of a precipice, which looks like it must be thousands of feet deep and wide, while that thunder peals with deafening roar and that burning lightning hues its long shafts of fire, and while that boiling black cloud looms up, these wild, black horses rear



and plunge -- and wife, the worse of it all is -- I can't find the brake." Here he nervously put his foot out again, and said, "O, wife, do come add help me get my foot on the brake before these horses dash me to pieces." Poor man! The time had been when that devoted wife could have helped him tame those wild horses of Hell; the time was when she could have helped him to the brake, through prayer and faith -- but now -- now -- now it is too late. The cloud of God's wrath is boiling up; the flash of His resentful eye is upon him; the fiat of His voice is heard; the gaping precipice of eternity yawns at his feet. God has come and the poor California stageman is gone -- prepared or unprepared. So it will be with you. Get ready.

I have now made my appeal. When I remember the thousands like it I have made in the past, and made in vain; when I recall the thousands of better men than I can justly claim to be, who have reasoned, appealed and entreated, in vain; when I recall the fact that some of you have resisted the truth, your own judgment and your own conscience, and your own interests, and your own Lord how can I expect you, all of you, to act wisely, drop everything else and -- Get ready.

The ease with which men shed the truth, grow harder, until they madly rush upon Jehovah's Buckler, and with the wild laugh of a maniac storm Hell, recalls a scene of the Mississippi delta. The little town of W. was famous for its barrooms, gamblers and blasphemers. There was a revival meeting on at the Methodist church, situated on a pone, or ridge, a few hundred yards up from the business and residence portion. It was night; service was on; a number of wicked men full of whisky, and bent on mischief, put a keg of beer on a wheelbarrow, and carried it up opposite the Methodist church, but down that declivity, and too far away, to be the annoyance they intended. They also loaded heavily an old cannon and pulled it up. For some time they drank, danced, yelled and swore. Then one of them, the acknowledged leader, proclaimed himself Jesus Christ, and proceeded to appoint twelve "disciples," to whom he delivered mock lectures, and gave them, amid the most blood-curdling oaths, a charge to go out and "preach the gospel." He then cursed them, called them around that wheelbarrow, which held the beer, and from its vile contents, gave them the "sacrament" -- punctuating it all with profane and obscene threats, -- if they should fail to save every sinner. The signal for starting out to "save the world" was to be the firing of that cannon. It was really intended to frighten the worshippers of the heights above them, and to be a signal for dispersing. With ill-assumed humility, zeal, and loyalty, they gathered about that gun, as if anxious for it to boom and let them go to "save the world." Their leader, a self-constituted "Christ," touched the match to the fuse. The cannon burst and killed their "Jesus Christ" and eleven of his "disciples." I think it would have killed the ether one, but God was bent on a living witness of how far men will follow 'the Devil and how hard it is to get them to see Him. When they buried these men, they took a piece of that cannon and put it up as a head-board for the leader. It is there now, and should remain, to warn all that -- -

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

I am done. But if I could, I would odorize every flower you pluck with -- Get ready. I would edge every green leaf with a crimson -- Prepare to meet thy God. I would ripple into every wave Get ready. I would thud into every footfall -- Prepare. I would rhythm into every song -- Get

ready. I would peal through every ringing bell -- Prepare, prepare. I would billow through all laughter -- Get ready. I would weep in every tear and breathe in every sigh and exhort through every sorrow and plead through every reverse, and shout through every success -- Prepare, prepare -- God is coming and you are going. I would scent everything you smell; I would flavor all you taste; I would color all you see; I would prick all you feel; I would bum into your imagination, your memory and your consciousness, these two words, just these two words -- as bottomless as Hell; as topless as Heaven; as vast as Eternity; as awful as the judgment; as repulsive as Beelzebub and as attractive as Jesus; as enduring as destiny; as omnipotent as God -- Get read -- -Get ready. Do it today -- Start right now.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 10 -- THE WANDERING LOVER; OR CHRIST ENTHRONED

### Introduction

Dear Reader -- I give this sermon to you as I have often preached it, and by request of many hearers, scattered over the years and over the country. It is humbly dedicated to every one, who, with high motive, is seeking the life and companionship and home of Christ. If it does you good, drop me a line about it to Lebanon, Mo.

J. B. Culpepper

\* \* \*

Text: By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please. -- Song of Solomon 3:1-5.

I have read you, as a text, a most beautiful and significant allegory, from one of Solomon's unique pen strokes. I consider him one of the most wonderful men of history. As a product of a most wonderful and warful epoch, he ushers in an unparalleled reign of peace. He manifests tastes and prosecutes industries in agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, wholly unresultant from pre-natal surroundings or early education. The curiosity with which he investigated everything, from the tiny ant to the rolling solar systems, was only distanced by the philosophic mind, by which he was able to formulate principles and transmit systems of thought, worthy of the added wisdom of three thousand added years, enhanced and enriched by all the modern appliances of laboratory, and office, and studio, and platform and pulpit.

\* \* \*

## WONDERFUL MAN!

In early life, his humility is striking and beautiful. His consecration is equal to his humility. He only craves divine illumination and guidance, as the ruler of God's great church and nation. It so pleased our God that the quadrupled currents were turned upon him. He thought easily. His tongue was as the pen of a ready writer. He shone, where others glimmered. He knew, where others guessed.

Wonderful speaker -- wonderful writer -- wonderful scholar -- wonderful in prayer -- wonderful in proverb -- wonderful architect -- wonderful emperor -- wonderful diplomat -- wonderful politician -- wonderful epicure -- wonderful spludge -- wonderful backslider -- wonderful woman's man -- wonderful fool -- Solomon. Why, it would break Texas to set his table a few months. It would bankrupt Kentucky to furnish him a full livery outfit. Wonderful!

He got to marrying one day, and he married, and married, and married until he billowed in the smiles of seven hundred admiring wives, of all nationalities and nations -- from his first-taken, blushing Jewish maiden, to the one of deepest ebony and Egyptian royalty. For her he builded a very palace. I have sometimes thought of Solomon coming in from settling a hosiery bill. It must have been on such an occasion that he exclaimed -- "Vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit."

Poor man!! I wonder if he ever had to go out on Monday morning to find a new washerwoman for each of these darlings.

Guess he laid in baby carriages by the steer load. Must have bought paregoric by the barrel. Wonder if he ever went shopping for "rattles" for the baby, and if he laid in the stock of "teething rubbers." Some of Solomon's proverbs may have been written on Christmas night -- just after seven hundred wives had taken dinner with him, with from one to four babies each, and every little Solomon with a bunch of fire-crackers and a tooting horn. If a man doesn't have to claim his wives in the new earth, I believe Solomon will answer to the roll call of old bachelors. He had enough of matrimony. In fact, he was woman damned.

But, however he lived his last days, and however he died, he had stood for much of human and divine knowledge and wisdom.

Let's study the characters he brings before our eyes in the text.

The figure is a very familiar one -- that of a man in a city, looking for somewhat or some one -- on this street, on that, across yonder, making inquiry, till satisfied. His constant inquiry was for the object of his love. This object was a person -- Him whom my soul loveth. Not the it but the him. It was Christ he needed and wanted.

It is well to "seek religion" -- to "get religion" to have "an experience of grace," but let's never lose sight of its source -- viz., Jesus. "By night -- on my bed -- I sought him." This seeking spirit shows that the man had "thought on his ways." One of the common crimes and sins of our day is thoughtlessness. There are near two thousand people before me to night, two-thirds of whom are sinners. You are not to say malicious, you are not vicious, but thoughtless. Many of you would not

steal, or kill a man. You take no special delight in cruelty. But you don't think. You would not, from choice, inflict needless punishment on even an enemy -- perhaps would put yourself to trouble to appease the hunger of a dog. But you won't think. As I have traveled over the Southern states for fifteen years, in revival work, it has been my sad fortune to visit many on their dying bed, unprepared to exchange worlds. Sin explained the unreadiness, but thoughtlessness explained the sin.

Of the scores of thousands, seen in our Southern prisons, every one interrogated, said -- Bad company brought me to this. When asked -- why did you keep bad company? Didn't know -- Didn't think, has been the unexceptional answer. THOUGHTLESS.

When Ab Everitt, of Georgia, told Dr. Green that he wanted to be religious, and wished to know how to start, the doctor said, go off and sit down and think an hour. He did, and often said it was worth many sermons to him. THOUGHTLESS.

One man said to another, on the brink of a deep Florida spring -- " look down and tell me what you see." Looking up, he exclaimed -- "O, such a lot of fine fishes." "But you should not have looked away -- look till you see them again." "I see them." "Well, keep looking -- keep looking." "I see a lot of lesser fishes," he exclaimed. " Keep looking." "I see a lot of very large fish -- moving lazily about." "Keep looking." "I see some logs and brush." "Keep looking." "O, I see the beautiful sand, bubbling up from immeasurable deeps." " That will do." Do you catch my meaning? How hard I find it to get you to look at your last night's sin -- your last week's sin -- your last month's sin -- your last year's sin--your last decade's sins -- on down and through, till beyond your last sin, and beyond your first sin, you see yourself again amid the bubbling sands of innocent, Christ-touched childhood! Thoughtless.

While pastor in Talbot Co., Ga., Tommy Bardnell was taken ill. His father being the physician, Bro. Win. Martin asked what his temperature was. The thermometer was applied. It registered 101, on being exposed. Put it back, said Bro. M., it is more than that. It registered 102 1/2. Put it back, said Bro. M. It registered 103 1/2.

Let it stay longer, exclaimed Bro. M. "No," said the father and doctor. "If it is more than that, I don't care to know it. He is my boy, and if he is nearing the dead line, I will find it out too soon, anyhow." Ah! that dead line! We preach to you out of God's eternal truth; the Holy spirit registers your moral temperature upon your conscience. Instead of lying still under divine diagnosis, till the worst, even, is known, you seek a gill of bliss in a ton of ignorance, by refusing to hear facts any further, or think upon them. Thoughtless/ THOUGHTLESS!!

I once possessed a bracelet and little book, the property of a girl, who was converted in the hospital in Augusta, Ga. She was scarlet in life -- had left Canada with or for a railroad man, whom she called Charlie. She followed him from town to town until consumption stole her beauty and caused "Charlie" to discard her. My friend, Miss Trussel, placed her in the hospital and led her to Christ. While she was very happy, she was very secretive, as to her real name, or that of "Charlie;" She promised to reveal her identity when sure of death. The night she passed over, she urged her attendant to send for Miss Trussel, as she wished to reveal some secrets and send a word to mother. Her wish was not complied with -- so she died with her criminal life

uncommitted. Just before she passed over she exclaimed -- " O, I was married for only one brief hour before." -- Hero she stopped short in answer to a question asked, and urged that they send for her friend, refusing to reveal anything to any one else. Through the articles above named, I tried to find her mother, but failed. The first lines, traced in beautiful hand, in that little book, ran,

"Of all the sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest these -- it might have been."

Poor girl! You represent a very large and growing class who owe ill health, lost home, blasted prospects and damned soul to -- " I didn't think." Thoughtless I Thoughtless I

O, if we could get you to think! That man out there who swears, would quit it in shame and disgust, if I could get him to dwell a few minutes upon its futility -- its unreasonableness -- its ungentlemanly features, and its indecency. On all moral questions, there can be no difference between a gentleman and a lady, except sex. If you can cuss and be a gentleman, your wife and daughters can and be ladies. No rubbing that out. Conclusion -- No gentleman swears. Thoughtless!

I know you say -- " It is a habit I have gotten into -- just a habit." This coat I have on is a habit -- just a habit. I wear it. It stays with me. Your swearing is a habit. That is, you wear it. It stays with you. You swear on Sunday because you cussed on Saturday. You cuss when you are mad, because you swear when you are in a good humor. It is a HABIT. You WEAR it. You are in the business. You are a sort of a wholesale dealer. You are going round establishing little retail cusseries over the country. You take every little novice in the art of making a slop tub out of his mouth, around the corner and show him how to pucker his lips and swear, " according to Hoyle." Thoughtless!

Do you swear before preachers? "O, No." Then you are unfit for a preacher's society, you being the judge.

Do you swear before ladies? "O, No." Unfit for a lady's company, you being the judge. If I had authority from your Governor to walk behind you with a loaded Winchester, to empty its fourteen charges into you the next time you swore, would you soon exchange a chaste mouth for a belching volcano sending forth its ear-smirching, God-dishonoring, man-debasing, soul-destroying lava which puts all Italy to shame? I hear you say -- "No." Then a shot gun is a more potent force with you than either self-respect or the law of God. See? Thoughtless! Thoughtless!

Take the custom of treating to intoxicants. It is this silly habit which makes so many drunkards. There are said to be two millions of confirmed, yea abandoned, sots in America today. Ninety-nine per cent started by giving or accepting a "treat." Every after-glass grew out of that first glass.

The thousands of men who float to their eternal doom, through beer-channel; wine-strait; champagne bay; rum-sound; gin-sea; cocktail-pond; delirium river; and ocean-debauch -- all -- all -- embarked in a treating cup -- first launched out of sight of deep water, and sharks, and squalls, and suck holes, and simoons, and mountain billows, and wrecked barks, and engulfed spirits.

\* \* \*

## THOUGHTLESS! THOUGHTLESS!

These HE-fools, who squander money and time and brains, and wreck boys and destroy homes, are only surpassed by SHE-fools, who use stimulants in food and put wine on their tables and serve intoxicants at evenings -- thus giving the bar-room a home sanction, with cyclone impetus. Poor boys! They have the hereditary thirst for drink laid bare as a ghastly wound, by cut glass, held in mother's hand "Punched" deeper by sisters' or sweethearts' sanction. No wonder, if they drift out and are picked up as suitable fuel for a Gin mill -- -run for revenue only, Thoughtless! Thoughtless!!

But the man of the text became aroused, under the influence of a good meeting like this, or some gracious visitation. He considered his ways. He thought. At once he saw his unfitness and his unsafety. He at once saw that help must come from beyond himself. Seeing his lost condition, in the light of a little reflection, and seeing that help was to be had in Christ, He, Christ, became at once the object of his search, the beloved One. Happy the man. who thus realizes his state, and thus clearly defines the remedy.

But he blundered in his very first step. "On my bed I sought." This stands for a class of seekers, or a style of seeking, whose name is legion. A man may be awakened to his needs, but not discern clearly the way to relief. Or he may be but partially awakened, and will, in consequence, underrate the remedy or the way to it. "On my bed." He thought, he planned, he wished, he hoped, he anticipated. But nothing happened. He could think on his bed -- could pray -- could resolve -- could trust, after a sort. But he could not repent deeply and practically. He could not pay his debts, restore the pledge, or return fourfold. He had publicly profaned the name of God and publicly desecrated the Sabbath, and publicly stood in the way of sinners. Then why not as publicly confess and restore and repent and confront? All knew him to be on the other side from the Lord; why not all now know him as with his Lord?

"I sought him but found him not." No Wonder. What General ever won a victory on his back? What domestic ever prepared her meals in bed? What mother ever infused enthusiasm, or instilled morality, or taught industry by such course, or want of a course? Did Washington thus lead the American armies to fame and to victory? Did Morse and Stephenson, and Fulton and Field thus people seas, cable oceans and thread commerce?

\* \* \*

## BUT FOUND HIM NOT

See your failure in his. Arise! Go forth! Seek! Strive to enter in.

The next step taken by this seeker of religion was equally erroneous and fatal. He said -- "I will rise now and go about the city, in the streets and in the broadways I will seek him whom my soul loveth." This brings us face to face with Broadway Christianity, -- Broadway seeking, and Broadway state of mind and heart, out of which it has all come.

Why, we have some churches today which stand for the Broadway to heaven. Don't all sinners know that the Episcopal church, for instance, will tolerate, if not advocate, the dance, the card table, the wine cup? Does not the Campbellite church in many sections, almost announce her indifference on these lines? Has not the Presbyterian church been justly accused of courting an easier, and a broader way of service? Have not our Wesleys and Asburys and Anthonys and their noble sort broadened out, until the name is most of what is retained of original earnestness and severity and self-denial and holiness?

We have Broadway preachers now. They rarely attack the leading sins of the day and of their people. How few preachers today will attack the license principle in the old political parties, although that principle is the breastwork on which the brewer and bar-keeper plant their guns, and from behind which death and damnation comes in overwhelming sluices. How few preachers hit the dance. I mean hit it. I mean take history and the -- Thou shalt not commit adultery, and knock it out. I mean take the Methodist discipline and pastoral authority and settle it. It can be done. I have tried it.

\* \* \*

## BROADWAY PREACHERS

How many of them can the Holy Ghost get to cry aloud and spare not, against Mr. McKinley -- who, in one short term has suffered whisky and its concomitants in the District of Columbia, when he appoints the officers who regulate these things -- has refused to remove the canteen from his armies -- has planted whisky in Cuba, the Philippines, Havana, and Alaska? I believe the judgment will reveal this as the most debauching term ever served by a president.

What would old Hickory Jackson say of the trusts which Mr. McKinley and his ilk foster? Jesus would send a message to a lot of old foxes if he wore here.

There seems to be but one hope for us. That hope is almost a hopeless hope. I refer to the hope that a sufficiency of preachers will rise up and cry out, to awaken sentiment and create alarm and bring on pain and cause action. Corruption in other parties is just as manifest. But who will check them, and change them and purify them, if the preacher does not?

\* \* \*

## BROADWAY PASTORS

They take dinner with you. They come to tea. They play croquet with the girls on the lawn. They are the jolly center at your convivia. They ask after the babies' coming teeth. They make a morning fling in pleasantries at your libertine husband, and elicit an "I like him" from his mouth that all day is full of deceit and profanity.

But that pastor has not had prayer in your home. He has not reproved your long tongue, with its known misrepresentations of your sister and neighbor. He has winked at or chimed in at your

lawn parties, kissing bees, cake cuttings, card parties, lie has never had a heart talk with your children, or your poor, deluded husband, or your lukewarm self.

\* \* \*

### BROADWAY PASTORS

They are on the increase, I fear. My poor penitent friend of the text says, -- "I found him not." No wonder. He is not to be found among such preachers or pastors.

\* \* \*

### BROADWAY OFFICIALS

I know whereof I affirm when I say that we often go down Broadway and take a usury-exacting, face-grinding, covetous, swearing, Sabbath-breaking member and nominate and elect him steward in the Methodist church. Yes sir. Of course I must submit to have some Broadway editor or other censor rip me up for these plain statements. I submit. They say I am an evangelist, crying against pastors and the church. They miss it. My poor heart cries for true pastors and the Narrow way church of the apostles. Amen. I know a Sunday cattle-shipping, profane official, who got the ear of the bishop and, it is justly thought, made a number of the appointments.

There is a great cry now against evangelists. Once, all of our itinerant preachers were evangelists. They preached twenty-nine times a month. The stewards and class-leaders wore, in fact, the pastors. They were men after the Stephen and Philip type. The preachers gave themselves continually to the word; the stewards visited from house to house, the Bible was read, expounded and enforced. The children knew the class-leader and steward as men of God; they were called by name in prayer; their minds were quickened; religious thought became dominant; their conscience assumed control in young life; they cried and slipped off to wonder and pray. Something happened. O for the sight of one more Carvosso class-leader! The man of my text says, "I found him not." No wonder, my friend. A Broadway steward or class-leader don't know this Jesus whom you seek. He can collect a little money, and give a little, but in experience, he is as dry as an ash-bank.

\* \* \*

### BROADWAY SUPERINTENDENTS

The average Sunday-school superintendent doesn't any more expect conversions in his school than he expects the Holy Spirit to witness savingly to his own heart. No sir. Doesn't expect it. I know, for in running meetings, frequently scores of the children are converted before he even comes round. Not one in five ever talks with us about the salvation of their children. They appoint giddy girls and worldly men to "hear the lessons." Frequently a year, two years, three years go by without a conversion, whereas there should not go by one such Sabbath.

\* \* \*



## BROADWAY TEACHERS

You can teach Latin better without knowing it, or Greek without a knowledge of the alphabet, than Christ without yourself being converted. You may interlinear a little Greek or Latin into the head, but Christ won't be imparted in this way. Dancing teachers -- card-playing teachers -- Sabbath soda fount teachers- Sunday train-riding teachers -- worldly teachers -- Broadway teachers. God save us from them. I knew a national libertine and infidel in one of our leading churches who taught the Bible class for many years. I can prove it. The man of my text says -- "I found him not." Poor man! No Wonder. This sort don't know Jesus themselves. They can't show him to others. I was in a church not long since, where there were five teachers who did not claim to be converted. One of them told me herself that she taught a class because her mother had promised her a diamond ring to do so for six months. Broadway teacher: Broadway church.

I believe the known and daily life of over half the Methodists in this country is in direct contrast to, and in open violation of, the spirit and life of Jesus. He went about doing good. Most of our members go about seeking pleasure or money or honor or ease. Paul said, "For me to live is Christ" (living). For many of our members to live, is for Christ to die, while the theater, card-table and dance flourish. Christ led a life of self-denial, and commands it of us. Many of our members lead a life of self-gratification. Broadway church. I have recently held a meeting where nearly or all of the members of the choir attend the theater. In fact, the opera house is owned by one of our stewards. Not long since, I helped a brother where the great bulk of his members frequent the theater -- give card parties, and give and attend dances. To his credit, be it said, he is making a manly and successful fight against their Broadway theories and practice.

I think our pastors are in straitened circumstances. In the main, they regard their vows, and love the Master. But they are helpless -- so helpless.

Many official boards tell them in words, "We will not stand by you in any disciplinary measure which looks to expulsion." We all know that if a pastor enforces discipline, any worldly layman can have him removed if he wishes to -- that is, if said layman has money and a little acquaintance with the authorities. I am writing in the interest of truth, and not to please an individual or a class. The truth is, our bishops, our presiding elders, our worldly officials will not endorse a vigorous administration of discipline. Why should it be a crime for me to say here what everybody knows?

The man of the text still cries out -- I found him not. Not in our Broadway -- nor yet in the city itself, is the soul likely to meet with Christ, or come into right relations with God. The city stands for business, and business contact -- society and social contact. This seeker's failure here, is a warning to all who say -- "It is enough to deal uprightly, to walk honestly, to establish and pursue approved standards of integrity. Christ is more than a moralist. Christianity is more than morality."

Morality is what your neighbors require of you. Christianity is what God demands at your hands. Morality is the standard which your community says you must live up to. Christly in life and character is what Heaven says you must be. Then Morality and Christianity differ, like Earth and Heaven differ. I FOUND HIM NOT.

\* \* \*

## BROADWAY FAILURE

The man of my text says -- "The watchmen that go about the city found me." Of them he made inquiry.

Thank God for such men and women. They lie in wait for souls, who have been misled. It was one of these watchmen who found me -- who found you. He asked, "Can you tell me where I will find him whom my soul loveth?" This faithful man or woman, I venture, did not say Look again over Broadway, or continue to go about the city, in search of peace. He rather recommended solitude. After being assured of his earnestness, I think he told him to look for his Lord on SECRET PRAYER STREET. Who has not been there at some time? I do not refer to our morning or evening prayers. I am not speaking of prayer-saying at all, but of SEEKING in SECRET prayer.

There is a state of soul which asks for, yea, requires retirement from all sound and sight of men. The man is convicted. He is a self-condemned sinner. His case may not be hopeless, but it is desperate. He is not fit to live, and is afraid to die. Solitude befits him. He is looking, listening, longing for Him who brings pardon. Alone, with his sins, he now prays. He approaches God in a new form, or rather without any thought of form

It suits him best to lay each and every bad act down in one great sickening heap. This, he says, is what I have done in the line of duty. My life-this pile, has been a contribution to the kingdom of darkness. I have lived on the wrong side. On this pile he lays each and every bad word of his life. The hill has become a mountain. His hope grows less as this mountain grows larger, and climbs skyward. This, he says, is my VERBAL LIFE. It is all on the WRONG SIDE. He remembers the words of the poet--

And must I be to judgment brought,  
To answer in that day,  
For every vain and idle thought,  
And every word I say?

He is threatened with despair, but he lays on all this each and every bad impulse and feeling of his life. This, he exclaims, is what I have felt -- therefore, what I am. Then, with one cry of anguish, he falls down, as a part of this great mountain of guilt and exclaims--

Nothing but sin have I to give--  
Nothing but love, can I receive.

\* \* \*

## SECRET PRAYER STREET

Were you ever on it? It is very quiet here. The birds don't sing -- wings don't cleave -- wheels don't roll -- intruders don't peep. Silence is golden here. A song, just now, would be in harmony. This man is looking for Jesus.

Who has not walked on SECRET PRAYER STREET? ever walked there in vain? Your speaker found his Lord there, thirty-one years ago. I love this street.

The poet says:

"I'll shout, while passing through the air--  
Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer."

It seems, as if with regret, I'll say -- Farewell, the best path I ever trod -- the surest road to satisfaction I was ever on -- the best friend I ever had. Good-bye, sweet hour prayer. I have pressed thy brow, when a boy; when in the prime of manhood; when crushed beneath a load of guilt; when struggling with a call to preach; when needing strength to deliver my message to sinners; when flattered by well-meaning friends; when the mob howls; when the wedding march was played at my door; when the hearse stopped at my gate; when a birth awoke the echoes in my domestic circle and my soul; when a death dashed my eyes and stilled my heart; when in the bosom of my family; when a thousand miles from home; when I had plenty; when I stood and took the dimensions of spectral want, as he came menacingly near; when I needed a personal friend, and when I was looking for a friend for a friend. Never have I gone in vain to seek my Lord on SECRET-PRAYER STREET!!

In the dark caverns, I have found a fit emblem of my soul, when it cried at morning, I wish it were night; at night, I wish it were morning. In thy hidings I have found a fit place to number my days, and apply my heart to wisdom. In thy stillness I have found a chance to test the standard of values, and know what was shadow, and what substance.

On some of thy sharp turns, I have met the enemy of my soul -- in sorest conflict, and won some of life's greatest victories.

While walking or kneeling on thy uneven ways, I have often met the angel and been told of evil near my loved ones, though many miles away. Here, too, I have often been assured of God's presence, and had revealed to me the issue of many battles then on, or to come. From thy depth I have found the depths Of my own depravity and weakness. From thy sunbathed altitudes, I have looked into the promised land and read my title clear, to a mansion in the skies.

When my brethren of the South Georgia conference had felt long that I was called to constant revival work, and thrust me into it by having me appointed Orphan Home Agent -- I trembled. Loving the pastorate, I shrank from the work of an evangelist. In this state of mind I walked out on Secret Prayer street -- looking for my Lord. I found Him and worshipped. Kneeling before Him, I asked three questions. First -- (and least important) will you give me and my family a support? A billow of assurance rolled over me. For fifteen years the ranchmen have furnished us our beef and mutton; the poultrymen have supplied our coops with fowls; the agriculturists have supplied us with corn and wheat; the wool and cotton growers have remembered us winter and

summer; the livery men have taken us to ride; the railroads have transported us; the real-estate men and architects have housed us; the Washington mints have struck off enough coin to enable us to say -- No good thing has been withheld from us. The school-teachers have instructed our children; the church has welcomed us to her Sunday-schools and blessed pews. I then asked -- Will my own family be fed while I am breaking the bread of life to others? Or must I, like many other preachers, hear it said -- "Your children are the worst of the parish?" I had often said, I don't believe I will have to contribute a child to the swollen army of crime. I had, on the other hand, expected to "bring them up in the way they should go." I asked my Lord on that hallowed street what it meant to my children for me to spend most of my time from home? Again I rode so triumphantly the billows of assurance, that I saw into the future years. Glory!

How has history corroborated assurance of faith? Has my Lord kept the word He spoke on SECRET PRAYER STREET? My oldest child was converted at eight; my next at seven; the next at six; the next at five; the next at four; the next at four, and shouted for a long while. This brings us to the baby. My two oldest boys are preachers: My two oldest girls have married preachers. My family is religious. BLESS GOD FOREVER! I asked one question more, Will you give me a full ministry, my Master? I hero shrink from telling the whole truth, as I see it. Over five hundred men have gone into the pulpits and mission fields from meetings which God has led me to hold.

I have seen hundreds of thousands converted around the altars of our camps, tents and churches, O, my Master, can I ever doubt Thee?

But all do not find Him on this street. Perhaps the watchman directs this earnest seeker of the text to seek for Christ on Penitent-form, or Altar-going street. He may suggest World-forsaking, or Church-joining street. I am sure he would direct him to SIN-CONFESSING AND SIN-ABANDONING STREETS.

I don't believe in the Catholic confessional, as I understand it. But I do believe in the confessional, "CONFESS your faults ONE TO ANOTHER." "If We CONFESS our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." (1 John 1: 9) "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Prov. 28:13).

The human heart is loathe to keep a sin which has brought deep anguish. It longs to pour its sorrow into a kindred lap. Fearing to do this, many miss the blessing which otherwise awaits them. You do violence to the instincts of your soul, and run counter to all domestic ethics, when you keep a secret sin, crime or fault from your wife or husband. If young people, in courtship, were more faithful in confessing their former sins, there might be fewer marriages, for a little while, but there would not be many divorces. Sir! the girl you are to marry should know your former life, You may smuggle yourself into her love, but pay-day is coming. You had better own up now, than have it revealed in the light of eternity. There are many people who wonder at their slow progress, or their no progress in spiritual matters, forgetting that, in reality, they are not what their own bosom partner has taken them for. Over half the men in almost any community have, at sometime, violated their marriage vows, not to refer to their beastly course, while in a single state. These same men, feign innocence, kiss their wives and daughters, thereby professing to be worthy of their companionship. If such is not a hypocrite, pray where is one to be found?"

\* \* \*

### SIN-CONFESSING STREET

Did you ever spend an hour or a day there, and notice, when you came back, how strong you were, and how noble you felt? You did not love sin anymore.

A preacher in the South Georgia conference was sorely tempted by a young, pretty widow of his congregation. He went to his wife and told her of his weakness and his temptation, and asked her to watch him and pray for him. She put her arms about him and said, my precious husband, a woman can trust the man who will thus confide to his wife. You will come out victorious. He did. You say, I could not tell my wife a thing like that, she would quit me. Brother, I am not responsible for your having married a fool. I don't think the Lord is. The duty of confession is plain.

I have seen thousands lie around the penitent form, until they confessed to something which the Holy Spirit had put His finger on. You would be surprised to know how many sneaks we have in the home and in the church. I beg each and everyone of you to make a confidant of some good man or woman, concerning the sin or crime which God's eye is on. I do not now recall one person, in a ministry of thirty years, who thus did, who was not rewarded richly.

\* \* \*

### SIN-ABANDONING STREET

It is not enough to confess. YOU MUST FORSAKE. Big sins; Little sins; Indifferent sins, All sins must be given up.

Outside of a police court door, on the morning when a new force was to be chosen, stood the candidates. One said, I will get the appointment, for the Mayor recommends me. Another said, I have a recommendation from five wards, previously served. The door opened. Our first man laid his testimonials on the table. Wait, said the officer, you must be measured first. Measured? Yes, you must be five feet, seven inches high, to begin with. He did not reach it. Failed in the first consideration. One man failed by one eighth of an inch, failed in the first point. Listen. You must give up sin to begin with. The smallest reserved rights, the least mental reservation, will keep you in the gall of bitterness. You may say, I will wait to seek religion, till after the circus Saturday. That places the show before your present duty, and grieves God. You will not be saved. You say, I will wait till after the ball to be religious. Yes, my friend, and you will wait long after it before you find God. He will not be thus trifled with. Here lies about all of the trouble. At the bottom of doubt, is a sin. At the bottom of fear, is sin. At the bottom of a poverty-stricken experience, is sin. We want to have given up sin, but we don't want to give it up. We want to have been good; but we don't want to be good.

Five feet, seven inches high to begin with. We must give up ALL SIN.

Men's big sins, or besetting sins, rum, women, swearing, or vulgarity, drinking, gambling.

Many of you men before me now, are kept from God by some woman, so vile as to be unfit to scrub the back steps of your wife's or mother's kitchen. You say, if the pulpit refers to these things, it should be in Latin. As long as you sin in plain English, I shall try to save you in plain English.

\* \* \*

#### SIN-ABANDONING STREET

But this poor sin-cursed man has not yet found his Lord, the object of his love. The alert watchman calls to him from the walls of Zion and asks, Have you found him yet? I hear him ask, Have you been on Fasting street yet? No, answers the tired, anxious penitent. Well, says his faithful guide, look then, for many have thus found Him. He at once traverses, in hungry expectancy, this long-sought, well-nigh deserted way. He stops, utterly discouraged, where Secret-Prayer street, Sin-confessing and Sin-abandoning streets empty into Despair alley. The anxious watchman, asks, Where are you? He says, I am in front of Despair alley, without any relief to my aching feet, head and heart. Look for him in that alley, says the ever-faithful man on the wall. O, I can't. It is dark, damp, and emits a fearful stench. You must enter and look for the object of your love there, my friend. Many have thus found him, says the man of God. You have looked on every street without finding Him. He is ahead of you, somewhere. If you turn back, God has no pleasure in you. Say:

"I can but perish if I go--  
I am resolved to try--  
For if I stay away, I know  
I must forever die."

The hesitating man goes doubtfully in, flounders along for some distance in the dark. The watchman shouts from his tower, where are you? O, the mud runs cold around my loins. I sink deeper at every step. I am dying here. I must retreat. O, don't do that! If you do, you are lost for all worlds. Do push ahead a little further. Perhaps "He will roll the sea away," or appear unto you. He makes one more effort. There is silence. The watchman breaks it by asking, Friend, where are you? I am in some sort of a pool or fountain. Can you tell what sort of a fountain you are in? I see from the light ahead that it is a bloody fountain. Ah! You are right, thus far.

"There is a fountain, filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there may you though vile as he  
Wash all your stains away."

Leave the poor old stranded wreck of body-Bend to the oar -- pull for the shore -- Swim that fountain.

While memory holds sway, I will not forget the experience of one Sabbath afternoon. While living over in Vanity Fair, I became awakened. I sought the Lord in many wrong ways and some right ones. I had given up all known sin; I had taken up every known duty; I had sought God at the altar; I had looked much on Secret-prayer street, by day and by night; I had interviewed the preacher; I had joined the church; I had talked in lovefeast; I had "hoped" I was converted.

But, while there was an occasional gleam of light, it was all the darker a moment afterwards. Despair finally seized upon me. I clung closely to Scripture reading, Secret-prayer, and Fasting-streets. No light. I became the victim of a hallucination (if, indeed it was not a reality). When I would go to pray-whether it was day or night, or whether my eyes were closed or open, the doors of Heaven would open, and a very tall angel would step between me and Jesus on the mediatorial throne, so that I could not see his face. He would stand there by the hour, if I prayed, holding a long brush or flail in his uplifted hands, while an ominous frown arched his brow. The moment I ceased to pray, the doors would begin to close, the brush would fall by the wall, the angel would turn to walk, looking at me unkindly, till the door was shut. I was thus pursued for about two weeks, when I utterly despaired of being saved. It seems now that I could not endure two such weeks. I went away into the woods, kneeled humbly down and asked the Lord for just one little favor. I did not now much care for penalty. That was just. I did not much care for suffering. I had almost grown old under it. But I was undone, because of sin. Sin had done all this. The little favor for which I now pleaded was, that I might go to hell that Sabbath evening -- rather than live to old age, but during the time, commit one more little sin -- then go to Hell. Time was nothing -- sin was everything. I was sick of sin -- tired of sin, afraid of sin, ruined by sin. I told the Lord that I would not complain, and would try not to weep, though he tossed me upon the most fiery billows, or my feet blistered on the burning marl of the deepest depths, if He would just then and there put an end to my sinning. O reel Hell fire would have been a cool retreat from sin, sin, sin/ I made the prayer, and waited to be seized by some officer from that burning prison of the damned. He did not come. I thought, maybe, the earth would open and swallow me. It did not. Old Satan here laughed at me, and suggested that I would not get off that light. That while I was a great sinner, that while I contaminated the very air I filled my lungs with, that God would not hear me till I had sinned more deeply, that I need not expect even so little a favor at his hands. For a moment, it looked as if it would have the desired effect. I came near unto blaspheming the name of God. If I could have found death and even been sure of Hell by it, I fear my lips would have uttered the shocking words. In utter bewilderment that the mercy of God was clean gone forever, I remained until, from some source, of which I was unconscious at the time, the thought came that, maybe hope was not clean gone forever. I clutched at it. Holding the little Bible high over my head, I cried, O, Lord if there is just one little word between the lids of this book which means mercy to me, if you will show it to my aching heart, I will never be too young or old, wet or dry, sick or well, rich or poor, far or near, to do my dead level best to serve you.

O, my soul. It is useless to attempt to describe what followed. I was turned upside down, inside out, wrong side right, in a minute. If I had been at the base of pine or oak, or stone, or Blue Ridge, or Andes, or Alps, or Himalayas, my impulse would have been to climb to the highest peak and express my astonished gratitude in throne-reaching hallelujahs. O reel Did surprise more

replete with Heaven ever lay hold on a poor pealed sinner, who, while wanting to sink, without appeal, and without reserve, without hope and without remedy, to the lowest caverns of outer darkness, was translated to the bar of God, to find the Father and Son, and the Holy Ghost, and twenty-four elders, and all the ranks and orders of all the angels, looking and speaking, and clapping and shouting and singing and writing my PARDON. The stars twinkled my pardon; the moon billowed my pardon; the sun shined my pardon; the birds caroled my pardon; the forest leaves laughed my pardon; the lake mirrored my pardon; the branch jabbered my pardon; the very Devil, from the shrinking shadows yonder, groaned my pardon. O, I had it. I've got it yet.

But I left the man of the text in the cleansing pool. The watchman asks, "Where are you, my friend?" "On a rock," he exclaims. What sort of a rock?" I read here.

"Rock of ages, cleft for me--  
Now I plant both feet on thee."

"Happy, thrice happy are you," said the man of God. "Your father and mother landed on that same rock. All the souls that ever broke these crimson waves since Abel's day have planted their feet just here."

From a dark shadow yonder, a strange voice suggested to our happy convert. "Are you not mistaken?" "Mistaken!" Shouted the new born man, "If there is anything I do know, it is that I am not bogging along in despair alley, or staggering through Fasting street, or kneeling all night in expectant secret prayer. No I a thousand times, No. I am not deceived, but am on

"The road our fathers trod--  
The way to glory and to God."

Our faithful watchman speaks, and asks, "What do you see?" "I read in burning capitals, LIBERTY STREET just ahead of me." "Ah," said the man of God, "Happy are you, IF CHRIST MAKES YOU FREE, YOU SHALL BE FREE INDEED." (John 8:36). "Walk out and press for the first time, the King's highway, and draw the breath of a FREE MAN."

Ah here is liberty! It was here I found it easy to preach to please God and save souls, whatever man might say." It was here I got my full consent to be called a holiness crank, or anything of which grace could make me worthy. It was here I got my consent to give up the pastorate, dearly as I loved it. It was here I became willing to be dubbed evangelist, ecclesiastical tramp, etc. It was here I stood flat-footed and threw my first prohibition ballot. O, thank God that I ever stood there, or walked there.

The man of God from his watch tower, speaks again and asks, "What do you observe as you look up that beautiful street?" "O! I see just in front of me a great acclivity, beyond which seems to be the out-croppings of a great city. On the slope of this acclivity, I see written, JEBUS HEIGHTS."

"Duty, privilege and heaven, demand that you scale those heights," says the watchman. You will remember the Jebusites, or the little tribe of Jebus. Joshua, Caleb and other great warriors had



come and gone. David, a prince on the field of battle, had led many victorious armies, and had been king for some seven years. He had left little Jebus on the right hand or left hand, coming and going, their insignificance forbidding a challenge. Having over-run the better part of the enemies' country, he ordered the King of Jebus to surrender his city and tribe. He was laughed to scorn, and received the stinging reply. "The blind and lame guard our walls." On a closer inspection, David's practiced eye detected the source of their defiant words. They were NATURALLY and well fortified.

He offered the generalship of his army to him who would force the surrender of this plucky kingdom. Joab undertook the job. He soon called David to counsel. After a careful examination of the defense of Jebus, they said, It can't be done, except we crawl up through the water sewers (a very humiliating thing). Thus they did. Jebus Jebusites.

We don't like the Methodist term, second blessing; but we have known many men and women who had surrendered their trans-Jordan country, cities and all, to Jesus, except a little Jebus of pleasure or fame, or money, or self. Time proved that Jebus (Jerusalem) was the spot about which and on which the Son of God should be born, should lay the scenes of his earthly career, should die, rise, ascend, and upon which he should again descend. God's most central, precious spot of earth is Jebus. So is it spiritually, Ponder these things. Our friend of the text, whom we have accompanied through so many pilgrimages, stands upon these glorious heights after a brief effort He feels that

"He treads the borders of that land  
Which nearest lies the Heavenly shore--  
Along the glory burnished strand,  
Where golden fruitage droopeth o'er."

He stands, feasting upon what lies out before, and rises up above, and stretches on beyond his vision, which billows in worshipful laughter, as the ocean makes hills and valleys of her yielding waves. The watchman, who keeps pace along the watch tower, asks, "Do you see anything to interest you?" "O, I see the very city itself, heaven, what must be my home." "How does the street look just ahead of you?"

"Why, I notice that it forks just out in front of me but comes to one again just this side yon beautiful, pearly gate, about which I see thousands of bright shining ones. I notice that over the right hand, is written, Shouting street; over the left hand, Calm street. "Good," says the faithful guide; "Take your choice. If you have a Presbyterian sort of religion, take down Calm street, letting your spirit say, My soul doth magnify the Lord. If you have a Methodist type of religion, take down Shouting street, and wake all the echoes with your glad praises. If you grow tired of shouts and songs, run across the beautiful island of laurel grove and commune with your more quiet brethren. If you, of a Presbyterian turn, find it too quiet, join your Methodist brethren and sisters on Hallelujah street. They both lead to glory."

The man of our text, who first sought Jesus on his bed, then in the streets, then in the broadways, says, "It was but a little that I had passed the watchman, but I found Him whom my soul loveth." I will not stop to discuss the value of a guide, a friend, at such a crisis; but beg you to

notice the eagerness with which the Christ was seized. "I held him and would not let Him go." If the sorrows of death ever compassed you; if the pains of Hell ever got hold on you (Psa. 116:1-9), you can feel for this dear soul. Why, I was afraid to go to sleep the first night or two, for fear I would sleep off my joy and my sense of security, I HELD HIM.

Notice, again the disposition made of his Beloved. "I brought him into my mother's room." Who don't recall mother's room, mother's chair, mother's place at the table, mother's corner about the family circle? Mother's room. After supper she and father talked of their young days, good days, great days, miraculous days, days gone. We listened and wondered and took notes. A few minutes had thus passed, when, lo! it was ten o'clock and we had to leave mother's room for bed.

Mother's room! Why, everything was there. Mother kept the strings. She knew where the hatchet was. She saw my top last. She kept the bottle of witch-hazel, and had a cloth ready, when my finger was cut. She kept my Sunday clothes. I went to her, as to a wardrobe.

MOTHER'S ROOM! Why, it was the court of appeals, for every unadjusted trouble coming up on the playground.

Mother's Room! Why, it was from this door that every contest, from "leap-frog," the swing, marbles, ball, up to mental athletics was umpired. This being the highest court in the universe of childhood, there was no appeal, or thought of appeal, from its decisions.

MOTHER'S ROOM! Why, it was a hospital for every sick chicken, pig, puppy, belonging to any child. Of course we came to mother's room to be sick. It was here we learned our Sunday-school lesson, here we heard lectures on Heaven and the way to it.

MOTHER'S ROOM! It is the sum of all that is good and noble and true in a child's life. No wonder then that our young convert says, "I held Him and would not let Him go till I had brought Him into mother's room." In other words, I enthrone Jesus in the best apartments of my spiritual and intellectual nature. He is not put in the "company" room, or shoved into the "spare" room, but asked to occupy the BEST. Here is the best chair, the best bed, the best fire, the prettiest pictures, the best of me is gathered into MOTHER'S ROOM. Come in, Jesus. This, now, is your resting place. When this tired, waiting, hungry, neglected Jesus, proceeds to take up permanent abode, by making Himself comfortable, the overjoyed owner of this room, now the joint property of mother and Jesus, steps to the door and charges the "daughters of Jerusalem" (representatives of mirth) "by the roes and hinds of the field," not to stir up or awake his love till he please.

In life, there are good days, big days, great days, red-letter days. But there can be but one supreme day, one supreme hour. That is the one in which a man REALIZES that Jesus is formed within him, the hope of Glory, AND HAS COME TO STAY, AND SEEMS SATISFIED WITH HIS SURROUNDINGS. My cheap attire; my limited education; my ignorance of men or measures; my family standing; my previous condition; my poor house and furnishings, none, nor all of these things embarrass me. They suit my new guest, He doesn't look at them or think of them, and this makes me forget them.

Life has reached a final expression, a full meaning, a divine emphasis, in companionship with Jesus. No wonder I say, "don't awake my love." Don't ask me to dance, don't belittle me with your card parties, don't blur my vision for holy things with dust from your theatrical platforms.

\* \* \*

TILL HE PLEASE

Was ever assurance more sure? Did Jesus ever abandon His home, the human heart, from choice? TILL RE PLEASE. Then the gates of Hell will never prevail against me.

\* \* \*

TILL HE PLEASE

Then I well may say, I am persuaded that nothing can separate me from my God.

\* \* \*

TILL HE PLEASE

"Angels, assist my mighty joys;  
Strike all your harps of gold.  
But when you raise your highest notes,  
His love can ne'er be told."

\* \* \*

TILL HE PLEASE

If such is our privilege, let's seek this Jesus now. If we have found Him, then we will not despair, or grow careless, but will speak to our souls.

Up to the fair Myrrh Mountain,  
The first frankincense hill,  
I'll get me in this midnight,  
And drink of love my fill.  
O, hills of frankincense, smiling  
With every flower of love;  
O slopes of sweetness, breathing  
Your odors from above,--  
Ye send me silent welcome,  
I waft you mine again;  
Give me the wings of morning  
Burst this still binding chain,  
For soon shall break the day

And shadows flee away.

Amid time's angry uproar,  
Unmoved, unruffled, still  
Keep, keep me calmly, truly  
Doing the loved one's will.  
Mid din of stormy voices,  
The clamor and the war,  
Keep me with eye full gazing  
On the eternal star.  
Still working, suffering, loving.  
Still true and self denied;  
In the old faith abiding,  
To the old names allied.  
For soon shall break the day,  
And shadows flee away.

From earthly power and weakness  
Keep me alike apart;  
From self-will and unweakness,  
From pride of lip and heart.  
Without let tempest gather,  
Let all be calm within,  
Unfitted and unbroken  
By human strife and sin,  
And when these limbs are weary,  
And throbs this sleepless brain,  
With breath from yon Myrrh mountain  
Revive my soul again.  
For soon shall break the day  
And shadows flee away.

There my beloved dwelleth,  
He calls me up to him;  
He bids me quit these valleys,  
These moorlands, brown and dim.  
There my long parted wait me,  
The missed and mourned below;  
Now, eager to rejoin them  
I fain would rise and go.  
Not long we here shall linger,  
Not long we here shall sigh;  
The hour of dew and dawning  
Is hastening from on high.  
For soon shall break the day  
And shadows flee away.

O, streaks of happy dayspring,  
Salute us from above;  
O, never-setting sunlight,  
Earth longeth for thy love.  
O, hymns of unknown gladness,  
That hail us from these skies,  
Swell till you gently silence.  
Earth's meaner melodies  
O hope, all hope surpassing,  
For evermore to be;  
O Christ, the church's Bride-groom,  
In Paradise with thee!  
For now has broke the day  
And shadows fled away."

\* \* \*

## THE WHY OF PRAYER

Prayer is a command, a duty, a privilege, a means, a way, a habit, a life. If it is any or all of these, the question -- "why pray?" is largely answered already. Before prayer can become to us what our hearts desire, it must appear reasonable. The reasonableness of prayer or praying, grows out of the established relations of father and child -- master and servant -- creator and creature.

It is only the prayer of faith which is answered. But faith cannot make a plea, on unreasonable ground. If the thing you ask for is unreasonable, you can't believe that you will get it, or that you ought to have it. Again, if you can't give a sensible reason, and a special one, for asking for a certain thing, the prayer of faith is impossible.

My child is sick; I want it to get well -- just want it -- that's all. If my simple, parental love, is my only argument, then the God who regards that, and changes his mind and his plans, because of such desire, would have to regard every such prayer, when such love is found, throughout the human race, if, indeed, not throughout the animal kingdom.

Do I propose to make the answer to my prayer, an incentive to a holier and a more useful life myself? And will I double my efforts to bring this child up for God and the race? Will I teach him or her that they are the child of prayer, and of a special, intervening providence? -- Thus inspiring within them motives for uprightness, and placing upon them obligations to usefulness. In short, if I don't propose to bring glory to God and special good to my race, through the child, I can't believe God will hear me, or ought.

Again. Faith cannot make her way to God through the brush piles of unsubmitiveness. If I cannot, in the final event, risk my Father's judgment, then my head is wrong; if I cannot trust his love, my heart is wrong. In either case the prayer for submitiveness, or acquiescence, must precede the prayer of faith.

Once more. Sometimes while pressing our suit, we will be unmistakably impressed by the Holy Ghost that the petition should not be granted. Then stop. At other times, we get the assurance that what we ask is according to God's will. Then press the claim. There are times, when you are assured that the case has been passed upon in the Father's mind, and in your favor. Then worship and watch and wait till He brings it to pass. There are times, again, when you will neither be repulsed nor accepted, very clearly, in your approach to the mercy seat. You constantly hover between hope and despair. You feel that the case is not won, but may be is not lost, but liable to be. The whole affair lies in the potential, or rather subjunctive mood. My large observation and limited experience has taught me that many prayers fail right here. At such times as I have described, I verily believe there is some condition, uncomplained with on your part, or the part of the one you pray for. That must be looked after. Examine yourself deeply. If the bar is not in you, then go to God to know what he wants you to say or do to the one for whom you pray, before he can answer.

Again. We must be above self-reproach, or condemnation -- or, if you please, above conscious sin, when we approach God. Read (1) John 3d ch. 20th and 21st verses, "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then we have confidence towards God."

I would not say that faith in God is conditioned on faith in one's self; but it certainly is founded on a deep self-respect. Here is what I mean: -- suppose I had stolen ten dollars from my host in the afternoon. That evening, at church, the preacher digs me up. I kneel at the penitent form-seeking regeneration. I have never been guilty of but one immoral act. When I try to trust Jesus, the Holy Ghost lays his finger on my conscience and says -- "that ten dollars," I see it. I am se/f-condemned. I say -- "I wish I had not taken it." "That ten dollars -- that ten dollars." says the spirit, I say, "I never will steal again." "That ten dollars" -- says the spirit -- "that ten dollars," says my own heart. I can't believe that God ought to hear me. But, with increasing earnestness, I say -- "I am going to slip this money back into my host's pocket to night." The Holy Spirit lays his hand on my conscience again, and says -- "if we cover our sins we shall not prosper -- if we confess our sins, we shall have mercy -- that ten dollars." Again, my own heart condemns me. I have not done all I can myself, and I can't believe God should yet interpose. Still kneeling there -- praying myself, and others praying for me, but nothing happens, till I say -- when this prayer is ended, I am going to walk up to my host and say -- "here is ten dollars I stole from you this afternoon; give me time, and I will restore, four-fold." Then I am going to turn to the audience and confess myself a thief. Now, What happens? Why I am converted in a minute, and get the witness while the prayer is yet going on, and while I am yet on my knees, and before anyone present dreams of my real trouble. Why? Because I met conditions -- regained my self-respect -- I got some faith in myself. THEN we have confidence towards God. You may spin out a thousand theories about faith, prayer, answer, but in practice your faith never plants foot on the promise and claims the answer, until you can look up and say -- "O, God, I have quit everything I know to quit -- I have done everything I know to do, and I stand ready to be everything you want me to be." At the end of myself, the upper end; at the end of my own efforts, the exhausted end; at the end of human means, applied moans, THEN We have confidence towards God.

Lastly. Faith sometimes needs to ask patience for a chair, where she can sit and rest, till God's means can correlate the Earth side and heaven side of things.

From the 10th chapter of Daniel, we learn that while this man of God was crying to God for help, an angel had already left the throne with the answer, and was trying to fight his way by the "Prince of Persia," with it. For three long weeks this angel was hindered; for three long weeks, Daniel continued to cry. The angel got reinforcement and got by and apologized to Daniel for keeping him so long in suspense. I won't say how much of Daniel's awful, persistent agony might have been worshipful, restful waiting.

I now wish to check this train of thought and substitute a few anecdotes, with prayer for a blessing upon them to each kind reader.

It was my privilege to stop in the lovely home of Waford J. Tucker, on the beautiful St. Johns, in Sanford, Fla. We had much talk. One day, in his modest, magic way, he told me of a mid-ocean storm, which registered up within two or three points of inevitable fatality. With slitted sails, and splintered masts, and lurching engines, the strong vessel, with her scores of panic-stricken passengers, committed herself to her frothy foe. The passengers had gathered into the dining-room because the stools and tables were screwed to the floor. Here, in mute pallor, or tear-washed ejaculations, they awaited the caprice of the Demon-inspired deep.

A young woman, who sat near Bro. Tucker and held her twelve year old sister with one arm, while she clung to the leg of a stool with the other, noticing the serene countenance which Bro. Tucker wore, exclaimed, " Mr. Tucker, how can you be so quiet? Are you not afraid?"

Mark his reply. "Madam, this is a fearful storm; the vessel can't hold out in this unequal fight much longer. She may sink, and you, with all the others, may go down with her; but I will not."

In amazement, she cried, "How do you know? Who told you? When did you find it out?" Mark his reply. "Madam, my work is not done. God has given me the assurance that I will not die until it is. How I am to live is in his hands, and don't much concern me."

Bro. Tucker said she looked on him for a minute, with enlarging eyes, which hued despair into laughing faith, then suddenly, with a cry of delight turned and caught her little sister in her arms and exclaimed, "May, dear, cheer up, we will land! I tell you we will land! My life work is not done. and we won't die now."

She then turned and gave him a woman's "thank you, sir." and went to rest on the bosom of trust, just as she once did on mother's lap back in her American home.

She had a job, you see, and was working at it, and so, was able to give a reason for wanting and expecting to live. See?

\* \* \*

## UNCLE BILLY GRIFFITH

If you were ever in Butler, Ga., much, you have heard of Croels' church, and of the Griffith family. The genesis of their religious career lay in "Billy." Wife and I spent a night with him once, and learned the following thrilling facts. He was one of several children, boys and girls. Their father was a county, cross-roads whiskey dealer. None of the family were religious, or ever attended church.

Billy was "mill boy." One Thursday he mounted "old black," and a sack of corn, and started off to have it converted into meal. His way lay by an old log house, which was used for the double purpose of teaching and preaching. This happened to be "circuit preaching" day. Seeing the horses and people, he was seized with a longing to witness the worship. Although he was sixteen years old, I think he told me he had never heard a sermon. He tied "old Black" to a limb, left him in charge of the sack of corn, and slipped inside the door. His wonder box flew open; superstition, like an Ishmael, came up, but had to give way to the Isaac of faith. Everything was holy, whatever that meant. The people, the place, the singing, the praying, and above all, the preacher and preaching, put a judgment awe upon him. He found himself taking stock in the entire proceedings, though knowing nothing for certain about any of it. The religious sense was thoroughly aroused before the preacher was through. He was so convicted of sin that he could not be persuaded from his seat, during the altar service, but later felt the great calm of pardon come over him. He came out of that church, a brand new boy, crawled upon a new horse, went over a new road to a new mill, having entered upon a new life.

His concern for his wicked father occupied him. He had heard much of prayer that day, and before reaching home had decided to secretly try it on his home-folks, particularly the father. Reaching home, he bounded into the presence of the family, and with joy and excitement, related what had happened. The mother took it seriously. The children took it wonderingly. The father heard it in anger, and in a rage, whipped Billy for stopping there.

The boy was not only surprised at the treatment he received, and the apparent unconcern of all for their souls, but was at his wits end as what course to pursue. He could not lapse into the old life. It was gone, and the place thereof could not be found. He gleaned more knowledge than comfort from his mother, who had been better environed in other days.

Billy resolved to pray for his father till the next "mill day," much desiring to hear another sermon, but praying that his father might be induced to "fide the turn" next time. Accordingly he established a plan and hour of prayer, in the dark and in the woods. The father grew worse, and was more cruel in his family than ever before. The Devil took advantage of this and accused the boy of prayer, of having brought domestic turmoil into the circle.

The thought was confusing and painful. The first month having found the family worse instead of better, Billy consulted with God and himself as to the best course. He was led to try prayer one more month. He was much engaged at odd times. His petitions all headed towards "circuit preaching." The month passed, with a perceptible change in Mr. G. He became quiet, thoughtful, was kind. The morning of the next "mill day," he put Billy at something else, and went



to mill himself. He heard that sermon. God was in it. It had the judgment ring. He trembled. He sat in thought and confusion through the altar service, not knowing really what was going on.

When the doors of the church were opened, he went forward and gave his hand. Outside the church door one of his neighbors said, Mr. G., I am glad you have joined the church. He said, I did not join the church, did not aim to, was only asking for prayer. He then went to the preacher, told him of his boy's conversion, of how he whipped him, and of his cruelty in his own home, and of the past few days of misery, and how he had come that day to get relief. He then said, "No, sir; I did not join the church today, but I and my whole family will be here at your next round." The next service was on a beautiful Sabbath. The Griffith family was there, and at the altar. When the doors of the church were opened, old man Griffith walked up and laid his hand in that of the man of God. His wife placed her hand on that of her husband; their two daughters came next, placing their hands; the oldest son came next, till it reached dear Billy, all hands stacked in the preacher's hand, stacked up hands, stacked up family, stacked up conviction, stacked up agony, stacked up wrestling, watching, weeping, waiting, stacked up faith, stacked up prayer, stacked up answers. Amen.

Uncle Billy was the first fruits of all this and what follows. He, himself, though he never learned to read, took his church paper over forty years, was a giant in prayer and good works. One of his brothers became a good preacher, two of his sons, in turn becoming itinerant preachers, and still another, a good worker.

Thus this small stream of prayer, started in little Billy's heart, has become several large waterways, turning many sprinkles of salvation, and beaming many ships of spiritual merchandise.

Did you ever pray? Did you ever pray, sure enough? Did you ever bring IT to pass? Did anything ever happen because you prayed?

\* \* \*

I was once pastor in South Macon, Ga., wife was laid low with disease. The physicians despaired of her life. On a Saturday, some of our friends came in from old Liberty chapel church, to ask the privilege of burying her in their rural cemetery. To their surprise, she was yet alive. My faith for her recovery, I think, had not flickered. Bishop Key, then pastor of Mulberry church, that morning met some of his elect women, to whom he reported wife's condition, adding that she was very low. They asked, how is Bro. Culpepper's faith? O, said Dr. Key, John thinks she will get well, says he has inwrought faith for it. One of them exclaimed, "O, we must go out then and help nurse her; it won't do for her to die if Bro. Culpepper feels that way. It would cripple him in prayer and service the rest of his life."

Fine point, that. These women of God felt that if my faith should receive a blow in my young life, it might run through all I prayed, or said, or did, or was through the remaining course of life. In the sense they meant it, to look after my faith was more important than the recovery of one person, though that person be a bosom companion. Sunday morning brought no visible change in wife's condition. About nine o'clock, she whispered to me about my appointment, ten miles in the country. I told her I was not going to fill it. She insisted, saying she hated to disappoint a

congregation, the last Sabbath she spent on earth. That settled it. I jumped in the buggy, drove hurriedly out, preached and came immediately back. She seemed to have slid a little further down the bank.

As my large Sunday school was assembling at the church, I walked down and laid my wife's condition before the teachers and children, and asked them to disperse with the lessons, and hold a prayer meeting for her. Bro. Goodyear, the superintendent, gladly agreed to it, and as I passed out, with sobs, they went down on their knees.

Hurrying back, I glanced at my precious wife, then walked across the hall and was in the act of kneeling down to join my devoted Sabbath school at the throne of mercy, when one of God's billows of assurance rolled under me and lifted me to my feet and caused me to shout out, Glory to God! She will get well. She is alive twenty years afterwards.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 11 -- BEFORE THE BALL

Five years ago, during the progress of the Indian Springs camp-meeting in Georgia, the news reached them that a dancing party was coming to the Springs from Macon, forty miles away, and one from up the road towards Atlanta.

Such good men as W. B. Godbey, L. L. Pickett, Gee. Mathews, etc., with many good women, held a prayer-meeting against it -- knowing its dissipating influence upon many of the young people, already more or less serious. After several prayers had been offered, some one proclaimed aloud that the dance would not come off. This assurance spread until the entire band were affected by it. My family was tented on the ground, and my wife and children were tangled up with that prayer-meeting. The news spread and reached Macon, that the camp-meeting folks had declared the dance off, by authority of God obtained in prayer

This was cause for great merriment among the dancing folks.

On the morning of the day, the dance was to come off at night, a largo crowd gathered at the depot of the 'Southern,' eager for the trip and frolic. Many jests were indulged in. Among other remarks, a whiskey dealer, one of the dancing party, as "all aboard" rang out, and a rush was made for the entrance, said -- "Wonder what them praying folks would say if they saw us now." They boarded that train.

The weather was good; there had been no heavy rains. But a bridge gave way and killed several outright. Many were injured, some of whom died later. That liquor dealer was among the first killed. My oldest son, who had gone down to Macon, our home, for some articles needed at the camp, was on the train. He was not among the killed, or the three score, more or less, seriously hurt. Thus ended that end of the dance. The train, bringing a party from towards Atlanta, was ordered to take a siding at Jackson. So they did not reach the ground. All sorts of talk followed, Some said people who would pray that way were wicked. Some said God would not hear such prayer. Some said it was a mere coincidence. Such found it hard to account for the widespread

assurance, three days beforehand, that they would not have the dance. Those who pray most, know how and why it all was.

If the Rambles of a Lover or these Incidents on Prayer have helped you, drop me a card at Lebanon, Mo. -- J. B. Culpepper

\* \* \* \* \*

## 12 -- AFTER THE EAGLE SCREAMS

Have you heard the eagle scream? Well, let me tell you about it. A famous hunter was out gaming, when he winged an eagle, on its first joyous flight. He took it to his home, bandaged the broken wing, and placed it in a large cage in the yard.

With no eyrie but a barn-yard perch, this noble creature of the rocks, began to leave off the eagle life and take on the life of the lower order of birds, which his birth had taught him to disdain. He became very observant of a flock of geese which used the same yard. In fact, in process of time, he came to like them -- so much so, that, when he was well enough to release from his cage, he began to associate with them. He would sit on the ground -- like a goose. He would try to drink water just like a goose. He would roost on the ground just like a goose. He would try to quack just like a goose. He would go through the motion of eating grass, just like a goose. He would go down to the pond with them and thrash about in the water and try to swim -- just like a goose. In fact, he was all the bigger goose, for trying to be a goose, when he was not a goose, but an eagle. But I am glad to tell you of a better day which came over my bird of the skies.

One morning the flock of geese were on their path to the pond, with the eagle a little in their rear, that he might the better see their movements and imitate their example. The master was watching them, as he had often done-when an eagle was heard to scream above them. It caught the ear of the bird on the ground. He stopped and seemed to be in a profound study for some time-then trotted up with the flock, which had paid no attention to the shrill cry above them. The free bird of the air screamed again.

This time, our bird turned about and seemed to be trying to catch up a broken thread from life's waste basket. In much apparent bewilderment, he turned and overtook the self-satisfied flock of puddlers.

A third cry -- sharp and piercing, rang down from ether heights. This was enough. Our eagle, in a minute, changed expression. He looked taller. He assumed imperial demeanor. He stood and shot out first one leg, then the other. He threw out the well wing -- then the lame one -- then both. He paused a moment, with his eye on the sun. Then he caught himself up and made a circle -- caught up and made another circle -- up and another circle, till he was above the houses. Up, up, circle after circle, till he was above the trees.

Just then, somewhere between him and the sun, the scream which had so thrilled and lifted him, was again heard. This came as if from the Mount of Transfiguration. He threw his eye down on the flock of geese, now entering the water, then turned and shot sunward, with his first loud,

prolonged, but natural scream, which being interpreted seemed to say-farewell geese and goose ponds -- I have never felt quite at ease with you. I am an eagle and am off to my home in the skies.

Am I now talking to those who while crossing the woody skirt of the seventh chapter of Romans, received a wound, which brought them into conformity with a life, on which they were not bent?

Brethren, hear me about that goose life... [There was a time when] I told smutty jokes, like a goose. I once chewed tobacco, used cigars and even the old strong pipe, like the geese. I was afraid of coming to want, just like a goose -- afraid of the opinions of men, just like a goose. Took my case in my own hands, just like a goose.

But one day, my ear caught a note which seemed to come from nearer the throne. It most profoundly interested me. It seemed to be connected with all my mysterious past, but threw new light upon it, and lent new charms to it. It explained inner longings. My gaze became vertical. It gave me new claims on throne. It put me to seeking "those things which are above." This thought engaged me -- engrossed me-possessed me.

Bless God I am an eagle, and am off to where only eagles fan the air.

-- J. B. Culpepper

\* \* \* \* \*

### 13 -- THAT BLACK HORSE [OF SIN]

Rev. 6:5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo! a black horse.

In the first year of my ministry, I came across the following incident, which impressed me, and which I tried to turn to value for souls. It has been caught up by many preachers, and, I think, used of the Holy Ghost for awakening many sinners. The incident:

One morning, a group of small boys stood together on the village commons, discussing a black pony, which was posted for "raffle yard" at "Two P.M." One boy, whose name was Tommy, said his mamma and Sunday-school teacher were opposed to his taking a chance, and that he was not going.

Some of them laughed and said: "Old Tom hain't got the two dollars, fellers -- that's all that's the matter with, him." There was truth enough in this to give Tom the "dry grins."

After dinner he drifted with the crowd, until he found himself in the group of excited men and boys, surrounding a beautiful black pony, without visible blemish.

The usual questions were asked and answered, when the raffle opened. Tommy's uncle stepped up to him and said: "My boy, I have registered a chance for you, so hold up your head; you have as good a chance as any."

Unluckily for our little friend, that two dollars won the pony, and it was so announced. Tom could hardly believe it at first. He had to be almost pulled up to him by a dozen of his envious companions. It gradually dawned on him that he owned a beautiful horse -- all by himself. The pony seemed glad to make the boy so happy.

After patting him, he seated himself in the new saddle, drew up the new bridle, and as the group parted, he moved out, in a brisk walk, towards home, the happiest boy in the county. As he was passing a store in which his friend "Dick" clerked, he heard his name shouted, and the cry to "Get down."

By this time Dick was in the door and said: "Tom, jump off that horse; he has killed the third man, and has been slipped in here to be raffled off today. He will kill you."

Tom had stopped. He said: "O, Dick, this is the pony, and I have won; he is all mine; but he is just as gentle, and so pretty. Don't you think he is a dandy?" as he paced gracefully over the green towards his home. As he stood up in front of the home gate, his father, who had been reading the paper, saw him, and recognized the vicious animal as the death-dealing one he had seen a warning concerning in the daily. He at once walked out, followed by the mother and sister, and said: "My son, I have just read of that animal. He has killed the third rider -- men -- and was sneaked in here and palmed off on innocent people. How came you on him? Get down quickly." The mother and sister chimed in at once, saying: "O, yes; do jump off." Tommy said: "Papa, he is mine now. Uncle took a chance for me, and I have won; he can't be vicious. Just see how gentle he is." (He turned him about.)

The mother said -- maybe this is another horse. The father shook his head, and was about to reiterate his order to GET DOWN, when his boy said, "Papa, I will ride up the road a little way and come back and tell you all about it." The pony moved off so gracefully that the parents and fond sister half relented. The ground over which he walked, trotted, toddled, single-footed, paced, racked, galloped, was so enchanted that miles stretched between him and home, until the setting sun, into whose face he looked, reminded him that he must return. He had patted his pony, caressed him, talked aloud to him, and planned many a happy trip together. Poor boy! How little he knew that these were only air castles, of the more flimsy fabric, to be shattered by death in a few minutes.

Listen! When he tightened on the rein to turn towards home, this beautiful animal was no longer beautiful, but became vicious, and seizing the bit between his teeth, with bowed neck, dancing eyes, dilated nostrils, lava-flecked flanks, striking fire from the rocks at every bound, he plunged madly forward. Tommy was frightened, and in vain tried to check the furious horse. He even sought to GET DOWN. It was too late. Look! When the road made a right angle yonder, the wild pony plunged straight forward into the forest, tearing through thorn patches, striking against saplings, becoming wilder and more unmanageable at every bound, until he reached a fearful

precipice, over into which he leaped, and far below, frowning death pinioned upon the sharp points of jagged rocks, both the vicious horse and his brave but deluded rider.

Hearer, I have been describing you from beginning to end, and you know it. Your judgment gives me a verdict; your memory floods the court with evidence; your conscience gives pungent point to the argument; the Spirit of God holds you in awful arrest at this hour, and while you hear me with that outer ear, your soul is listening to the awful tramp of God in its resounding corridors, and to a voice which refuses to be hushed, saying: "Thou art the man."

\* \* \*

### THAT BLACK HORSE! O, THAT BLACK HORSE OF SIN!

Look at that boy on the black pony of disobedience. God, who made him, and who knows what is best for him, says: "Obey your parents," and promises him long life, if he will; but he finds other boys out riding, and he goes, too. At first he is truant from school, slips out and runs with a boy whose company he has been forbidden -- goes to the pond to bathe, or does some "little thing," as he calls it. It looks harmless -- just as that pony did to Tommy.

But he is in the saddle now, and wants to go further. The opportunity is soon offered. Other boys are chewing and smoking. It looks nice. They tell how they learned. He is tempted. They tell him he can't afford it -- has no money. He knows he has money. True, mother gave it to him to give to the Cuban sufferers, and he is on his way to the agent now. He is tempted, pulls out the quarter, and silences their lips, but only for a moment, Another boy says: "O, fellers, let him alone; he is a girl. If he was to smoke one cigarette we would have to carry him home to his mammy."

Poor boy! He is raffling for the black pony. Now that he has stopped in bad company, how shall he start on? Now that he has met one of their accusations, how shall he fail to prove the other false. He wavers a minute, then says: "I can smoke as well as you without getting sick." A third boy speaks up and says: "Boys, he'd smoke if we would set up. He is too stingy to buy 'era. You never knew him to treat a friend." Still another says: "Fellers, let that kid alone; when he gets home his mammy will ask him where that quarter is, and make him show it, too." Poor boy! He is gambling for that pony. He can stand it no longer, but says: "I will show you." He calls them in and "sets up." O, it is so bad! He has won the pony. We see death in the animal's eye, but the boy doesn't. Already, he has robbed the starving Cubans. Already he has dishonored mother. Already he has gone with a company to do evil. On the black horse, you see.

O, the Black horse of disobedience to parents?  
O, that Black horse of cigarette smoking?  
O, the Black horse of sin!

This boy, men and women, is typical. A description of him would be the history of every sinner in this tent.

There is a young man out there on the black horse of profanity. He never heard mother or sister swear; he was, I hope, not trained by father; his Sunday-school teacher did not train him, but

he is on that horse. Why, he thinks it sounds nice. He really is glad that he can take God's name in vain.

Did you ever notice how well swearing and smoking go together? Have you noticed how soon a young man will say: "I can't quit. I swear before I know it." So, Tommy rode farther than he intended. O, won't you dismount now? If you can't curse before ladies, it must be wrong. If you would not swear before a preacher, it must be an evil. If it is always in connection with anger or foolishness that you swear, you here have proof of the origin of the habit. Won't this help you to get down? If the habit is growing on you, by that fact can't I persuade you to dismount from this black horse of indecent language? If God is sincere when He says: "I will not hold him guiltless that takes my name in vain," won't His voice alarm you? Won't you let it be as if He said: "Young man, just ahead is that precipice. Soon you will go over into Hell!"

O, man, do get down -- get down now!

There are men before me who are on the black horse of gambling. Here, again, sin looks innocent and beautiful until it has the advantage of us. How harmless it seems for a couple of young ladies and gentlemen to sit down to a table of social cards. Yet the passion for gaming, which, unchecked, ruins its millions, is created in this way. To pass over the fact that many women gamble, their greater sin consists in giving aid to a custom which results in the ruin of so many men. It is not enough to plead holiness of intent, innocence of purpose. What are the results? Nineteen-twentieths of the confirmed gamblers of the land say they got their start around the social card table, and played first with ladies. Then while you may not become gamblers, you are worse. You are black-leg gambler manufacturers. No doubt of it. You may be beautiful and sweet, but the Devil has hired you to hold the stirrup while young men mount the black horse to ride off to the lowest dens of vice. Yes, when they plunge into Hell, I want to say that, according to my ideas of justice, you will ride in behind them, if you are not a stark fool. I know you women have been called angels until you sit out there and pop your eyes on me when I speak plainly to you.

If you will read your Bibles, you will find that every angel spoken of there is a man. Yes, ma'am! not a woman among them.

But you women are more responsible for the sins of men than you are willing to admit. Do you ask me how? I will tell you. The sexes are the complement of each other. We have immeasurable influence over each other. For instance: If there was not a man around, you women would not cook more than once a week, and no telling when you would wash the dishes, comb your hair or make up the beds. You laugh, but it is a fact. The presence of a man puts a move on you. The same is true of men. When you are habitually absent from us, we become filthy and rapidly disintegrate.

This brings me to say that WE KEEP UP EACH OTHER'S STANDARD OF RIGHT AND NOBILITY. Have I made myself plain? I am trying to say that if you young ladies were to walk into one of these bar-rooms and take a drink, stick a cigar in your mouth and stalk down the street, no young man would be caught in your company in daylight. Am I right? You know I am. We compel you to be respectable by dropping you when you are not. That is your standard held up by us.

How about our standard in your hands? Why, here is the size of it. Next Saturday night one of these average young men can spend half the night in a saloon, drinking and gambling, and the other half in a shameless house, then stick a cigar in his mouth, ring your doorbell, and arm you off to church. Yes, arm you. Where is his incentive to a noble life? He knows he can just be a dog and go with the best of you girls. O, yes; you are angels, but where is our standard which God and society has placed in your hands? If you demanded that we should be as pure as we demand of you, we would measure up to it, And, inasmuch as you fail to hold up our standard, you help us to mount the black horse of sin. While I am speaking to you young women, let me say that many of you are on the black horse of dancing.

I wonder how you can look with tolerant eyes upon this silly and heathenish exercise, much less participate in it, if you ever pause for sober thought. Most of your fallen sisters took their first downward step from, or rather in, the dance. They say so. For further information, I refer you to a little book I have written on this subject. In it you will find what all the leading churches of this country think of this thing which you say you had rather do than to eat. By the way, let us analyze that expression.

Women don't dance much alone, or just with women. You say you had just as soon dance with a woman as a man, when I corner you, but you hadn't, for when I ask you to give me your hand in solemn promise that under no circumstance will you ever dance with a man, not one of you will do it. Suppose you take all contact with men out of the dance. Why, you rob it of most of its charms. If the sexes must dance apart or on opposite sides of the room, they would quit; you know they would. Then when you say, "I had rather dance than eat," you simply say I had rather some man had me around the waist, or was squeezing my hand, than to eat. How would it sound to say: "I am so bad off to marry, I am about to die?" Pardon this plain speech, girls. I know you would shrink from such a statement, but I must say that it is the more becoming expression of the two.

The church is your friend. You don't doubt it. But the church is against the dance. Why is this? The church knows that when you enter the ballroom, the ball, like all balls, will roll until it strikes bottom somewhere; or, in other words, that you have mounted the black horse, and are likely to be thrown at any hour.

You know that preachers are your friends. Yet they fight the dance. Why is this, young ladies? Why, it is because they have the Spirit in them which would thrust them in the way of that dashing black horse, and save you from certain death.

You say, "There is no harm in the dance." We tell you there is. You say you don't see the harm. Tommy did not see the harm at first in the pony. He heard it, though. You hear that there is harm in the dance. I tell you now that there is. When you see it, it will be too late, probably, to save yourself. Dismount, girls, now!

You say you don't mean any harm. Tommy did not mean harm, but that black horse did. So does the dance. Get down, O, get down at once. You say it teaches you grace. You should say disgrace. The Bible says grace comes through Jesus, and not a cock-eyed dancing master



You are not considered by any sensible person more modest, graceful, refined, or better fitted for the duties of wife or mother, or citizen, by having familiarized yourself with the touch of all sorts of men in the ball-room. Get down, girls -- now, while Bro. Culpepper pleads with you -- get down. O, women, don't underrate your influence over men. If you recognize your power, use it in the right direction, and begin now.

I want to preach a sermon -- give an exhortation and call up penitents, all in one reference. The reference is to my warm friend, Rev. R. F. Kilgore, whom I hope you will know some day.

I was used of God in his salvation, in a tent meeting in Pensacola, Fla., a few years ago. I came to know him well after that, for we were much together in soul-saving. Let me tell you about him. He ran away from his Virginia home, Christian home, at the age of fifteen, thinking he did not have the liberty he deserved. He landed in Cincinnati, O., almost penniless, homesick, but afraid to return. In looking for a job, he met the manager of the Middle States Detective Service, to whom he apprenticed himself seven years. As soon as the papers were signed, binding both parties, the homesick boy was asked where he preferred to board. Brought up, as he was, around a family altar, he thought first of the religious phase of his future life. While his people were Baptists, he remembered to have heard his mother say that the Presbyterians in that community were truer to their church vows than any other denomination; so he said: "I'd rather board in a Presbyterian family." In a little time it was arranged, and he found himself seated in a family circle of five. Supper was announced, but my friend choked up, as his thoughts wandered back to his old Virginia home. True, he had been told that he could call the girls sister, and Walter, brother; but this, you know, was not much to a boy whose heart was crying to see mother. In the midst of suppressed tears, however, was the sweet thought that he would soon be permitted to join the family in worship. This he hungered for.

Supper over, the center table was rolled near the fire, and the old family Bible -- no! no! no! a deck of cards, was thrown upon it!! The group gathered about it, when one of the young ladies said: "Maybe the young man will join us?.... No," said my friend, "I don't know one card from another; my folks are all Christians and don't play cards." "O," said the attractive young lady, "we are all Christians, too. We all belong to the Presbyterian Church."

Poor girl! She did not seem to know the difference between church membership and membership in the Kingdom of Christ. Frank asked for his room and cried himself to sleep. I have heard him say that during the five years he boarded there, there were not a dozen nights in which they did not play cards, but not one in which they read from the old Book and prayed. Do you believe they were Christians? I don't. On one occasion the brother and one of the sisters took a trip to Dayton, Ohio, which left the number of carders small. The favorite girl urged Frank to play. He urged that he did not know how. She proposed to teach him. He had already learned to love her. He yielded, and she taught him to shuffle and deal. He saw but little into the game that night, but a few nights were enough to fascinate the boy. He soon began to take the pack to his room and practice on them to a late hour. When the absent brother and sister returned, this one, his enchantress, said: "I can take Mr. Frank and beat any two in the house." And it was so, too. One day, when father and mother were away, Walter asked my friend to go across to the bar-room and take a game. He said: "No, I don't go to such places." Walter explained that there was a partition. They went. Walter tapped a gong, when two men walked out. They played a four-handed game

with these men, and won. The gong tapped, when out came four "schooners" of beer. My young friend was horrified, and for the first time he swore. He cursed Walter for pulling him into gambling, arose, and went crying to his room. Walter soon followed to beg him not to let his father know he frequented that place. To be brief: My friend got on his first drunk in that vile place. He got into his first fight there also. From this small, but sad, beginning a fearful harvest came. This young woman had railed for the black horse and turned him over to my friend, and helped him to mount. O, what a ride followed! He became a drinker, and his nightly allowance was a quart to be consumed through the night, after drinking heavily through the day.

He became a gambler, often manipulating cards with one hand while holding a cocked revolver under the table with the other, having determined to have the pile or take the man's life. He gambled all over this and other countries, running with the crowd and committing the usual sins which follow in the wake of gambling. He became a prizefighter under the name of Jack Smith, and was thirty-seven times in the ring, committing the sins which follow in the wake of pugilism. He carries several bullets in his body, was cut entirely open once and left for dead, tried many times to take the life of those he was running with. He had a great influence over young men, and often led them away from the right. I have heard him say that when he was converted scores of women would have rejoiced to have heard he was dead. Such was his power over their sons and husbands. Thank God he was saved and is today out in the evangelistic field.

But, listen, young ladies. I have often heard him say that he knew no one on earth but that young lady back in that Cincinnati Presbyterian home could have induced him to try to learn to play cards. He loved her, and did it for her sake. I have often heard him say, too, that, deeply as he respected her, he believed in some way she would be tangled up with all the sins which card-playing led him into.

I see I have impressed you. Thank God for it. Resolve now that you will never teach a young man to play cards, and that you will never give it the show of innocence by playing with any one. O, get off the Black horse, and persuade all your friends to get down. Do you say that you will quit dancing if I will give you as good an argument against it as I have against gambling in this incident about my friend? Then I will do it, while these older Christians pray.

When I was pastor in -- I called one morning on Miss \_\_\_\_\_, one of my young lady members, who had been addicted to the dance. On entering the parlor, she said: "Well, Bro. Culpepper, have you come to get after me about dancing again?" I told her I had not; that I had not heard that she had infringed church law again. She confessed, but added: "I'm done for good." I said: "Miss Nan, I am glad to hear you say that. What has decided you?"

(Now, listen.) "Well, you know Bud Jim (her brother, a leader of my Monday-night prayer-meeting), he was home about a month ago, when we had a ball here. I took it upon me to persuade him to dance. It took me until after midnight, but I succeeded. After one or two sets, he came to me and said: 'Sister Nan, I did not know there was half so much fun in it. Here goes to dance till I'm so old I can't.'" She had put him on the Black horse, and he had ridden out of the prayer-meeting and into the world.

She paused a moment, then, pointing across the street, said: "Those people, Bro. Culpepper, you know, move in the social strata below us. We never exchange visits. Well, they had a dance the week after we did. While they did not think of inviting me, they sent Bud Jim a card, and he went, and danced the night through." She then pointed through the window, near which we sat, to another neighbor, saying: "Those people would be said to move in a circle still lower. Those girls where Jim danced never visit yonder. But they had a dance last week and invited Bud Jim, and he went."

Do you catch on, girls? Miss Nan had raffled for the Black horse, had helped her precious brother into the saddle, and while she had remained at home, in what she called first-class society, Jim had ridden out of the prayer-meeting -- out from the home influence -- out into a circle into which his sister could not go, and we now find him spending the night at a ball in third-class circles. Do you see it? Will you ever learn that society has guards up for you, and forbids your getting a seductive taste of what lies beyond, but that no such protection exists for our precious boys, except as our thoughtful young women lift up a standard. I was about to speak to my troubled sister, when she motioned to me to remain silent. After some pause, she asked: "Do you know what the Clippers are?" Going on, she said: "Well, sir, brother spent last night there in a dance." The Clippers are a gang which infest "Sandy Bottom," and dance in nudity and reel through the orgies of the lowest dives.

Is this not a dark picture? Well, I must dip my brush in Egyptian midnight to finish it.

Jim no more cared for the tame entertainment of home, or of first or second circles. He went to the outer circles, and spent many nights with the "Clippers." One morning he brought a young man home to a Sunday breakfast. He met Miss Nan. She, too, was on the BLACK HORSE, and riding fast. An intimacy sprung up between them. They were married. A few months went by, when, coming home drunk, he placed a pistol against her temple and blew out her brains -- then blew his own out.

I am glad you are listening to me.

Now, young ladies, let me put my finger on a few of the salient features of this sad picture.

Miss Nan, a consistent member of my church, listened to some one speak of the beautiful pony of Worldly amusement. It looked harmless. She took a chance, won the pony, and began to ride. She wanted her brother to accompany her. She took a chance for him, and won again. They mounted. Boy-like, he wanted to ride further. He soon left her to return alone, and he began to ride in doubtful company. He rode out of the church, out of religious duty, out of elegant society, then out of moral society, then down among the lowest. He lost family respect, then self-respect -- introduced into his sister's presence a vile man, who, too, was on this vicious animal, and together they rode over the awful precipice into a Devil's Hell.

O, Girls! Boys! Get down! Get down! Get down!

There are many before me now who are on the Black horse of Intemperance.

O, what an army of cavalrymen -- not on their return from fields of honorable victory, but on an ignominious retreat. They are on the run from home and mother, and wife and children, and church and manhood, and bread and Heaven. I have stood and cried myself hoarse for twenty-five years, as this army has filed by. I have gotten only one in a thousand to see the yawning gulf right in front. Many of those who saw it were powerless to stop the Black horse and get down. Do I swing the picture low enough, or high enough, for you to see it?

PRAY, BRETHREN. Turn and get down on your knees and pray while I talk. Look at these riders! There are 500,000 young men among them; 125,000 of them will ride into drunkard-dom this year if we can't get them to dismount; 85,000 will ride over the precipice this very year if we can't stop them.

Look! There are preachers, lawyers, physicians, bankers, mechanics, teachers, farmers, railroad men in that ride to eternal death. See, they quicken their pace. They don't look this way, or I would point to the warning written just above their heads. Let every one who has a friend in that army of doomed men shout for life -- for your life, for their life, for this life, for the next life; and while you get their attention, maybe I can say something which will arouse them. Thank God, they did hear that. Some are looking. Now, pray for me. Men -- men on the Black horse there! Hear me!! Millions, as agile, as gallant, as strong as you, have raffled for that horse, and tried to ride him, because of his beauty and promise. He flung them to the bottom of eternal death. Yes, men, he is docile, and docile only to deceive you. He will kill you. Already, if you remember, he has much changed since you first mounted. Think of how many men have died drunkards. Well, they went over this same road, on this same horse. Believe us, men, and get down. Listen, fellows. Could you take all the orphan children of your country by the hand, under ten years of age, who were made such through drink, and put them in line, you would have a line 75,000 miles long, or long enough to go three times around this world. Men! Their fathers raffled for the Black horse of tipping, mounted and rode off on a pleasure trip They have never come back to these pale-faced: man-forgotten, ragged, hungry, waiting children. Do you love your children? I know you do, and appeal to you in the name of that love to get down. Listen, men, while I punctuate this sad line of sad orphanage with 18,750 miles of pale, tear-stained, heart-broken motherhood and wifehood.

Boys! If I should ask you if you love your mother, you would resent it. But, boys, these same mothers' sons raffled for the Black horse of a social glass, and rode over the hill for a "good time." Their mothers have left the night-lock off, have left a lamp in the window, have stood and looked their eyes out and their life away in vain, for their sons never came back. Boys, they passed over this very roll, on that very horse. Won't you get down? Thank God. some are getting down. Run, men, and come to their help. Shake hands with those noble boys for me.

You married men there in the saddle, won't you hear me? The husbands of the brokenhearted wives I pointed you to just now loved their wives just as you do. They did not aim to make them widows -- overload them with work care, trouble and finally kill them. No! But, men, they raffled for the Black horse of treating, kissed their wives, who, with tears in their eyes, said: "Husband, I feel for you. I fear that new horse will hurt you. Don't go." These men laughed, kissed their wives again, and passed off. These poor wives have gone to the field, to the washtub, to the poor-house, to the churchyard; but their husbands have not re. turned. They passed over this same road, on that same Black horse. He threw them. He will kill you. Won't you get down right

now? It is now or never with you. O, what can I say that will induce you to stop! I bid you call up the innocent, pleading faces of your prattling children. Maybe that will help you to want to get down and return to them. I bid you look in memory upon the sweet girl who once so confidently followed you to the altar, and whom you loved, and whom you swore eternal troth to. Look upon that face there. Compare it with the same face, with lines of anxiety distinctly marked upon it since you raffled for that Black horse. Man, you are killing your wife. Can't you see it. You say you love her? I dare you prove it. Jump from the back of that habit, come and give me your hand, and go with me to your wife and imprint an old-time kiss on her hungry lips, and look into those deep, true eyes and tell her you love her. Then kiss her again and tell her you have come home to prove that love by riding the Black horse no more forever.

Sinners, old and young, one and all, hear me, and get down. The memory of an indulgent father, or a doting, fond mother, urges you to get down. The pleadings of a trusting wife, with the pleading looks of dependent children beseech you to get down. The sad but fond recollections of childhood should be an incentive to you to get down. The voice of preacher and Sunday-school teacher, reaching you from the distant past, should stir you to get down. The many graves by which you have thoughtlessly ridden and seen tenanted by the friends of childhood, should arouse you to get down. Every song you ever heard, from your mother's lullaby to the last chorus which burst upon your willing ears, should prompt you to get down. The majestic mountains which look rebukingly upon you, as you ride down the valley of death, warn you to get down. The laughing streams which burst from the rock on your way remind you of the water of life, and gurgle, "get down." The croak of the raven, the hoot of the owl, the scream of the eagle, the dip of the hawk, the crowing of the barnyard rooster, with the very cooing of the dove, combine to induce you to get down.

The very flowers at your feet are weeping fragrant tears, O man, O woman, awaking memories of mother, sister, sweetheart, home, and all these, in their loving turn, plead with you this moment to get down, get down.

The smile of angels from Heaven, the friends of yours over there, the voice of Jesus himself, the wooings of the Holy Spirit, cooperate with your self-interest and better judgment, to induce you to get down.

The muffled groans which reach you from the bottom of that precipice, towards which that sweat-streaked Black horse of sin is taking you, thunder up at you to get down, get down. I related this black horse incident once in H\_\_\_\_\_ County, at night. There was a young man present who had ridden a literal black pony to church. As they rode off, after services, he said (playfully): "Boys, get out of my way. I am the fellow the preacher was talking about; don't you see the color of my pony?" Directly he said: "Boys, my head feels mighty strange." They trotted on towards home, when he said again: "Boys, I tell you my head feels very funny." When they reached the lane which led up to his house, he asked one of the boys to ride by with him, as he felt so badly. He scarcely knew his mother when he reached the house. We buried that boy before the meeting closed. Poor fellow, he spake truer and more than he meant, for he was not only on his father's black horse, but he was riding the Black horse of sin, and went over before our eyes.

The next day, after I related the incident which that young man heard, another came to me and said- "O, sir, I spent an awful night, after hearing that black horse incident, I dreamt that I was in a swing, whose top was fastened out of sight above my head. I thought you and the pastor stood near me, and as I would swing to and fro, with ever-growing strides, you both earnestly remonstrated with me, saying: 'Will, you are going further with each oscillation; don't do it.' But I continued to pump and swing, until my sweep was long and rapid. In front of me was a sort of hill, beyond which was a something, at which I became reckless in my determination to swing over and look down upon. You preachers seemed to read my determination, and became very energetic in your efforts to stop me. I only laughed at you as I would swing by. I will never forget how you looked as I swept by you the last time. You were both crying "and wringing your hands, 'O, Will, don't go there!' I swept by and out over the brow of the hill, and -- Oh, horrors! -- I had swung right out over the burning lake of Hell, and, to add to the awfulness of the minute, the chain broke above my head, and sounded like the crack of a gun on my tingling ears."

Will then turned to me and said: "Mr. Culpepper, I know what that Black horse meant to me. I have raffled for him. He has been mine, that same horse. I know, too, what that swing is. It is the swing of death. At first, I made short excursions, just beyond mother's knee, then out from home, then on and on, till I am almost gone. Excuse me, sir, but I want you to give us a chance to come to the penitent form. I must get out of that swing, or, as you put it, off that Black horse."

Now, bow your heads in prayer.

O, God, my Father, bless this little incident and the use I have tried to make of it tonight. Give me fifty dismounted men and women at this hour, and I will tell every angel in heaven that Jesus did it all. Amen.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE END