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EXCERPTS FROM SEVEN SERMONS

By Charles Little Wireman

This Digital Publication Created
From A Booklet Published
In January, 1974
And Titled:
"Excerpts From Sermons
By C. L. Wireman
As Taken From
The Revival Herald"

Printed Booklet: -- No Copyright

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Digital Edition 07/17/2003
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CONTENTS

Introduction

- 01 -- The Nation's Need Of God
- 02 -- I Have Kept The Faith
- 03 -- Moral Cancer
- 04 -- The Fragments
- 05 -- An Easter Message
- 06 -- The Father, Son And Holy Ghost
- 07 -- The Church Of God

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INTRODUCTION

To know Rev. Charlie L. Wireman is to be inspired by his humility and simplicity. His fearless, yet tender, sermons are, and always have been, an inspiration to all who have heard or

read them. For this reason, it gives us great pleasure to have helped in making a portion of the powerful spirit and tireless preaching of "Bull Dog" Charlie Wireman available to all readers.

Omer F. Witt, President
Witt Printing Company

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01 -- THE NATION'S NEED OF GOD

From a sermon delivered in Intercession City, Florida September 1950

"Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah."

About four hundred years ago our forefathers were crossing the dangerous seas, in frail ships and breaking through primitive forests, traveling untrodden ways, facing impossible hardships, that they might worship God according to their own conscience, and founded a country where religious liberty should never die. They came with high ideals and hopes. They set up high moral standards based on the Decalogue of Moses, and exhibited a sublime faith in God. Like Moses, they "chose to suffer afflictions with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin just for a season."

They could have lived in peace and prosperity at home, had they been willing to conform to creeds made by man and violate their own God given convictions; but they dared the dangers of the deep, and wild beasts and wilder men; also starvation, poverty and death that they might have liberty to worship God according to their own consciences. America was settled by those who sought liberty.

When Columbus, the daring navigator of the unknown seas found at last a new land, he went ashore and set up the cross of Jesus Christ, and fell on his knees before it, claiming the newly discovered land in the name of Him whose symbols the Cross represents. Our country was founded as a Christian country, and she has become a very great nation, extremely rich in material possessions, and powerful and most influential among the nations of the world, all because she was founded on the moral law and unyielding faith in God.

Since our nation was founded as a Christian nation, shall she become a military power, seeking conquest and world domination? Or, shall she become the servant of the most high God, to fulfill the destiny which was once the opportunity of the Hebrew people? America may become the promised land for the nations of a war-wrecked world, and the agency of God in the world's redemption, the ministering angel of mercy, and the Lord's Shekinah to lead the world back to God. She should set the moral, religious and social standards of the world.

To reach this place of service to God and humanity, she must herself go to the mourner's bench, mourn, repent, confess and forsake her own sins. She must re-learn and return to the principles of her own founding. She must be unselfish and reconsecrate herself to God, return to His temples for guidance, and seek to make every citizen a Christian, and a citizen of the kingdom

of God. She must get rid of her rotten movies, whiskey, beer, wine, etc. "For if my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and return from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and heal their land."

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02 -- I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH

From a sermon delivered in Intercession City, Florida November 15, 1950

Paul said, "Demas hath forsaken me." Here we find one who lost the faith, and one who kept the faith.

Paul had no secret formula for keeping the faith. It is open to one and all, so that he who would run may read. Jesus and all the inspired writers and preachers outlived the method. Faith is a very tender plant; it is easily nipped by the chilling frosts of Atheism and blistered by the scorching heat of carnal passion. Paul took good care of the faith. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. The more one hears or reads the word, the stronger his faith will grow. Hear the Psalmist, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee." That is still a good practice.

The professor who substitutes worldly amusements for church attendance and the cheap funny papers for the Bible, has lost the faith and become a miserable backslider. Bob Ingersol once had a date to lecture in Washington, D.C., while Congress was in session. Benton McMillen was a Congressman from "good old" Tennessee. Another Congressman proposed to Mr. McMillen that they go and hear the lecture on the "Mistakes of Moses," McMillen refused; "You are not afraid of Ingersol, are you?" asked the Congressman sarcastically. "No," said McMillen, "nor of any other infidel, but my mother believed the Bible, and in Jesus as her Savior, she taught me to do the same. She lived a righteous life, and died a triumphant death; she had kept the faith. I aim to follow her advice and example. Why should I pay Ingersol or any other enemy of God to try to wreck my faith, blot out my hope, and send my soul to hell?"

McMillen, like Paul, was taking care of his faith. "Go thou and do likewise." Paul kept the faith by cultivating it. "Faith without works is dead." Paul never found time to cultivate doubts, to nurse grouches, indulge in self pity, or tell his troubles to others. He counted them all as light afflictions not to be compared to the rewards of faith. With the shield of faith he quenched the fiery darts of the wicked one and overcame all barriers. Paul kept the faith by keeping fellowship with the faithful.

Faith strengthens faith. Wherever Paul went, he would look up the most faithful disciples or most pious Jews he could find, and associate with them. By so doing, he welded a chain of friendship that was a great comfort to him through the dark hours spent in prison, and on long journeys in strange lands.

It is a bad sign when a professor of religion goes on a trip to some distant place, to see him, instead of finding his way to the house of God on the Lord's day, going on a visit to ungodly

friends, and partaking of the pleasures of those who are not of the household of faith. Simon Peter tried that once to his sorrow, on the awful night of the betrayal, when his faith wavered, and he consorted with the enemies of Christ, and was soon lying, cursing and denying his Lord.

After Paul had reviewed the battle field on which he had fought so valiantly and won the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil, the grand old battle-scarred veteran of the cross turned the telescope of faith to the future, to catch a glimpse of the beautiful city he was soon to enjoy; and as the vision unfolds before his dimming eyes, his chains drop off, his prison guards vanish, the dungeon falls away, Rome, and all her cruel tyrants are left behind, and the liberated old prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ, is now walking by sight on the golden streets, inhaling the perfume from the tree of life, hearing the singing of angels and redeemed saints. "Have faith in God."

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03 -- MORAL CANCER

From a sermon delivered in Whitmire, South Carolina, September 15, 1951

Some time ago, I recall having read a writer's observation on contemporary living. I do not remember his exact words, but I do recall that he pointed out the disastrous mortal plight to we are drifting. He singled out instances of deceit, dishonesty and lying in our national life, which compared favorably with our church life today. He reminded us of the prevalent sex crimes almost constantly filling our daily press. he even mentioned prominent people who had been divorced four or five times and were still the ideal of the American public. He listed public figures in the world of entertainment who had been guilty of scandalous conduct, and who, almost because of it, were greater box office attractions. This same principle is stealing its way into our church denominations.

All in all, that writer drew a rather dismal picture of the American moral scene, and one I am inclined to believe was not at all overdrawn.

We certainly can point to a sort of moral cancer that is eating its way into, and weaving itself around our modern church life, and if allowed to continue, will destroy all that is good and noble and true in our churches, regardless of the denominational name. We know the effects; we have seen it in operation. What is the cause? And what is the cure?

The cause is very obviously the loss of the gradual ignoring of true Christian moral principals, and Bible standards. Once we lost the divine reason for conduct and replace it with what man wants, we are preparing for moral chaos. And if we strengthen our attitude by adopting the slogan "Everybody is doing it," we can expect all kinds of difficulties, customs, and numbers. Carnal desires should not be the ultimate guide for our actions. Unfortunately, we are tending that way today.

Read your newspaper editorials, and what do you find? Legalize easier divorce. People are going to get them anyway." "Do away with laws against mercy killing. It's not human to see a person dying slowly in awful pain."

"Changing our ideals on purity. They are not being observed. Try more practical ones and release tension on human conduct." These, and similar suggestions, are often heard in our church world today, only concerning other things, and they are based on the promise that the old standards have not worked or will not work today. "They should be junked. Let us have new ones based on common experience and sanctioned by majority conduct." This is perhaps a rather brief and bold presentation of a good deal of modern thought, but none-the-less true.

Now we have not come to this situation all at once. There has been a gradual breakdown to prepare for it. Some of us can remember when one could settle a question or a problem by simply pointing out what the Bible said about it, and that was authoritative and final. Today one points out the same answers and gets all kinds of explanations to justify changing them. We need to reaffirm our belief in, and our firm acceptance of God's Holy Word. We must wholeheartedly reestablish His divine principles and regulate our lives according to Bible standards. It is not enough to just admit that these conditions are among us; we must do something about them. God has promised that when the devil comes in like a flood to lift up a standard against him. So let us pray much and stand our ground, contending for old time, and new time Bible standards.

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04 -- THE FRAGMENTS

From a sermon delivered in Pinellas Park, Fla., December 1953

"When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." John 6:12

Jesus and His disciples were seated on a hill overlooking the River Jordan, near the Sea of Galilee. As the company rested on the hillside, they saw a great audience gathering. Down every road and path streamed the pilgrims, a part of the great company bound for the celebration of the Passover at Jerusalem. Word had spread among them that Jesus of Nazareth was there, and they turned aside to see and listen to Him. Apparently they were entirely forgetful of the distance to the next village where they could procure food to eat. This was no "every day crowd". Men, women and children were arrayed in holiday attire making a very striking pageant.

It was a happy holiday crowd, but they were hungry, and hunger, whether it be spiritual or physical, never went unheeded by the Master. You will recall the Bible record of the climax when Jesus directed His disciples to "Gather up the fragments which remain."

There is a lesson for us in these words. It is sheer folly so may practice in wasting so many precious things of life. And it goes even deeper than that, for it teaches us that many of the loveliest and most majestic things of the creation of God or man are fabricated out of

fragments. Whether it be a rainbow composed of a myriad of fragments of light, or an ocean made up of countless individual drops of water, or a soul redeemed from the chaos of sin, they all teach us the same lesson.

From the time Adam and Eve sinned and fell from grace, it has been the broken things of life that have constituted its greatest glory, when they have been redeemed and reclaimed and rehabilitated the eternal souls of men. In this light, how meaningful are the words, "a bruised reed will not break, and smoking flax will He not quench".

From the sinner whose life is shattered by evil, to the broken body of Jesus on the cross, it is the broken things which give to life much of its meaning and beauty. The church should be a powerful factor in gathering up broken resources and shattered lives. Let us remember that every Bible Christian is a tiny unit out of which the great Church of Jesus Christ is built, and our mission is to win others into the same fellowship which is the great spiritual Church for which Christ gave His life.

A sweet smile is a fragment of soul sunshine for which a sad world is waiting; a kind word is a note in the symphony which stirs the lonesome souls of men. Blocks of stone torn from the quarry; beams of wood severed from majestic trees; drops of molten metal smelted in intense heat and then fabricated into girders; and countless other elements all assembled into a majestic temple, but all originating from the breaking up of their own original formations. Also some of the most beautiful lives have been builded out of the debris of broken dreams, demolished ideals, and blasted hopes.

The reason the church seems to thrive on fragmented lives is because of the prevalence of sin and the great value Christ has placed on the souls of men. In His own words, "He was not willing that any should perish", and His great commission to His followers was to seek and to save that which was lost. Just now the impact of that lesson should be very marked on us as Christians.

A helping hand is often the touch of God on a drooping shoulder; and the name of Jesus spoken to a weary soul is often the daybreak that ends a night of loneliness. We are too prone to criticize and too slow to praise. We must ever manifest Gods love and make it bless the world. On the little things of life hang the destiny of souls. We are builders of the Church of eternity. Let us build it with care. What we make of our lives is not enough. What we salvage of other lives is infinitely more. Fragments of any life, if dedicated to God, and given to the Master's service, will set a halo of peace and victory about that soul. This was true of Peter, of Paul, and many others, and can be true with any of us today. By the grace of God out of such lives, we can build a church where God will make His throne-room and rule in love, a place where the soul is secure.

Whether it be joy and happiness, peace or pain, tears or triumph, all are a part of life and all will go to build a Godly life. None of the elements of our lives are valueless to God. Never despise the day of small things of the fragments. Gather them up for the Kingdom of God. May God teach us the use of the fragments of His grace; the preciousness of the minutes in a day, the value of the opportunities we so often neglect; and the possibilities of Divine love which are ours even in these awful days.

Gather up the fragments,
I hear the Master say,
As he fed the hungry multitude,
In the desert place that day,

Gather up the fragments,
Let none be cast away,
Twelve baskets full were gathered
Before they went away,

Gather up the fragments,
This lesson He would teach,
For all of the disciples,
There was a basket each.

We never will go hungry,
Or never die of thirst;
We'll always have a plenty,
If we serve the others first.

There are many kind things left unsaid
And many deeds undone
Let us gather up the fragments
'Til the setting of the sun.

Let the others have the honor,
If to them the honor's due
But we'll gather up the fragments,
As Jesus bade us do.

-- Annie Benn

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05 -- AN EASTER MESSAGE

From a sermon delivered in Pinellas Park, Fla., April, 1955

Easter Season brings to us the message of hope, victory and Redemption. It is a time of joy when we forget decay and death, and are thrilled because of the miracle and beauty of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ which means the triumph of life over death, and immortality of the soul.

We should not undertake to explain the mystery of life and death, for we cannot fathom all things. We cannot read the riddle of the universe, but there is something deep and vital and Divine

within us which whispers the words of faith and consolation to our humble spirits, and tells us that there is a life beyond. From the depth of our hearts we feel the unconquerable urge to believe in a Supernatural Architect of the Universe, in the Divine purpose of the omnipotent and loving God, and in the redemption of Adam's fallen race from sin and death.

The deepest demand of the human heart is for spiritual certainty; for permanent assurance amid the tragic conditions of earth. Easter comes with new vitality and life, with all spiritual beauty and restoration of nature, with the message of immortality bringing to us wonderful consolation in the faith that man is fashioned with an immortal soul, and can move in harmony with the Divine Pattern of resurrection redemption, having victory over life and death.

The Easter Faith affirms that Jesus Christ is alive today, and that He is the Redeemer of the world, with the power to transform the human heart into a beautiful temple for and of the living God.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ assures us that he is not now a mere memory, but a living Presence. The triumph of Easter Morning proclaims that the living Christ is ready to walk with us in our pilgrimage to the eternal City of God.

Joyful is the time when we know that the living Christ is walking with us to give us light for darkness, joy for sorrow, courage for fear, faith for doubt and life for death.

Then the Jesus of History became the Christ of today. He draws nigh to us the closest of earthly friends. After the Resurrection, the disciples were glad when they saw Him. They then received from Him their commission: As the Father has sent me, even so send I you to preach the certainty of the Resurrection, the love of God, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

These disciples were transformed by a certainty, by an invincible conviction, and undying faith in the reality of their risen Lord. They went forth uncompromisingly with the message of their risen Saviour.

The living Christ of Easter is present in this modern sin-cursed world today to give us comfort in affliction, peace for our troubled perplexed minds and hearts; victory in our souls over death, hell and the grave, forever and forever more.

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06 -- THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY GHOST

From a sermon delivered in Pinellas Park, Fla., September 1955

God is revealed in the Bible: and we find in this book His laws, His love, His will for all mankind. God has absolute right to rule supremely over all. God is a person, distinct and separate from all created things. He can send heat or cold, rain or drought, blessing or judgment. His wisdom is infinite, His power omnipotent, His mercy is boundless.

Jesus Christ existed before the world was and by the power of the Holy Ghost He was incarnated, and in this sense He was the only begotten Son of God, born of a Virgin (not just a young woman) and was absolutely sinless. There was nothing carnal in Him. When he was tempted in all points, there was no response or inclination to sin. He had hunger and thirst, he desired food and drink. Jesus had no more desire to sin while He walked among men on earth than He did when He was with the Father before the world was. Jesus died for the redemption of all men and His suffering and death He provided for the redemption of all the human race.

In Jesus all men can find all they need and all that God requires. We believe that the Holy Ghost one and equal with the Father and the Son. He is a person, and in a peculiar sense, He came into the world on the day of Pentecost, and now abides among men to reveal sin, and to show us the blessings of a righteous life. To warn all men of judgment, and to explain and interpret to us the meaning of the scripture.

He produces conviction for sin and makes new creatures of us, and bears witness that we are born again. He comes upon consecrated believers in a powerful baptism, purging and cleansing out all carnality, sanctifying and making them holy, giving them power to carry on in the vineyard of the Lord.

Let us not stop short of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

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07 -- THE CHURCH OF GOD

From a sermon delivered in Pinellas Park, Fla., January 1956

Some time ago I was asked if I belonged to the Church of God, and when I answered that I did, I was asked if the Headquarters were at Anderson, Ind., Cleveland, Tenn. or Findlay, Ohio. I answered, "Neither of these places, but the Headquarters of the Church I belong to is in heaven."

I believe in the Church of God, and that it is made up of all truly regenerated souls of all Christian denominations, of all people, tribes and languages. No one belongs to the Church of God who has not repented of sin, confessed and forsaken his sins, and received pardon and been regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost.

God's Church is His family of which He is the great Father, and entrance into that family involves and requires being born again of the Divine nature. To become a child and heir of God, you must be born into His great family. (See Rom. 8:14-17)

There is fellowship, understanding and communion among all the true children of God, regardless of denominational affiliation. I do not believe that Jesus Christ came into the world to build up an ecclesiastical body, but to evangelize and save lost sinners who are honest enough to repent and simple hearted enough to trust God to save them. I do not believe that God puts His approval on the building of expensive churches and providing palaces and high salaries for

officials and preachers, while millions of people are without the gospel, hospitals, comfortable homes, orphanages or food and raiment.

One of the greatest hindrances to the spreading of the gospel through all the centuries, and now, is religious politics, office seeking, jealousy and strife among church people over prominence and power over others. Our greatest need is the power of the Holy Ghost.

What does God care about big churches and officials when the people for whom Christ died have never heard of the Love of God in the gift of Jesus Christ for their Saviour. When the Early Church took their world for God, they worshipped in dens and caves, homes and catacombs. It was so in early Methodism and every other great spiritual, soul-saving movement. The need today is not the building up of great ecclesiastical systems, but the manifestation of Holy Ghost power, and an honest effort of all Christian people to scatter the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." No great revival has ever broken into, or out from, a well organized denomination. Human efficiency crowds out Divine sufficiency.

I am convinced that one of the greatest sins of our day is sending out to heathen lands those who are bedecked with unscriptural wedding rings and other worldly junk like the heathen themselves wear, besides other devilish, worldly flub-dubbery, such as immodest dress and unscriptural hair-do, etc. Such confuse the minds and corrupt the thoughts of converts of former missionaries in heathen lands. Such have no direct message or spiritual power to bring the message of Jesus Christ on the Cross to lost hungry souls. Such missionaries slap in the face, not only the blood of Jesus Christ, but the lives of holy men and women who prepared the soil in which they are now sowing tares. "Oh Watchman, what of the night?"

May God have mercy on the man who calls himself a preacher, and who fails to cry aloud and spare not along these lines in these critical days. Backslidden churches and preachers are alike on the outside and inside. You cannot separate the sap from the leaves and fruit produced by it. May God get us back to the "old paths wherein is the good way, as our fathers preached it, before it is too late to save the Holiness Movement and the souls charged to us.

To your knees, old-fashioned saints; hold fast and never give in an inch to the enemy, Amen! Surely Jesus is coming soon, and we can only keep our lamps trimmed and burning bright by careful obedience to the whole will of God. If Jesus should come today, are YOU ready?

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THE END