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TRUTH AGLOW

By Fred M. Weatherford

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DEDICATION

This book is devotedly dedicated to all lovers of Divine Truth and Christian thinking. It is sent forth with the sincere prayer of the author that its pages shall serve as a spiritual stimulus, as well as a source of inspiration for deeper loyalty and devotion for the Christian cause. It is the author's prayer that many shall find the Lord in saving power through reading this book.

* * * * *

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rev. Fred M. Weatherford, author of this book, has been a successful pastor for the past twenty-five years. One of these pastorates continued over a period of eleven years, during which time the membership was nearly tripled and a new commodious church edifice constructed and paid for. The author has traveled extensively, having visited some seventeen foreign countries. He took graduate work in the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, Palestine. The author's name appears in several Who's Who publications, including "Religious Leaders of America" and "The Biographical Encyclopedia of the World."

Other Books By
Fred M. Weatherford:
The Bible, The World's Capsheaf
The Coming World King Sanctification
God's Way to Heaven
The Cross Interprets Christianity

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FOREWORD

In June, 1918, I met a young man at the hotel in Portland, Oregon, and soon found him friendly and interesting. He told me he was a wheat farmer out in the eastern part of the state. When I asked how much land he cultivated, his answer surprised me, and I complimented him as being a truly "big farmer." But he modestly replied that some of his neighbors worked much larger farms. Later I heard that this young farmer had entered the ministry, and I knew at once that his would be the dependable, hard working type which is the chief glory of the Christian ministry.

Fred M. Weatherford has made good proof of his ministry. He has shown himself to be a wise leader, a good administrator and a preacher of unction, ability and success. And among his many gifts, that of ability to "spread his brains on paper", has come clearly to the fore. He expresses his thoughts in clear language, and his style is both interesting and forceful. To these excellent qualities an ever increasing reading circle fitly testify.

The writer has brought his maturest production to us in this new book. It is my joy to commend both the book and its author to the reading public. My prayer is that this book may have a wide circulation, and that its pages may become leaves from the tree of life to thousands. My prayer for the author is that he may increase and abound more and more, and that his life may continue to be an offering poured forth as a channel for the Gospel of peace and holiness.

James B. Chapman,
General Superintendent,
Church of the Nazarene

(Author's Note: This introduction was written shortly before Dr. Chapman's decease.)

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01 -- A DAY OF GOOD TIDINGS

"Then they said one to another, we do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace..." -- II Kings 7:9

"See then, that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, redeeming the time because the days are evil." -- Ephesians 5:15.

It seems paradoxical from the standpoint of our modern world to acclaim this as a day of good tidings; for about us there is bloodshed, shocking disaster, and such horrible catastrophe that one would be forced to declare our day as downright bad. On looking about, one would be compelled in the light of our current world, to declare that we are in the midst of a dearth of good tidings. To quote this Scripture as applicable today, when the whole world is chaotically unsettled, seems most incongruous. But these conclusions are evidenced only from the surface of what is going on about us. Surely it cannot be said to be a good day for the hundreds of thousands who are bereft of home and robbed of their national heritage and driven homeless across the face of the earth.

But we throw a new aspect across the horizon of our text when we raise this question, "For whom is this a day of good tidings?" "To him that believeth."

I take this text not because it is necessary for social and national purposes to provide an antidote, as a counter-action to the forebodings of the weak. I choose these God-given words because they constitute a challenging formula to him who believes the God of redeeming grace.

Notwithstanding the dark and disheartening picture which this day presents from the human standpoint, God is the Delivering Power to lift the shadows and bring peace out of chaos for every living soul. His power of redeeming grace is more real than the grim and concrete actualities of the enemy who seeks to confound and destroy us.

The source of our Christian inheritance at its true value, when given free course by faith, can counterbalance and displace our handicap of sin with a redemption that makes us more than conquerors.

If the essentials of our saving faith are appreciated, this is a day of good tidings. It is startling how many people there are who have an antipathy or dislike for Christianity without having the faintest knowledge of its transforming power and, what is more -- when they are told of these miraculous good tidings the most of them will not believe. They simply will not believe that anything so interesting and dramatic, can be the message of the church. To whomsoever the basic doctrines of the Christian church seem dull and uninteresting, it is because they have never experienced the revelation of the God of Christianity. Once you experience the God who made this world, lived in it and passed through the grave to make the gateway for our deliverance, you are assured of having passed from death unto life. It is then you realize the thrill that a genuine Christian lives by the most interesting and dramatic fact of history.

Now with a realization of these facts, will you listen again to the urgent challenge of the text: "Then they said one to another, we do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace..."

It will help us at this juncture to recall the original setting of the text. It represents an extraordinary vivid Scripture narrative. The setting is at the gates of Samaria when the city was under siege. Around the walls of the city Benhadad of Syria had set a blockade and the Israelites were slowly starving to death because their supply lines had been cut off.

The plight of the besieged city was bad. A little colony of lepers lived near the city gate. With famine raging the thought came to them, "How can supplies reach us under such circumstances. They resolved that survival had but one chance -- that was to seek food from the camp of the enemy; so they made toward the besieging camp. As they approached the outskirts they anticipated to be challenged with such words as, "Who goes there!" by outpost Syrian guards. To their amazement their progress was not interrupted. They reached the camp to find it vacated by the enemy, with all their provisions left behind, as though they had left under the pressure of panic-stricken fear.

That was a day of good tidings from the standpoint of temporal supply. They hurriedly carried the news back to the besieged city.

The spiritual good tidings of God to humanity are like that. The devil, the enemy of man, has thrown a blockade of sin about every individual outside the fold of Christ, cutting off God's spiritual lifeline. The good tidings I announce to you are represented in the fact that Jesus Christ came to defeat this enemy and liberate you from the bondage of sin. These are indeed dramatic tidings I bring to you. They center in Jesus Christ and His resurrection.

This much is certain: if you crucify justice and trample love and righteousness beneath your feet, they will rise again to condemn you to eternal destruction.

Think of the God who made the universe and all things in it, taking to Himself a human body and subjecting Himself to its frailties. That is a startling fact; but that He should be the object of sport by an unlearned, vindictive rabble, is quite intolerable. But the power of His might was vindicated when He turned the Cross on which they hanged Him in broken humiliation and outward defeat, into the major and supreme triumph of all history, by breaking the bands of man's last enemy when He came alive out of the tomb. That was the heroic deed of Deity.

This unconquerable Christ of love, justice, and truth, holds the only solution for the social, moral, and spiritual integration of the world.

He alone has the power to make of men brothers, by His redeeming grace.

The early Christians did not hold their peace. They proclaimed the good tidings of God's Grace without fear or favor. If we are prone to think our day of evangelism difficult, we may assure ourselves that their day was ten-fold more threatening and difficult. Yet so full were their hearts of the glowful and scintillating joy, that they sparked their way through the blackest darkness with the triumph and glory of heaven's shining radiance.

We have a spiritual vitality and force in the power of Jesus Christ, that is able to overcome the pomp of emperors and the pride of dictators. It is this element in the Christian faith that makes its message dynamic and contagious. It is this divine illumination of personality that causes the world to be impressed, as it is contacted with these good tidings. It is this that proves to others in a confused and perplexed age, that there is a hiding place from the wind of doubt, a covert from the tempest of moral and spiritual bewilderment. It is now time to be redeeming the time.

Christianity has nothing to fear intellectually, morally, or ethically. Neither can we forget the witness of the saints of 2,000 years, whose long line of testimonials is an impregnable bulwark to the transforming power of God in the salvation of souls. This Christianity brings an intensity of God-consciousness to the soul.

Redeeming the Time

Unconvincing are all the discussions about prayer, when compared to the anointed strength of a man who has truly prayed. His message carries the stamp of a soul fired with the truth of his sins forgiven.

Referring to the message of divine truth, that has in it the power to transform human character, you may be assured that I shall not withhold this truth. I speak to make it known and to incite men to lay hold on eternal life.

Can you imagine the scientist in the field of medical research making the discovery of a cure for a disease that has so long taken its toll of human life and then keeping such a discovery to himself? Not unless the man's conscience is dead. To withhold such a discovery would be to defeat the very purpose of his pursuit. Likewise it is against all the ethics of Christianity and the Kingdom of God, to withhold the discovery of the Saviour's redeeming grace. So I announce to you with unbounded joy, the very tidings for which this disrupted world in its pathetic plight is waiting. As a Christian ambassador for Christ I announce to you the veritable power of this Royal Redeemer to make of you a new creature. His birth acclaims that power; His death declares Himself our substitute in that pursuit; and His resurrection is the unanswerable verification of His power to do all that He has promised. He said, "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

It is necessary for you of this generation to redeem the time by getting this salvation, not only because the days are evil but by reason that life is uncertain also.

It is no violence to the thought when we say, Act strictly as wise men. Recover the waste of time through judicious anticipation.

Take heed that you have a strict rule of action, and let that rule be the highest measure in the scale of ideals.

Time is eternity's filling station. The intake of your literary, spiritual and social life constitute the rule by which your destiny is shaped, and your eternity fixed. Then the primary focus of one's time should be, to concentrate upon a proper concept of his literary, spiritual, and social life. This can be had only by a knowledge of that which is indorsed by God. God determines which one of the two eternal extremities we have prepared ourselves.

Time is one of God's most precious gifts to man, but the test comes in the use he makes of it, as to the outcome of the man.

As for man, time is brief. Improving the moments is like plucking golden apples from the conveyor of time. Let them pass you unheeded and they are forever beyond your reach.

Stand as a sentinel and improve with prudence time while it lasts, for eternal consequences will result from the use you make of it. What you contemplate must be done soon, or it can never be accomplished. Time like the wind passes by never to return.

With great precision and care, watch your investments. Mortgage your time to the Devil and he will soon be your landlord. Indolence is inconsistent with laudable action. It creates the imaginary, magnifies real difficulties and serves as a paralyzant to the energy of the mind. Invest your life with the gang in the rounders' hang-out and moral stocks will go up when you are gone.

The opportunity time offers you for improvement today if not invested, will cost you more for less tomorrow. Each time opportunity knocks at your door unheeded, her precious treasures are diminished in number.

What will Christ say to those whose arms are full of worldly vanity in the day of His visitation, when He has offered treasures of untold wealth, with which men might have adorned themselves in virtues and graces and trophies without number, to lay at His feet?

We must arrange our affairs according to the measure of Time. Psalm 90:12 states: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." God says elsewhere in His Word: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." On another instance He said: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

For the time allotted to us, God holds us responsible for the use we make of it. The haunting horrors of Hell will always be a reminder of what might have been, to its occupants. Opportunity is not a moment of time, but a memory of torment or triumph according to the measure of life's investment.

For what objective do men utilize their time? In most instances it is to reach some goal of freedom. The laborer mops his brow that he may be free from the servitude of poverty. The scholar burns the midnight oil that he might be delivered from the bondage of ignorance. The soldier fights that he may cast off the formidable yoke of national and domestic tyranny. The penitent prays that his sins may be forgiven and his conscience freed from guilt, that he may escape the eternal death chamber. The believer presents himself a living sacrifice to God, in lieu of an all-out spiritual cleansing, to gain freedom from inner fears and be clothed with Divine Power for service.

It must be borne in mind, that to become a Christian, one must overcome a handicap which only asserted will-power can achieve. For men do what their unredeemed hearts desire, much more readily than their reason directs. Therefore, you must assert your will, to follow the course outlined by reason.

Let us not forget, that the only alternative for men of time is either Christ or Catastrophe for all Eternity. With you and me it is turn or burn; repent or perish; believe or be damned. I plead with you: lose no time in choosing Christ and live in Heaven for the eternal duration.

Liberty in any capacity is cheaper than the slavery its absence imposes. It is better to die in the pursuit of liberty if need be, than to live under merciless bondage. We honor the man who defends to the limit his name, his home, and his nation. Yet names and homes and nations, in this world, are of limited duration. There is but one commodity of priceless value and of limitless existence: that is one's immortal life. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

What good will it do us to have won the war and thereby sustain the four freedoms for which we fought, unless we make use of them now? For instance, we wave banners and parade with a great deal of gusto, that we won in the battle for freedom of religion, and thank God we did; but the tragedy of it all is, where is the serious-minded crowd that exercises this freedom by getting the thing for which we fought. Did it ever occur to you, that there is the possibility of winning this freedom and losing the destiny which Christ purchased on the cross for all

mankind? If the present generation does not embrace religion and thus conserve the Christian testimony who will save it in the next?

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02 -- THE ROYAL MAJESTY OF CHRIST

"And the angels said unto them, fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." -- Luke 2:10-11

The Word of the Lord is certain to accomplish the fulfillment of its purpose. When the Lord told Adam who had been betrayed by the serpent Satan into the sin of disobedience, that "the seed of woman" would come and bruise the serpent's head, he was as certain of its accomplishment as of its utterance.

But centuries rolled by and the prophet Isaiah caught anew the Lord's sure word of promise. Isaiah 9:6 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

But centuries still passed in review, when we hear the angel of the annunciation say to Mary, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

We are stricken with awe at the humbleness by which the Son of God came into the world. His coming was not only without social distinction, but below the par of the humblest peasant. His birth was wholly without human ostentation, not even a room could be found for His delivery, much less a formal reception by potentates with a retinue of servants.

As the last resort Mary was compelled to deliver the Saviour to the world in a stable and unattended by nurse or physician. So utterly alone were they that God had to send a delegate from Heaven to give the welcoming address. But who indeed of earth should explain to the world the interweaving of Deity with humanity, as reposed in this child wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger? Who could explain the emblazoned signature of "Immanuel" inscribed on his visage and written in his Word? So the angelic host from Heaven presided that day, and said, "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day a Saviour... which is Christ the Lord." Yes, this was God's special embassy from the courts of Heaven, announcing to the world that Christ, the Messiah, the long-looked-for deliverer is now come. He the great high priest is now available to forgive the sins of all men everywhere for the asking.

Men who had sat, and who sit today, in the darkness of their own wisdom, may now behold and experience the light of salvation.

Temporal poverty prevailed with this lowly Nazarene throughout His life and ministry. We have observed the poverty of His birth and He never owned a home. He said, "The birds of

the air have nests and foxes have holes but the son of man hath nowhere to lay his head." He was buried in a borrowed tomb but thank God he did not need it long.

He came to His own, but his own received him not. He was despised and rejected of men. He died the death of a slave, being crucified. His burial was attended apparently by only two, as far as the ministry at the grave was concerned.

But why all this poverty? "He became poor that ye through his poverty might be rich." But what is the legacy he left? The way of salvation and a flawless life.

Notwithstanding his poverty, he was the most versatile expert of the ages. He never tarried long in the stall at Bethlehem. So far as we know he never referred to it again. When questioned about temporal things, his reply was, "wist ye not that I must be about my Fathers' business."

Like the Master, we must not linger long about the improvised delivery room in Bethlehem but carry the message of Him who said, "Follow me and go ye." Our test of loyalty today is not to be found merely in the observance of his birthday anniversary but in following him to the confessional altar and going where he sends. He said, "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be damned." If we follow where he leads, all sin will be forgiven. Though innocent of sin himself, yet in bearing the sins of others he suffered a broken heart. The angel said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save His people from their sins."

The versatility of His royal majesty is demonstrated in many ways.

He never posed as a statesman yet it is said of him, "Of his kingdom there shall be no end."

He never displayed any medical credentials, yet he said to his leper patient, "Be thou clean," and his leprosy fell from him.

He never matched oratorical ability with Cicero or Demosthenes, yet it is said of him, "Never man spake like this man."

He never posed as a food economist when rations were scarce, yet he fed 5,000 people from three small loaves and two little fishes and they gathered up twelve baskets of food after the multitude had eaten to the fullest of their capacity.

He never had access to Uncle Sam's reconstruction finance corporation, yet his taxes never went unpaid.

He never sat at a post-war peace planning table, yet he says to everyone who comes seeking, "My peace I give unto thee."

The majesty and ministry of this humble man of Galilee is phenomenal and supernatural. He was man when his taxes came due and no money available wherewith to satisfy the claim, but he was God when he drew a draft on the Lake Bank and took the money wherewith to pay from a fish's mouth.

He was man when he wept at the tomb of Lazarus, but he was God when he nullified the impregnable law of death with the immortal words, "Lazarus come forth" and though four days dead he lived again.

He was man when he lay asleep in the boat while his disciples screamed with frantic fear, but he was God when to the tempest-tossed sea he said, "Peace, be still," and the storm abated.

He was human when he stopped to hear the pleading cry of blind Bartimaeus, but he was God when he said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole," and the blind man rejoiced to go away seeing.

Jesus was human when he stopped at the tree in which Zacchaeus sat, but he was God when he said to him, "This day is salvation come to this house."

He was human when he sat down to rest his tired body on the curb of Jacob's Well, but he was God when he transformed a fallen woman for the asking, while sitting there.

He was man when he cooked a fish-by on the shore of Galilee for his disciples, but he was God when he walked on its waters.

He was man when he met a perplexed, troubled world in the throes of hate and war, but he was God and the immortal psychiatrist, when he left the flawless principle of love as the guiding basis for all human relationships.

He was man when he died upon the Cross, but he was God when he doffed the grave clothes and came forth from the chamber of death its eternal conqueror and said to a redeemed world, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

He says to men of a war torn world today, "Come unto me and I will give you rest."

God's Way

In Genesis 3:15 (R.V.) "I will put enmity," says Jehovah to the serpent-tempter, "between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The serpent here represents the power of evil, otherwise expressed as "the devil" or "Satan". The defeat the devil sustains from the seed of the woman, through the birth of Christ, is the means by which man wins a moral and spiritual victory over sin. It will be recalled that it was by woman that sin entered the human race. It is now, through the seed of woman, that salvation from sin comes to the human race through Jesus Christ.

We may reject any thought of an over-exaltation of Mary, the mother of Jesus; nevertheless, it remains significant, that she was the medium of God, through whom the deliverer came.

The birth of Christ represents a new man -- "The only begotten Son of God" -- "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This constitutes the essence of the incarnation, or God come in the flesh.

Jesus said that he had not come to judge the world, but the very fact of his coming, was in itself a judgment that brought world condemnation.

The purpose of Christ's incarnation is a miracle so deep as to move to pity even the simple-hearted, who did not understand it. In this, however, their understanding was equal to the most learned. A singular fact of the mystery revealed in the birth of Christ, is seen when we witness the humblest shepherds and the wisest sages, bowing at His feet, each to take something from Him which neither before possessed.

A Serious Question

What can Jesus do for man that man can not do for himself? If he were only man, himself, whatever he could do, man may do for himself. If He can do anything for man, which man can not do for himself, then He had the power to separate Himself from humanity and there was more wrapped up in His personality, than the human form with which He was clothed.

If He was only man, he could have done nothing above the reach of man. If man were equal with Christ, he could do anything for himself that Christ could do for him. If he could save himself from sin, for which Christ assertedly announced the purpose of His coming into the world, then man does not need anything from Christ. If man can save himself, there ought to be some verse in the Bible to plainly say, man may save himself. But one such verse cannot be found.

If man cannot save himself and Christ announces the salvation of men to be His sole mission in coming to this world, then He is able to do what man cannot otherwise accomplish for himself. I want to be told what I really am and what the future holds for me and what I must do to qualify for the best that future holds. Let me know more about this incarnate Son of God. If His pre-existence was higher than that form which He assumed, in order to help me, then it presents an item that touches my sensibilities and provokes and challenges my sincerest thinking.

In His pre-existence He was one with the Father-co-equal with God. "I and the Father are one," He said. There He enjoyed all the glories of a sinless Heaven. Nothing could enter there to mar the beauties of living.

Here, He was an individual obscurely born, reared in the humblest of circumstances, with no prestige of earthly parentage -- one whose coming into this world could find no place of reception. There had to be found a place among the beasts of the stable for Him to be born. He

was persecuted, rebuffed, reviled, arrested, and crucified. All of this He knew would take place before He came.

He was known to be bold in His reproof of sin and austere in His mode of living. He had no preferments in His gifts and would accept no bribes to win the allegiance of any individual or group. He made it plain that if any followed Him it would cost them all; that they must separate themselves from all forms of worldliness; that they would be traduced by slander; that they would be haunted by persecution; that accepting the salvation He offered, carried with it a willingness to suffer martyrdom. In the face of these rugged demands, multitudes came to Him. Like the wise men, on coming to Him, they went home another way -- changed.

The wise men, bowing before the Christ of Bethlehem, knelt before innocence incarnate. It was an evidence of wealth in its poverty, prostrating itself before His Majesty, the Saviour. They met Him, who required, "Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." They gave Him frankincense, not to deodorize the stench of the stable, but as an evidence of their surrender and because their altars would no longer need the smoke of incense and perfume. They offered Him myrrh because their spiritual death had ended and their dead formalism had been made to live. They gave Him their gold, because of their profound sense of gratitude, and they sought to express it in a manner that would help others to receive this priceless gift of eternal life.

While kneeling in their pontifical robes, upon that straw-bedded floor, those mighty and learned men offered themselves, with the pledge of obedience, to serve and follow Him whithersoever He may lead.

Christ Demonstrated His Power To Be More Than Man

It was this Christ who demonstrated His power over the elements. He rebuked the tempest and the wind was hushed. He spoke to a fig tree and it withered away. He ministered to a demoniac and restored him to normalcy. He told a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years to "Take up thy bed and walk," and he carried it off.

May I remind you that He, "who for the joy that is set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," now offers to ransom the world from the hands of the destroyer. From His mediatorial throne He serves to erect upon the ruins of earth's falling thrones, a kingdom that is safe from the invasion of any foe. Here the name of Christ is honored above every name, by prostrate obedience and undying song -- a name that is honored on earth by every confessing lip and every bending knee. This represents the consummation of the joy that is set before Him, for you.

My friends, receive Him into your hearts today and may God help you to live the life He inspires and to follow in the course of service which He outlines. Then at last you shall see Him, not a babe in Bethlehem, not a sacrifice upon the Cross, but a King upon the throne, where His glories are immortal and your joys eternal.

Having Christ in the heart now, causes us to react with ecstasies of praise. Indeed, we might well join with the poet from the caption, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," (By Perronet).

All hail the power of Jesus name
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
The worm-wood and the gall,
Go, spread your trophies at His feet,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all.

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03 -- THE CROSS AND THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT

"For Christ also hath once suffered [or sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." -- I Peter 3:18

Christ suffered to bring us to God. Then his major purpose was to provide for us a new destiny, for there would be no object in bringing us to God if there were no master objective in His purpose.

The second objective was His commission, authorizing Christian workers to make the meaning of the cross known everywhere.

The cross and its meaning are not so difficult for us to understand today. War has prepared the world for that better understanding. The crosses, inserted by the little mounds on the battle-fronts of the war theater, all tell us in very gruesome language, they died that we might live. They also represent hidden crosses in human hearts somewhere. Fathers and mothers, wives, sweethearts, and friends, have all borne crosses, which correspond in some measure, to those crosses near the fields of battle. They have eyes and hearts that are pained by lonely hours of grief.

It should not be difficult for people today to follow the course marked out by Jesus, since we are already acquainted with grief. We have a sense of awakened memory, that bears a symbol to His suffering.

The stark, bloody picture of battle, in an evil world, reminds us of the Cross and the gruesome sacrifice of Christ, to free men from the powers of death and eternity's dark night. The recent war brought a new spirit of ethical understanding throughout the world. With humble consciousness, it has brought us to the Cross, with a capacity to see what was invisible to us before.

From deeds that smite we have come to feel the weight and power of words that unite. The hard sayings of Christ no longer grate on sin-sensitive souls. Indeed, a religion that calls for a mixture of the stern and tender pleadings of Christ, is sure to have a welcome and responsive hearing, from men who have been in the crucible of fire.

Christ, the Hero of the Ages

When we think of Christ we see a hero of unflinching bravery, who without reservation bared his life to the tempest. He unflinchingly faced the chasm of death. His blood moved with the energy and sacrifice that functioned in the process of transfusing life. He chose to die. His chivalrous courage did not count the cost, though He entered the valley of the shadows like the rent of a torn garment. To Him, life was but a lonely memory as He envisioned the greater ultimatum to come out of His service and death. Whatever else Calvary means, it meant that life itself was merely incidental, while the demand of a great ideal was at stake. That ideal was World Redemption.

This leads us to the heart of the Christian religion. It was for the realization of this ideal that Christ died. In actuality, it is represented in human experience. A supernatural reception of that ideal does two things: first it reduces sin to a minus quantity by forgiving and blotting out the sin-life. Second, it re-creates divine life in the soul of man and gives him a vision like that of the Master.

Venturing his life upon the altar of sacrifice, Christ foresaw the faith of man, for salvation from sin, purchased by his death. There is a quality about this faith of Jesus, which arrests our attention and grips our hearts. His utter self-abandon, was more than a spiritual adventure in the pursuit of reclaiming sinful lives. It was an adventure that had in it the certainty of salvation, for everyone who believes. His heart was broken that he might heal every sin-wounded heart. To Him, death was an open door to a glorious achievement. He believed that men who would not listen to His words, would be convinced by the silent meaning of His death.

It was not the Roman authority that crucified Jesus; neither was it Jewish hatred; it was the love of Jesus for a lost world, that fastened Him to the cross. Suffering love changes the whole spirit and quality of another's life. It is the love of Jesus, that transfigures the lives of sinful men. Our soldier boys in their self-forgetful risks and blood-shed were like that. They represented the high love of a man for a Christ-centered democracy. A loyalty that plunges into pain regardless of the cost.

Those who approach Christ feel the contagion of His flaming, sacrificial love and bow at the cross pleading the merits of His forgiving mercy. This loving sacrifice sets a standard which cannot be ignored. It is as if you suddenly see the heart of life's meaning and cannot be content to

have it mean less for you, than complete deliverance from sin. This is the purpose for which He died.

Calvary is more than a revelation of the love of man for other men. It is the revelation of the love of God for men. That God is a participant in human life, bent under the burden of the worst that can come to men, is evidenced by the lash of malignant hatred. Though they wounded Him unto death, by hard brutal selfishness, it is the invincible and inscrutable evidence of His concern for the human race. His love for men feels the burden of pain -- a pain which death feels at the end of a lost man's reward. His life of humiliation and His death upon the cross, gives a platform for faith, sufficient for the salvation of a lost world.

God's Faith in Humanity

If God believes that you are worth Calvary, you cannot afford to quit this life without becoming an active beneficiary of His sacrifice. Without doubt the sweetest words to be found in the Bible are these: "Father, forgive them..." This is transcended only by the experience which that forgiveness brings.

God in human life met the shock of death upon the cross for all men, as a provisory remedy to grip and transform them.

The cross is not a theological dialectic; it is not a mere symbolism; it is the fountain source, from which we derive supernatural life. It brought religion down from heaven, because it brought God down to earth. Now we take salvation from heaven, because the Christ of the Cross ascended up on high, from whence He dispenses grace, unto all who penitently seek and pray for forgiveness. Through the cross God becomes an experience, to all who believe Him to forgive their sins and blot out the past.

The fruit of the incarnation is God sacrificed on the Cross. When its significance has seized the mind, the conscience, and the heart, it yields the fruit of salvation and we sing with the poet, Rev. Isaac Watts:

"Alas and did my Saviour bleed,
And did my sovereign die;
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

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."

In this passionate deed of divine rescue you have God in action. In the cross of Christ you have the all-out sacrifice to bring men to God. The forgiveness which speaks from the Cross is our medium of conscience release, from which the guilt of sin takes leave. It is the sweet essence of the Spirit housed in a temple of clay. The man to whom these things become vital has simply pressed his way into the Kingdom.

The spiritual passion of the Cross was infinitely beyond the hurt of physical pain. Though it is incomprehensible that Jesus should bear man's burden of sin, by staggering up the slopes of pain to death; yet this sort of God wins our surrender. It also wins our allegiance to follow Him anywhere He leads.

We are in the midst of one of the most crucial epochs the world has ever seen, for the shaping of human destiny in the light of the gospel. It is also true that every physical life is being challenged for its right to live. Would it be an exaggeration to say that the furnace of life has been heated seven times hotter than ever before? The thinking, the ideals, and the institutions of our free America are in jeopardy in this furnace. How we shall come out of this crucible will depend upon many things but mostly upon the national and international relationship we sustain to God as affecting other peoples.

Shall the world of tomorrow be fashioned by the ideals cherished in the heart of Christian Americanism, or shall the anti-God regime triumph in the current struggle?

Among many leaders there are those in the church and out of it, who are ill-at-ease over looming possibilities. The historian will recall that humanity's march across the centuries has not been one of continuous progress. The march has not always been upward. In one century we have stood stalwart, sure, and unafraid; our faces pointing toward the morning, with the song of untrammelled victory. The next century has witnessed the world bowed down, groping its way in the wilderness. History is littered with its wrecks of proud and mighty nations, who rose to world prominence only to pass into obscurity and be forgotten, save for the flare of their day.

The Modern World Picture

Paul's remarkable letter to the Romans was written to residents of what was then, known to be the capital city of the world. His pen painted the picture dark, in the first chapter of this striking epistle. The social structure of Rome was corrupt. Civilization was tottering. Evil men who had rejected God were in power. Thus entrenched, the world was being driven into moral and spiritual chaos. When a nation divorces itself from God, calamity is inevitable. Our world picture of today is like that. It is true that with the passing of the centuries, progress has been witnessed of inestimable worth in many fields. Those who enjoy these advantages today, would be the last to forget such progress; but notwithstanding these material assets, as the world has grown older it has also grown bolder and worse in sin. This has brought on our world, the evil clouds of moral and spiritual confusion.

Reporting for our own nation, director J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, through the United Press, disclosed an alarming breakdown in the moral standards

of youth. For persons under 21 years of age his record showed that arrests of minor girls increased 55.7 percent in one year.

"Prostitution and commercialized vice among minors increased 64.8 percent, while those arrested for other sex offenses increased 104.7 percent." Drunkenness increased 39.9 percent.

The above statistics are more than alarming. We see here the astounding increases of evil influence, from more than 39 percent in drunkenness to more than 100 percent increase in arrests for sex offenses. In past history, this relative progress in the field of evil, would require a generation. Where shall we place the blame for this utter, unprecedented moral collapse? If you will permit me to make a diagnosis, I would display these four placards: CIGARETTES, LIQUOR, THE DANCE, and THE MOVIE respectively, as the largest contributors to our moral dilemma.

The greatest saboteur to America is running at large playing a free hand and unmolested. If I were submitting one saboteur to top all of the rest, it would be alcoholic beverages from 3 percent content on up. You cannot mix social life with alcohol and come out unscathed, any more than you can mix war with alcohol without drastic penalties. When will our nation be aroused to declare alcohol an outlaw to be barred from our mode of civilization?

Why is it that nations of the earth are aligned in opposing camps today? Where is the nation whose hands are not full of death-dealing munitions? Hatred from vitriolic vials have been poured out without measure. Death still rides the clouds, the seas, and the land. Millions of lives have been blown to atoms by opposing fronts, to match wits and might to the utter destruction of the other. Post war international relations have to date made but little progress in outlawing the horrors of the past for future generations.

To interpret the present world chaos and assert the blame for it, is to say, that this hellish evil day, has come as the result of the philosophy and influence of leading bad men. While the larger percentage of this influence emanates from outside our borders, it cannot be said that we are immune from blame. The tremendous loss in moral and spiritual conscience, reverence for law, the disintegration of home life, disregard for sacred institutions, and the scholastic regimentation of a mechanized materialistic interpretation of life, have all made large contributions to our present world of blood and tears. Money instead of God has been life's standard objective. Carlyle called it, "The Philosophy of Dirt." When coin rates above character, property has become more than life.

Remember the Titanic, the pride of the waves, went down with a large percentage of its passengers to a watery grave. Why? They neglected to provide for the conservers of life. The greatest conservers of life today is God and His Church. The church to date however, has proven herself too impotent spiritually, to salvage the world from moral collapse. There must first be a reclamation of spiritual power in the church and a re-examination of its commission, with the reception of Divine Power to declare it. The need of the church is a recovery of God in human life. It is the power of God emblazoned in personality with divine authorization that incorporates a God accentuated church, essentially qualified for the reclamation of human life. For this purpose Paul believed the gospel adequate.

While the flames of hate were leaping and the hands of thieves were plundering, Paul looked at these ugly facts and challenged them with great faith in an immutable God. Eternal and inexhaustible resources were his, because he was God's. This mighty man of God was courageous, because he was divinely powered. He was invincible because he believed the gospel to be an adequate guide, for the redeeming and rebuilding of a corrupt society, necessary for the making of a safe democracy. He believed it so thoroughly that he gave up everything to proclaim it. He endured suffering gladly and even surrendered to martyrdom, in an effort to convince the world that the gospel held the recipe for complete world Christianization and furnish a common meeting ground adequate for lasting world peace.

Paul might have remained in Tarsus, a respectable, formal rabbi, but when he met Jesus of Nazareth face to face, his life was so changed, so completely revolutionized, that he sacrificed himself for the spiritual recovery of life wherever found. Overmastered by a heaven-born conviction he proclaimed with divinely-animated fervor, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." His gospel was never diluted; not even when the ethical, theological climate changed. He unequivocally bore down on the claims of the gospel wherever or whenever he spoke.

The Demand of Our Day

What was the problem of Paul's age, is the problem of our age. The real problem of our day is not political; it is not essentially international or economic. The world problem of today is a spiritual one. The solution to the evil that issues from the human heart is the Divine Regeneration of the sinner and the Sanctification of the believer. This solution comes not by culture but by Divine process, which eventuates in the making of a new heart. The first requisite to the making of a new world is not a power of sufficient strength to police it, but a power sufficient to save it from its terrible and lesser sins. This transformation does not come through forms or rituals, neither by learning, but by revelation. This revolutionizing, supernatural change in the life of man, and this alone will make a hating enemy a loving brother.

Wherever this gospel has been received in genuine transforming power, it has changed both thought and conduct. It has changed the fundamental issues in the guidance of life.

There is a great deal of talk these days about building a new world, but this world is not so bad, except for the man who lives in it. This cosmic world in which we live, is a profusion of beauty, bespangled with glory. The majesty of its mountains, the fragrance and beauty of its flowers, the babble of its sparkling brooks, the dashing breakers on the rolling seas, the multifarious coloring in the gorgeous sunset, the silvery parade of the vaulted heavens, the melody of the sweet-singing birds and the rapturous, prismatic glow of the harmonious rainbow, all combine to make this natural world of ours a habitation resplendent with the Almighty's creative genius.

The flagrant travesty and tragedy of our world, is that man will not rise in harmony and obedience, to the enjoyment of God's planning for him, both in time and for all eternity. Men are

ready to discern the dark gathering shadows about them, but how seldom do they turn to God as the guiding light, to lead them out of their current plundering darkness.

The true Christian is a romantic crusader for God and humanity, heralding not only the possibility but the reality of a glad dawning new day. What we need in this sad hour of sweat and strife is the proclamation of the real and simple gospel, as revealed in the Word of God. It has in it the dynamic requisite to the transformation of all human life.

When Sylvester Horne departed from this country for overseas a few years ago, he said: "The average sermon I have heard in America is a pious exhortation to a nice people, to go on being nice." I think his interpretation was not too wide of the mark. Such prosaic preaching wouldn't stir the down on a gander's neck, to say nothing about converting a world to Jesus Christ with saving religion. It takes the thunder of Sinaitic law, the preaching of a burning judgment in the caldrons of hell, the sacrifice of a bloody cross, the power of a triumphant resurrection and the glorious dwelling place of a sinless, happy paradise for the sanctified, before men are shaken to the realization of what life is all about. The gospel of Christ must be declared in all of its claims, before men will come to know that the supreme objective of life is God in the human heart; not gold in the bank.

Christianity in the heart of man changes the word "barbarian" into the word "brother." What does it? God! It is the missionary spirit in the heart, that makes men brothers.

Christianity is a missionary religion with a world vision. Take away this world view and you eliminate the very character of Christianity. The church lives spiritually only, when world vision is constantly kept in the foreground. With such a vision, people are ready to follow their leader, in the apparent dangerous ways pointed out by this great commission.

The one thing that can save the church from spiritual lapse is a constant working of this world vision. History records, that golden pages have been written in church history, only when its missionary passion is foremost. Its power in the homeland is inseparably associated with its passion for the ends of the earth. It either takes all men into its love-motivated outreach, or, it shrivels and dies.

The church faces an extraordinary challenge, which has arisen out of the maze of a warring world. In these troublesome times it must give both lives and money to accomplish its mission, for this is a day, when the whole Christian program is being attacked by deeply entrenched opposition.

Christianity has always had to do its work in a world that is at variance with God; but in recent years, sinister powers have openly arrayed themselves in battle, to utterly crush the church. Unless it can rise up to the full spiritual strength of divine authorization, in the execution of its spiritual mission, it must sacrifice its place of leadership to anti-Christian philosophies for world exploitation.

There are millions of people around the world who are saved today, as a result of Christian missions, but the perpetuation of this fruit of centuries, gathering, is being challenged for the right of existence today.

What Shall the Church Do?

How Christian institutions shall react to such caustic and bitter opposition awaits to be seen. Will they go down in humiliation and sacrifice for a new baptism of Divine power, or fold up and surrender to the foe that is challenging them? The former is the essential course, if the church is to stay in the race and be victorious in taking Christ to all nations, during an era that is the most complex and difficult in the annals of human history. There is no other way to meet the opposition of those with whom there is no common denominator, or Christian sympathy, for a spiritual world outlook.

Terrorism will give way only to the kingdom that looks forward with spiritual zeal, faith, and hope. There is no purpose in standing about shivering in weakness and grieving over a day that is draped in death, when the demand is, that the Christian church give birth to a new spiritual adventure. To such an adventure the New Testament breathes with throbbing assurance.

The world is waiting for a new manifestation of the power of Christ in human life. The demand is for a Christianity that is imbued with spiritual triumph, which seeks nothing but a crusading opportunity for holy conquest, in carrying the Christian message to the ends of the earth.

The church has too often called for the physician to take its temperature and count its pulse, without taking the remedy, which the prescription called for, until it has become prostrate over the fact of its impotency. The time has come for it to take the recovery prescription.

War, poverty, and death in the nations have created wide-spread discontent, until there is a great secret longing for the divine cure and the elimination of human panaceas.

With all this we should bear in mind that the great commission, "Go ye" is still mandatory. Christian authority of Divine Origin is as much a requisite for successful conquest today, as in any century past. Let us pause and listen to Him, who as the victorious leader of the church, gave the command, "Go ye into all the world and teach all nations." This commission has never lost its urgency. Modern criticism has put an interrogation point over its validity, but faith obliterates the interrogation with an exclamation point! Faith answers with bold, courageous response to tell it. His vision is like that of the poet, Priscilla J. Owens:

"We have heard the joyful sound:
Jesus Saves! Jesus saves!
Spread the tidings all around
Jesus Saves! Jesus Saves!
Bear the news to every land,
Climb the steeps and cross the waves;
Onward! 'Tis the Lord's command

Jesus Saves! Jesus Saves!"

The genuine Christian heralds it as the God-given enterprise. Jesus sets forth the aim, the field and the responsibility.

The missionary charter which Jesus gave, carries with it the guarantee of inevitable success. The man who sees the world through the vision of Christ, is a world-wide missionary. He becomes the captive of a God-centered necessity, which impels him to go, to sacrifice, and to serve man-kind in his outreach to bring them to the Master. True to the purpose of God, he is ill-at-ease until he has shared with the underprivileged, the light and healing found in Jesus Christ. He is moved with a compassion that men should not die without Christ. He believes in a religion that "gets you" and not merely in "getting religion."

Too often conversion is interpreted as an escape from a bad world. While that is true, it is also an open door to a new and better world. The coming of the grace of God into the life of man brings with it a recreation which ushers him into an entirely new world. This transformation all comes about .because he sincerely, if not tearfully, repents of his past sins and believes God to forgive him.

Then, further, to be identified with Christ includes an eagerness to see all men saved from all sin. He says with the poet:

"Lead on, O King Eternal
The Day of March has come."

This charter reveals that humanity has marched up to the cross-roads and another generation is coming. In the face of this challenging responsibility our resolve is, by the grace of God, we shall not permit them to arrive and find the signboard down that points to heaven.

The people of our day face wide-spread insecurity, both economic and spiritual. Communism is the collective agent which seeks to dissolve the individual and open the way to unbridled force. Our cry is for the continuance of the Christian democratic spirit, wherein man is subject only to the dictates of his own conscience; and wherein directors of state must obtain the right to govern by the voice of the people.

It is the business of Christian education to keep the spiritual thorough-fare to heaven wide open. Visiting the old world I saw statues of saints without eyes, decorating cathedrals. Blind saints, they were, behind stained glass windows. That presents a very drab and dreary picture of the blind attempting to lead the blind. People need their eyes of understanding opened with gospel light. Vision is not merely a faculty of the physical; a man may see with his mind as well as his heart and eyes. Such vision saves men from the paralysis of indecision and brings them into the glorious light of Christ, with its sweeping challenge for conquest.

This dark hour is the time for heroism, optimism, and faith in the church. The world is facing an angry sea, over which the winds roar and the waves are lashing the ship of life in heavy seas. Christ is the only one who can say to it through His commandatory interjection, "Peace, Be

still!" By holding Christ up, the world can see and experience the curative powers of His healing balm.

A letter from my son, Fielding, during world war two, stated that he left the Tunisian area of North Africa on a bombing expedition over Italy. He had as his guide a beam of direction known best to aviation. In the climate of the Mediterranean, he soared into the altitude where the thermometer registered 40 degrees below zero, but that beam of light guided him both to his objective and return. The providence of God permitted him to return on all of his aerial raids.

This incident serves to illustrate the quest of Christ in behalf of all, to get on the priceless light beam by responding to His call in pursuit of the great Eternal Objective.

What we need is Christianity with its sleeves rolled up and its face bared to the task of absorbing the shock of evil, in its conquest for the liberation of human souls. It is expensive business. Paul said, "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." That very thing he did. The cross is symbolic of battle. It is a challenge to the peril of ease. Christ took off His coat when He went to Calvary in defense of eternal bound souls. The task He undertook was both sweaty work and bloody work, but He did it with that spirit of heroism that let no one down until the task was accomplished.

There could have been no victory in the battle waged upon the cross and no resurrection morning, had Jesus not been willing to expend Himself even unto death.

It will take that kind of a spirit to rescue the perishing today. Christ came to give His life in the pursuit of redeeming mankind. The early Christians looked upon themselves as expendable in pursuit of the same objective. They lived in Roman catacombs and hundreds perished in the Roman Coliseum; others upon the racks and upon the gallows; while still others gave themselves to divers forms of persecution to preserve the Christian testimony and save the lost. Among such martyrs were the Pauls and the Stephens -- in modern days the Schmelzenbachs and the Esther Carson Winans.

Lord, let the mantle of those holy heroes of conquest fall upon us today! Help us to carry the torch in that spirit of sacrificial love that gladly suffers in an effort to turn the destiny of immortal souls and build the Kingdom of God.

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04 -- THE CHRISTIAN AND MONEY

"And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. Then contended I with the rulers and said) Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries." -- Nehemiah 13:10-12

There are many guiding principles or rules of action found in the Bible designed for guidance in the sustaining of spiritual life. There is one principle which involves a prominent pivotal point in man's relationship with God that I desire to consider in this chapter. It is God's plan to finance the program of redemption.

There is no business man that has financed the establishment of a business who needs to be informed that money is one of the first demands in the promotion of any given project.

One would not suspect that a God of infinite wisdom endowed with the power of creation, which required the design and execution of the most detailed planning, would leave the greatest organization in the world, the Church, which He founded, without a financial plan sufficient for its successful perpetuation.

God's financial plan is the tithing of Christian people. Since the initiation of tithing as a method for financing the church was of Divine origin, it has remained unalterable through time.

The first account we have of tithing is merely a paying of the tithes, which is conclusive evidence that it has been well-understood by man since the beginning, that God devised this plan for financing the church. It is also indicative that the paying of one-tenth of one's earnings into the church treasury is God's minimum requirement. Leviticus 27:30 states: "All the tithe... is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord."

The student of the Word will observe that the law of the tithe is a demonstration of God asserting His sovereignty over all possessions. Obedience at this point acknowledges the sovereignty of God over one's life.

The observing of one day in seven as sacred and holy unto the Lord is an acknowledgement of God's sovereignty over one's time.

It was law with the children of Israel, that they should give one-tenth of their earnings for the support of the church. And Malachi's support of this financial plan is revealed in Malachi 3:10, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat (money with which to pay the bills) in mine house." Solomon who was noted for his great wisdom wrote with his inspired pen the following words, Ecclesiastes 10:19, "... Money answereth all things." In other words, what we do with our money is an index to the seat of our affection and character.

To show the deep-seated spirit of covetousness in the human heart God inspired the Apostle Paul to write in I Timothy 6:9,10 these words: "... They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

In order to show the emphasis placed upon money by God in the relation that man sustains to Him and His kingdom, let me quote from the words of J. O. Atkinson, "The Word of God treats more often the theme of money, and man's relationship to money than it does of any other single theme whatsoever. In the four gospels, on an average one verse in four treats of

money and man's relationship to property; and of all the parables our Saviour used, nearly two-thirds have to do with this single item."

There is much more said in the Old Testament about tithing than in the New, but having fixed the proportion of giving in the Old Testament, less was needed to be said in the New Testament for its perpetuation. While the ceremonial law was abolished on the advent of the New Testament, it will be recalled that the law of the tithe existed 500 years even before the ceremonial law was given. It is a sufficient proof that the law of the tithe is binding in the New Testament because it originated in the Old Testament times. If tithing was God's financial plan both in the Old and New Testament times, it is essential in our times, for the plan God instituted was inaugurated to sustain the church throughout the history of mankind. It would seem that a sufficient reason for the Almighty to institute the tithing system as the means for financing the church is evidence of the justness and adequacy of the method.

Since God required the giving of one-tenth for spiritual purposes under the Old Testament order, would it be reasonable to expect that Christians should give less under the more favorable and more enlightened circumstances of the New Testament regime?

Are Non-Tithers Excused?

Now if God has required in all ages the tenth of man's income as the minimum basis for financing the church, in what position do people place themselves who give less? To give less than a tenth to the church cannot be consistent with the inspired standard of man's duty to God and man. God's will in this respect is made so plain in His Word that there can be no just excuse for ignorance or transgression at this point.

Malachi presents the subject of tithing both with respect to the results of its observance and the consequences for failure to pay one's tithes. Malachi 3:10, 11 states, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruit; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts."

God pronounces a curse upon the non-tither. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Malachi 3:8, 9.

If a man robs God he is a robber, and it matters little whether he plays the part of a thief toward God or man. For in either case it would not alter the status of the act -- he is subject to punishment for being a thief.

To say that one loves God and at the same time withhold his tithe is both an exhibition of unfaithfulness and a revelation of his covetousness.

Ephesians 5:5 states, "... No... covetous man... hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God."

To pay the tithe was the bounden duty of every Israelite but his free-will offering depended upon his ability and willingness. Dr. J. B. Chapman said, "You cannot be liberal until you have been honest."

Poverty A Stumbling-Block

Some seem to fear the stigma of poverty if they tithe and give offerings. This attitude is but a demonstration of the faithless and the covetous.

The greatest outpouring of the Spirit is promised in response to the liberal giver to the cause of righteousness. "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over."

After searching the Scriptures through we fail to find any promises more assuring than to those who are generous givers. Despite this fact, however, there are many professed followers of our Lord who are financially narrow and stingy with God. Yet they will be inconsistent enough to anticipate that He will not pass them by in sharing His blessings. God says, however, in I Samuel 2:30, "... Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me will I lightly esteem." We also find in 2 Corinthians 9:6 these words, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

It is easier to find precepts and truths in God's Word, to support the system of tithing and liberality, than to find flowers in the open glades in the springtime. Please observe Luke 6:38, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal shall be measured to you again,"

The following illustration serves to corroborate a modern demonstration of this point.

Years ago a rich church of a certain denomination had been supporting a missionary in India, sending his support directly to him. After a number of years they decided that they were no longer able to support him, and he was to be called home after a certain date. The pastor announced his recall from the pulpit. There was a poor widow in his congregation whose husband had died and left her with two small boys. She had reared the boys by doing drudgery for a living, but they had grown to manhood and had gone out into the world to roam she knew not where. A few days after the announcement that this missionary would be called home because the church was no longer able to support him, the estate of a relative who had died in a distant state was probated and she received a five hundred dollar check. The first time she prayed after receiving the check, God told her to give it to keep His missionary on the field. She questioned the Lord and told Him that she needed the money for her years were telling on her, that her strength was failing, and that she had done nothing but drudgery all her life. God told her to give it and that He who had never failed the lily and sparrow would not forget her. She called up the chairman of the board of stewards and told him what she had received and he rejoiced

with her, telling her how glad he was that she had received this help. "But," she added, "God tells me to give this to keep the missionary on the field," He said, "No, woman, we cannot receive your money. You need it more than anyone." She insisted that he must take it because God said for her to give it. He took it reluctantly. The money was sent to the missionary with instructions to use it in the fear of God as it was blood money. The name of the donor, with the story of the sacrifice she had made to keep him on the field, was also sent to him. The man remained on the field, feeling sure that God would bless him because of the sacrifice of this godly woman. During the first revival he conducted after receiving the money forty heathen were converted and he wrote her of their conversion. As she read the letter tears of joy flowed freely and finally she broke into shouting saying, "Thank God, that is my missionary." The second revival was conducted by this missionary in which sixty heathen were converted. Again, he wrote her telling of his joy in seeing the conversion of the heathen, which was made possible by her sacrifice. As she read she shouted, "Thank God, that is my missionary." As she felt strange concerning the third letter she received from India, she looked at the name of the writer before reading it, and to her glad surprise there was the name of one of her boys. She hastened to read the letter. It read something like this:

"Dear Mother: -- Brother and I are here in India. The other day we came in contact with an American missionary. In a revival which he was conducting both were converted. Mother, since God has forgiven us we want to beg your forgiveness for so neglecting you and for all the sorrow that we have caused you. After a certain date we will be home, and never again will you have to wash, scrub, and do drudgery for a living." The letter continued but this was all that she could stand. She arose shouting, "Thank God for the salvation of my boys and for my missionary." Like the poor widow of the Bible she gave God her all, even her living, and He blessed her in this case by the salvation of her boys, the thing she desired more than all the money in the world, the pleasure of her children at home and a living the rest of her life. God will be no man's debtor. This widow remembered God and He remembered her.

God says in Proverbs 3:27, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."

2 Corinthians 9:7 points to the true spirit of giving, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

A man who paid his tithes into the local church treasury said, "This is my tithe, my family surely does need it but I promised God I would tithe so here it is." It is plain to be seen that this man gave grudgingly and of necessity rather than from a heart of sacrificial love.

If the question be asked, What is the degree of poverty that exempts from tithe-paying the answer is, according to God's Word, Where there is no earning power.

The justice of the law of the tithe is seen from the little required by the poor man and of the much remaining after the wealthy has given largely. The contribution or withholding of the tithe determines the attitude toward Divine Sovereignty and human responsibility.

Christ pronounces a woe (grief -- sorrow -- misery and calamity) upon him who disregards the necessity of tithing. Christ stated in Matthew 23:23, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; (fundamental essentials to salvation to which tithing is secondary only and yet quite as necessary) These ought ye to have done and not leave the other undone."

There is as much woe here pronounced on the non-tither as there is to the one who eludes the first essential law by which he is made Christian. To leave tithing undone is as woeful for the Christian as the ought or lack of salvation is to the non-Christian.

Daniel Webster the great statesman once said, "The greatest question I have ever meditated on, is my personal responsibility to God, and the next greatest is my responsibility to my fellow-men."

If one has much or little earning capacity he can give the tenth and not be impoverished by it. When a person assumes to think it unjust for a poor man to tithe when apparently his family needs every cent he is making, he has forgotten God, who originated the tithing system as the most equitable method of financing His church. Such persons have overlooked this fact: that God has pledged Himself to honor those who honor Him.

Someone has said, "Measure thy life by loss instead of gain, not by that taken in but by that poured out: For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice, and he who suffers most has most to give."

Bishop Thoburn of the Methodist Episcopal Church once said: "A thousand Ingersolls could not do as much to defeat the cause of God as an unbelieving church. Our fear should not come from without the church, but from within. Those within the church who will not believe God; and step out upon His promises, who will not bring their tithes and offerings into the storehouse, constitute our greatest danger."

Why Pay the Tithe?

We should pay the tithe, first of all, because God commands it; "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse," is God's command. The storehouse, by the way, is not left to individual choice. The Lord states in I Corinthians 16:2, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come." As this verse of Scripture indicates, the Christians worshipped on the first day of the week so the implication is without question that the instruction was to bring their tithes with them to church where they worshipped, or of which they are members.

That the people brought their tithes and offerings to church with them is indicated by Jesus as revealed in Mark 12:41-44 inclusive, "And Jesus sat over against the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And He called unto Him His disciples, and saith unto them, 'Verily I say

unto you that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Christ still watches to see how we give.

We are not only to tithe because we must obey God's commands in order to get to heaven, but we must tithe because we are God's stewards. He has trusted us to finance His cause. If we fail Him then it is impossible that the world shall be evangelized. How people and even whole denominations can expect to justify themselves at the Bar of God when their annual per capita giving is as low as \$12.00 I cannot anticipate.

The church will never be able to impress the world as keeping faith with God in demonstrating any appreciable spirit of sacrifice if it operates financially on a mite-box basis.

In this country we spend annually \$750,000,000 for cosmetics; \$200,000,000 for chewing gum and approximate a billion dollars for cigarettes alone. But to cap all of this the American people pay eight billion dollars annually for legalized alcoholic beverages. It is estimated that there is as much illegal liquor sold as legalized. This would make the sum of sixteen billion dollars for liquor. On the other hand, for every dollar earned by the American people three-fourths of one cent is spent for advancing the cause of Christianity.

We should pay our tithes because in so doing it commands the respect of the world. When the church must resort to bazaars, rummage sales, oyster stews, carnivals, and other questionable tactics to finance its cause, it is not only a reflection upon the sincerity of its communicants but it brings reproach upon the cause of Christianity as well.

We should pay our tithes to the church because it keeps the channels open to God for spiritual blessings. It is still true that God honors those who honor Him. Thomas Kane a few years ago had published in many newspapers in this country and Canada this question: "Have you ever known of anyone who was less happy, less generous, or less prosperous by being a tither?" A total of 10,000 replies were received in answer to this question but not a single one was marked "yes."

Mr. Hyde, the man who made Mentholatum, started his business by giving one-tenth. His business increased in such prosperous proportions that he was finally enabled to increase his giving to nine-tenths of every dollar he made.

Mr. Colgate, manufacturer of the famous Colgate shaving soap, was a strict tither. During his life-time he gave millions of dollars to the cause of Christ and left a monumental name for his liberality to the Christian cause.

We should systematically pay our tithes because it is God's plan for financing His Church. The faithful tither demonstrates his faith in the cause of righteousness with his pocket book. He shows to the world that he not only loves God but that he has concern for the salvation of his fellow-men both at home and abroad. The world cannot point an accusing finger at him and class him as a thief, because he is obedient. He proves himself loyal to God and to the

church. He considers tithing as the minimum -- that which is commanded and demanded by God for the support of the church. You will find the tither to be an offering-giver plus the tenth.

Fritz Kreisler, the great violinist, said, "I never look upon the money I earn as my own. It is public money. It is only a fund entrusted to my care for proper disbursement. I am constantly endeavoring to reduce my needs to a minimum. I feel morally guilty in ordering a costly meal for it deprives someone else of a slice of bread or a bottle of milk."

When Christ was asked, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?" His reply was, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." In other words, pay what is due the government in taxes. He did not overlook saying, however, "Render to God the things that are God's." In other words, what is due God pay with the same punctiliousness with which you pay your state and federal taxes.

Every now and again we run across people who say they do not believe in pledging. These same people, though, have little difficulty when signing their name on the dotted line for Uncle Sam in the matter of paying income tax. They sign it up in bold-hand writing with a thorough understanding as to when each quarterly pledge is due. Why not be as honest with God and pledge to the church at the beginning of the year your tithes and pay it out as systematically as you pay income tax to Caesar?

God said, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse." This method presents the principle by which the continuous provision of the financial program of the church is met. By following this method the pastor can say with the Prophet Azariah, "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the House of the Lord we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store."

Nehemiah found that the people had ceased to tithe and as a result the House of God was forsaken. It is also true that the individual or church which ceaseth to tithe is forsaken of God.

If God pronounces a curse upon those who do not pay their tithes then friend resolve to become a tither now. By what logic may we who are under Grace expect to escape that curse if we fail to pay our tithes to the church of which we are members?

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05 -- GOD'S EXCELLING GRACE

First Corinthians, Chapter Thirteen

Not until the principle of divine love rules the spirit of man has he been brought into complete captivity. Eloquence amounts to little unless the source of its flow originates in a spirit that is enamored with divine love. This love is greater than filial love, or that prompted by the spirit of philanthropy. It is the same love expressed by John in his first Epistle, chapter four, where he says, "God is love," and "His love is perfected in us." It is a love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

This divine love constitutes the fulfilling of the law. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," Although our moral and intellectual powers were lessened through the fall of the Race, yet the Apostle Paul says, "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Christ characterized the fulfilling of the law as follows: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Promise was given for compliance with this Scripture in the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy 30:6 "The Lord thy God will circumcise (purify) thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

Unless we possess this more excellent grace of divine love, everything for which we strive in life shall have gone for naught when values are reckoned at the close of life's day. Without the noble qualities fostered by this love, there are times of inward and outward rancor, and betimes a spirit of unkindness and a more or less consistent attitude of selfishness.

Paul puts his foot on the ashes of self-martyrdom and all the wearisome rounds of life as useless without this divine love. The soul thus furnished suffers long, is sweet, kind, courteous, and uncomplaining. There is not one note of bitterness in his gentle heart. The soul possessed of this more excellent grace will not take up a reproach against his neighbor.

The person possessing this spirit of divine love is not envious. He does not envy the person who is able to do more and do it better than himself. He does not envy the gifts and honors conferred upon others, when his ability does not merit the conferring of such honors. The spirit of God's excelling Grace removes the spirit of envy: "Love envieth not."

This more excellent way creates a spirit of humility. If you have been kind and if you have been generous, you are unaffected thereby, for this more excellent way does not brag. To such, compliments are like perfume -- to be smelled and not swallowed. A person endowed with this experience is courteous. He does not behave himself unseemly or unbecomingly.

A person possessed with such grace seeks to be helpful ("seeketh not her own"). There is an absence of the selfish spirit. A good label for greatness is "A life of unselfishness." To such, to get is to give.

Possessing the "more excellent way" one is even-tempered -- "Love is not provoked." This expression is a strong one and denotes the absence of all those feelings of irritation under provocation usually witnessed in those not in the experience of perfect love. Love can feel injured and abide the time of redress. She calmly and patiently waits for vindication in the providence of God. Love suffers long, which implies that injuries are to be borne and forgiven. If you have a flaw in your window glass, the loveliest view that you may have through it will be ugly and disfigured. Likewise if you look uncharitably upon others, you will doubtless see only

the unlovely in them. People are very loathe about judging evil of themselves therefore if we love ourselves as our neighbor we will respect them with the same admiration.

Love overcomes the wickedness of men. When the injury is inflicted love forgives it and looks to Christ for succor and solace. If given time, love and gentleness will wear malice out. If we abide in the spirit of Divine Love we shall not be irritated into unkindness.

Evil temper might be defined as something that smears all virtues. There are men and women who would rate as tops in the field of spiritual grace but for the fact that they are easily ruffled, quick tempered, or have a touchy disposition. This is one of the strangest and at the same time one of the saddest problems of Christian ethics. It is accounted for from the fact that there are two classes of sin, First, sins of transgression and second, the in-being of sin or the sin of disposition. The "more excellent way" removes the latter.

The prodigal son might serve as a good illustration of the first class. The elder brother could well serve as an illustration of the second class. We may give the elder brother credit for all of his virtues. He stayed at home; he was faithful; he was hard-working. He was a believer. But look at him when special favor was conferred upon his prodigal brother. He was like a spoiled child sulking outside his father's house. He was peeved and would not come in. He is a demonstration of the "old man" on parade. Nothing more quickly betrays an unsanctified life than a carnal demonstration. What effect do you suppose the elder brother's attitude had upon the Father and the guests as well as the returned prodigal?

The elder brother's attitude showed that he lacked the experience of the "more excellent way." He was filled with jealousy, pride, and selfishness. He was peeved that someone else was in the lime-light.

Now there is really no place in heaven for a disposition like that. If he should get there, such a spirit would embarrass everyone else. You could never be sure when he was going to behave or misbehave. In order to enter heaven one must take the spirit of heaven with him. The "more excellent way" is required to give reality to revelation. One possessed of this spirit refuses to press his own rights or bear malice. His spirit of love stands out with noble sagacious dignity. When love is given the chief seat as the motivating rule of life, things of an infantile state are displaced with those of gracious maturity.

Whatever evil tendencies had been observed before, in the Corinthian church, they were satisfactorily met in the secret of the "more excellent way."

The Corinthian Church

Paul had been greatly distressed by the Corinthian church for its misplaced evaluation on Christian essentials. Without their reception of the "more excellent way," he felt that the Christian society at Corinth would surely fall apart. He believed, however, that he could inspire a correction through the reception of Divine Love.

To the Corinthian church and to every church, perfect love embodies the chief doctrine of Christianity. Of all the gifts of God the Baptism of Love is the most excellent. Faith and Hope are inferior to it. "And now abideth faith, hope, love but the greatest of these is love."

This love is revealed as being superior to all the gifts of the Spirit as related in the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians.

"Though I speak with tongues," or "Though I speak with all possible tongues, even of men and of angels, if I still lack perfect love it is as sounding brass or as clanking cymbals."

"Though I have all faith, so that I can move mountains and have not love I am nothing." I might have sufficient faith to overthrow all difficulties, yet if my heart is marked by the absence of the "more excellent way," my rating with God is still incomplete.

If I were rich I could be charitable enough to give myself poor. I could even give my body to be burned, in so much sacrifice on behalf of others. Yet I would not rate as qualified for heaven. I still lack the "more excellent way."

This love rejoiceth not in iniquity. It does not rejoice in the downfall or injury of others. The strict meaning of the verb is, "to cover." It carries with it the idea of covering over and bearing in silence whatever may be imposed. It conceals and is silent about those faults of others which could become household stock for their embarrassment.

Love "rejoices in the truth." The heart of overflowing love exercises great rejoicing and satisfaction, because his life is in complete conformity with the will and purpose of God.

"Love never faileth." One possessed with the "more excellent way" will not find himself short of the divine requirements. Other gifts are transient. The gift of prophecy shall vanish and the gift of tongues shall cease and the gift of knowledge shall come to naught. While these gifts shall pass away, there are three left remaining: faith, hope, and love. Of these three graces love is chief, for it is the end for which the other two furnish the means.

Hope is baseless except its foundation is that of faith. Faith likewise, can be no more than the forerunner of the "more excellent way." The Baptism of Love perfects salvation and qualifies for heaven by eliminating all that is carnal and mantles the creature with a qualified divine image.

A test as to perfect love is a trial. If you cannot take it, it betrays an unsanctified spirit. It is an endless process to attempt to deal with an evil temper itself. We must resort to the source of its outcroppings. The seat of such a spirit reveals a carnal nature, that is ingrained and inborn in every life. The only antidote for it is the "more excellent way" which eradicates such a spirit.

Divine Love may well be labeled as the supreme gift of God, because it never fails -- "Love never faileth."

It must be borne in mind that this "more excellent way" is a gift, not an attainment. A man may determine that he is going to arrive at this experience through personal endeavor by the exercise of his own will power; or try to copy it; but such processes will never produce the experience of Divine Love in the believer. It is the gift of God.

Perfect Love Experienced

Perfect Love in an effect. It is conditioned on complete abandonment or consecration of one's self to God. This is man's part. This coupled with faith in God, brings the "more excellent way" experience. This is done through the baptism with the Holy Ghost, which produces the effect, or the "more excellent way."

This gift is available only to the believer, the born-again Christian. Such an experience is essential to what John Wesley called "Christian Perfection." It is essential to a place in heaven.

To get this experience one's obedience must be unhesitating. God says in His Word, "They that seek me early shall find me." One's obedience must also be unconditioned. There must be a complete, all-out abandonment of one's self to God. This means that his consecration must be unlimited. The seeker must believe God to fulfill His promise; "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." This literally means, "Wherever you may be seeking God, continue to seek until you are baptized with the Holy Ghost which produces the "more excellent way." Charles Wesley's hymn, "Love Divine" points the way:

Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heavn' to earth come down!
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling;
All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into ev'ry troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit,
Let us find that second rest.
Take away our bent to sinning,
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore Thy temples leave:
Thee we would be always blessing,

Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in Thee:
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love and praise.

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06 -- A FORUM FOR YOUTH AND GRAY HAIRS

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth ..." -- Ecclesiastes 12:1 "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not." -- Hosea 7:9

In time of war it is the caution of the officers to guard their men against over-shooting. Probably the pulpit speaker is as much at fault in over-shooting the mark as an army. There is perhaps a lot of missing for want of direct and plain preaching. This might both affect the people preached to, as well as the purpose for which men preach.

John the Baptist was not of that school. He was most firm and rebuking to the make-believe Pharisees as he called them a generation of vipers, when they sought affiliation with the church, without having been converted. Paul likewise, was a very direct preacher. His audience at Athens was full of people who worshipped false gods, yet, to them he preached the only true God. At Corinth, he denounced the vices for which the city was famous.

Our Lord reached the level of His crowd when proclaiming truth from experiences common to them.

Using the stones of Jacob's well as a pulpit, He preached a sermon using water for His Text.

Standing, one day, He viewed a sower in the process of sowing wheat and He used that as His Text. (Matt. 13:18).

On another occasion, He used as His Text a treasure that was hid and found. (Matt. 13:44)

He preached another sermon, using as His Text a catch of fish he had witnessed in the net. (Matt. 13:47-)

He used as another Text the ungodly, foolish rich man of Luke 12:15-21.

Again, He was heard to deliver a message using for His Text the tares, as recorded in Matthew, Chapter 13.

He preached them another sermon, using as His Text the lost sheep, as recorded in the 18th Chapter of Matthew.

He picked up a lily at His feet, and from it delivered a sermon on the care of God.

Youth and Gray Hairs?

Perhaps at some time you have ascended a mountain, but you did not find it as you anticipated; instead of finding the top sharp and precipitous on either side, you found quite a stretch of table land, more or less rolling or level, before coming to the descent on the other side. Life is like that. It grows up quite rapidly, until it reaches the top place in life. After crossing this span, the decline is as rapid as were the ascending years. There is a time when the supply and waste of life seem to be at a perfect balance. We call this the age of maturity. That culminating point is a solemn position. From this vantage point one can see the cradle, which he left, on one side and the open grave, where he shall soon lie, on the other. Yet, the individual seems to derive little, if any, practical good as to whether he is going up or down hill, in the scale of life, as affects his future destination. For, while he is going up hill he anticipates old age, at which time he will prepare for life eternal. But, by the time he reaches the top of the hill, to take the descending scale, he has forgotten that he is now old.

But let us view the range of death's victims. We observe that, of the crowd which started together, there are .but few stragglers who reach the natural turn in life's descent. This brings us face to face with the fact that many more die young than old. Thus, we find that death extends its inroads over the whole period of life. So, it matters little whether going up the young side of the hill or tottering down the other side, beneath the weight of years, your path is strewn with tombstones and grave diggers, each of which speaks most loudly to the young: "Prepare now for life eternal." God speaks to that innumerable company yet full of the spring of youth: "Remember now, thy Creator in the days of thy youth..." (Ecc. 12:1); as well as to the few elderly folk: "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not."

Time, A Period of False Security

Time offers only a subtle, false security to its travelers. It seems never to present an alarming challenge; like the horizon, after we have gone far, it still beckons on. It is always a shocking thing to see the happy prospects of a brilliant youth suddenly brought to naught like a delicate piece of china ware accidentally dropped, only to shatter into irreparable bits. To see a life in an instant collapse beyond the hope of amends, unprepared, is heart-rending.

On what grounds, may I ask, are you counting on escaping hell and making heaven your eternal home? Have you been born again? Christ says, "Ye must be born again." Have you been sanctified? God's Word says: "Without the sanctification no man shall see the Lord." Have you

prayed to God in the name of Jesus to forgive all of your sins? If you answer me in the negative, then your path is beset with the greatest of dangers and eternal disappointment.

A plausible profession of salvation, without the witness, is like Color-Back for gray hairs. It only serves to disguise -- it fools no one. Your attempted deception only proves fatal to yourself. Sin is more dangerous to youth than to age; unless mercy pardons and grace saves, it foretells doom. Sin is sin, however great or small. As long as you can see one star in the sky, you know the sun is not yet over the Eastern horizon. As long as there is one leak in the boat, the ship and its cargo are in danger. So, as long as one sin reigns in the life of man, Jesus has not become your Saviour.

Remember this, man shall never cease to exist, Whether blessed or cursed with immortality, we shall either live to regret forever that we ever lived, or to shout forever that we shall never die.

The Brevity of the Traveler's Stay

One of the marvelous things about God is that He has the power to turn a curse into a blessing. Experiences that leave the heart desolate, He is able to turn into a blessing. When we think of the aching loneliness which bereavement brings, it is difficult to think that blessing may come out of it.

The personal impact of death is bitter in its influence. But, like sweat and toil, it may prove a blessing.

Life becomes serious in the shadow of the grave. When a traveler goes to Medford for a week, he is anxious to see everything within a radius of a hundred miles. He pays a visit to Crater Lake and makes a journey to the Oregon Caves. But, many people born in Medford have never seen Crater Lake or viewed the beauty in the Caves. It is the brevity of the traveler's stay that creates within him an intensity to capitalize upon his opportunities. This very passion should seize every thinking mind to make early preparation because of the inevitable fact of death.

Death deepens the value of common things. During the World War, when boys were being called from home, death seemed more probable than its escape. It was then that the blessings of home and loved ones suddenly dawned upon them. Those heart tugs deepened the sense of life values, when death seemed formidable.

Never did men feel more tender toward their sons than on the parting day, when they left to enlist in the great war. It was then that they were concentrating on the ties of home and the fact of separation. They forgot the little things, when the larger loomed in the foreground. Sometimes little things obscure the major, even to the point of neglect.

Life becomes a series of deceptions when we permit ourselves to become victims to the claims of time with its decoying lures. It is a sad day when a man lays up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God.

God arranged everything beautifully in this life. Indeed, He said, Genesis 1:31, "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good..." He arranged all things for the happiness of man in this temporal period, but the perversity of man has marred this beauty. But the recovery of God's eternal choices returns to man the sight of everything beautiful.

To step from sin and discord back into the realm of accord and harmony brings man back into the realm of the beautiful. Faith in the validity and value of our common salvation is the secret to the beauty of everything, when coupled with prayer.

"God hath made everything beautiful in His time." When the springtime breaks upon us, amid bursting buds and fragrant blossoms, we exclaim: "How beautiful is the spring-time!" Advancing to summer, when the rich foliage en masse bedeck the trees and from a limb there hangs the woven, trim, nest of the oriole. The song of the yellow tipped bird intrigues you to ecstasy as he warbles his sweet melody. It is then you exclaim, "How beautiful is the summer!" But time rolls on apace and autumn loads the trees and stocks with golden fruit. Later, the leaves are left with gorgeous colors by the tinting frosts. At such a time we are heard to say, "Autumn, too, puts on a sparkling parade of beauty." The wheels of time turn on into winter, when the glories of spring, summer, and autumn are withered by its cold breath. But it spreads a mantle of fleecy white flakes which no artist can rival, piling crystal upon crystal, until it measures feet in depth and we must say that winter rivals the beauty of them all.

"He hath made everything beautiful in his time." This philosophy can not be improved upon. Life is a gift of God, a sacred gift. If only the end for which life is given is attained, man will reap the beauties that accompany an eternity of perfect peace. Man may choose, however, to ignore the high purposes of God for him and in so doing, suffer the withering, remorseful blast of eternity. The only thing man has to fear is that of being called out of time, before he is prepared for eternity. Being prepared for eternity, life is blessed and serene, with no element of fear, not even the fear of death, for even death is beautified by the grace of God. Having entered into that essential unity with God, life becomes a symphony of unending praise.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose." God has a time and a season to beautify every man's life by His GRACE. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth..."

* * * * *

07 -- A MADHOUSE FOR NON-CHRISTIANS

"And in hell he lifted up his eyes... and cried ... I am tormented in this flame." -- Luke 16:23, 24

In the New Testament the Greek word "tartarus" means a place of woe or misery. There is another Greek word "gehenna" which is used eleven times by Jesus in the New Testament. In each usage of this word it means a literal place of fire and suffering. He preached hell fire more than any other prophet. I will cite you to some of the references used by Jesus in this connection. Matthew 5:29-30... Mark 9:43-48 ... Matthew 17:15... Matthew 13:42... Matthew 13:30. These

Scripture citations, with others, which refer to being cast into hell fire, came from the lips of Jesus, who is infallible or without error.

It is reasonable as well as Scriptural that the ungodly must be separated in eternity from the godly. This is taught even in our hospitals where the patients of every contagious disease are separated from the rest. Every penitentiary is a testimony of separating the good from the bad. It should be plain to everyone that if the ungodly were admitted into heaven, heaven would soon become a hell.

What scene is comparable in horribleness to a peep into hell's madhouse? You have visited an insane asylum and heard the lamentations, cries, bewailings, and cursings of its inmates. Then you have visited a penitentiary to see men in stripes behind the bars. Some of them were waiting for the electric chair because they had made themselves too dangerous to live. Penitentiaries present scenes, though scarcely comparable yet bearing some semblance to the indescribable horror of God's madhouse for the wicked.

The language God uses to describe hell is: "being in torments" -- "weeping and gnashing of teeth" -- "outer darkness" -- "the fire that never shall be quenched."

Through the passing of time God has not eliminated hell. All the people who forgot Him by neglecting to prepare themselves for heaven will be consigned to that place of endless duration. Some say that hell is outmoded .because it is old-fashioned, but we would not say that of Nature, because it is old-fashioned. We do not disbelieve its reality just because it is old-fashioned. Nevertheless, the trees seasonally continue to bud and leaf out; the flowers likewise bud and bloom; but we do not hear anyone saying they are outmoded.

All modifications of hell have been invented by men, but their false fabrications cannot bear up under the fire of God's inscrutable decree. The hell of which the Bible speaks has not been changed in word or description, figure, metaphor, temperature, or reality.

Why Hell Is Necessary

Sin makes hell necessary. Sin is disobedience to the will of God. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord." The punishment of sin is inevitable because it is God's promised pay to the sinner. There is no escape from it except through the Blood of Christ, the means by which the sinner is forgiven.

Only those who disbelieve the Word of God can believe Hell to be unreal. Because some choose to disbelieve in a hell does not cool it off any or alter the fact of its reality. Some declare that God is too gracious and good to send souls to hell. But God does not send people to hell. They go there because that is their choice. Man chooses his own destiny. God says, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve."

It is true that God is love; but it is none-the-less true that he is just; and because HE is just he cannot admit sinners into heaven. Therefore, there must be some place for them. Hell is

that place, and He is under obligation to deliver them to that destination. Justice demands a separation of the good from the bad.

Those who object to hell, forget the picture that Jesus has given of it. It is more ghastly and withering than the writings of any man; yet Dante's "Inferno" and Michelangelo's "Last Judgment" are unrivaled human portrayals of the reality of Hell.

Hell, upon the authority of God's Word, is a stern, grim reality. Fumes from the hell of sin smell to high heaven. This scent comes from corrupting dives, gambling dens, houses of ill fame, liquor bars, from the evil smirking, mind-poisoning and character-blasting Hollywood theatrical films, dope shops, the evil page, and many other Satanic originating evils.

One's refusal to think sanely about the reality of hell does not change the fact of it. God's pronouncement of future punishment is His trumpet of warning mercy, a danger signal flung out in the path of every sin-straying soul. Every warning points to God's Son, dying upon Calvary, to barricade the way of every sinner en route to hell. Good people and bad alike, believe that sin should be punished. This is the universal verdict of justice.

The Thing That Makes Hell A Madhouse

Memory is the thing that makes hell a madhouse. "Son, remember," is God's admonition to the soul who opened his eyes in hell. This shows that reason is active in hell. To be within the seething corridors of hell is the eternal reminder of what a right choice would have wrought; consequently it is a memory of lasting remorse. The golden opportunities lost, the admonitions spurned, and the prayers stymied by the disobedient, all constitute occasion for that agony of memory called forever, to the occupants of hell.

In hell, the privileges and calls from God to escape it are eternally hushed. The lost in hell with no hope of escape and no chance to die, will bewail with relentless sorrow, how God tried to prevent their awful plight. With eternal bitterness they must suffer the stigma which their own folly has brought them. Memory with them will be a haunting virus of a never-killing specter. The memory of unforgiven sins in hell is indelibly engraved upon the conscience of the sin-blighted soul, with no possible reprieve from its lashing.

Conscience will make hell an eternal nightmare. It causes men to give up secrets that have been buried for years in this life. It was conscience that caused Herod to cry out, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead!" It was conscience that made Judas hurl the 30 pieces of silver down at the feet of those to whom he had sold his Christ, with the cry: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood."

The Hopelessness of Escape

One of the contributing factors to the terrors of hell is the hopelessness of its consignees to ever escape from it. Hell is incomparably worse than commitment to prison for life, for the prisoner has some slight hope of gaining his freedom; but the keeper of hell guarantees no possible escape from its confines of suffering.

If I could say that one day hell will be burned out, those words would fall like sweet music and mints of gold to hell's suffering inhabitants; but this I cannot do because hell is forever. It is the graveyard where all hope of release is buried.

In hell they lift up their eyes in shame and torment. Such characters as Ahab will be there. He took Naboth's vineyard by fraud; but thereby lost his throne and died in bloody battle, while "the dogs licked up his blood" and his soul sank into the abysmal depths of eternal despair.

The moral rich young ruler clung to his riches and turned his back upon the Master, who said, "Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven... But... he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions." Matthew 19:21-22. Covetousness was the price of his soul.

How Everyone May Avoid Hell

I have good news for everyone who is willing to confess and forsake his sins. God has said in his Word, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He also says, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21. He also gives the following words of comfort: "In the day that ye shall seek for me, and search for me with all your heart, I will be found of thee." He also states in his Word, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." In Romans 10:9-10, God calls the sinner to repentance with these words: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Man is left to choose whether or not he shall accept Christ or land in hell. It is nothing short of mad folly to go on in one's sins, while trifling with time and flirting with Destiny, in an unsaved condition. Death stalks the road of every man's course with muffled tread, and he will catch up with you sooner or later. It may be sooner than you suspect. One of a thousand things can bring you to death's door. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!

I plead with you in the language of the hymnist who wrote the song entitled "Only Trust Him" by John H. Stockton

Come every soul by sin oppressed,
There's mercy with the Lord,
And he will surely give you rest,
By trusting in His word.

Chorus:

Only trust Him, only trust Him,
Only trust Him now
He will save you, He will save you
He will save you now.

For Jesus shed His precious blood
Rich blessings to bestow:
Plunge now into the crimson flood
That washes white as snow.

Yes, Jesus is the Truth, the Way,
That leads you into rest;
Believe in Him without delay,
And you are fully blessed.

Come, then, and join this holy band,
And on to glory go,
To dwell in that celestial land,
Where joys immortal flow.

* * * * *

08 -- A BUSINESS MAN MISSES HEAVEN

"And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where 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 my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 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? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." -- Luke 12:16-21

This Scripture presents the picture of a business man whose career, I think will bear analysis, as it relates both to time and eternity.

First of all, there is nothing wrong in having good crops and fields beautifully ripened unto the harvest. It should be regarded as a fallacy to suppose a man to be wrong because he has plenty. There is no penalty attached to sainthood for having an abundance.

There is no fault to be found with a man in business for having good merchandise and plenty of it.

Good goods in the long run are more serviceable than poor merchandise.

The man of this Scripture derived his wealth from the soil. Agriculture is of all pursuits the most honest and natural of wealth-producing sources. Time in the course of this pursuit had made him wealthy. In this fact, however, there is no indictment against him.

I should like for you to follow me in the consideration of this man under the three following divisions: 1st: His dreams; 2nd: His folly; and 3rd: His doom.

His Dreams

When this man started out in his business career he evidently had the conception that life is solely for the purpose of accumulation; that the pursuit of life is to be consumed wholly in the field of materialism.

There is not the slightest intimation that this man practiced dishonesty in any form whatsoever in the accumulation of his wealth. Most assuredly wisdom would commend him for his arduous industry. But life to him had become solely materialistic. In his dream for acquiring wealth he had shut his whole life in with his goods and his barns.

Being altogether concerned about capital he gave no attention to character. He was thinking more of possessions than in giving himself as a possession. He had not reckoned with our Lord's command, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and these things shall be added unto you."

This man was engrossed in the abundance of the things which he possessed. In trying to house himself with the corruptible, he lost sight of that life which is incorruptible. He had not given the slightest consideration to him who said, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." He had overlooked the following instructions given by Christ: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

His whole life was given to the building of a big business to the exclusion of nourishing a big soul.

His Folly

No man can live wisely, truly, and genuinely, until he has rid himself of the notion that he is his own property. Christ said, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." "For all souls are mine," saith the Lord.

If I can convince a man that his soul even is not his own, and that he must take the laws governing it, from the utterances of God, I shall have brought him to the right point from which to start the discipline of his life. A man is little indeed who projects everything in the light of himself. In his calculations he said: "my fruits" -- "my goods" -- "my barns" -- "my soul".

The folly of this man's life is seen in the fact of his misplaced values. The fact that he was not rich to ward God is the poverty point of his folly. This is where his poor little "my" failed utterly!

He said, "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But a man has gone too far, when he begins to make a

covenant with time and mortgage the future. At this point there stands an unseen power with which he has not reckoned. It is then that he becomes forcibly conscious, that there are distinct limitations set about him.

It is a tragic scene in the drama of life, after it has been acted out, that instead of hearing a thunderous applause by a pleased audience one hears the heavy thud of doom from the tongue of God: "Thou fool."

God went out to call on this man. He walked around the barns and saw him sitting with his feet cocked up on the front porch railing in the middle of the forenoon. He didn't even say Good Morning! or, Come In. His guest was more than he expected.

God said to Him, "Thou Fool," (there will be a coffin out here to carry you away in tonight) "this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

Then God turns to teach us another lesson. He says, "Beware of Covetousness." God is more concerned about a full heart than a full barn.

After God got through talking to him he said, "So is everyone that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

The greatest folly of this man was not in the fact or method of his accumulated wealth. His irreparable folly lay in the fact that God and salvation were left out of his plans. He neglected to take into consideration the brevity of life, in view of eternity, with its foreboding losses, for which material gain cannot compensate.

He should have cried out, "What must I do to be saved," instead of "What shall I do to save my increased possessions." He is now about to be asked by the great Landlord for an accounting of his stewardship and he is learning that material wealth is a poor credential toward acquiring residence in heaven.

He failed utterly in his spiritual repositories, He had no rating with God. After it is too late, he learns that spiritual assets mean as much in man's credit with God as material assets mean in the commercial world.

This man's pearls and diamonds now hang about him as shackles that cry out against his soul for his utter unpreparedness. He put property above character, now his property has no value. His spiritual investments have been nil, therefore, his eternal rating is on the loss side of the ledger.

Only that business man is wise who on discovering his own limitations confesses his selfish weakness and turns to God for forgiveness, to experience the joys of salvation.

His Doom

"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?" He lived under the false assumption that his soul would find heaven in his business. The folly of his false standard of life has led him to his doom. He tried to animalize himself and in so doing divorced himself from God and heaven. He is now horrified at the threshold of death, that he has left the one thing needful out of his life-GOD! "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul..."

God said to him, "Thou fool!" May we not learn a lesson from this business man who misapplied his life, not because he was a business man, but because he failed to become a Christian. May we apply the wisdom of God in this prayer he left us: "Lord, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." May this following truth stir us to action: "He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

When God lays his hand upon you suddenly, and says, "This night finishes you off for time," what opportunity have you left then to empty your life of wickedness, and through repentance and faith grasp the promise of God for salvation?

Make this resolve now: I will walk in the way of God's commandments. I will, and do now surrender my life to Him, repent of my sins sincerely, and pray in faith that God will mercifully forgive and blot out the past. He said, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," and "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Again He said, "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved," and again, "Ill the day that ye shall seek for me, and search for me with all your heart, I will be found of thee."

Then make this resolve: I will take His book as the counsel of my life and do His will henceforth. It need not be said of you: "A business man misses heaven."

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09 -- A MOBILE GOSPEL

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth..." -- Romans 1:16

A mobile gospel means a message that calls for conquest. From the nature of the case then, we need to mobilize the messengers of Christ to get the gospel to the ends of the earth.

Nations have come to the horizon and flourished only to pass away. Mighty mobile armies have gone into conflict on the day of battle, and won the day only to turn and demobilize. But the militant message of the gospel with its heralds must withstand the storm-stress, conflicts, confusions, and chaos to blaze a path with victory perched upon its banner to the peoples of the inhabited earth wherever found.

History serves to prove that the activity of the gospel conquestors make the courage of Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Wellington, Washington, Grant, Foch, Pershing, Eisenhower, Mac Arthur, Montgomery, Rommel, Shiang-Kai-Shek, Tojo, or Stalin pale into insignificance. It is little wonder that the Apostle Paul acclaims the gospel as "the power of God..." It is the omnipotent hand of God which gives the gospel a potency that is above every other power. It is powerful because of a mighty God.

A crusading faith in consecrated Christians can meet and conquer the foes of man and God. In these days, however, the achievements of Christendom have been hampered and neutralized by lack of spiritual dynamics, which formerly characterized the church. It is the task of spiritual minorities today, to recover the crusading spirit of early Christianity.

The message of the gospel when borne by fire-baptized messengers is made invincible. Listen to the Apostle Paul, "I am ready.., to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." And again, "This one thing I do forgetting those things which are behind I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." It was his militant spirit that made him the imperial preacher of the ages. To charge and not retreat was characteristic of his ministry.

The militant spirit of Jesus is evidenced by His rescue mission on earth. In effect, He said, "I have come to rescue humanity from the hands of the enemy." Then He commissioned the church as His Mobile evangel when He said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16: 15) He also said to them, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep among wolves."

Handel, when he wrote the Messiah, keyed his music to the power, sacrifice, and glory of the militant Christ. Michelangelo studied the militancy of the Ten laws and sculptured the face of Moses in stone. He read of the conquest of David in the Psalms and left the image of the psalmist sculptured on the rock.

The gospel militancy is found in its power. The gospel is dynamic in transforming character, therefore the Apostle Paul could find no place for the negative, in proclaiming the redeeming power of its truth. It put iron in his blood to make him one of the invincibles. Jerusalem did not frighten him; neither Athens, the seat of wisdom; nor Ephesus, the stronghold of necromancy; nor the intimidation of lustful Corinth; neither Rome with its idolatry.

Gethsemane, Calvary, Pentecost, and history all declare that the power of the gospel lifts from death to life. The gallows, the racks, the burning stakes and death beds all tell us in the sacrifice of blood, that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. Voices of the sanctified the world over, declare that the gospel is mighty to save and strong to deliver. This gospel power lifts from servitude to gratitude, from the slough of despond to the role of jubilation.

The potency of this gospel resides in the person of Jesus Christ who is the hero of the ages. Those who herald this gospel message will remain when the heroes of Waterloo, Gettysburg, The Marne, Pearl Harbor, Leningrad, Rome, Berlin, and Tokyo are forgotten. The

scenes of soul conflict will still be witnessing the victories of the power of the gospel when the historian has ceased to record.

The message of the gospel is one of conquest. All the festering sores of iniquity find their solution in the power of Christ and His gospel. It has a supply for which no medicine can find a remedy. It supports a hope which no other philosophy can produce. It has a hunger satisfying portion which no bread can satisfy. It has a supply for the gospel thirsty which no other thirst slaking agency can rival. It has a liberating power for sin and enslavement which no other emancipating remedy can approach.

For a lost world, Jesus brought the hope of salvation, life, reformation, and resurrection. Through His redeeming grace, the vilest sinner is saved. The Philippian jailer, the dying thief, and Saul of Tarsus, all found the power of the gospel adequate for salvation. The power of the gospel demonstrates that it can free any captive, disperse any darkness, and save any soul.

Even the atheist Darwin said that the gospel had carried a cargo of blessing to every land to which it had gone. Emerson said, "The name of Jesus is plowed in the history of the world."

Jesus Christ through the power of the gospel binds up broken hearts, erases iniquities and gives abundant liberation to the imprisoned.

With the militant spirit of a devoted church, goes the glorious daring might and the sweeping wing of traversing speed to carry the gospel message to the far reaches of life's habitation.

The gospel is sent forth as a record of facts summed up and revealed in the processes and power of the militant Christ. It began and is sustained by the name of the Sufferer. When we read that, "Christ died according to the Scriptures," the fact begins to take on depth and meaning. If we take Paul's words, "Brethren I declare unto you the gospel which I preached... how that Christ died... according to the Scriptures," it becomes the gospel of our salvation from the fact that "Christ died for our sins."

The nature of His death was one of atonement-a sacrifice for sins.

The statement that He was buried, guaranteed the fact that He was dead; and that he arose from the dead according to the Scriptures, makes conclusive proof of the power and fruits of His gospel.

The gospel power of salvation is needed by everyone because of the universality of sin and the awful burden of guilt, as well as the stern and inescapable reality, that sin demands a penalty to which all must answer. The life and death of Jesus Christ was a sacrifice for the forgiveness of all sins, which constitutes the only staple spiritual transforming supply.

There is no use talking about the gospel unless it is understood what we mean by it. In the words of the text, the gospel... "is the power of God unto salvation." The gospel Spirit-powered means a great deal more than either social or intellectual, material or political

betterment. It is something more than tampering with the outside of man's life. Gospel redemption goes to the very seat of the human heart and transforms the life. Social Christianity is applied Christianity, but social Christianity can be no substitute for that gospel power which makes a new creature through the forgiveness of sins in being born again.

This transforming gospel power is released to "every one that believeth" -- to everyone who believes so deeply, that he repents of his sins and cries to God for forgiveness. He in turn receives the communicated Holy Spirit witness, bringing a knowable assurance that his sins are gone. This is the power of the gospel of Christ applied.

Jesus Christ is God's answer to a sinful world. He is the medium for man's reconciliation to God. Therefore, reconciliation with God is the first over-mastering and challenging responsibility of life. Yet this astounding fact remains, that the greater percentage of men act as though the matter of reconciliation were so relatively unimportant, that they not only push it into the background but treat the matter of their relationship with God as if it were wholly inconsequential. Indifferent and utterly heedless, they seem to stifle every thought that would remind them of destiny. Unwittingly, men of the world seem to pride themselves in their skeptical attitude and brand everything as fanatical that has the stamp of the supernatural in it.

In our modern restless, fevered, and distorted world where are the masses who will consider that the true diagnosis of what is wrong with society is Spiritual Maladjustment -- no place for God in the re-making of life by the power of a reconciling Christ? The impotence of man, then, is revealed in his inability to diagnose his own malady. To him, the tie to the God of our fathers has been raveled out and he is utterly set adrift.

I am glad, however, that we have a medium of return in the person and power of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. They are qualified to make a complete analysis and give the recipe for reconciliation.

The most diabolical thing about sin is, that it perverts a man's judgment. It hardens his conscience and stifles his feelings. As a result, every time one sins he makes it less possible for himself to sense the power of sin and consequently, it is easier to assume that there is nothing in him demanding forgiveness. Every time he rejects the corrective Voice of conscience, the next time that voice speaks, it will be less convincing.

A closed life to God is pictured in the language of Whittier:

"A tenderer light than moon or sun,
Than song of earth a sweeter hymn,
May shine and sound forever on,
And thou be deaf and dim.

"Forever around the mercy-seat
The guiding lights of love shall burn;
But what if, habit-bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn?

"What if thine eyes refuse to see,
Thine ears of heaven's free welcome fail,
And thou a willing captive be,
Thyself thy own dark jail?"

This all constitutes the revelation of what Jesus had in mind when He spoke about the unpardonable sin. Our Lord's reference to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is not some specific base and heinous crime that makes sin beyond remission; but it is the frequent resistance of the Spirit's call that sears the conscience-making it non-responsive and non-receptive. Even God, Himself, is helpless to operate in the presence of such total destruction to one's perceptive and persuasive powers.

The moment that vision, truth, and conscience are not dynamic enough to marshall a decision from the will, to effect the casting off of the chains of sin's dark yoke, I fear the closing of the door to seal the doom of that soul is eminently near.

If there is a response in you, however, that calls for deliverance from the wrong in your life, the Voice of God has not been silenced. Only the God of the text is adequate for such a deliverance... "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself -- and we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God."

Certainly there is no power within man's will, intellect, or emotional nature, that is adequate in itself for deliverance from sin. When a man is aroused over his own utter sinful helplessness, he feels that he is doubly disqualified to initiate any sort of action, to right the wrongs of his own life. It is then he cries out to God, "O wretched man that I am! ... Deliver me!" Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes. This salvation is the supreme miracle of life.

When Jesus was questioned by the Scribes about His ministry to the man with the palsy He said, "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, take up thy bed and walk? But that ye may know the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way..."

"... God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself... and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation... we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

This text pre-supposes disorder and confusion and seeks to introduce a remedy to reinstate order and harmony. Sin has broken the friendship that existed between God and man. Ever since the fall of man, enmity has existed in his heart against God and God is justly offended with the sinner. His holiness, justice, and truth are an indictment against all transgressors of His law. As His Word declares, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:2)

But His offended majesty seeks the reconciliation of man. In fact, He has initiated the means. From the depths of His infinite mercy the plan comes by which His justice might be satisfied and at the same time save the sinner.

John 3:16 sets forth God's plan for man's redemption: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

I John 2:2 declares in referring to Jesus: "... He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." We understand by the word propitiate, to be favorably disposed toward; an opening of the means for conciliation.

"God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." The atonement is the same word translated "reconciling." Being reconciled means that one's sins have been pardoned and the death sentence remitted.

This is made possible because Christ became the substitute in suffering the death penalty on the Cross for every sinner. "God laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Since Christ became our substitute God can still be just and pardon us.

The militancy of Christ is seen in this Scripture: "The Lord is... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

The following lines were written from that Scripture:

Not willing that any should perish,
He died for the lost of the Race,
Threw open the doors of salvation,
And proffered the blessing of Grace;
He called for the weary to enter,
And said, "Whosoever may come;"
He pled with the dying and sinful,
And promised to gather them home.

Not willing that any should perish
He sent forth His Spirit to men,
To call them to faith and repentance,
To call them again and again;
He gave them the word of Salvation,
He gave them the preachers of Grace;
He held out the hands of His Mercy,
And bade them His love to embrace.

God is willing only as a last resort, to consign men to Hell. On the other hand, He was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. More than that, God "commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Who could stand by the side of Calvary's Cross and behold Christ there, as God's substitute sacrifice for sin and believe that God wants men to be lost? His invitations from the Word are sufficient proof that He wants all men to be saved. Therefore, he who is lost is lost because he will not come to Christ and surrender his life.

From the poet's lines we say,

"Come," it is the Saviour's call,
"Come," the word sounds forth to all,
Come today;
Why should you in sin still roam,
God is waiting; Hasten home,
Why delay?

* * * * *

10 -- A MORAL STORM IN THE RAPIDS

"Whither will he go, that we shall not find him..." -- John 7:35

"... he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." -- John 12:35

Multitudes in our day are translating the freedom of worship in America, into freedom from worship. This accounts for the infiltration of those ideas which if given wide acceptance would sound the death-knell to American liberties.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, religion and idolatry were holding hands. This meant that spirituality had suffered a compromise with the religious forms of that day.

Our nation has experienced many critical periods in its brief history. The memory of many can recall the last quadrennium of blood and tears incident to World War I. But those days were not as critical as the recent world engagement of blood and terrorism on land, in the air, on the sea, and under the water. That chaotic cataclysm further contributed to the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the world.

That was a day of daring international defiance, when men of pernicious, diabolical, blood-thirsty thrust were tying crepe on millions of door knobs. Following in the wake of this maddened derangement in the social structure, is insane sensuality, drunkenness, the unmitigated villainies of the unprincipled, and the unblushing vulgarities of womanhood. These are all causing the moral mercury to drop to a sub-low, approximating that of the world flood. Modern evils are conducting the morality of our nation to the borders of collapse. The sponsors of moral deformities are asking us to substitute the licentious for the decent.

Our day is lapsing into one of molly-coddled theology, with the preaching of back-bone-less moral philosophy as a substitute for Holy Ghost religion; the administration of laughing gas for the painless extraction of sin; and pious cleverness as a substitute for gospel power. Civilization seems to be undergoing the frightful processes of spiritual extinction. Even the faith wings of the church are being clipped by the scissors of reason. Its latitudes are becoming as broad and shallow as the Platte River and as dry as the Sahara Desert.

Moloch, the spirit of unjust power, and Belial, the spirit of unholy pleasure, and Mammon, the spirit of unrighteous gain, have entered into a combine that is blandishly flourishing to corrupt and debase the innocent. A blind attempt is being made by this regime to interpret everything in the terms of natural phenomena. They blatantly charge the Supernatural adherents with ignorance. They would spread abroad the notion that ethics, religion, the soul, and God represent the creation of man's dreams, trances, and superstitions.

There is intellectual recoil against the demonstration of spiritual emotionalism, yet who of them would be charged with the absence of an emotional nature in the role of courtship, down Lovers' Lane, or at the athletic contest.

There is increasing wide-spread disregard for the observance of our holy Sabbath with the growing tendency of society, business, and the government to commercialize it to extinction.

During and since the bloody contest for military supremacy, Christianity in the major sense has been reduced to social service, minus revival tides of supernatural transforming power. Half-nude women parade the streets flaunting temptation by their unchaste appearance and then have the temerity to ask protection from seducers. If by modesty they would practice full coverage, 85 percent of their insults from the opposite sex would be eliminated.

While the blackness of night is falling, and the fever of life's fierce heat burns, and inflamed appetites feed on obscene amusements from the screen, we need to take counsel to ourselves lest we fail to rise up in denunciation against such raging evils. Can it be that the church is as blind to the evil marauding of our day, as Samson was after the Philistines punched out his eyes? It should not be difficult for us to map out a road for correction, when civilization is undergoing the frightful processes of wholesale disintegration. When men are caught in the snares of such evil perpetrators, what shall those of us who are Christ-positioned as watchmen on the walls, say to a people in this jazzy-headed, virgin-robbing, sin-smitten, hell-bound world?

Are we going to cry out against these black insults to God, with their defaming effects upon civilization? Yes, we are duty-bound to lay open the moral abscesses of modern Babylon. We must expose the shameless parade of immorality in the streets of Sodom.

A Brighter Aspect

We dare not look too long at such dark forebodings, lest we become men of dislocated spiritual objectives. This crucial hour furnishes opportunity for the Christian world to display the incarnate virtues of Christ. Without an exhibition of such virtues, profession is like painted fire, compared to the real -- no glow and no power.

If the pure gospel is to be preached and spiritual religion preserved, hypocritical Phariseism must be countered with the real thing. If the galling yoke which the liquor ring is putting about the neck of society, and the stifling nicotine blight with which the tobacco trust is damning the young manhood and young womanhood and blasting the future of the unborn are to be outlawed, then the church of the Living God must rise up and challenge these agencies of demoralization with a spiritual program, that will throw a blockade across these corrupting filth streams. Why not do something today that will help them up, instead of sucking them down?

What we need most to save this world from utter moral collapse is an offensive, Holy Ghost Revival. This can be accomplished only by men and women who wear the white flower of pure lives. If the virtues productive of good citizenship be lost by the people, our free government will be lost to despotism, without the intervention of a foreign foe, and without any change in our present political structure.

Moral corruption is a bane to the freedom of human rights, equal to that of the despot's conquest. History tells us one story, respecting the downfall of nations. Strong at first, its people rise on the wings of moral and spiritual power; but acquiring wealth sinks into luxury, then becomes spiritually and morally decadent and finally, the easy victim of a strong foe.

In this event, the most unalert thinker among men, should have no trouble in determining, that the first line of defense necessary to national prosperity is spiritual. Our second defense is spiritual; and our third defense must be spiritual.

We cannot be strong, if we fail to recognize the virtue and necessity of the following truth: "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."

If men are not in the path of truth and righteousness, they are in imminent peril. If we see not through the eyes of Christ we are blind. If our ears are not sensitized to His voice, a destructive invader gains our ears and becomes our seducer.

We never fail to give credence to a man of authority in his field. If it is the science of wireless communications we listen to Marconi; if it is pottery, we listen to Wedgewood; if it is drama, we hear Shakespeare; if it is astronomy, we listen to Hershel; if it is painting, we call on Raphael; if it is music we listen to Beethoven; but when it comes to matters of life and death, there is only one who appears on the horizon, qualified to give instructions. It is then we turn to Him who is the emancipator and Saviour of our lives, Jesus the Christ.

Men without Christ are Cains, Achans, prodigals, rich young rulers, and Abners. These all have their part in the Lake of Fire and burning brimstone. Without Him men are cast into outer darkness. Christ is the Vine, without Him men are withered branches, prepared for the fire of eternity. Christ is the Rock, without Him our sandy foundations will let us slip into oblivion.

Freed by Christ from sin's galling yoke, life is turned to the joys of Christian felicity and from the stench of Hell to the perfumes of Heaven.

Amid the flash, fanfare, and folderol of time's intriguing detours, set by the enemy of men's lives, we arrest your attention to proclaim the seriousness of life. We challenge the sinner's seductive trial with the beauty of Holiness. It is from this state that Jesus came to retrieve our wanderings. He would bring every one of us back to His likeness in moral quality and spiritual completeness. We challenge those of you who have fallen the lowest, with the way up to the highest. Just resolve to leave the shrine of Satan and set up an altar to God.

A Word to the Christian

Though we live in a day which is starkly irreligious and defiantly impious, let us be as faithful as Elijah, God's uncompromising fire-puller, and as Daniel, praying in the palace of Babylon. We should be well apprised of the fact, as professed followers of Christ, that if there is no mocking and scoffing by God-haters, at the high standard of Christian piety, we can mark it down, that the gospel thus lived is devoid of spiritual power.

When George Whitefield preached on the Kensington Commons, they threw dead cats and rotten eggs at him. His reply to them was: "This is the best thing in the world to make Methodism grow. Throw away as fast as you please!" When a stone cut him on the forehead, he seemed to preach with greater compassion, from the sacrifice of blood.

I wonder if the common run of work-a-day Christians is not less crusading today, because of so many perfumed plaudits instead of plummeting projectiles; forgetting, that those who live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. One of our dangers is the paralysis of compassion. We became so familiar to the horrors of slaughter, incident to war's crimson terrors, that we have lost compassion for the suffering. We need greater compassion today, if the wounds of Satanic war are to be healed.

Compassion means entering into the sufferings of others, with a view to their relief. This is the picture of Christ. It is through our Lord's mercies that we are not consumed. He offers Forgiveness instead of Fire; Glory instead of Despair; Heaven instead of Hell. But man's willful consent to follow Him is necessary to bring it about. Confess your sins and break from the world. Believe God faithful who said, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

Words from the address of Moses to the Israelites are assuring: "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things, that we call upon Him for..." Yet these people were an inconsiderable body confined in a wilderness. But their peculiar greatness arose from their nearness to God. They knew that they were a people bound for a better country, and having Him they had all things. He supplied all their necessary requirements. They had only to ask and receive.

David when plundered and stripped of all earthly goods, counseled with God. God had become the strength of his heart and his portion forever. He could say with the Apostle Peter, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up;" but he stands upon the ashes of the

universe to exclaim, "I have lost nothing, but I have gained a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

* * * * *

11 -- THE BIBLE, UNIQUE IN ITS MESSAGE AND LITERATURE

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet..." -- Ps. 119:105

"The entrance of thy word giveth light." -- Ps. 119:130

"Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your soul." -- James 1:21

"... the Holy Scriptures... are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." -- II Timothy 3:15

"... all the promises of God... are yea, and... Amen." -- II Cor. 1:20

It is significant that the Bible stands incomparably ahead of all books, in the thought of civilized people. The history of civilization took its rise and holds its center of thought and affection in the message the Bible reveals.

Dr. Odell Sheperd says, "Without this book America could not have become what she is; and when she loses its guidance and wisdom, she will be America no more."

The Bible is the only book of time, that tells us how to get to the timeless city, where deathless lights forever shine. The message of this book has so molded the thought of the civilized world, that it is woven into the very fabric and fiber of its history. Let us remember that government rests securely, not only upon the consent of the governed, but upon the measure in which the principles taught in the Bible are basic, both in individual life and governmental practice.

The Bible does not confront us with a theory of destiny, but with events that make destiny. Its revelation is that of Spirit, which gives to us the true and divine meaning of life. If we are willing to sanction and do the will of God, we shall be happy both in the pursuit and termination of a glorious destination. A surrendered consent to do His will, is the crisis point at which the unity of man with God breaks through the confusion of things and emerges with an understanding of eternal light and life.

Paul's admonition to Timothy was (2nd Timothy 4:2): "Preach the word." It is the key that unlocks the human heart. It is also the key that unlocks the mystery of God to all human need. It tells me who I am, where I came from, and answers the question, "Where am I going?" These are the questions that the soul of man desires to have satisfactorily answered. Science cannot answer them. Only the Word can tell of the origin of life, and point to a satisfactory adjustment of man's relationship to God, and to his destiny. This is God's message to man.

If we want to know the tragedy of man's fall, we find it in the Word. It gives the only cure for what E. Stanley Jones calls, "The three oppressions: sin, suffering, and death." Its remedy for sin is found at the cross; for suffering, the mercy and love of God; and for death, resurrection and life everlasting. The Scriptures are the bulwark of salvation, giving the recipe that transforms humanity's lost estate. It is the illuminating agency that transmits the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

The most loved and the worst hated book in the world today is the Bible; but notwithstanding this fact, it is the Book of God, with Jesus Christ as its basic subject. Its object is the salvation of all men. It is the only book that assumes to give the history of the past and also portray to us the eternal future. It is at the same time the most ancient book and the most up-to-date book. It is a book that anticipates the future with unerring prediction.

How God used man to write the very Word of God is an unsolved mystery. But we find no difficulty in accepting it because of its many verified predictions. We believe the Bible was inspired because, who would write such a book if he could and who could write such a book if he would? Three thousand eight hundred times we find in the Bible such words as: "The Lord said," "The Lord spake," or "The Word of the Lord came," "Thus saith the Lord," and like expressions. God signs His own signature to this Book as being His Word.

The only satisfactory explanation of the Bible, with its 66 different books representing about 40 different writers, covering a period of approximately 1600 years, having such unity and harmony from the beginning to the end is that God dictated it. Peter gives a satisfactory explanation that it was inspired of God. 2 Peter 1:21: "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Bible is unique from the fact that it was written by men of all classes, separated 1600 years in time and 1400 miles in distance. It just doesn't make sense that such a compilation could represent a harmonious whole, except God moved men to write it. Therefore, we must conclude that the Bible was verbally inspired or dictated by God. Its structure demanded supernatural direction.

Dr. A. T. Pierson, an eminent Bible student, counted 333 prophecies in the Old Testament pertaining to Christ and discovered that all of those relating to His earthly life have been literally fulfilled.

The Bible was not written as a book of science yet it has been proved to be scientifically true. It has never been found to be at variance with any known scientific fact of which it speaks. This alone proves it to be a supernatural book.

No discoveries have been unearthed by excavators by which to disprove one iota of the Bible. Countless numbers of specimens have been unearthed, however, to confirm the authenticity of the Bible.

Some people get into difficulty because they make no distinction between what the Bible teaches and what is said in the Bible. The Bible by no means teaches everything that is said in it. Even the Devil himself is quoted in the Bible, but this does not mean that the sayings of the Devil are endorsed, by any means.

The Bible has withstood the storms of the centuries. Kingdoms have arisen and fallen but the Bible stands indestructible, like Daniel in the lions' den. The lions of time have not been able to tear it apart or consume it. Fires have not been able to destroy it. It is beyond the reach even of war. No howitzer has been able to bomb it out of existence. No submarine can sink it. No gas has been able to smother it, not even that of the infidels.

The Honorable former Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, recently stated: "Seldom in the history of mankind has there been more need than today for the precepts contained in the greatest of books."

"In many parts of the world there is a drift toward a reversion to a system of tyranny... an abridgement or destruction of human liberty, a shackling of speech, thought, and conscience."

"The roots of our tragic shortcomings lie in the realm of the spirit. We find ourselves defeated in efforts to improve conditions within and among nations, solely because of the spirit which animates human relationships. Our endeavors founder because we fail to find reliable guide-posts for the basic relations of man with man."

"Yet such guide-posts exist... they are embodied in a Book -- the Book of the Ages, the Holy Bible."

"The Bible is the high water mark of literature." "What we need today... is a universal and firm conviction that if the thought and action of every one of us were guided by the spirit of the Bible, we would reach our ardently desired goal... if that spirit is cast aside... disaster alone is in store for us... history records too many instances of the down-fall of civilizations consequent upon moral and spiritual decadence."

The Bible As Literature

The Bible is the literary monarch of the world. When we hear such gifted critics as Addison Macauley say of the authorized version, "If everything else in the English language should perish, the Bible would alone suffice to show the extent of its beauty and power." This assures us that it ranks first in the field of literature. It is also brought forcibly to our attention as literature when we see from the pen of the English historian, Froude, these words, "In the Bible, who finds not an exquisite tenderness, a Saxon simplicity, a sublime majesty, a preternatural grandeur absolutely unapproached in all the attempted improvements of modern schools."

It may be still more outstanding to read from the poet, Pope, the following words, "Nowhere, as in the Scriptures, have so blended the noble and the pure, the dignified and the graceful in simplicity of language; while the Book of Job, in profundity and sublimity of thought, surpasses the noblest parts of Homer."

The prelate, Faber, in referring to the English of the Protestant Bible, says, "It lives on the ear, like the music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of the church bells, which the convert hardly knows how to forego. Its felicities seem to be things rather than words. It is a part of the national mind and the anchor of the national seriousness."

Of a truth, the whole drama of humanity is found in the Bible. There is the sunrise of youth and the sunset of age -- birth and death and the settings of destiny, both ill and good.

Goethe, the great German writer, characterizes the Book of Ruth as, "The loveliest epic and idyll in all literature." All that is truest and best in the world of education has been woven into it by this great epic gem of all literature. It is written in the purest and the noblest English, abounding in the most exquisite style of all literary form.

The Bible bares distinctively, the true school of English literature, possessing every quality of our language, in its highest form. A rating of the great writers, for purity of English, brings this fact forcibly to our attention. For instance, Tennyson's "In Memoriam" has 89 percent pure English words and Chaucer's "Prologue" 88 percent. Spencer's "Faerie Queen" has 86 percent pure English words; while in Shakespeare's drama 84 percent; and in Milton's "Paradise Lost" 81 percent but the King James version of the Bible, has the highest percentage with 97 percent pure English words. No greater tribute could be given the Bible, as the highest perfection of the English language.

Wordsworth wrote, in his literary appraisal of the Bible, "The Sacred Book":

"In dusty sequestration wrapped too long--
Assumes the accent of our native tongue.
And he who guides the plow or wields the crook,
With understanding now, may look
Upon her records, listen to her songs
And sift her laws."

In order to ascertain a proper evaluation of the Bible's primary position in the realm of letters, we should let our thoughts be guided to two distinct sharply defined facts. First, the higher order of literature, which the Bible presents, and second, the high degree of literature which the Scriptures have created in the world's most valued literary works.

The marvelous beauty, charm and strength of conception, as well as expression, mark our authorized version of the Bible from Alpha to Omega -- the beginning to the end. It is, indeed, the incomparable classic of the ages, for refinement of diction, elevation of thought, conveyance and purity of style.

The Scriptures present a biography more attractive than Lamartine, or Plutarch; a history more lucid and important than that of Livy or Tacitus, a philosophy more comprehensive and profound than that of Locke or Durant or Bacon, a portrayal more inspirational and thought-provoking than that of Homer, Dante, or Shakespeare; an oratory more challenging in

effect than that of Cicero or of Demosthenes; patriotic songs surpassing those of Kipling, Byron or Burns; a romance more heroic, as in Esther or Ruth, than any that were every written by the pen of Bulwer, Thackeray, or George Eliot.

As writings of unapproximating command, culture and influence, there are to be found in the Bible, lyrics which Pendar cannot rival; rhetorical eloquence more to be desired than that Dora the ancient Demosthenes; diction more superb than that of Sophocles; and prose more cultural and sublime than that of Plato.

Note these words from the Bible, "In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth" -- while a sentence of only a dozen words, it expresses volumes. It solves the puzzling problem of origins and puts us at ease in the hands of a great Creator.

Then, from the Levitical law of this incomparable literary volume, we find the most profound and conclusive treatise on law available. It forms the basis of the Justinian and Napoleonic codes, and may I add, of all present-day jurisprudence.

Let us turn to some of the beacon literary lights of this master Book of Books: for instance, the drama of Job with its noble philosophy and striking poetry, as well as the most sublime soul epic of the ages; The Book of Psalms with its charming meditations and dramatic lyrics; the Book of Proverbs, with its unexcelled collection of moral and prudential maxims; the prophecies of Isaiah, of Daniel, and of Joel, with their prophetic range and heart uplifting rhapsodies, each moving like the shifting glimmer and changing scenes of highly wrought drama.

Then, turn to the immortal letters of Paul, noble in their molding of unimpeachable logic and impassioned emotion; they stand as the immutable epitome of the Infinite, for redemption and human conduct.

Last, we invite you to turn to the peerless parables of Jesus, where we behold Him taking us from the simplicity of life to the sublime revelation of God in human revelation.

To get a comprehensive view of the literary and spiritual influence of the Bible, upon the great writers of the world, let us review some citations to see the astonishing influence, exerted upon them by Bible thought and language. We can see how indebted Pope's "Messiah" is to Isaiah; Byron's "Ode to Darkness" to Jeremiah; Spencer's "Red Cross Knight" in "Faerie Queen" to the last chapter of the Ephesian letter; Wordsworth's "Ode to Immortality" to the 15th chapter of the First Corinthian letter; Bryant's "Thanatopsis" to the Drama of Job; Milton's "Samson Agonistes" and "Paradise Lost" to Judges and to Genesis; and Scott's "Rebecca" in "Ivanhoe" to the Book of Genesis.

While the Bible has furnished the scenes from which these great men of literary worth drew their inspiration, it can also be said that, apart from the Bible, we should have no Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress"; no Dante's "Inferno" and no Byron's "Hebrew Melodies". Without the Bible, Shelley had not written, in his "Prometheus Unbound," the following splendid lines: "Emblazoned on Heaven's Immortal Noon, the Cross leads generations on." Spencer, in writing

"Faerie Queen" is greatly indebted to the story of Christ's resurrection and ascension, which is perhaps the most beautiful passage in all his poems,

"The Lord of Life and Loyalty,
Lifting himself out of the lowly dust,
On golden plumes,
Up to the purest sky."

History is centered in time and meaning in the Bible. It furnishes the story of a people whose historical destiny, it unerringly relates -- an inexplicable phenomenon. It is through the Bible that God has given a revelation of Himself, through the person and teaching of Jesus Christ.

The Bible does not confront us with a theory of destiny, but with a message, the acceptance or rejection of which, mark the events that determine the destiny of men.

Then without hesitation let us receive the fullness of the truth as revealed in the Bible. If Christ can perform such feats of mercy to the impotent man, and transform three thousand penitent souls on a given scene, for the asking; if he can paint the clouds in a profusion of gorgeous colors and make them more beautiful than the most skilled artist; if he can hang the stars in their glorious numerosity; and the moon in its silvery magnificence; and set the sun in its marvelous supremacy and power in the heavens; if he can purify the atmosphere and support the myriad of his profuse creations by his omnipotence, this God can say to the foulest, with the power of unshackling deliverance, "Your sins which are many, are all forgiven." He says with the power of equal authority, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thessalonians 5:23.

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12 -- THE WONDERFUL CHRIST

"... for unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and: the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting father, the Prince of Peace." -- Isaiah 9:6

The coming Of Christ is, the most marvelous miracle of all time. Matthew's Gospel for the most part relates the human incidents outside the birth of Christ. Here we have a glimpse of Joseph's side of the story. It also features Herod as the opposition to the Christ. It relates the phenomenal message of the Magi and the miraculous star of guidance.

In more detail Luke's Gospel features the divine side of Christ's coming into the world. Here we have the angel's visitation to Mary giving in detail the manner and method of Christ's divine birth.

An angel was sent to announce to the world the birth of Christ; also, where and how He should be found. Then it refers to the heavenly chorus "praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Luke's Gospel gives us the information that Jesus was named in heaven even before He was conceived (Luke 2:21): "... Jesus which was so named of the angels before He was conceived in the womb."

Matthew 1:20 also supports this fact, "... behold, the angel of the Lord appeared." And, "She shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins."

Mark's Gospel makes no reference to the birth of Christ. He simply starts with the doings of Christ's labors.

John's Gospel leaves off all details surrounding the coming of Christ so far as His birth is concerned. What he did say, however, respecting Him was more meaningful than that said in either of the other Gospels. John said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Deity in the abstract is unrevealed so Christ literally became The Word of God, or the communicating medium of God to man.

In this Gospel we find the sweetest, simplest, and shortest expression of God to man, respecting His gift and concern for the salvation of the human race: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

He Is Wonderful in Prophecy

One of the most wonderful things concerning Christ was the prophecy relating to His coming to the world as its Saviour. There are 456 prophecies relative to this wonderful Christ.

This prophecy began in Genesis 3:15 where it states, "The seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head." This Scripture also gives credence to the deity of Christ, for the reader will observe that it says "The seed of woman" instead of "The seed of man" which bears out the miraculous conception of Mary.

All of the prophecies concerning Christ have been fulfilled save those incident to His Second Advent.

Christ Was Wonderful In His Deeds.

He said to the fishermen along the sea of Galilee, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" and they were transformed. Andrew and Peter" became two of His foremost Apostles.

He met blind Bartimaeus one day on the Jericho Road. Bartimaeus prayed, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me and Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee." The blind man received a double miracle in that ministry: the return of his eyesight and the saving of his soul.

One of the Pharisees desired Jesus to eat with him and He sat down to meat. While they were eating, a woman in the city who was a sinner, "when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment... and He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven ... thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace."

Christ was wonderful in His love. "... Christ... loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify it and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:25-26).

His love was full of suffering to us-ward. If one thorn should pierce your brow you would probably faint, but a whole crown of thorns was thrust upon His head until it was crimson-streaked from the probable piercing of fifty or more such thorns. Not a word of protest came from this loving sacrificial personality. His hands, which had been doing kindness in wiping away the tears of others, are now being mercilessly pierced through by cruel nails upon a cross. Those sacred feet, that had been traveling the highways of mercy, are now being mutilated by the hands of crucifiers spiking them to the cross. Finally, we see His wonderful heart of love being pierced with the merciless spear.

His heart of love was ever-reaching out after and saving the lost. He said in effect to the little crooked tax collector, Zacchaeus, "Come down to the mourner's bench and get religion." He did. He was so overwhelmed with gratitude and praise to Christ that he invited Him home to dinner that day.

Jesus was wonderful in His Words. When Andrew had an interview with Christ, he was so profoundly impressed both with Christ and His words, that he accepted Him as His Saviour and rushed immediately in search of his brother, Simon. When he found him he brought him to Jesus that he, too, might hear His wonderful words of life. We have often read these words, but perhaps we have not always borne in mind the fire that was in them, for Andrew was doubtless thrilled to ecstasies, for His words were the means of bringing salvation to his life.

Even the enemies of Christ were impressed with the wonder and sweetness of His words, for they said, "Never man spake like this man!".

He Is a Great Counsellor

Christ is the fountain for wisdom and understanding. By his counsel there is the full measure of supply to satisfy the religious instincts of the human race.

In this dismal labyrinth of suffering and death, following the lash of war, surely this world needs to consult the Great Counsellor for a recipe suited to the readjustment of life among nations. When the nations take counsel from Him again, they shall learn how to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. We have never had such great need for Divine Counsel as now. His prescription is the way out of the world's current hopeless helplessness. The ritual of human sacrifice consequent upon the mobilization of men for war, is a lamentable commentary on the depravity of the human heart the world around. The true ritual of human life adheres in following the recipe of the Prince of Peace, who came to reveal and to give spiritual life to men and show to them the true precepts of human relationships. The influence of every cycle in the history of man that has made a contribution to the elevation of civilization, is traceable to a beaten path to Him whose birth, marks the first Christmas gift. The past and future, meet in Him who stoops to put His everlasting arms beneath and lift us up to heaven.

What we need primarily, is not the Ten Commandments written in stone, or the finely written Golden Rule hanging on the walls of our homes: But whatever is embodied in Christ -- it is that thing imparted to man that we most need. The undimmed glory of His own personality in its Divinest revelation, lies in the fact that He incites us to become what we see in Him. If we would achieve the role of royal manhood, Christ must be the means by which it is accomplished.

He Is the Mighty God

Christ's name is designated as "The Mighty God". One writer translated these words, "The Irradiator" or "One who gives light to men". Another suggests that it means, "The Illustrious" or "The Bright and Shining One".

I do not wonder that He is called "The Mighty God" for He is the only one who has the power to forgive our sins. "He is mighty to save and strong to deliver." Without the might of His intervention we should all be lost. Because today He is seated at the right hand of the Father as our mediator, or as our attorney to plead our case with the Father, as we plead for mercy before Him: He is the might of our spiritual life-line bringing deliverance from sin.

It is not enough to describe God without epithetic terms. The ideal concerning His crowning traits are summed up in these words: sagacious and mighty with Fatherly solicitude, the embodiment of a deliverer.

The poetry of Charles Wesley is suggestive at this point from his song, "Come, Thou Almighty King":

Come, thou almighty King,
Help us thy name to sing,
Help us to praise:
Father! all-glorious
O'er all victorious
Come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days!

Come, Holy Comforter!
Thy sacred witness bear,
In this glad hour:
Thou, who almighty art,
Now rule in ev'ry heart,
And Ne'er from us depart,
Spirit of power!

When He came, He took over, in matters pertaining to religion. As it was predicted, "The government shall be upon His shoulder." He dismissed the priests of dead formalism and pulled down the altars of false religion and declared to the world, "I am the way, the truth, and the life". This Mighty God has the power to accomplish His purposes. If men do not adhere to His principles and accept His message of saving power, they shall be awakened in the Day of Verities with eternal remorse, at the calamity of their own folly.

This mighty God's throne is not one of improvised fabrics, reared by vanity and subject to be overthrown -- it is fixed. It is the throne of God. While His throne is founded upon might, it is also founded upon right. God laid the government upon His shoulders to be as enduring as the days of heaven.

The blood which sealed all the promises of the Messiah, binds our Father's faithfulness to their accomplishment in the heavenly sanctuary. To the sanctified, He shall be the eternal bond of their union, the medium of their fellowship, and the joy of eternal living.

While living here we cannot conjecture what bearings the system of redemption may have upon the relations of Providence in the occurrences of the immediate future. These are in His hands. It is ours to trust Him as implicitly where the veil obscures, as when His light floods the path.

Of the titles referring to His mighty kingship there are 571 in the New Testament alone. When He was on the earth He was prophet co-incident with His first advent; He is now our high priest in heaven. His coming again will mark Him as King Eternal. With this advent a great white throne comes into view out of which proceed lightnings, thunders, and voices (as revealed in the Revelations 4:2-6) which is indicative of revolutionary judgment upon the living world. The Godhead here assumes and executes power in disposing of Its enemies forever and initiates the final stroke that brings in the supreme reign of righteousness.

There is a resurrection taking place, but no trumpet is sounded. The trumpet was used to call those up who were in sanctified union with the triune God, when the church was caught up to meet Him in the air. But this occasion represents the call of the Great King in the scope of His inescapable sweep, as He reaches into the seas, cemeteries, and into the depositories of the wicked dead wherever found, as well as the living, bringing together the unrighteous souls from the ages past to present. These vast multitudes with united souls and bodies find themselves standing before the Great White Throne. All of the wicked are there, from the first to the last; big sinners and little sinners, nobles and peons, rulers and the ruled, millionaires and beggars.

There they all stand before the white dazzling light of Eternal Justice, "In whom there is no variableness; neither shadow of turning." They are there to receive what the Codex Sinaiticus says of them, "The sea gave the dead ones in it and death and Hades gave the dead ones in them; and they were condemned, every one, according to their deeds."

These are all cast alive into the same lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are. It is here they are tormented day and night in the Ages of the Ages.

The Everlasting Father

To be the Everlasting Father means the Father of Eternity. Fatherhood carries with it the power of authority. This means that He is to reign and rule in the ongoing and unending duration of eternity.

Since He is to the Christian world Our Father, we know that He has many children for whom to care. That is why He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions..." and "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also." A favorite symbol by which the Bible presents celestial happiness for the children of God is a house. It seems that God has taken every precaution in His eternal planning to furnish superlative joy for His children throughout all eternity.

Since we know that Christianity is a prophetic religion, that is, it deals with life that is to be, as well as that which now is, it should be sufficient ground for everyone to come to know God as his Father. "In Him is no variableness neither shadow of turning." That is why it is said of Him, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Christ is the same because He is the best; that is, there is no progress beyond Him. That is also why we are incomplete without Him, for we are always short apart from Him.

Christianity is the process of the everlasting Father. The fact that we may dwell with Him forever and the fact, that we may miss dwelling with Him forever, should be a challenge requisite to the necessary preparation to make sure that we shall forever be with Him. To qualify for that habitation He said, "Ye must be born again" and "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

This great Father of Light is full of, tender compassion. Psalms 103:13 states, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Humanity is exposed to pitiless storms. He is the shelter. For the thirsty He is the rock in a weary land. Indeed, He is the Rock of Ages, cleft for us.

Toplady's song, "Rock of Ages" brings us to our knees to find a hiding in the Everlasting Father.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee:
Let the water and the blood,

From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure
Save from wrath and make me pure.

"Could my tears forever flow,
Could my zeal no languor know;
These for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and Thou alone;
In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

The Prince of Peace

One of the darkest blots upon human history has been the utter failure of all peace attempts. At the beginning of 1914 there were at least 160 major peace movements throughout the world. Yet this combined force was insufficient to prevent the ghastly horror of World War I. Following that war a fund for the endowment of peace furnished the means for the establishment of 800 peace organizations, but the war hounds broke through this barricade to precipitate the most devastating war, the world has ever experienced. On the heels of such extended world-wide failure, we are convinced of the futility of a peace-crowned world, as long as individuals and nations bar universal acceptance of the Prince of Peace. Only God can bring world peace and this can come to pass only as men make a peace treaty with the Prince of Peace.

Within the last 35 centuries there have been some 8,000 peace treaties signed between nations, but notwithstanding, war rages on with its merciless blood-tolling tale. The only durable peace treaty for men and nations was signed at Calvary and sealed in the sacrificial blood of Christ. Even in the throes of dying anguish our Saviour raised His voice to plead in the face of men's hatred and blood-thirsty spirit, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Nineteen centuries ago this peerless world prophet said to the penitent, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you; Not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye believe in God believe also in me."

If you have never permitted this star of beacon light, to guide you to the harbor of deliverance from sin, with its war-making devices; if like Herod you have steadfastly waged warfare against this Prince of Peace; if you have never opened your heart's door to receive His message of salvation, may I inspire you to immortalize this Christmas by making His mission a glorious fulfillment in your life.

William Jennings Bryan, the Great Commoner and superlative statesman, once said, "In the rivalry to present the best ideal to the world, love and not hatred, will control; and I contemplate with joy the coming of that day when the rivalry between nations will be, not to see which can injure the other most, but to show which can hold highest the light that guides the footsteps of the human race to higher ground."

I think the best symbol of peace is a little child. A story revealing this fact was evidenced on the battlefield during World War I in northern France. There was a thick fog, so dense that one could not see more than a few yards from the trenches. In the night time the Germans had drawn back their lines and the French had gone forward, but between the two positions a lonely farm house was still standing. As usual, heavy guns began to boom at dawn, but suddenly on both sides the firing ceased and there fell a strange silencing of artillery.

Midway between the trenches, near the shadowed farm house, could it be possible -- yes, it was so; On the green meadow, there crawling on his hands and knees, was a little baby. It appeared perfectly oblivious to any forebodings of danger. Presently, the baby's laughter was heard as his little hand grasped a dandelion.

Not a shot was fired. Suddenly a soldier jumped out of the trench and ran to the child. He tenderly took him up in his arms and carried him back to shelter. No, not a shot was fired but along both lines there rang out a mighty cheer.

The coming of a little babe had brought peace. It has been about 2,000 years now, since the Prince of Peace was born on that Christmas morning. He seeks to bring peace and good-will among all men today. My sincerest prayer is for all men to accept him as Saviour, sanctifier and King.

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THE END