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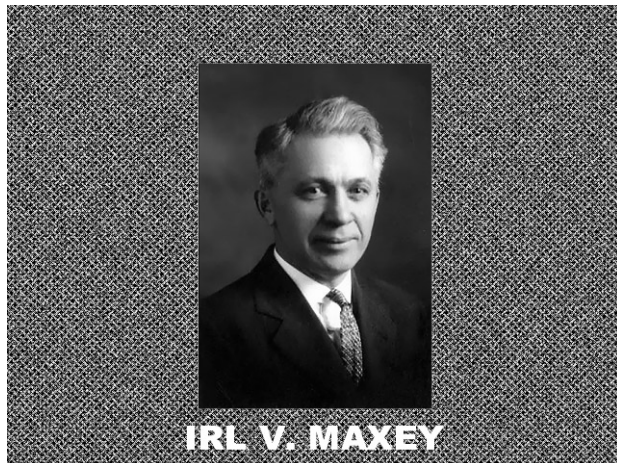
**WHERE ART THOU?  
A Sermon By Irl V. Maxey**

**Digitized And Edited  
By Duane V. Maxey**

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**Digital Edition 01/21/06  
By Holiness Data Ministry**

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## **INTRODUCTION TO THIS FILE**

**This sermon is undated. However, it was among those in two "Collegiate" composition notebooks that contained sermons that papa wrote in 1906 and 1907. Further, he notes that it was written in Witt, Illinois. Another sermon in one of these notebooks, written in Witt, was dated 1906, and two others written in Witt were dated 1907. Therefore, in all likelihood, this sermon was written in either 1906 or 1907.**

**It was interesting to me to learn, from an illustration papa used in this sermon, that he taught school for a while. Perhaps my mother told me something of this when I was a lad, but if so, I had forgotten it.**

In this message, papa compares "the school system" -- matriculation into a school, college, and university (and study therein) to the progressive states of spiritual life -- from Repentance, Justified Life, to Entire Sanctification. But, he informs the reader that this comparison cannot be followed as an "analogy" -- except in regard to the various spiritual states of Christian life. He uses the question of his text as relative to where one is in the courses of the Divine School System.

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**SERMON TEXT:** -- "And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9).

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## **INTRODUCTION TO THE SERMON**

You all know the location of my text and the circumstances under which it was uttered. Adam and Eve had disbelieved and disobeyed God, and were persuaded by the devil to the sin of disobedience. Then, feeling their shame and disgrace, they made themselves aprons of fig leaves and hid themselves away in the garden. The Lord came and called to Adam, "Where art thou?"

Get the words of the text: "Where art thou?"

Now every one of us is somewhere in the kingdom of God's love -- is somewhere on the hills, in the ditches, or in the thickets outside the moral universe of God's love. "Where art thou?"

Man was God-loved, God-pure, animal-respected, and ministered to in the world -- but in a moment of sin the whole race was started downward.

We do not wish to ask today "Where art thou?"\* on this course, but at the same time of man's expulsion from Eden came the promise: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

[\*It is difficult to ascertain papa's meaning in this paragraph. In the first sentence above, I think he may have meant: -- I do not wish to put you on the spot personally here today, even though I shall be expounding upon the question, "Where art thou?" in the Christian course. He could not have meant that he did not mean to pose the question to his listeners, for this is one of the very things he does in this sermon.]

For 4,000 years God looked out upon humanity to find a faithful one through whom He could manifest Himself. In the fullness of time, Christ came as a

completer of this plan of salvation. Now this is to get man back to the place he was created.

"Where art thou?" in respect to the plan of salvation? Now this is not a thing of a moment. Usually man does not get religion in a single night. You do not jump full-grown from your original state to a state of restored purity. This would be possible with God, for the work is all God's as man lets Him work, but man cannot grasp.\*

[Papa is not arguing here against an instantaneous New Birth, nor against an instantaneous Entire Sanctification. If I understand correctly what my father is saying, he is stating that while God could instantaneously perform every work of grace, man cannot grasp, all at once, those things which God requires of him before He will perform them. Next, he quotes a poem by J. G. Holland -- not to endorse all that the poet says, but to illustrate a specific point.]

Let us quote from J. G. Holland:

"Heaven is not reached at a single bound;  
We build the ladder on which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And mount the ladder round by round.

"We hold this thing to be greatly true:  
A noble deed is a step toward God,  
Lifting the soul from the common sod  
To purer air and a grander view.

"We rise by the things under our feet--  
What we have mastered of good or gain--  
By pride deposed or passion slain,  
And vanquished ills we hourly meet.

"We hope, we aspire, we resolve, we trust;  
When the morning calls us to life and light,  
Our hearts grow weary, and in the night  
Our lives are trailing in the dust.

"We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray;  
We think we mount up on angel's wings  
Above the recall of sensual things,  
But our feet still cling to the clay.

"Wings for the angels, feet for men;  
We may borrow the wings to find the way;  
We hope, resolve, we trust, we pray

**But our feet must rise, or we fall again.**

**"Only in a vision, is the ladder thrown  
From the weary earth to sapphire walls,  
The dream departs and the vision falls,  
The sleeper left, wakes on his pillow of stone.**

**"Heaven is not reached at a single bound;  
For we build the ladder on which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And mount the ladder round by round."**

**This poem is a sad expression of one trying to mount the heavenly way without God, but the poet expresses a truth we must get: -- The night or the day when you were converted was only the faint beam of a ray of light that broadens, when it grows, into eternal day -- the bursting of new life in faintness that will reach its evergreen fruitage in eternity.**

**Let us compare this life back to God with the school system. We cannot follow the system as an analogy, but as [spiritual] states by God's grace.**

**First -- age is necessary to reach before entering [the school system] -- this we will call Repentance.**

**Second -- the school from entering to the close of the college course -- Justified life.**

**Third -- the university course -- the Sanctified life.**

**\* \* \* \* \***

## **I. ENTERING SCHOOL -- REPENTANCE AND NEWNESS OF LIFE**

**Yes, we all must come to the place of acknowledgment of sins and deep, soul-repentance before we enter the kingdom -- as a child says, "I am six years old. I can go to school," so the soul says, "I have repented of my sins. God says He forgives. He does." As the child enters the school room, trembling, seeing new faces and new surroundings, soon the kindness of the teachers bid it all depart. So, the soul comes to God and all new things appear, and His love shines it all away [i. e., shines away all the fears relative to being a new-comer in the "newness of life" in Christ.]**

**We are in the kingdom, but we are apt to feel that we ought to be manly and pray as well, and testify as well as those who have been there a good while.**

I will illustrate: -- I once had a boy start to school to me. A month after school commenced, he came and wanted to sit with one who had been coming all the time. I granted it, as he was unacquainted with the work. I made some letters on his slate for him to try while I heard the first class recite. I noticed him crying and boo-hooing. I said, "Emory, what is the matter?" He said, "I can't make those crooked things." He wanted to do it as well as Donald.

Do not measure your ability with others -- "my grace is sufficient."

Now, we want to stay in school -- not go just part of the time. One of the most unsightly things to my mind is a great, large boy or girl in the first grade who has been in and out of school, or who did not study and failed to pass.

So, many have gone this way -- backslidden -- so much work, then so little, until manhood or womanhood finds them in the church still babes in Christ. God help us here! Go on into college -- go on to college!

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## **II. THE COLLEGE COURSE -- PROGRESS IN THE JUSTIFIED LIFE**

In this college we have a faculty: -- Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We have rules. Secret prayer, Family prayer, and Bible study is the course. If we offend any of the rules, we are liable to be brought up before the Faculty.

Listen to your Teacher -- the Holy Spirit. Do not fail the course. You must take it all and graduate to be ready for the university course -- Entire Sanctification.

Pray in secret, pray with your household, read and study your Bible. Then we have tutors in this Christian college -- those who have been faithful in the course whom the Holy Spirit recommends to the Faculty to teach others who are not so far in the course. Among these are class leaders, S.S. Supt. and teachers or fathers and mothers teaching children.

Are you faithful in this course, tutors? Have you so clung to prayer in secret and at home until your Bible study has become thorough, and you are leading your children to Christ, your scholars to Christ?

You say, speak to my boy or girl, my pastor, but YOU are the tutor. Ah, parents, bring your children to Christ. Teacher, bring children to Christ. Superintendent, how much time do you spend in prayer over your school?

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## **III. THE UNIVERSITY COURSE**

**Now comes the university course. But you say a college course is enough. I think I can make it in my course without it. It costs too much!**

**Yes, I answer, it does cost very much study and sacrifice indeed, but if you are going to be a doctor you need to specialize. If you are going to be a lawyer you need to specialize. If you are going to be a civil engineer you need to specialize. Ah, by all means, if you are going to be a person of any vocation, take the university course.**

**In the college course you get somewhat of a broadening thought of men and their needs, but you need to be most skillful in your profession to occupy your chosen place.**

**Just so, in God's School System you must take the university course. Listen, the teachers of the college urge it -- the Holy Spirit urges it, and as you follow the course of secret prayer and home devotion, deep Bible study, and as you see your needs, you will at once say, "Let me have the university course at any cost."**

**The fullness of the Holy Ghost is the teacher -- the Faculty is the same. Only now you are so deeply associated with them that all fear of their Personage is gone, Hallelujah! "Perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John 4:18). The course is the same, but before entering you entirely consecrated your life to the work. You sink so deep in prayer that the Bible becomes sweeter and deeper to you until now you feel the zest of the Spirit and want to go out in the vineyard to win souls. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are in your soul.**

**When we have completed this course, and on the way we go, casting this mistake and that one out of our life until we come to the dark, rolling Jordan. Over we go, in the power of Glory, into the Pearly Gates, into the radiance of eternal Glorification -- Man re-perfected.**

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#### **IV. THE CLOSING EXHORTATION**

**Ah, my dear people, the Bible teaches entire sanctification. The [Methodist Episcopal Church] Discipline speaks of it -- our catechism teaches it -- our experiences and God call us to it. In the name of our Christ, never lift your voice against it, but accept it in your theory, seek it most earnestly in your experience. The course does not depend on growth. You may be saved and sanctified today. You may have it now.**

**Alone, I stand in the presence of God as His ambassador and plead with you: -- Give your entire life to Him. "Where Art Thou?" Use the means God has put down for this purification. Do it now. Amen.**

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**THE END OF THIS SERMON**