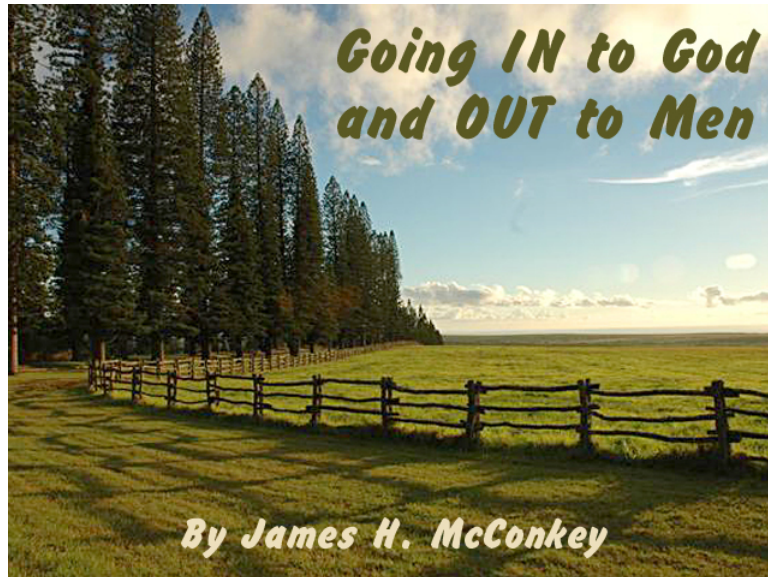


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GOING IN TO GOD AND OUT TO MEN
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INTRODUCTION TO THIS DIGITAL EDITION

Here is one of the most powerful, yet concise messages I have ever read! It will not take you long to read it -- yet you may never forget it. It is from a little leaflet by James H. McConkey, and although there is no publication date, it obviously dates back quite a while. There was no copyright on the leaflet, but HDM retains the copyright for this digital edition. Nevertheless, permission is granted to spread this little message freely to others, and, after many readers take it in, I venture to say that they WILL want to share it with others. -- Duane V. Maxey, Chandler, Arizona, June 28, 2006.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE MESSAGE

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall GO IN AND OUT, and find pasture" (John 10:9).

A great battle was impending. The commander was inspecting his troops. Turning from a mass of undisciplined, inexperienced men before him, he said to one of his generals: "These men I know nothing about." Then, as his eye ran over a body of men who had been with him for a short time and knew something of march, bivouac, and battlefield, he said: "These men I think I can trust." Finally he turned to a division of troops who had been with him in all of his campaigns. They were the veterans of his army. They had been baptized in blood and fire in many a fierce and deadly struggle. As they stood before him with set lips and stern countenances, ready, and waiting for the onset of the coming battle, the great commander turned from them with a heart pulsing with pride and confidence, and said quietly to his officers: "These men I know I can trust."

How shall we become men and women whom God can trust? How shall we shun the calamity of a continuous spiritual babehood, stunted in growth and

blighted in fruitage? How shall we come to full grown manhood in Christ Jesus? How shall we grow strong and "find pasture?" Jesus Christ answers these vital questions with His usual matchless simplicity and searchingness in the tenth chapter of John's gospel. "By Me," He says, "if any man enter in he shall be saved." He tells how to escape spiritual dwarfage. He teaches us how to feed, how to find pasture, in these striking words:

"He shall Go IN and OUT and find pasture."

The believer is a priest of God. As the priest goes in to God, and goes out to men so must it be with the believer. He must go in to commune: he must go out to serve. He must go in, in faith: he must go out in love. He must go in to get from God: he must go out to give to men. He must go in for visions: he must go out for tasks. He must go in for life: he must go out to bear fruit. He must go in to wait on God: he must go out to work for men. He must go in to listen: he must go out to speak. This is his balanced life -- to go in and to go out. And as he does so, Christ says, he "finds pasture," he feeds and learns the secret of growth and gain in the Christian life. Let us think awhile of him in this relation God-ward, in his life of going-in. And let us note first, that--

* * * * *

01 -- GOING IN TO GOD

We must go IN to feed on the Word.

This book tells you of the cleansing of your soul from the deepest-dyed stains of guilt; of its redemption from darkness and death to light and eternal life in Jesus Christ: of your right to sonship of God by faith in Christ Jesus: of the indwelling of God's own eternal Spirit within you: of strength to resist the fiercest temptations which may assail you: of power to serve in all the life work to which God has called you: of joy and peace amid tribulation and suffering: of deliverance from this body of sinful flesh into a body like unto that of His radiant glory: of the overthrow and destruction of the great enemy of your soul: of the coming of your Lord and King in all the glory of His holy angels: of His triumphant and splendid reign upon a redeemed and glorified earth: of the glad day when God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes and the tabernacle of God shall be with men: and of the everlasting, changeless, blissful ages of eternity through which you shall live in the face to face presence of your Lord and in the ceaseless joy of His service and will in the universe. Can you neglect such pastures of tender grass as these? Can you afford not to go in and brood over such a Book until it fires your soul for your King and sends you forth with burning heart to do His will among lost, sinning men, and hasten the glorious day of His appearing? While the men and women who feed upon the dry, juiceless husks of the world are starving in soul and spirit, the child of God who feeds upon this book will grow strong and rich, and as he thus "goes in" shall find pasture such as the world doth never feed upon.

* * *

We must go IN to drink of the Spirit.

"Be not drunken with wine, but be filled with the Spirit," is God's striking word in Ephesians 5:18. What is it to drink wine? It is to open the body to wine, which thereupon fills us. What is it to drink of the Spirit? It is to open the soul to the Spirit, which thereupon fills us. The great truth here is this: Whatever we open to fills us. If we open the body to wine it fills. When we open the soul to God the Spirit fills. This is what communion does. It opens the soul to God. He who goes in: he who waits upon God in the secret place as literally opens his soul to the inflow of God's own spiritual life as the wine-drinker opens his lips to the inflow of wine.

Here is a Christian man. He goes to his doorstep Sunday morning and picks up the Sunday paper. He begins to read. That is, he opens his mind to the subject matter. Hour after hour he reads. At the end of that time he is filled with its contents. Then he goes to church. But the best sermon his pastor may preach cannot drive out from his being the things of the world which now possess him. That to which he opened has filled. But suppose he starts the day in a different fashion. Suppose he goes in to the secret place of prayer. He bows over the Word of God. He prays in faith to God: He waits in silence before God, believing that "They which wait upon the Lord shall change their strength." Such a man opens his soul to God. And He to whom he opens fills him. As surely as he was before filled with the spirit of the world to which he opened, so is he filled with the Spirit of God before whom he waits. And the days in which he does this he will be conscious of a new quietness, peace, and power in his daily life. For this is what it is to drink not of wine, but of the Spirit.

* * *

We must go IN to keep from choking.

Here is a submarine diver. He dons his brazen helmet and leaden shoes and sinks beneath the surface of the sea. Now God never created him to live beneath the water. And if the element which surrounds him should break through his helmet, it would instantly suffocate him. He is a creature of God's free air above. He must have that to live. So up above him men keep steadily pumping down fresh air through a rubber tube to keep him alive, while he plies his dangerous calling.

Is not this a picture of our spiritual dangers and needs? We are born from above. We belong to another world. Our life is hid with Christ in God. We move constantly in a worldly atmosphere which, like the water encompassing the diver, chokes and suffocates the soul when it breaks through and fills it. There is only one remedy. "Our life is hid with Christ in God." We must live like the undersea diver. We must draw our daily life from God, through Christ. And this we do in the secret

place. It is as we go in to the hidden place with God and learn the secret of communion with Him that we are saved from the suffocating choke-damp of the worldly atmosphere in which we are compelled to move.

What a striking word is that of our Lord's upon this very truth. "The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, choke the Word." Cares, riches, fleshly desires -- these are the deadly trio of Word-chokers! As these surge into a man's life they suffocate it. It becomes like the snowy lily standing in its spotless whiteness until the weeds and thorns creep in about its roots, and then it bows, and droops, and withers under the deadly choking of its foes. If the curtain could be lifted from the lives of thousands of busy, feverish Christian men, immersed in these things, they would be seen gasping for spiritual breath, throttled by the clutch of these spiritual foes.

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It does not take LONG to go IN.

Perhaps as we speak you are thinking of long intervals of devotion and communion with your Lord. You picture the secret closet of prayer where men spend hours with Him. You dream of some mountain top where in the stillness of the desert place God speaks so clearly to your inner soul as you are shut off from men. You think of the cloistered depths of the forest where there is no sound but the twitter of the birds and the drone of insects, and where the tree-tops through which you worship weave quaint patterns against the back-ground of God's own sky. And well is it for you if you have such places and such hours to go in to God. Our Lord had such, and many of them. But a man does not need these to go in.

Nor, in the busy whirl and rush of life, can he always have them, even if he would. And so God is so near, and the arrows of prayer so swift in their course, and our Father so waitingly intent for every cry of prayer that starts on its upward way, that it does not take long to go in. In an instant of doubt: at the first pang of distress: with the first mis-step of a mistaken course: in the first second of a fierce temptation, we may go in. Amid the rush of traffic, the fever of a hurried day, the pressure of a strained and suffering one you may go in, if for but a second or two of precious approach. You may lift your heart in it all and whisper--"God help me; deliver me: give me strength: guide me: suffer not my foot to slip." And He will hear you. And you will learn the sweet lesson of how quickly and how easily we may go in, in this so sorely needful life of prayer.

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02 -- GOING OUT TO MEN

It is not enough to go IN: one must also Go OUT.

Do you remember Caleb's gift to his daughter in the land of promise? He gave her a land that had "upper and nether springs." There is a beautiful spiritual teaching here. God indeed has sky-springs. Ever and anon the heavens open and pour forth their rains upon the thirsty earth, making the fields to spring up in fragrant flowers. But God also has lower springs. Right in the pathway of our daily toil, from amid the dust and grime of the earth God makes springs to burst forth and slake the thirst amid the labor and heat of the summer. Even while he toils the weary worker may kneel and drink of the spring that bursts from the ground at his feet. So of the spiritual life. He who goes in to the secret place of prayer does indeed drink of the fountain of God's life. This is God's upper spring, always flowing for those who go in. But God has His lower springs, too, which burst from the ground by the pathway of our daily service. And the strength of God, and the blessing of God is ours when we go out in service as surely as when we go in for prayer in the loneliness of the mountain tops or the sequestered depths of the forest. We wax strong and grow in grace not only by the in-take of communion but by the out-give of service.

* * *

The WORLD IS WAITING for you to go OUT.

I know a Christian man who had this experience. He was strongly impressed to speak to a business friend concerning his soul's salvation. Hour after hour the impression stayed with him. But he hesitated, and delayed. Night came, and he retired, but not to sleep. A strong conviction that he was disobeying the Spirit of God gripped his soul. Four hours he tossed in distress upon his bed. Away after mid-night his wife was awakened by his unrest, and sought the cause. He told her of his plight and then added. "Just as soon as I can get to his store in the morning I will go and speak to my friend of Jesus Christ." Morning came. Swallowing a hasty breakfast he hastened to the merchant's place of business. The latter was closeted with a couple of business associates. Up and down, outside the office, the waiting friend paced, restlessly. As soon as the callers were gone he walked into the office and greeted the merchant. The latter in reply said, "I want to see you upon an important matter." My friend answered, "John, I have no time for business now. I want to talk to you about accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Savior." "That is the very thing I have been waiting for you to speak to me about," was the astonishing reply. Without any further word of invitation the business man definitely accepted Christ. All this time the spirit of God had been striving with him. All this time he had been waiting for the human agent who should be God's messenger to bring him the gospel; waiting for the man who would "go out" even as the Spirit of God was seeking to move him to go.

Friend, somewhere some soul awaits your going out. It may be the young employee to whom you have never spoken of Christ: it may be the man whom you jostle daily in the market place or the exchange: it may be the one who is dearest to you in the fellowship of friendship and yet who knows not the Lord to whom you

give allegiance; or it may be a little group in the dark and distant ends of the heathen world who, even unconsciously to themselves, await the coming of the one who shall be to them God's messenger of light, life and deliverance from the captivity of sin and death. Therefore, for the sake of those who wait your coming fulfil your royal priesthood. Give yourself to go in and go out. Go in and catch a vision of the tender love of God: go out and bear that love in face, voice, deed to lost men. Go in and see God's wondrous compassion in forgiving your blackened past: go out and bear the same spirit of forgiveness to those who have sinned against you. Go in and mark God's patience with all your blindness, selfishness, and neglect: go out in long suffering- with those who treat you with some of the same coldness and unconcern. Go in and get a vision of the Christ-life: go out and put away the pettiness, folly, and indifference of the self-life. And as you go in and go out you will feed, you will find pasture, you will grow strong in the spiritual life.

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Any kind of GOING OUT, however humble, PASTURES THE SOUL.

"I was walking down street one cold winter day," said a Christian man. "At a near-by corner sat an old woman. Her face was wrinkled, her head white with age. Her withered hand was out-stretched in appeal for aid. Moved by a strong feeling of her need I stopped and dropped a good-sized coin into her hand. 'Does you mean all that for me, Mister?' said she. I nodded assent. 'I'll carry you to the feet of my Jesus for that,' was her trembling response. At once a great joy leaped into my heart. I passed on my way with my soul aglow with the consciousness of the Master's presence, marveling that so great a blessing could come from so trifling a deed."

And so however insignificant your going out may seem to you yet strength and growth will come in the going. It is not the sweep of service but the act of serving which brings the soul-growth. Steady, persistent service seemingly of the most trifling kind will be pasture to your soul, and bring growth to your life. Aim to be faithful in your sphere. Leave to God the expansion of that sphere. To teach the class, visit the sick, comfort the sorrowing, cheer the downcast, minister on all sides in the little things which come daily to your willing hands -- all this sort of going out will feed your inner life, and steadily advance you in Christian growth. "If ye know these things blessed are ye if ye do them." It is the doing of little things rather than in the dreaming of great ones that we find pasture and most perfectly fulfil the conditions of growth.

* * *

Going OUT will SAVE US from SPIRITUAL MORBIDNESS.

I have a dear friend in the heart of Africa. His party was out on a trip of exploration. They had been gone nearly six weeks. One day they ran out of water.

For two days he and his comrades suffered the agonies of thirst. Then they came to a well, which had been dug by the natives. My friend rushed up to the well, his lips parched with burning thirst, his whole body yearning for the life-giving water. Instead of the coveted water he was greeted with a growl. A huge lion leaped up from the bottom of the well, and fell only a few feet short of reaching him. The lion, too, had evidently gone there for water. He had fallen to the bottom of the dry well. And when my friend came looking for water to quench his fiery thirst, he found instead a ravenous wild beast.

Is not this a parable of our spiritual lives? So long as we keep going in and going out: so long as we keep these springs a-flowing, the upper spring of communion, and the lower one of practical, loving ministry, that long do our lives stay strong and sane; sweet, natural, wholesome. But when we grow careless in communion, and slack in service: when these upper and nether springs dry up, and cease from their blessed and divine out-flow, then come the wild beasts of spiritual morbidness and take possession. Gloom and despondency: undue and unwholesome introspection: unnatural craving after spiritual emotions and inward frames instead of the daily doing of the will of God for our lives: beclouding of assurance and the inswarming of hosts of doubts and questionings which the normal faith-life and lovelife fling off with ease and quickness -- all these wild beast foes possess our inward selves, and harass our inward souls. And then when men come to drink at our well-springs they find the fountains dry, transformed into a den of spiritual foes, and they turn away disappointed and unrefreshed. Yea, verily child of God, there is nothing which will keep your life so well balanced, so symmetrical, so free from morbidness, so happy in the Lord, as for you to incarnate in your daily every-day life this simple, yet sweeping teaching of our Lord about going in and going out. Try it, and see what a wondrous far-reaching cure it is for all your inner doubts and darkness.

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03 -- IN CONCLUSION

Therefore upon the outside of the door to your chamber of prayer write these words, "GO IN." And when the fever of life is burning in your blood: when its rush and outward tumult are stilling the inward voice of God in your soul: when its fret and friction are wearing your tired nerves into impatience and petulance: when the flesh in all its pettiness is in imminent danger of controlling your spirit, words and acts, and of bringing you into the place of humiliation and sore defeat--then it is high time to obey those golden words and -- GO IN.

And then on the inside of that same closet door of communion do not fail to write, in imagination, those other simple words -- "GO OUT." For you may find such blessing as you go in to study the Book that you would like to tarry there always: or the gathering of the saints in some upper chamber may be so precious that you are loath to leave it: or the secret place of prayer has so refreshed your heart that you

would fain spend your busy days wholly in supplication. But then it is that you need also to "go out." Only thus can you keep in loving, helpful touch with a suffering world that needs Christ through you. Only thus can your Christian life be kept sweet, wholesome, practical, free from eccentricities and perils which attach to the life of the recluse and the dreamer. For here lies the balanced life: the life which "finds pasture" -- the life which grows rich and steady, and strong in the Lord. It is the life which not only goes in to receive from God, but goes out to give to men.

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THE END