

# The PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

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## *That I Might Know Him*

That I might know Him! Let this be life's aim,  
Still to explore the wealth stored in His name,  
With heaven-taught intelligence to trace  
The glories that light up His sinless face;  
That I might know His power day by day,  
Protecting, guiding in the upward way:  
That I might know His presence, calm and pure,  
Changeless midst changes, and midst losses sure:  
To dwell with Him in spirit, day and night;  
To walk with Him by faith, if not by sight;  
To work with Him, as He shall plan, not I;  
To cleave to Him, and let the world go by;  
To live on earth a life of selfless love;  
To set the mind and heart on things above:  
Till I shall see Him without vision dim,  
And know Him as I know I'm known of Him.  
—MAX I. REICH, in *Hebrew-Christian Alliance Quarterly*.

of heaven was at hand, then with the Sermon on the Mount He taught, and with the parables we have the illustrative or analogical method. He tells why He made this last change; it was because so many had no understanding of spiritual things and would pervert the truth.

Further in this chapter of Romans from which we have chosen our text, we find it stated repeatedly that God gave them over to a reprobate mind. This is particularly emphasized in v. 28. The word used here is the purest intellectual term in the New Testament and was introduced by St. Paul. Denny in commenting on this passage says that it is a mind which is no mind and cannot discharge the functions of one, a mind in which the divine distinctions of right and wrong are confused and lost, so that God's condemnation can but fall on it at last.

While other passages might be cited, yet these are sufficient to show us that there is depravity in the moral reason, clearly set forth in the Word of God. The stain of sin in the being of man perverts our thinking.'

#### MANIFESTATIONS OF A DEPRAVED MORAL REASON

In outlining the manifestations of a depraved moral reason, we must of necessity repeat some of the points that we have already mentioned. But we will approach them this time from a different angle, and I believe that we will also find other manifestations.

First we would say that one of the most general manifestations of depravity in the moral reason is the lack of an understanding of spiritual values. In writing to the Corinthians Paul tells them that to those that perish the preaching of the cross of Christ is foolishness and that the natural man receiveth not the things of God. This we see over and over again in life. The way of the cross is a way to be despised so the natural man looks upon it, he sees nothing to be desired; its glory never shines upon him until the Holy Spirit illuminates his understanding.

This lack of understanding of spiritual values is found in the regenerate man who has not found the fullness of divine light and understanding on spiritual problems. Jesus rebuked Peter because he did not comprehend that suffering is a part of Christian service saying unto him, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

Then with the lack of understanding of spiritual values there comes a deadening of the feeling. When we value anything highly we have a corresponding feeling response, but when we count anything of little worth, our feeling response is negligible. So the Apostle Paul speaking of the Gentiles who had not received Christ, says of them that their understanding is darkened, "being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4: 17-19).

Following on we have the reprobate mind which we have mentioned quite distinctly before. This would seem to bring before us man in a helpless state and condition, not given over by God directly, but because he gave himself over and refused to retain God in his thoughts and let his imagination dwell on evil rather than good.

Finally comes one of the climactic points when the depravity of the moral reason affects the intuitive reason and also the logical may function truly while the moral reason is depraved. They can never function with the same precision, but they may abide in truth. Yet on the other hand there is a tendency for the depravity of the moral reason to spread its corruption over the intuitive and logical reason until we have the state and condition depicted to us by the psalmist, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God." The truth of the existence of God comes to us through the intuitive reason primarily and is reinforced by both the logical and moral reason. When the intuitive and logical reason fails to apprehend this great fundamental truth of theology and doctrine, then the soul has passed out into entire darkness as far as his understanding is concerned, and the probabilities are that all doors of approach to his soul are closed.

Thus we see the Scripture teaching on the depravity of the moral reason given in brief and its manifestations in the life of man. This phase of depravity only adds to the already gruesome picture of the evil in the heart of man. It brings only evil and destruction in its wake. Happy is the man who has been purged from its contamination.

### *Two Great Pastors*

We think of Phillips Brooks as a great preacher, but those fortunate enough to be in his church knew him also as a great pastor. He said one time, "I wish that I could devote every hour of the day to calling on my people. I know of no happier or more helpful work that a pastor can do, and I call as much as I can. How is it possible for one to preach to his people if he does not know them, their doubts, sorrows and ambitions?"

Dr. J. H. Jowett, like Paul, possessed rare powers of sympathy, for which he paid a high price, literally wearing himself out in his ministry. He once said, "At first I could not conduct a funeral without tears. I could not read the burial service without my speech being choked; but now I have had so many funerals, have seen so many people in sorrow, I have seen so much suffering, that I can read the burial service without tears. Well, perhaps this is part of the gracious providence of God that the burden should be eased, but I don't want the ease if it be at the cost of losing the compassion with my fellowmen. I would rather have the tears, I would prefer the choking speech. I would prefer that my not-too-strong body should be tired out, drained out twice or thrice a week, if I might only keep my compassion with my fellowmen."—SELECTED.

# The Meaning of Inspiration

Donald H. Strong

THE Bible is the inspired Word of God. Its authenticity and historicity are principles fundamental to the Christian faith, and may for the present purpose be assumed as true. But the question which arises is, What do we mean by inspiration? For there are many theories of inspiration, and our attitude toward the Bible and toward the whole of Christianity will be very largely governed by the theory which we accept as to the nature and extent of inspiration.

Before taking up the problem as to the exact nature of inspiration, a few prefatory suggestions may be made.

1. Inspiration is not revelation. Dr. Charles Hodge says that revelation is the act of communicating divine knowledge to the mind, while inspiration is the act of the same Spirit controlling those who make that knowledge known to others. Similarly, G. L. Robinson states that inspiration is an operation of God in which He makes known to men His being, His will and His purposes, and that it is therefore distinctly a mode of revelation.

2. Inspiration is more than illumination. Every Christian who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit is illumined but he may not be inspired. Spiritual illumination is subject to degrees, while inspiration is not, for it is in every case the breath of God expressing itself through human personality.

3. In speaking of the writers of the Scriptures being inspired by God we must remember that the object is the inspiration not of the men but of the books, and not of the writers but of the writings. David and Solomon and Peter were not everywhere and always inspired, for then they would have been infallible and inerrant, which we know was not the case.

4. It must be made clear that the Scripture for whose inspiration we shall contend is the original record—the actual documents as penned by the writers themselves, and not any translation or translations. Unless we make the extremely liberal concession that all copyists have been inspired, there can be no existing translation that is without human error in some degree.

5. It must be conceded that any theory of inspiration of Scripture includes the whole and every part of it. The Bible says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God," and Christ approved with the stamp of His divine authority every jot and tittle. In view of these two facts, what man is competent to separate the Bible to fit any theory of piecemeal inspiration?

The thesis of the present argument may now be stated briefly. The meaning of inspiration is that the words of the Bible are God-breathed—not the thoughts only but the *very words*. If they are not, then the Bible is not inspired at all, since it is composed only and solely of words. In 2 Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God,"

the word translated scripture is the Greek *graphe* which means writing or anything written. Writing is composed of words, and this passage points clearly to plenary verbal inspiration. This position was well stated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1893, in these words: "The Bible as we now have it in its various translations and revisions when freed from all errors and mistakes of translators, copyists and printers, is the very Word of God and consequently wholly without error." In defense of this position we shall resort not to argument or logic but first, to the testimony of recognized authorities on the subject and second, to the evidence found in the Bible itself.

Professor Hodge states, "The line can never rationally be drawn between the thoughts and words of Scripture. That we have an inspired Bible, and a verbally inspired one, we have the witness of God himself."

Professor Gaussen says, "The theory of a divine revelation in which you have the inspiration of thoughts without the inspiration of the language is so inevitably irrational that it cannot be sincere, and proves false even to those who propose it."

Canon Westcott says, "The slightest consideration will show that words are as essential to intellectual processes as they are to mutual intercourse. Thoughts are wedded to words as necessarily as soul to body. Without words the mysteries unveiled before the eyes of the seer would be confused shadows; with them they are made clear lessons for human life."

Dean Burgon has said, "You cannot dissect inspiration into substance and form. As for thoughts being inspired apart from words which give them expression, you might as well talk of a tune without notes, or a sum without figures. No such theory of inspiration is even intelligible."

We may go back if we wish to the testimony of the early Fathers. Justin writes, "We must not suppose that the language proceeds from the men that are inspired, but from the divine Word himself, who moves them."

Clement of Alexandria said, "The Jews and the Christians agree as to the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, but differ in interpretation. By our faith we believe that every scripture, since it is God-breathed, is profitable. If the words of the Lord are pure words, refined silver, tried seven times and the Holy Spirit has with all care dictated them accurately, it was on this account the Savior said that not one jot or tittle of them should pass away."

No view of verbal inspiration could be more rigid than that held by Augustine, who said, "The Scriptures are the letters of God, the voice of God and the writings of God and the writers record the words of God."

Professor Benjamin Warfield, in an article on the Westminster Doctrine of inspiration, summarizes

the position of the early Church when he says, "Despite the contrary assertion that has recently become tolerably current, essentially this doctrine of inspiration (verbal) has been the doctrine of the Church of all ages and of all names."

In the last analysis, it is the Bible itself of course which must settle the question of its inspiration and the extent of it, and to this we come now in the consideration of the proof. The Bible plainly teaches that its words are inspired and that it is the Word of God.

In 2 Samuel 23:2 David says, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me and his word was upon my tongue."

In the first chapter of Jeremiah we read that the prophet said, "Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord saith unto me, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak . . . Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth."

We know that Balaam was compelled to speak against his will, for he said, "Lo, I am come unto thee; have I now any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak." While Balaam was not of course one of the writers of Scripture, still this passage is of value for it indicates that God could and did at times dictate the very words which men should speak.

In the five books of Moses there are no less than three hundred instances of such phrases as "Thus saith the Lord," "The Lord spake" and "The Lord hath spoken." The Prophet Isaiah states explicitly twenty times that his writings are the "words of the Lord." Nearly a hundred times Jeremiah declares, "The word of the Lord came unto me," or says he is proclaiming "the words of the Lord." Ezekiel says sixty times that his writings are the "words of God." And so we might go through book after book of the Scriptures. Every writer declares that he is recording the words of the Lord and not one says "This is the thought which the Lord gave me."

But we may go still farther. The most unique argument for the inspiration of the words of the Scripture is the relation which Christ bears to them. First of all, He himself was inspired in His very words. The first reference to His prophetic office says, "I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak . . ." (Deut. 18:18). In His own words Jesus says, "As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" and "the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." Also, "Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 6:63 and 8:26, 28). In the second place, Jesus used the Scriptures as though they were inspired in their very words. In Matthew 22:31 He draws an argument from the tense of the verb *to be*. In verse 42 of the same chapter He proves His own deity by referring to the particular

use of the word *Lord*. And it was Jesus who said, "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." In Matthew 4 Christ overcame the tempter by three times stating "It is written." In referring to this Adolphe Monod says, "I know of nothing in the whole history of humanity, nor even in the field of divine revelation, that proves more clearly than this the inspiration of the Scriptures. How can we explain that spiritual mystery, that wonderful reversing of the order of things, if for Jesus the words of Moses were not the words of God rather than those of men? How shall we explain it if Jesus were not fully aware that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?"

Sidney Collett suggests that God has made this physical universe a thing of perfection. The sting of a wasp is perfect in design, and a snowflake a study in art. Then he says, "Surely we shrink from so blasphemous a thought that the same Almighty Creator has been careless and indifferent about the details of His Word, which is to endure forever."

Probably the strongest objection offered against the theory of verbal inspiration is the idea that it makes of the Scripture writers mere machines, with no power of conscious choice. Even if this were true, as it is not, we might ask which is the more important, the free agency of a score or two of mortals or the divinity of their message. We can insist upon no idea of inspiration if it excludes the human element in the writing of Scripture. Wayland Hoyt said, "Inspiration is not a mechanical, crass, bald compulsion of the sacred writers, but rather a dynamic, divine influence over their freely acting faculties." It is limiting God to say that He cannot do this without turning human beings into automatons. Shall we say that He who created man as a free agent left Himself no opportunity to mold man's thoughts into forms expressive of His will without destroying that which He has made? On this subject Dr. James Gray, former Dean of Moody Bible Institute, says, "And indeed, wherein resides man's free agency, in his mind or in his mouth? Shall we say that he is free while God controls his thought but that he becomes a mere machine when that control extends to the expression of his thought?" Thus it is evident that verbal inspiration in its strictest sense does not involve mechanical dictation in any sense. It is clear that all of the writers about whom we know anything not only maintained but strikingly revealed their own individuality.

We have listened to the testimony of the early Church leaders, of the sacred writers themselves, and of Jesus Christ; we have heard the evidence of both scholarship and common sense, and the conclusion of them all must be that the only theory which we can intelligently accept is that of a full verbal inspiration of the very words of Scripture.

It must be admitted that there are difficulties in the way of any explanation of inspiration, but these difficulties are fast disappearing under the light of

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## Laziness—False and Genuine

Mallalieu A. Wilson

ARE preachers lazy?" In several articles and discussions that have come to my attention in recent years, preachers themselves seem to have cheerfully accepted the verdict of guilty. In my opinion a more correct answer would be Andy's favorite expression, "Yes and no—mostly no!"

Even when preachers are guilty of laziness, many fail to see wherein their laziness really lies. Sometimes serious injury may come from taking too seriously the frequent exhortations against laziness if we have a false idea of what laziness is. What is laziness anyhow?

### I

Some laymen seem to think that spending one's time at anything except physical labor is laziness. They admire a preacher who spends much of his time in strenuous physical labor. They consider him energetic. They despise as lazy one who rarely does any physical work—whether his lack of such activity is due to indisposition or to the necessity or spending his full time in study and pastoral work. Fortunately this attitude is not nearly so prevalent now as in former years.

Again, taking sufficient time for sleep is not laziness. Very dangerous and unscientific nonsense is often advocated on this point. Even Wesley, ordinarily so sensible, tried to make all his preachers rise at four a.m. because he himself had found no necessity for sleep after that hour. To deprive oneself of necessary sleep is one of the surest ways to undermine the health and precipitate a nervous breakdown.

Jesus, and perhaps some of the Middle Ages mystics, seemed to be able to substitute prayer for sleep. If we knew that secret, we too might sleep less in order to pray more. But since we do not have that secret, and since prayer is for most of us still "the hardest work in the world," as I have heard my brethren assert, it is dangerous to try to substitute even prayer for sleep.

A preacher may need more sleep than he needed when he was a laborer, for activities that are primarily mental require a longer time to recover from than physical activities. Also the quality of mental work depends more on the rested condition of mind and body than does the quality of physical work.

Under the driving of a relentless boss, a man may shovel concrete all day, though bleary-eyed from lack of sleep, and the concrete will set just as solidly as if he had been well-rested and enjoying the task. But a man who goes to his study bleary-eyed will work not only without pleasure but without success.

From many years' experience as a student and as a teacher, I found that it is far more important to come to a class with a well-rested brain than to come with a tediously prepared lesson. Again and again the student who stayed up all night to study has fallen on examination below the student that di-

vided his time more sensibly between study and sleep.

One hour of honest, concentrated study when well-refreshed may produce more results in creative effort than eight hours of yawning over books when too sleepy to think. Perhaps praying done under extreme fatigue conditions is not of very high quality either. When one is so worn that he goes to sleep almost as soon as he drops on his knees for prayer—as I confess I have done more than once—the probability is that he needs sleep more than he needs prayer at that particular time. He should try to pray when still freshly rested.

No general rule can be given as to the exact amount of time needed for sleep. A recent study of the sleeping habits of men successful enough to be listed in "Who's Who in America?" indicates an actual average of eight or nine hours daily. This is probably more than the average citizen gets, although perhaps not more than he needs.

It is not a question of how little sleep we can "get by" on. I have known students to go for years with not over four hours' sleep a night. But when they learned in studying psychology the effects of sleep on the nervous system and were persuaded to experiment with more sleep, they discovered a new physical and mental vigor that they had not known anyone could possess.

Even with one individual the amount needed may vary with the climate, age, and certain health conditions. Ordinarily a good rule would be always to sleep until you wake up naturally—that is, without being called or alarmed by a clock.

Scientific experiments have also demonstrated the fallacy of the idea that sleep after midnight is not so valuable as sleep before midnight. It is true that the first hours of sleep are the soundest, but today they are not believed to be necessarily any more beneficial than the later hours. And anyhow, the first hours of sleep are the soundest regardless of whether the sleep begins after midnight or before.

In these days preachers are usually engaged in their most strenuous or exciting work at night. To retire for sleep a few minutes after leaving a thrilling or a heart-breaking altar service or after a long, hazardous drive through traffic is for most of us to court certain insomnia. Many preachers find that any sleep before midnight is rarely possible. If they are still asleep the next morning when some manual laborer calls before going to his work, it does not mean they are lazy.

Other people whose work is nerve-racking and at night, such as dramatic and operatic performers, customarily sleep well up toward the noon hour. Such people are never accused of being lazy by any who understand. But preachers often find it necessary to rise early as well as to stay up late. In such case, they should not be ashamed to take a nap during the day.

## II

Again, calmness and lack of hurry do not necessarily indicate laziness. Sometimes I am rather disturbed by the frequent reports of "nervous breakdowns" among even our younger ministers. Probably it is not due to overwork, for medical men are rather unanimous that overwork never broke anyone down. It may be lack of sleep. It may be lack of adjustment in marital relations. It may be maladjustments in other lines.

But primarily, I wonder if it is not due to our conception of the ideal preacher as one who is always on a tension, rushing desperately here and there in haste to save some soul, settle somebody's personal problems, rebuke someone—before understanding the situation—or weep with someone else—when perhaps equally misinformed. The impression I have often carried away from assemblies and conventions is that this is what we are exhorted to be like.

Years ago, a friend of mine, a slow, easy-going boy, was praying at an altar for sanctification. He was praying along in a thoughtful but not too intense manner. A minister of the intense, fiery type stood it as long as he could and then began to exhort him in exasperation, "Git nervous, boy! Git nervous!"

I have often felt like giving similar advice to some preachers, but after all, is that exactly what we need? Some by getting nervous accomplish a great deal of good, but usually they undo all the good by their same nervousness. They remind me of the man who "leaped into the saddle and rode off furiously in all directions at once."

On the other hand, some of the most consistently successful pastors that I know, measured even in terms of increasing size of their membership and congregations, are men who always seem leisurely. They take time to sleep, they take time for recreation, they have time for friendship, they spend time with their families on restful pleasure trips. Yet they manage to make more calls, read more books, look after their church business more promptly, and give more time to district and general interests than the average preacher. And apparently they are growing in deeper devotion to Christ.

## III

There is one other thing that is often mistaken for laziness. Bad health conditions may sap a person's vitality and leave him weak and anemic. Infected teeth, infected tonsils or other focal infections poison the system as truly as drugs. All diseases seem to poison the body in a depressing way with the single exception of tuberculosis which seems to produce a stimulating poison that may cause its victims to put forth almost unbelievable exertions up till almost the hour of their death. There are people who are depressed with sickness from the hour of their birth. There are some that are born with relatively sluggish glandular systems.

Where lack of activity is due to diseased bodily organs, exertion of will power will not help much. What is needed is a cure of the physical cause,

whether through supernatural agency or natural means.

## IV

There is a real laziness which is a defect of personality that can be changed and should be changed. Someone has defined it as doing what we want to do rather than what we ought to do. This is a poor definition but a wonderfully enlightening suggestion. Laziness is seen in the way we delay work, put forth feeble effort in work, and too quickly drop work.

Even when a man is in good health and well rested, there is still a terrific temptation to neglect some phases of work that are less enjoyable than others. This is the preacher's temptation, and this is the only sense in which one can justly accuse very many preachers of laziness.

Just what is neglected depends on the personal likes of the preacher. I know some preachers—believe it or not—who really enjoy pastoral calling so much that they must fight against a temptation to stay out all day in that work.

Others like to study—or at least to read. Their temptation may be to neglect their calling or the business of the church.

Others dislike both calling and studying but are happy as long as they have church business to look after. A building program keeps them happy, but when the church has completed its physical plant they become restless and move on or else become contented just to putter around looking after a lot of largely unnecessary "business."

There are still others who are interested only in the "spiritual" work, by which they mean largely holding public services.

## V

All of these are tempted to "rationalize" their conduct, that is, find good reasons for doing what they do, when the real reason is that they just naturally like to do it that way. If men like to study, they may come to doubt whether visitation work is really necessary or even important. If they dislike to study, they may come to believe that too much study interferes with divine help in the ministry.

I have even known men who disliked to do anything but preach and have the thrill of altar services, decide that visitation, looking after church business, and study were all hindrances to their own spiritual condition.

Real laziness is a habit. How are habits of laziness or of industry formed? Investigations have shown that they are formed in just the opposite way from what we might expect. A habit of tackling all work, unpleasant as well as pleasant, with enthusiasm and persistency is found in those who have had work that they really enjoyed. They worked so hard at the pleasurable work that working became a habit.

On the other hand, people who have had to do work they disliked for a long time, usually form the habit of dawdling over *all* work and lack persistency even when they try something that they are initially interested in. An educational system which confines

students very largely to studies in which they are not even remotely interested and lets them get by with very half-hearted efforts at accomplishments may really make them lazy for life.

## VI

But what can a preacher do if he recognizes that he is more or less lazy? In the first place, unless a man finds the work of the ministry on the whole interests him intensely and challenges his best efforts, it would seem that probably he has mistaken his calling. I doubt if God has really called these sullen, reluctant men to the ministry who would far rather be doing something else.

One must continually remind himself that the less interesting part of his work must be done well if he is to have opportunity to continue the part he likes. By tying all his work together in this way, the interest he feels in one part will help to carry him through it all.

Of course as one works at an unpleasant task he will often discover interesting things about it, so that what was formerly drudgery becomes an inspiration. This process can be helped by deliberately looking for the values in drudgery work. Such values are always present in work that is really necessary.

A good general rule is to compress unpleasant tasks and perform them as rapidly, intensely and promptly as possible. Then one can give himself with good conscience and enthusiasm to the part of work that he likes without having formed the habit of procrastination, dilatoriness and half-heartedness in work.

One should not feel that he must spend all his time or even most of his time in the work he hates and put forth only feeble efforts in the activity in which he excels and which he prefers. There is in any occupation a minimum of efficiency and attention necessary to each part of one's work. Without that minimum of successful work in each line, a man will fail no matter how brilliant his performance in some other line. But in the ministry, as in teaching and other professions, distinguished success demands that a man shall be especially good in at least some one phase of his work.

After a man qualifies as a fair pulpit speaker, a fair pastoral visitor, a fair administrator, a fair devotional leader, and as a good, upright, consecrated man, he still needs to be outstanding in one or more of these points or to surpass the average in some other way, such as showing talent in musical leadership, if he is to have success.

A well-known law of habit formation is that laid down years ago by William James, the great Harvard psychologist. His first rule was "Always get as strong a start as possible." A preacher needs to constantly make fresh efforts to reorganize his activities on a more efficient basis, and remembering the rule above, he should take advantage of every special time of transition to make a strong, fresh start. This means not only when he enters the ministry for the first time, but also at the beginning of every new assembly year, after every rally and convention

when he has been freshly stirred, and on every other occasion that varies the routine, including such as special meetings.

Let's welcome, brethren, every exhortation that will encourage us to go home and make a fresh start and a more energetic effort to succeed for God. But let us be careful that we do not defeat our purpose by mistaken efforts at success. Remember that for efficient work we need bodies and nerves well-rested with sufficient sleep, fresh air, exercise, and recreation, and calmed by cultivation of poise and evenness of temper.

That we may not form a habit of trifling with all our work or procrastinating in all our duties, let's tackle our most unpleasant tasks and get them out of the way as quickly as possible, remembering all the while that even these unpleasant jobs are necessary parts of a glorious calling and seeking to find frequently even in these tasks of drudgery bits of genuine interest and joy.

## THE MEANING OF INSPIRATION

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modern scholarly research. But until every problem is solved and every argument silenced, we may say with Bishop Ryle, "Give me the plenary verbal theory with all its difficulties rather than the doubt. I accept the difficulties and humbly wait for their solution, but while I wait I am standing on a rock.

## The Joy of a Good Conscience

THOMAS A KEMPIS

A bad conscience is timid and uneasy. Keep a good conscience and you will always be happy.

A good conscience can bear much and is able to be very cheerful even in adversity.

You will enjoy a sweet peace if your heart does not condemn you.

The glory of the good is in their consciences and not in the mouth of man.

The joy of the righteous is of God and in God they rejoice in the truth.

He will be easily content and at rest whose conscience is pure.

You are not more holy because you are praised; neither are you more vile, because you are blamed.

For you are what you are, neither can you be made better by what others say than what God sees you to be.

If you take good heed to what in yourself you are inwardly you will not care so much what men say about you.

Man sees the face but God sees the heart.

Man considers the actions; God weighs the motives.

To walk inwardly with God, and to have the heart detached from earthly objects, is the state of a spiritual man.—In *The Wesleyan Methodist*.



## *If I Were a Pastor*

A. S. London

THE word "pastor" has an interesting note about it. It is significant. It is equivalent to a herdsman or shepherd, one who cares for the flock. It seems that of all the terms used in the Bible for the preacher, the word shepherd is the most beautiful. The word carries a content that can hardly be found in any of the terms clergyman, priest or bishop. Pastor and shepherd are synonymous.

If I were a pastor, I would see first that I was the right kind of a man. No man can wield the right kind of influence as a preacher who is not all that he professes to be. I preach what I am, and not what I merely pretend to be. I would be pure, clean in character and conduct, for as Emerson says, "I have the strength of ten because my heart is pure." I would live above the line of giving others a just cause for suspicion.

If I were a pastor I would strive to have a happy home, a congenial atmosphere and raise my family so as to be examples worthy for others to follow. I would not want fussing, gossiping, or backbiting to be known among us. I would gather my family around the family fireside at least once each day and have family worship. I believe this would be wholesome for my home, and the homes of those about us. I would be kind, tender, gentle, patient, and live at home what I profess at church.

If I were a pastor, I would want my home kept clean, my children neat, my own attire presentable. I would not lounge around until a late hour in the morning and be unpresentable if a caller should happen our way at nine o'clock. I would strive to have my children adorn the doctrine I preach, and my wife be an example of true womanhood.

If I were a pastor, I would leave the family at quite an early hour and retire to my study. Here I would study, read good books, meditate and pray. I would cleanse my own life of all prejudices, littleness and narrowness. I would come out of my study around the noon hour, greet my family with a pleasant smile and cause them to be glad of my presence. I would not be a grouch, a complainer, a faultfinder. I would be as kind to my wife as I would be to other women. I would be as patient with my own children as I would be with other children.

If I were a pastor I would give my afternoons to visiting. I would look first after the sick, the distressed, the poor, the needy, the discouraged. I would not have cliques, and make so many calls at a certain home until the neighbors would begin to whisper about it. I would steer clear of going to the same place so many times during the week until my influence at home and abroad would be hindered for good. I would love little children, respect all pure womanhood and meet all classes, business men, schoolteachers, doctors, lawyers and common laborers, and cause them to feel that I was an honest citizen of the community where I lived.

If I were a pastor I would know every unchurched home in my territory. If I lived in a small city I would know every family, take an interest in the public welfare of my town, and not hold myself aloof from the people.

If I were a pastor I would have frequent visits with my Sunday school superintendent and teachers. I would have a great Sunday school rally once each year, attend every convention, leadership training courses, of every denomination, that it was possible for me to do so. I would arrange a canvass of my church territory twice each year, and find the name and address of every unchurched person in my jurisdiction. I would prepare for at least two good revivals each year, with conventions, week-end meetings arranged at convenient seasons. I would treat my evangelist as I would desire to be treated. I would have a comfortable place for him to stay, pay him well for his services, and build a psychology before his arrival of confidence, expectancy and blessing.

If I were a pastor I would strive to be a leader of the moral and religious forces of my community. Slavery was abolished in this country under the influence of preachers. The cause of temperance has always been led by ministers. The pulpit should lead in every movement for the uplift of humanity.

If I were a pastor I would be a friend to every young man and woman in my community. I would never scold, or take the pulpit as a place to reprimand them for their weaknesses and faults. I would preach a positive message of salvation from all sin for all ages and classes. I would take an active interest in young people, talk with them, go with them, visit them in their homes, their workshops, their schools, and love them with a compassionate love. Love begets love. Interest begets interest. I know of a pastor who has three thousand in his membership. He knows them all by name and success or failure never comes to any of these members but that the pastor knows about it at once.

If I were a pastor, I would be a good shepherd of the lost sheep. In every congregation there are those who have strayed off. "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?" In this parable, Jesus portrays a most remarkable interest on the part of the shepherd concerning the lost sheep. He continued his search for the lost one until He found it. And when He found it, He rejoiced. Sympathetic interest, loving care and sacrificial service are shown.

The shepherd looms large in the history of the Jewish minds. He was a man of importance. David was a shepherd boy when he slew Goliath. Abraham had his flocks and herds. Amos was following the herd when he heard his call from God. The twelve sons of Jacob were shepherds. Moses



was tending the flock at the back side of the desert when he was called of God to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage. Jesus is the chief Shepherd and every true pastor is an undershepherd. We are exhorted to "feed the flock of God."

If I were a pastor, I would not club, or beat, my flock. I would strive to give them wholesome food, I would realize that some are weak, others are sick, poor and unable to keep up with the herd. The pastor is to take heed over the flock of which he is overseer. I would give milk for the babies and meat for the strong. I would break the bread of life to the hungry and lead them to fountains of living waters.

Sheep are the most defenseless of all animals. They are not fleet of foot, they run but little, and are

an easy prey. They need the defense and protection that a good shepherd can give them. It is so with the Church of God. There are many weak Christians. The good pastor giveth his life for his sheep. They do not need to be fed on current events, political creeds, or social reforms. They must have the Bread of Life.

The true pastor drives away false teachers, and constantly is on guard to banish false doctrines. There are wolves to devour the young, and often come in sheep's clothing. Sin and sorrow are found in every congregation. I must have the Great Shepherd's heart, or my work will become distasteful and grinding. I must look well to my own soul.

What a responsibility to be called to the "oversight of the flock of God."

## *If I Were an Evangelist*

James P. McGraw

**I**F I were an evangelist I would continually strive to practice the art of looking at things from the other person's viewpoint. Such a practice can help more toward maintaining a happy relationship between pastor and evangelist than any other. It fosters friendship, breeds brotherhood, helps harmony, compels confidence, and solves problems in every realm of life. A noted columnist, commenting on the cause of a tense diplomatic relationship between two great nations, blamed the whole trouble on the apparent failure of the leaders to put themselves in the other's place and understand one another's problems. Ministerial brethren should exemplify the ideals taught by the apostle; "In honour preferring one another." If I were an evangelist, I would rather give better treatment than I received, than to come out at the big end of the horn with the pastor thinking I had not helped him as much as I could have with a little greater effort.

If I were an evangelist, I would give at least one month of every year to Home Missions. The temptation for the successful evangelist who is much in demand among the stronger and larger churches is to devote his slate entirely to them to the neglect of smaller and weaker churches who, God knows, need him ten times as much. I would struggle to avoid this tendency by offering my services to my District Superintendent for at least one Home Mission campaign each year for the purpose of organizing a new church, and scheduling each year at least two weak churches that I know cannot give me the support I ordinarily receive, but need revivals none the less. Just as it is right for the pastors to look after the sick, the poor, and the weak of their flocks, I would remember that as an evangelist I should care for the small churches and hard places without showing favor to those which are better established numerically, spiritually and financially.

Some evangelists might not find this attitude possible for them because of financial obligations which

make it necessary for them to set a minimum price for their time and avoid any place that may not be able to afford such a price. If I were an evangelist, I would fight to keep myself and my family free of unnecessary financial entanglements which would so involve me that I could not get along on whatever God would give me anywhere He led me, be it a big city first church or a backwoods brush arbor.

If I were an evangelist, I would learn to omit all unnecessary and irrelevant material from my sermons, and boil them down to an average of thirty minutes. The crowds might gather to hear Gipsy Smith preach an hour, but if I were an evangelist they would tire within about half that time. There are not many Gipsy Smiths. One little girl liked her own preacher better than the visiting bishop, and her mother asked her to explain why. She said, "Our preacher says 'finally' and he stops, but the bishop says 'lastly' and he lasts." If I "last" too long I might have a similar experience to the Scotch minister who always found it difficult to bring his messages to the close. A passerby met one of the parishioners coming out of the church a few minutes after twelve one Sunday morning, and curiously asked, "Is the preacher done?" The reply was, "Aye, he is done but he wouldna' stop!" If I were an evangelist, the crowds might be smaller as the revival drew to a close, but it would be for some other reason than that they were worn out by my long-winded sermons.

If I were an evangelist, I would devise some method of keeping my correspondence answered, and my schedule orderly. I would avoid the necessity of writing back to change a date with some pastor two or three times because of conflicts due to my carelessness in promising to be in two places at once.

If I were an evangelist, I would make an effort to cement the friendship and esteem between the pastor and his flock. To commend the church for

faithfulness or some other virtue will cause the pastor to appreciate his people more, and to boost the pastor in every way possible will create a greater spirit of co-operation and appreciation on the part of the people.

If I were an evangelist, I would "bear down" more in these trying days than ever before. Rather than to assume a critical attitude toward the indifference among church people, I would try to understand that this condition is likely the fulfillment of the prophecies relating to the end of this age, as Jesus foretold, "because iniquity did abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Students tell us we are in the midst of the "falling away" that

will precede the second coming of Christ. Truly now is the time to cry aloud and spare not.

If I were an evangelist I would preach, pray, and perspire in a tremendous effort to evangelize the lost before night comes when no man can work. I would not be guilty of the crime of coasting along. I would take more interest in youth. I would work every conceivable effort to get a hearing so that I might preach a positive gospel of the religion of Jesus Christ, which answers the supreme questions of life, gives peace in a world of turmoil, blots out the sins of the past, eradicates carnality, prepares the way that leads through the valley of the shadow of death.

## The Funeral Service

E. E. Wordsworth

ONE of the important duties of a minister is to officiate at funerals; especially is this true of the pastor. The character of this service will contribute to the good influence of the pastor and the gospel message, or weaken and in some measure hinder the cause of Christ. An appropriate comforting service is upbuilding, while the opposite may do immeasurable harm. We venture out of our thirty years of experience in the ministry to offer some suggestions.

If sickness is known to be present in any family of his charge it is the clergyman's duty to visit such homes to offer his spiritual ministry to them. He should be so familiar with his Bible that he can quote appropriate promises, or turn and read them if the patient's condition justifies such procedure. Never pray lengthily nor loudly, but in subdued tones, in the sickroom. I knew a minister who prayed loudly for five minutes or more at the bedside of a dying saint who was then suffering extreme physical agonies. He was exceedingly unwise. Learn to greatly abbreviate your prayer. A minute is long enough ordinarily.

When the minister is quite sure that death is ensuing he should carefully note the comforting words of the dying. Sometimes, in preparation for death and the funeral service, he should write them out. In my earlier ministry I did not do this, but in the later ministry I have seen the great advantage of it. What a great comfort at the funeral service for the minister to be able to repeat these consoling words of the deceased!

The funeral service should be well planned. Every detail must be known and arranged. We usually prepare three or four service orders on slips of paper. I give one to the undertaker. One to the singers and I have one myself. We frequently follow this order:

1. Song. (An appropriate song by the special singer or singers.)
2. Brief opening prayer. (Two or three sentences.)
3. Scripture lesson. (Carefully selected.)

4. Sermon. (Never more than fifteen minutes—frequently ten.)

5. Obituary. (I always interview the family before the funeral and get all necessary information. I type it and have it ready to read.)

6. Closing prayer. (This is when I mention the bereaved family and I always try to know all their names so that I can recall them.)

7. Closing song. Special singers.

If the service is held in conjunction with some fraternity it is customary at this moment to turn the service over to them. However it is always advisable to have a common and complete understanding with the officiating lodge member before the service. It is the very height of discourtesy for a minister to say a word that would reflect on this organization at this service. Personal convictions must be silenced.

The above order of service is only suggestive. It is variable according to circumstances. But always have a definite plan for the occasion. Under no circumstances extend the service beyond thirty or forty minutes. Twenty minutes is better frequently. Of course for an illustrious person it is justifiable to lengthen the service somewhat but even then within proper bounds.

I usually follow this order in my sermon. First, I preach the message from my text and make no reference at all to the deceased. At the close of this brief message I sum up my remarks about the loved one in the casket and close with the most touching thing I know. I do not make any effort to make people weep but rather to assuage grief. But if I know anything of the character, personal history, family connections, church relationship, and the circumstances of the death of the deceased, I make brief mention of it at this point. It is much better in my judgment to follow the order suggested. I have noted that many preachers of other denominations do this.

The minister should understand that he has full charge of the religious service and that alone. The

undertaker has charge of all other matters. The service must always begin on time and the minister should be present at least a few moments ahead of time. It is almost unpardonable to be late.

The minister must be dignified and solemn, subdued and sympathetic, but natural and in earnest. He should exercise self-control. His duty is to calm and quiet grief. Oratorical display is entirely out of place.

The subject matter of the funeral sermon should usually be drawn from the Holy Scriptures. Remarks about the deceased are expected but the minister must use extreme caution, especially in case of strangers. Silence is sometimes golden.

At the cemetery the minister should precede the body to the place of interment and, standing at the foot of the grave, after the casket has been lowered, he should read, in a clear voice, the Service for Burial of the Dead. No additional remarks should be made. Singing is sometimes permissible, but not at all necessary. Sometimes the minister uses flowers, or earth, during the committal service; in some sections the undertaker will do this while the service is read or spoken. Always have an understanding with the undertaker and conform to common practices. Remember that funeral etiquette is important.

I believe every minister needs a funeral manual. The best I have seen is Arthur H. De Long's "Pastor's Ideal Funeral Book." I have one and have used it for years. Our Publishing House can get it for you (price, \$1.00). It is filled with helpful material and suggestions. I have known some ministers to use only the Bible. Well, frankly, I must say that we all need all the help we can get for such occasions.

At the close of the service the minister should speak a parting word of personal sympathy to the members of the bereaved family before leaving the cemetery.

Do not try to run a revival service during a funeral service. Solomon said, "There is a time for all things." I saw a minister try it. It was inappropriate and a colossal failure. Be kind, tender and Christlike.

## Helps to Holiness

A clear experience in justification.

A quick obedience to the known will of God.

A faithful reading of the Word.

A vital prayer life.

A "conscience" about "little things."

A self-denial for Jesus' sake.

A care that the conversation has an end in spiritual welfare.

A pursuit of reading which deals with holiness and the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

A testimony which looks toward the fulfillment of the promise.

A thirst that carries the promise with it (Matt. 5: 6).

An attendance upon the means of grace.—*The Free Methodist*.

## Too Busy

William T. Wendell

(1 Kings 20:40)

**W**HAT joy he had in the Lord! How zealously he searched the Scriptures! His knowledge of them was exceptional. How active he was in his local church! He was one of the leading laymen of it, filling various prominent and responsible positions with devotion. He gave not only his energy, but his money to the kingdom with liberality. He could have sung in deed and in truth:

*"I'm on a shining pathway  
Adown life's shortening years."*

Christ was to him a "living, bright reality."

But as time went on I could note that some of the glory was departing from his life; there seemed to be a mysterious letting down in his experience. His testimonies did not have the old-time triumphant ring. And then one night I discovered one of the reasons. I heard him confess that he was so busy that he did not take time to be alone daily with God, frankly admitting that he had lost the overcoming joy out of his life by failing thus to enter into his closet. Hearing his lamentable words I suppose I recalled the statement of D. L. Moody, "The professing Christian who is so busy that he does not have time each day to wait upon God in prayer and Bible study is busier than God intended him to be."

But at this period he still attended prayermeeting faithfully. The time came, however, when he no longer was present at that midweek gathering. The reason (or excuse) he offered for that absence was that he was still "too busy."

Yet he continued to come unfailingly to the Sunday services, and was very active in an external way in the small congregation to which he belonged.

But now it has been many months since he has been inside the church. If words and conduct are some of the "fruits" by which we "shall know them" who are in or out of Christ, this former "burning and shining light" is a spiritual cinder, for whom, unless he gets back to the Lord, "the blackness of darkness is reserved forever." Some day death will be calling on that man. Then he will not be "too busy" to heed. What horror he is manufacturing now for that hour!

In an address to preachers a few weeks ago, the speaker said, "Forty is the danger line for preachers. By this time the preacher has probably decided that he knows fairly well how to do his work, and he will not grow any more. He will be tempted to hash over his preaching material and discover nothing new. The best way for him to save himself is to adopt a new course of study and hold himself to it as rigidly as he did when he was an undergraduate. And by some such means he will not only become intensive, but he will also broaden out. And it may be he can save himself from the inroads of dry rot and premature deterioration." How old are you?

## GENERAL CHURCH PROGRAM

### *The W.F.M.S. Silver Anniversary*

C. Warren Jones, Foreign Missions Secretary

IT seems most fitting that the good women of our beloved Zion should celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary as a missionary society. No one will deny that they have rendered faithful service and accomplished the purpose for which the W.F.M.S. was organized. That purpose was and ever has been to educate our people as to the great need of a heathen world; inspire to greater sacrifice and heroic effort in carrying out the Great Commission and gather funds and thus help the church to save a lost world.

For twenty-five years the W.F.M.S. have pursued their task. They have been faithful in season and out of season. They have prayed and fasted, sent forth the printed page and given devotedly of their means to support the foreign work. They have exercised faith, labored and toiled and have refused to be defeated. Economic depressions and recessions have failed to dampen their ardor. Their love for souls and implicit faith in a great God have been beautiful to behold. They have done a great work and done it well.

They are not closing up their work. Rather, they are just beginning. They are about to say goodbye to one period of time to enter a new day. They boast not of what they have done. They praise God for past victories and rush on to undertake greater tasks; to gather more sheaves to lay at the Master's feet.

In this their Silver Anniversary they look to the future. They have caught the vision. They see what can be accomplished. They see the need of strengthening our Bible Training Schools. In this they are right. No greater need exists on our foreign fields. We must train our young men and women and send them forth as firebrands to spread this glorious gospel.

Our W.F.M.S. have undertaken a great task. It was not forced upon them. They begged for the privilege of sponsoring the Thanksgiving Offering and adding to the amount usually received an extra \$25,000. This means an offering during the month of November of \$70,000. It is understood that all over and above \$45,000 is to be placed in a special fund to be used only to further the work of our Bible Training Schools.

#### REASONS FOR THE SPECIAL OFFERING

We shall confine ourselves to three reasons of the many that might be given:

*First*, that we may educate and train the natives so that they may be efficient and successful workers, carrying the gospel to their own people.

*Second*, for the sake of millions who have as yet never heard a gospel message.

*Third*, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who gave all to purchase salvation for all men.

#### ATTENTION, PASTORS

We owe it to our good women of the Church of the Nazarene to give them 100 per cent co-operation in this great undertaking. Their purpose is to glorify God and extend His kingdom and thus hasten the day when holiness shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea. After all, their task is the task of the whole church. The goal they have set can be reached and one and all can have a part in what we trust will be an epoch marking event in the history of the Church of the Nazarene.

### *N. Y. P. S.*

S. T. Ludwig

### *The Evangelistic Tense*

E VANGELISM in all of its phases is one of the keynotes of the N.Y.P.S. The General Council desires to make this a constant matter of importance in the local society program.

There are several ways of emphasizing this matter. We urge the full participation of the N.Y.P.S. in every revival program sponsored by the local church. In these revival meetings the young people can do much to advertise, personally invite people and support these meetings in every way.

But evangelism in its full meaning extends into post-revival effort. Here lies a field of work which can keep the young people busy the rest of the year. New converts need to be helped and encouraged. Prayer and Bible study groups can be maintained. Sunday school attendance can be increased. In fact the work and service of the N.Y.P.S. can be such as to support the whole church program. Every effort should be made to keep the tone of the society deeply spiritual and progressive.

Many of our societies have engaged in a "church survey" of young people during the month of October. Others, perhaps, plan to do so during some month in the future. What shall be the pastor's attitude in this regard? To simply make records and classify them is not enough. You can render a very great service if you insist that your young people continue the work of visiting and reaching these young people who are not regular attendants in the N.Y.P.S. service. Through constant vigilance and persevering effort in the months ahead you—pastor friend—can help your N.Y.P.S. to live in the evangelistic tense.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Basil Miller

### Giving by Faith

"I'll give \$25 to this revival. It has been worth that much to me. I'll promise by faith," said a good woman in an Oakland, California, revival. God had been pouring out His Spirit in a marvelous manner, but finances had been difficult.

When this sister made her pledge the entire audience was stunned, because they realized she would have to do washings to raise the money.

She was poverty-stricken, but she walked by faith.

"Mother, how on earth will you get \$25 for the meeting?" her daughter asked on the way home.

"I don't know, but God is in it, and He will supply the money."

Early the next morning the lady was on her way to town when she found a pocketbook lying in the street. She picked it up and inside were two large diamonds, but no money.

"What are you going to do, Mother?" the daughter asked.

"Watch the papers," came the quiet reply which faith prompted.

The next evening paper carried an offer for a reward to the person who found a purse bearing two diamonds.

The lady went to the address the following day, which proved to be that of the bonding and insurance company.

When she returned the diamonds, they handed her a fifty-dollar bill. She began to cry and when they asked her the reason she said:

"I promised \$25 to a revival in our church, and I thank God he supplied the money."

"Yes, and He gave you a twenty-five extra," said the insurance agent.

"When I made the pledge, I felt that God would have me trust Him for the money. My faith was restful in His presence and I was sure He would supply," she testified that night.

Give by faith and God will give back to you!

### Receiving and Giving

"Here, sister, you take this five and use it for whatever you need," said Dr. H. C. Morrison to a woman sitting on a cold Louisville, Kentucky, street. She was in evident need, her feet wrapped in burlap sacks to keep them warm.

"Sir, I thank you from the depths of my heart. May God bless you."

The famous preacher was on his way to the editorial office of the *Pentecostal Herald* when a stranger stopped him on the street and handed him a five-dollar bill to use in God's work. The doctor decided to give it to the first needy person he met, and the lady of the street got it.

Walking a few blocks farther another person met the preacher and before they separated he also gave Dr. Morrison a five-dollar bill.

"Give it," again God's voice seemed to say. And the doctor passed it out to another person in need.

A third time the experience of receiving was repeated. But this time the preacher put the five in his pocket.

It was the last he received. Said the preacher:

"The supply lasted as long as I gave it away, but I dammed up the source of the money when I put the third bill in my pocket."

"Give and it shall be given you . . ." expresses the Bible standard of giving and receiving.

### Thank God, I'm Ready

The southern evangelist Jack Frost was converted from a terrible life of sin while a railroad brakeman. God had been good to him, lifting him out of circumstances that from the moral standpoint were almost unbelievable.

He had not been a Christian long until God put him to the test. Let him tell the story:

"I was riding on the engine, and started to jump off when like a stroke of lightning my glove caught on an iron projection. I was hanging just below the engine wheels, dragging from my glove. I looked up and immediately over me came the drive shaft, pounding toward my unprotected head.

"My life flashed before me in panorama. The sins before my conversion were blood-covered. I thanked God that he had blotted out my past, and made me ready for my heavenly home.

"I watched that drive shaft (taking only a second to make the revolution), but my soul was happy in my Savior, though death came instantly.

"The engineer saw my plight and set the brakes. Poised right over my head that drive shaft came to a standstill, as though the hand of God laid hold of it.

"There was no fear, for perfect love casteth out fear. My one thought was, *Thank God, I'm ready!*"

### An Unsatisfied Traveler

The famous illustration of *looking afar* for pleasure and *finding* it in one's back door is Conwell's lecture, "Acres of Diamonds." He tells the story of a Persian who saw an exquisite diamond, sold all his estates and searched the world for a match. Broken and discouraged he returned to his native land, and discovered the diamond had been found on his own estate.

To modernize this story, a young man living in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, decided to find a job. He started out in search of employment and determined not to return home until he had found it. He went through the states, down South, up North, out West and then worked his way to the Philippine Islands, and then retraced his steps to America. He searched long and diligently the States returning home, and once more was disappointed.

Worn and tired, having spent all he had, he came back to Pittsfield, and found a job in an oil station just two blocks from his home!

The common things of life bring more satisfaction, if God is in them, than the unreachable one. Little affairs, if done in the name of Christ, afford greater joy than reaching after the heights and never attaining them. If you would know soul rest, find it in common duties that lie around your doorstep, which you can accomplish in Jesus' name.

God uses what a man possesses, and multiplies its power. God's question is, *What is that in thine hand?*

He asked the widow, *What do you have in your house?*

### Riding the Rapids

"Hold on, men, we'll make it through the rapids, for God promised, 'The waters shall not overflow thee,'" said Roger Winans to his Aguaruna Indian helpers as he was rafting three hundred miles down the fast-flowing stream that joined the Amazon at Iquitos, Ecuador.

The missionary built a raft of balsa wood and on it placed his goods in preparation to coming to the States. When they got to the rapids the natives despaired of mak-

ing it through. They wanted to turn back, but the missionary knew he must meet the steamer that was to take him and his wife down the Amazon River to the ocean.

"The rapids were high, higher than I had ever seen them before. The spring rains in the mountains had been heavy, a couple of hundred inches a year or more, and as a consequence the river flowing past our mission station was a raging torrent. It was time for us to leave in order to catch our steamer for America."

"But, missionary," began one of the Indian raftsmen, "we'll be wrecked in the rapids. They'll tear us apart and we'll all drown."

"Casting about for a promise on which I could ride the rapids, God gave me one. The Spirit softly whispered, so it seemed, 'The waters, they shall not overflow thee.' Then I commanded:

*"Cut the shorelines; God will take us through!"*

"The rapids tore at the light balsa wood; the waters swamped us. God carried us through whirlpools. We were shot from side to side of the stream. We ducked and dodged, poled and twisted to get away from the falls. When others lost hope I threw my promise back to the waters, 'They shall not overflow thee.'

*"We rode that promise safely through."*

Whether shooting the Amazonian rapids, or riding the waves of life, stand on a promise and God will carry you through.

### A Song Book Goes to Prison

"Brother Miller, will you give me a song book?" asked Mother Auld, the friend of seamen and prisoners.

"You may have one with the blessings of this church and my prayers behind it," I said, handing her a copy of *Waves of Glory*, the property of the First Church of the Nazarene, San Diego, California, which I then pastored.

"Write your name in it, and your blessings," the sainted woman suggested. "I want it for one of my dear boys, who is in San Quentin on a murder charge. He is to hang shortly unless God intervenes. Pray for him."

I thought little of the incident until years later when the family asked me during my present Pasadena pastorate to conduct Mother Auld's funeral. She had lived those years the friend of forsaken men, sailors, soldiers and prisoners.

"You knew her so well when she was active in her beloved work, and we feel she would want you to say the last words over her," they said.

During the funeral service I related the song book incident, as she told it to me.

"I sent the book [she said] to my San Quentin boy just before he was hanged. When he opened the package in prison, he read an old gospel song, 'There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood,' and fell on his knees seeking Christ's blood to flow over his poor soul in cleansing mercy. He came up shouting God's redeeming glory.

"The days he spent alive were devoted to telling the other boys about his saving Christ. A revival broke out in that penitentiary, and before it closed 150 prisoners had been gloriously brought to Jesus. Among them were thirteen life-terms or men who had already been condemned to the gallows.

"My boy walked triumphantly up the gallows with God's glory singing in his heart. His last words were a testimony that as soon as the door was sprung his soul would leap through the golden gates.

"The San Diego chief of police where the crime had been committed, could not believe that so hardened a criminal as 'my sailor boy' could have been so radically converted. He traveled hundreds of miles to talk with the man, and came away saying, 'This is a miracle of God's power. Nothing else could have made such a change in any life.'"

I stood by that grave after repeating the committal words—dust to dust ashes to ashes—but I could never finish, for I saw the immortal work of Mother Auld, the friend of sinners, go on through eternity.

Preachers came from that noble woman's work with sailors. Sixteen blue-backed sailor boys bowed at our altars in the San Diego church one night, and I saw one lad throw up his head and cry, "Yes, Lord, I'll preach the gospel!"

Her body lies under the Californian sky; her grave nestles at the mountain's feet; but her influence wings through the years triumphant.

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## BOOK CHATS



By P. H. Lunn

HERE is a volume of sermons by that well known evangelist and prolific writer, William E. Biederwolf. Thirteen messages in all and every one with an attention arresting title. The book gets its name from the caption of the first sermon—THE WORLD'S SATURDAY NIGHT (Zondervan—1.00). Other sermons are "Lame in Both Feet or The Cripple of Lodebar," "Three Men in a Tree," "Why Our Prayers Are Not Answered," "What this World Needs," "Short Beds and Narrow Covers," and so on. These are timely messages expressed in forceful English and replete with illustrations.

WITH THE TWELVE by Carl A. Glover (Cokesbury—\$2.00) is a fascinating study of the training by Jesus of His disciples through six stages of their development. This is followed by an individual sketch of each disciple. The twelve men are portrayed in terms of their relationship to Jesus. The author reviews the method by which Christ, through His teaching, miracles, the cross and resurrection, transformed the men who in turn launched the Christian Church. One is impressed with the thorough-going preparation entailed in the writing of a book of this kind. It is quite exhaustive without being ponderous and unnecessarily detailed. This is a worth while book for serious study.

With pleasure we announce another volume from the pen of our own Leewin B. Williams formerly pastor of our church in Washington, D. C. FINANCING THE KINGDOM (Eerdmans—1.50), is a handbook of methods and suggestions for pastors, church officials and treasurers on the most efficient means of raising money and of keeping records thereof. The author has given years of study to this important matter and from the standpoint of research and experience is entitled to speak with a note of authority. The nine chapters are as follows: "The Church and Money Methods," "Conditions that Help the Finances," "Now Concerning the Collection," "Other Methods of Church Financing," "Church Accounting," "Plans for Securing Funds," "Church Management," "Church Board Meetings," "Illustrations."

This last chapter of "Illustrations" lists fifty-two telling illustrations that will help any pastor in presenting and selling his financial program. It seems to the Book Man that this volume should be in every church from the smallest to the largest in our denomination.

## THE PREACHER'S WORKSHOP

An exchange of methods, plans and seasonal suggestions. If you have discovered an idea that has proved successful in your church, send it in.

Roy E. Swim

### Daily Thanksgiving

ONE of his scholars once asked Rabbi ben Jochai, "Why did not the Lord furnish enough manna to Israel for a year, all at one time?"

The great teacher said, "I will answer you with a parable. Once there was a king who had a son, to whom he gave a yearly allowance. It soon happened that the day on which the allowance was due was the only day in the year when the father saw the son. So the king changed his plan and gave his son day by day that which sufficed for the day. Now the son visited the father every morning, realizing his continual need of his father's love, companionship, and giving."

So God deals a daily supply that supplication, communion, thanksgiving may be daily.—SELECTED.

### We Give Thanks

For the sturdy oaks and the stately pines,  
For the lead and the coal from the deep, dark mines,  
For the silver ore of a thousandfold,  
For the diamond bright and the yellow gold,  
For the river boat and the flying train,  
For the fleecy sail of the rolling main,  
For the velvet sponge and the glossy pearl,  
For the flag of peace which we now unfurl,  
From the gulf and the lakes to the ocean's banks,  
Lord God of Hosts, we give Thee thanks!

—EDWARD JONES.

### America and Peace

This world can never reach peace by threats and force. If this is to be the blind leadership of men, nothing can save the world from a catastrophe to civilization.

No nation has alone built this civilization. We all live by heritages which have been enriched by every nation and every century. And to save this civilization there must be a changed attitude of men. Our country, standing apart, can make a contribution of transcendent service in holding aloft the banner of moral relationships.

If we are to hold that banner of morals aloft the people of America should express unhesitatingly their indignation against wrong and persecution. They should extend aid to the suffering.

We should not be isolationists in promoting peace by the methods of peace. We should not be isolationists in proposals to join in the most healing of all processes of peace—economic co-operation to restore prosperity.

But surely all reason, all history, all our own experience show that wrongs cannot be righted and durable peace cannot be imposed on nations by force, threats, economic pressures or war. I want America to stand against that principle if it is the last nation under that banner. I want it to stand there because it is the hope of preserving liberty on this continent.

That is America's greatest service to mankind.—HERBERT HOOVER in Chicago speech.

### Honoring the God of Force

"We wish to hear no more about brotherhood . . . because relationships between states are relations of force and these relations of force are the determining elements of their policy.

"We must arm. The watchword is this: More cannon, more ships, more airplanes, at whatever cost, with whatever means, even if it should mean wiping out all that is called civil life. When one is strong one is dear to one's friends and feared by one's enemies. Since prehistoric times one shout has come down on the waves of the centuries and the series of generations, 'Woe to the weak!'"

—BENITO MUSSOLINI in March 26, 1939, speech.

### Pawns or Persons?

"Act so as to use humanity, whether in your own person, or in the person of another, always as an end, never as merely a means."—IMMANUEL KANT.

### Man's Loneliness

No generation has been so afflicted with the sense of the meaninglessness of life as our own. We are tormented by the demons of fear, loneliness and boredom. Because we have neglected worship, or do not know how to use it, we wonder whether life is worth while or not.

Our loneliness is not of isolation but of insulation. We are living locked-up lives, preferring to build walls rather than bridges. Nowhere is that loneliness more appalling than in the crowded solitudes of a great city. Never were human bodies so jostled; never were

human souls so alone. . . . Today we are frustrated, confused, adrift, unhappy, acutely alone because we do not know how to seek and find in God the meaning and music of life.—JOSEPH FORT NEWTON.

### Peace in the Midst of Trouble

The message of General Chiang Kai-shek to the International Missionary Council meeting in Madras struck a strong note of faith and courage. "There lies upon us and, we presume, upon you also, a great weight of care which religion alone can teach us to bear worthily. . . . Our religion teaches us that sin is immeasurably a greater evil than suffering. . . . Our people are being purified and uplifted by their present trials. . . . War is brutal, but it will ever be powerless to rob us of the transcendent peace of men who are at peace with themselves."

### Out of Tune

"Too many of us will not turn on the dial of life. We are not in tune with the Creator."—George Washington Carver.

### What Does Christ Mean to You?

A group of young people were asked this question, "What do you really believe about Christ?" Of the answers one was particularly significant. It was as follows:

"In the first place, I believe that Christ can make a difference in a person's life.

"Then I believe that everybody needs Him.

"And I believe that His present existence must be taken into account, and that means prayer."—Primitive Methodist Journal.

### The Gospel

The gospel is not good advice; it is good news. It is not authority; it is a vision. Its activities, its passion, its endurance, are expressions, aspects, fruits of an inner vitality which has its source far from the outer circumference, inward, lonely and aloft. The effects are like branches and leaves, which proceed from an inner sap.—The British Weekly.

### Where to Begin

The story is told of a young man coming to see Dr. Joseph Parker about his call to preach.

"God has called me to be a preacher, I am sure of it," said the young man in Dr. Joseph Parker's vestry.

"Good," answered the old preacher. "Then get on with it."

"But where?" rejoined the young fellow. "Where am I to preach?"

Dr. Parker walked to his open window, looked out over the city streets, with their teeming masses of men, and



said, "There are the people! Go and preach to them."—*The Pentecostal Herald*.

### More Than a Thimbleful

"Never offer men a thimbleful of gospel. Do not offer them merely joy, or merely safety. Tell them how Christ came to give men a more abundant life than they have, a life abundant in love, and therefore abundant in salvation for themselves and large in enterprise for the redemption of the world."—HENRY DRUMMOND.

### Present Tense of Cleansing

Holiness is not some immutable state which we attain by a desperate venture of faith once for all; it is rather a condition of soul which requires for its maintenance the continual observance of the conditions by which we enter into it. The following quotation from the writings of Thomas Cook of England is to the point:

"Do you teach the possibility of an absolute death of sin?" asked an undergraduate during a mission which I held in Oxford some years ago. "No," was my reply, "we teach the possibility of a conditional death of sin." "What is the difference, may I ask, between a conditional death of sin and an absolute death?" he further inquired. My answer was as follows: "Suppose there were no windows in this building and it were full of darkness, how are we to get rid of all darkness? A strong light is brought in, and when the light fills the building the darkness is excluded. But the darkness is excluded only so long as the light remains. If we remove the light the darkness returns. What the light is to the dark room the Holy Spirit is to the heart of the believer. When He fills the heart with the light of His own indwelling presence all sin is excluded, but that condition is maintained only so long as the Holy Spirit continues to possess the heart. By one act the room becomes instantly lighted, but if it be continued in a state of illumination the presence of the light must be continued. So to retain the Holy Spirit's presence within us, and the purity which the radiating power of His own blessed presence produces, requires a continual walking in the light, and the continual acting of the same faith by which we first received it."—REV. R. H. HAMILTON in *The Free Methodist*.

### Enduring Work

"If we work upon marble it will perish; if we work upon brass time will efface it; if we rear temples they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds and for immortal souls, and imbue them with the just fear of God and love for our fellowmen, we engrave upon these tablets something which will brighten through all eternity."—HENRY WARD BEECHER.

### For the Bulletin

"My house shall be filled with music, with song, with praise and prayer and the burdens of life shall be lifted from all who enter there."

"Small skill is gained by those who cling to ease;

The able sailor hails from stormy seas."

"A man's true wealth is the good he does in the world."—*Bulletin Detroit First Church*.

### The Bible

It is the treasure store of all wisdom, the foundation of all education.

Following its loving Savior, churches live, building on its deathless precepts, they stand monumental, the lighthouses of the world.

Its historic annals reveal more than all the other records of ancient days.

It traces unerringly the origin, growth and fall of mighty empires.

In its biographies we have the deepest psychology and philosophy.

Its law is the foundation of all laws.

Its science, respected in every age, is always in advance of every generation.

It is the supreme textbook of life and the authoritative pedagogical book of all times.

Governments live only as they follow its paths of justice and right.

Before its matchless wisdom wise men of all ages bow as they from the East did before the great Teacher, the Son of God.

Forever the inspiration of motherhood, the most wonderful mothers of earth are found where its message of love is proclaimed and accepted.

Glorifying home life, it is the great Book for all parents; it reveals the eternal home, and the Everlasting Father, and Jesus as the way thereto.

To the old and the young, to the sick and the well, to the poor, the friendless and the sinner, it comes to each with comfort and healing and hope from the Holy Ghost.

Containing the most reliable history and science, the most wonderful poetry and the most successful business advice, itself a vast encyclopedia of knowledge, it is yet more than all these, it is the Book of God and pre-eminently the Book of all ages; it comes from the very heart and hand of God and, best and greatest and kindest of all, it tells of the redeeming blood of Jesus, Savior of all accepting Him.—DR. JOSEPH HARMON in *The Wesleyan Methodist*.

### Two Hundred Years Ago

Two hundred years ago a church in Illinois passed the following resolution: "Resolved that Mrs. Justis Rider and Miss Phoebe Harris be expelled from the Church because they favor

Sunday schools, which are not mentioned in the Bible and because they have harbored a missionary."—*Nazarene Neighbor*, Lima, Ohio.

### The Cradles are Full

Dr. Daniel Steele once told the following incident: "In a church of which I was pastor the desire was publicly expressed for a revival in which many sinners should be converted. A wise woman who sorrowed over the lack of spiritual development in the members of that church arose and said, 'What should we do with the converts? We have no place for them; the cradles are all full'."

### Do You Suppose?

DO YOU SUPPOSE:

Everyone you meet recognizes that you are a Christian?

Your pastor or Sunday school teacher always thinks of you when he or she is enumerating those they can count on to be present on Sunday?

Your neighbors believe you are a real good Christian?

You will face someone at the judgment who will point to you and say, "He is the reason I am not a Christian. He never invited me to Christ."

You make Christianity attractive by the way you display it?

You have done your best for Christ today?—*Your Nazarene Neighbor*, Lima, Ohio.

### One Lesson for Me

I pastored a church once that had a Sunday school that kept along in a consistent attendance but made no startling gains. And I knew it was going just about as high as it could go. But a pastor followed me who pushed the attendance twenty-five per cent above the previous mark . . . and kept it there, and then higher!

Since then when I have been tempted to settle down to the conviction that the Sunday school was doing as well as it possibly could under the existing conditions, I have thought of what my successor did that time. And then I have honestly questioned myself as to what that same man might do if he followed me again. And then I try to get up and give such help and encouragement and excitement to my Sunday school superintendent to cause our school to pull ahead of its previous standing.

Yes, that is the moral I extracted from that experience. When you know the school never will do any better, go at it to make it bigger and better just as someone else would do who refused to be defeated by conditions. Beat yourself before your successor beats you! It is much more pleasant.—L. B. in *Michigan District Bulletin*.

# HOMILETICAL

## A PREACHING PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER, 1939

J. GLENN GOULD

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

Reflectors of Christ

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—2 Cor. 3:1—4:7.

**TEXT**—*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord* (2 Cor. 3:18).

I. This text forms the conclusion of a passage that sets forth in striking contrast the superiority of the new covenant of grace and mercy over all that had preceded it.

1. The starting point in this contrast is found in verse 6, where the Apostle Paul declares himself to be a minister of the new testament rather than the old. The meaning of this expression is clarified somewhat if the word "covenant" be substituted for "testament." God's dealings with His people have been from time immemorial on the basis of a covenant relationship. He made His covenant with Adam, and later with Noah. His dealings with Abraham were on a similar basis. The covenant which stands forth most conspicuously in the Old Testament dispensation is that with Moses, amounting practically to a Magna Charta which determined for all the subsequent years the basis of the political and religious life of His people. But now, in the suffering and death of His Son, God has entered upon a redemptive engagement with men that can be described only as a new covenant, and one far more precious than any heretofore revealed. The contrast the apostle draws is between the covenant of Moses on the one hand, and this new covenant sealed by the atoning blood of Jesus on the other; and he declares the new covenant to be of the spirit rather than the letter. For, says he, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

2. Now, the Mosaic covenant did possess a glory that is not to be despised. The apostle refers to it as "the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones"; by which he means that as the matter worked out in practice, while the old covenant could condemn sin, it could not save from sin. Nevertheless it was revealed amid a demonstration of divine glory such as Israel had never before beheld. For forty days Moses tarried in the presence of God, receiving from His hand the terms of this new testament; and when He returned to the camp of Israel, his face shone with a holy radiance so bright that the Children of Israel could not look upon it. And we are told that Moses wore a veil on his face to hide the dazzling splendor of God's glory that shone from his countenance.

3. The most significant thing about this experience, and the thought which Saint Paul is endeavoring most to emphasize, is that this glory on the face of Moses was a passing, and not a permanent thing. The real purpose which was served by the veil on Moses' face, asserts the inspired apostle, was not to conceal the glory itself, but to conceal the fact that that glory was already fading away. The Revised Version brings this out clearly in its rendering of the original account in Exodus 34. It is true the Jews believed it a permanent glory, and not a passing thing; and that would and did lead them to look upon the covenant of Moses, of which

the glory in Moses' face was but an attestation, as an end in itself and not, as God intended it should be, "a school-master to bring them to Christ." Consequently "the veil is upon their heart." Their minds are darkened by the prejudice that is born of misunderstanding. The only hope for such a deceived heart is that it will turn to the Lord.

4. It is just here, asserts the apostle, that the superiority of the new covenant is to be found. That was passing; but this, revealed in Christ, made possible to us by His shed blood, and ministered to us by the blessed Holy Spirit, abides forever with a glory that is ever increasing rather than ever passing away. The Revised Version brings out this glorious truth with crystal clarity: "But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."

### II. There is a tone of immediacy about this assurance that is all-important for us.

1. The experience Paul describes in these words is to be enjoyed here and now, in this present world. The tense employed by the writer places within the reach of us all the privileges of the new covenant. "We, . . . beholding . . . are changed." It is a present tense experience, one which the apostle is himself enjoying; and his assumption is that all of the new Israel of God have access to this same grace. In 2 Cor. 4:2 the apostle records his conduct in the presence of this revelation. "We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but . . . commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." He declares, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels," these frail temples moreover, that "God *hath* shined in our hearts," and that of clay. These expressions all speak of a marvelous revelation of the grace and glory of God committed to men who are living on the earth. The experience is one for this present world.

2. The apostle's language implies, moreover, a clear spiritual vision. It is a clear view of the face of Jesus Christ. No longer do the clouds and shadows and darkness of sin and selfishness and malice hide that lovely face. It becomes our privilege to view His countenance with our faces unveiled. It is also a clear vision of men and things. Sin distorts the relationship between things and persons until the judgment is warped and the normal sense of proportion fails to function. Jesus once healed a blind man by giving him two touches of that healing hand. After the first touch it is stated that the recipient of Christ's mercy saw "men as trees walking." That is, they loomed up entirely too large. And there is many a child of God who falls into bondage to men and their opinions because of a similar distortion of vision. Christ has a second touch, however, that will enable one to see all things clearly.

3. But the apostle implies an equally clear, undistorted reflection of the face of Christ. Just as the moon gathers up the rays of the sun and reflects them to a world otherwise shrouded in darkness, so must the followers of Christ reflect His image to a world sitting in moral darkness and the shadow of death. Men have lost sight of the face of our Lord today; but they are scanning the faces of His followers, hoping they may discern something of His lineaments there. And Christ expects that we shall reflect "as a mirror the glory of the Lord."

4. Above all, it is a growing and increasingly blessed relationship. It is this quality that the apostle is at most pains to assert. Herein lies the chief distinction of the new covenant as contrasted with the old. That was but the shadow of good things to come and so was illuminated with a passing glory. But this is the very image of those things and is marked by a glory that is constantly increasing. We behold His glory with faces unveiled, and are changed from glory to

glory by the Spirit of God. This is rightly called "the glory that excelleth."

### III. But what, in a word is this "glory that excelleth"?

1. It is a glorious relationship. From strangers and foreigners Christ has made us the sons of God by gracious adoption. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

2. It is, furthermore, a glorious deliverance. From the load of sin that crushed us to earth we have been set free by forgiveness. From the depraved instincts and tendencies of our carnal natures we have been cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. In the stead of pollution and condemnation, we are privileged to enjoy purity and freedom.

3. It is, finally, a glorious prospect; as someone has said, "the glory of going on." It is the glory of traveling a road that leads into an increasing Christlikeness, until His blessed face is reflected with the absolute minimum of distortion. Here is enough of grace and glory to satisfy every longing of my poor heart. I am resolved to enjoy it to the full.

## EVENING SERVICE

### The Pathway to God

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Isaiah 55.

**TEXT**—*Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon* (Isa. 55:6, 7).

I. There is a beautiful incident recorded in the ninth chapter of 2 Samuel that affords a perfect picture of a sinner redeemed. King David, at last secure upon his throne, recalls the men whose loyalty made possible this victory. Of all the men with whom he had been associated during the days when he was a fugitive, there was no one to whom his heart was so closely knit as Jonathan, the son of King Saul. It was at great personal sacrifice that Jonathan had espoused the cause of David; for he himself was the logical heir to the throne. It is a magnificent commentary on the character of this man that, despite the fact that by the plan of God, David was the heir to the throne that was logically his, he nevertheless gave his heart to David. Now, after Jonathan's untimely death, David recalls the debt he owed to him, and through him, to the house of Saul. The king inquired, therefore, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" It was then brought to his attention that Jonathan had a son, named Mephibosheth; a poor, wretched fellow, lame in both feet. There was little of the glory of his grandfather, Saul, lingering in this broken hulk of humanity. However that mattered not at all with David. He commanded him to be brought from his miserable home in Lodebar and be given a home in Jerusalem, where he "did eat continually at the king's table." It was a marvelous transformation for Mephibosheth; and so far as he was concerned, it was entirely undeserved. It came to him, not for his own sake, but for the sake of his father Jonathan. It was a lovely story in itself; but its greatest significance lies in the manner in which it typifies the mercy of God to a lost and helpless world.

### II. God is dealing with a helpless, crippled, rebel world, deserving rather of hell than of heaven.

1. God does not spare language in His Word in describing the moral chaos and degradation wrought in human life by sin. He describes the heart of man as "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." He declares the moral state of the sinner to be one of wounds, bruises and putrify-

ing sores. He makes it clear that we are a lost race, hell-bent and hell-bound. But the tragedy of sin lies in the fact that God fashioned for us something far nobler than this. It was His purpose that we should live in the King's presence and be children of the royal household. It is from this holy purpose on the part of the Father that we have departed. Such a departure is clearly implied by His exhortation to "Return unto the Lord."

2. Now, the grand truth of the gospel is this: that what has been forfeited through sin may be recovered through grace. It is more than a mere salvage of the broken hulks of humanity, blasted and all but damned forever. God undertakes to remake us, to regenerate, to recreate us anew in the image of God. He offers us a place at the King's table, and purposes that we shall be "kings and priests unto God." "He is able," declared the writer to the Hebrews, "to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him" (Christ). From the "uttermost" to the uttermost is God's gracious plan.

3. This blessed boon is offered us, not for our own sake, but for Jesus' sake. There is little about us that would suggest royal blood and birth. The original purpose of God has been so obscured by sin, and that obscurity in us has become so marked that one with less power and compassion than God would have pronounced us hopeless. But for the sake of His Son who died to save us, He invites from our Lodebar to His own table. What marvelous forbearance and mercy are thus revealed!

4. And we ourselves alone can hinder the consummation of this redemptive plan. Jesus relates the story of the men invited to the marriage feast who all with one consent began to make excuse. All of the king's kindness was defeated by the unwillingness of those he would have as his guests. And so may we defeat God's best purpose, a purpose hallowed by the shed blood of Jesus, by our own wilfulness.

### III. It is some such appeal God is making in the language of Isaiah in this text, "Seek ye the Lord."

1. God is a seeking God. He pursues men and overtakes them. He lays siege to these hearts and endeavors to win them. As Bunyan conceived it, man is a city called "Mansoul" and Prince Immanuel has us beleaguered with His righteous forces; while within us is one Prince Diabolus, determined we shall not capitulate. Saint Paul declares that Christ's pursuit of him ended eventually in his arrest; from which hour he was "the prisoner of the Lord." Through the cross of our Lord, and by the active ministry of the Holy Spirit, God is seeking men.

2. But men must seek God. God has turned to men in mercy; now must men turn to God in contrition. Aroused to a sense of danger and need, a man must cry out, "What shall I do to be saved?" What escape is offered me? A man thus moved is bound to find God. When seeker meets Seeker, salvation results.

3. But to seek God is not to engage in an endless searching, a dust-raising performance, to no purpose. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" asks one of the characters in the Book of Job. It must be admitted that there are some roads down which men seek, but which do not lead to Him. But there is a way that leads unerringly to His presence.

a. To seek is to forsake. The sinner must forsake his way—his habits of life that have debauched and cursed and damned him. The unrighteous man—outwardly erect, but inwardly groveling—must forsake his thoughts. Our ways are so different from God's ways that there must come to pass within us a revolution. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount revealed most graphically the great gulf fixed between the ways of God and the ways of man. Therefore, a man must forsake his own ways. It is more than merely accepting Christ to become a Christian. Christ will not enter a

heart that has not forsaken sin and the ways of worldliness and wilfulness.

b. But to seek is to return. Here is true repentance, not only *from sin*, but *toward God*. A man must hate sin, not only because it is intrinsically evil, but also because it is an offense against God himself. David prayed in that repentant 51st Psalm, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." The pathway of repentance is the road that returns a man to God.

4. Then God engages Himself to grant mercy and pardon. "He will have mercy," declares the prophet. "He will abundantly pardon." Literally, God will "multiply to pardon." He will throw all the resources of His gracious personality into the accomplishment of a genuine forgiveness for the sinner.

#### IV. But there is a fearful danger hinted here, too.

1. It is plainly intimated that God may not always be found; will not always be near. He had better be sought while there is some hope of finding Him.

2. But why should this be true? There are a number of reasons.

a. The disposition to return to God cannot be invoked at will. It is wrought in a man by the Holy Ghost. A man must return to God in the day of the Spirit's awakening.

b. Moreover, there is a relentless hardening process going on in the soul. Just as age hardens our physical tissues, so does age harden the set of our souls. We may reach the place eventually where we lack capacity for repentance.

c. There comes a time in many lives when God says of them, "Ephraim is joined to his idols: let him alone." It is fearful to think about; but the whole record of religious biography, as well as the repeated warning of God's Word, indicate that this is a real danger.

God is forever crying, "Now! Now! Now is the accepted time!" And men are forever replying, "Tomorrow! Tomorrow! Tomorrow I will repent and find mercy!" May God give us ears to hear the challenge of this truth and be saved.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

**The Secret of Power**

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Acts 1:1-14.

TEXT—*Shamgar slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad, and delivered Israel*" (Judges 3:31). *But the children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle*" (Psalm 78:9).

I. The incidents set forth in these texts, and the characters of the persons involved, are shrouded in the greatest obscurity. One verse alone records the achievements of Shamgar; while there is no agreement among Bible scholars as to the exact occasion of the perfidy of Ephraim. Yet the dust of thirty centuries is not sufficient to cloud the striking contrast between these two records.

1. It should be noted that the basic difference between them is not one of methods, but of men. Indeed from the natural point of view one would suppose that victory would have been on the side of numbers and material equipment. Shamgar was lone-handed, armed only with an ox goad; while the children of Ephraim were more numerous and well armed. But it was Shamgar who, contrary to all expectation, was the victor; and the children of Ephraim, despite their numbers and equipment, fled from the field.

2. These contrasting incidents are an illustration of the fact stated by the Prophet Zechariah that victories are won "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Superior equipment and strength of num-

bers cannot substitute for the spirit that makes a man a victor. This has been proved repeatedly in the history of the armies of the living God. Gideon's three hundred men were more than a match for a vast horde of Midianites. One with God shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight.

3. What was it that made Shamgar a victor, despite his lack of suitable weapons, the lack of which turned the children of Ephraim into cowards? It was that inner quality of soul called spiritual power. What Shamgar lacked in his hand he possessed in his heart. And the superior equipment of the sons of Ephraim could not atone for the lack of this inner spiritual discipline.

#### II. God's Word has much to say about the power of the spirit.

1. It should be noted, in the interest of clear understanding, that there are two words for power used by the New Testament writers. One of them means authority or privilege and is used by Saint John in the first chapter of his Gospel, "As many as received him [Christ], to them gave he *power* to become the sons of God." Acceptance of Christ conferred certain blessed privileges upon them, and among others the privilege of sonship through gracious adoption. The other term translated "power" means force or effectiveness. Jesus used it in His last promise before His ascension, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me." Christ here is speaking of a new dynamic or energy which is to move in and upon men who received the Holy Ghost in His fullness. Now, both of these terms are descriptive of Christian experience, and it is the privilege of all men to know the grace and blessing which they signify. It is the latter meaning, however, that is set forth in these contrasting scriptures of our text.

2. The Spirit's power resides in personality. It is true, Saint Paul declares that "your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost." But the term "body" is used thus in an accommodated sense. The human spirit resides in a physical body; but the Holy Spirit resides in a human spirit. The Spirit of God and the spirit of man are so interfused and commingled as to seem, if not actually to be, one spirit. Thus completely would God possess our human personalities.

a. Personality is a discovery of this modern age; but God has understood its laws from the beginning. The important thing about a man, as God regards him, is his personality. I heard Dr. T. Z. Koo, eminent Chinese Christian, say that the first great revelation which the gospel made to him was that of the worth of the individual. All his life he had thought of himself as one item in a vast aggregation of mankind, so inconsequential that his death or survival could mean very little. But the gospel taught him that he was a man possessing spiritual potentialities of the very highest worth; a man for whom Christ died and over whose life God was yearning. The gospel thus gave him a new sense of his personal worth.

b. It is this personality that God proposes to sanctify and fill with His Spirit. He wants to possess our intelligence and understanding; our memory and will; in order that every expression of our inner life shall be glorifying to Him. Not our body, as a blind unthinking agent, but our spirit wholly yielded to the Spirit of God; our choices and ambitions and ideals dictated by His blessed will; this is God's desire for us.

c. It is amazing what God can do with ordinary men who are possessed by His Spirit. Shamgar and his ox goad seemed to offer few possibilities; but in God's hand they became mighty. Gideon, reduced to three hundred men armed only with torches and pitchers and a leather-lunged shout of victory, overcame the Midianites. Peter, rough and clumsy fisherman that he was, in God's hand became a mighty

apostle. Paul, blinded and prejudiced by his rabbinical training, was transformed in an instant and made a vessel meet for the Master's use. These men were what they were only by the power of the Spirit resident within them.

### III. What, we may well ask, is this spiritual power?

1. It is a power that delivers from defilement and cleanses the heart from every sinful propensity. Every carnal obsession, every hateful disposition, every lustful desire, every malicious tendency in the soul can be cleansed away. Too many have offered apology for the flaws in their characters or dispositions by describing them as "my weakness" or "my temper." Near the city of Haverhill, Mass., is the birthplace of the poet Whittier. Just off the spacious kitchen of the old home is the bedroom of the poet's mother, its floor elevated some three steps above the level of the kitchen floor. An attendant explains that there is a huge rock beneath the house at that point; and since the rock could not be moved, the room was built over it. So many have built their structure of character over and around some blemish of soul that could be blasted out by the power of God; but, unwilling to take the heroic way, they have apologized for and accommodated themselves to their weakness. But the power of the Spirit is a dynamite that can eradicate that blemish and enable one to build a character symmetrical and full of grace.

2. The power of the Spirit is, moreover, a divine energy, a dynamic, enabling to victory. He can not only deliver; He can maintain the soul thus delivered in a daily walk in harmony with the will of God. The old hymn:

"How tedious and tasteless the hours  
When Jesus no longer I see!"

has been changed to a song of glorious triumph.

### IV. But the power of the Spirit is rigidly conditioned. Its laws must be faithfully observed.

1. It cannot be received except on God's terms. God requires, first of all, a humble confession of need—and acknowledgment of uncleanness of heart. God's gift is not for self-sufficient souls. There must be, in the second place, a complete and final commitment of all to the will of God. Every trace of stubbornness and rebellious disposition must yield before the will of God until nothing remains within the heart but a complete and final "Amen." There must be, finally, a faith that appropriates the grace of holiness. Without a disposition to take God at His word and risk everything on His promise, there can be no potent contact with the cleansing, enabling power of God. It is of absolute importance that one wait humbly before God until the blessed Spirit comes in sanctifying power. Dr. A. C. Dixon observes that the power of Niagara serves a multitude of purposes. It warms homes and cooks breakfasts in Toronto. It propels street cars in Buffalo and illuminates a hundred cities within its radius. And over in Auburn, N. Y., at the state prison it electrocutes criminals who are under sentence of death. But all of this power is occasioned by the fact that the Niagara Gorge is many scores of feet lower than the brink of the Falls. It is the humility of the Gorge, so to speak, in getting down low that makes power possible. And for the man who will humble himself and wait for the Spirit's coming there is an experience of power that will illuminate and warm the soul, propel it in its life for God, sustain it with food convenient, and put to death the criminal within, the carnal mind.

2. And, finally, it can be maintained only by a faithful observance of its condition. It requires the same devotion to retain the Spirit that it required to obtain the Spirit. Have you received this delivering, enabling grace? "It is for us all today."

## EVENING SERVICE

### Do You Know Christ?

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 1:19-34.

TEXT—*There standeth one among you, whom ye know not* (John 1:26).

I. The scene where these words were spoken was the Jordan valley, where John the Baptist had challenged the attention of all Palestine by his dynamic, prophetic ministry. There was something about this uncouth son of the desert that turned back the hands of the clock to the days of Elijah. In an age marked chiefly by its timorous lack of conviction and its pitiful absences of authority and morality, the preaching of the Baptist was arousing, if not actually alarming. While the common people thronged him and found grace and healing in his words, the authorities in Jerusalem found in him a potential menace and endeavored discreetly to analyze the true inspiration of his message. But with absolute impartiality and magnificent courage he denounced the sins of men of both high and low degree, and called both alike to repentance.

1. Not the least noteworthy feature of John's ministry lay in the self-denying spirit by which he was actuated. As a matter of fact, he was called of God to a ministry of apparent failure. It was given him to draw the multitudes to his preaching, only to see those same multitudes fall away and go after his great Successor, Jesus of Nazareth. But this was God's purpose from the first. John was the forerunner, come to announce the approach of the Messiah; and when that task was finished, his work was well-nigh done. The spirit of the man stands forth with crystal clarity when, reminded that Jesus and His disciples were baptizing more followers than he had, he replied, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

2. His great task was to identify and designate the Messiah and prepare the way before Him. For one who reads the first chapter of John's Gospel there can be no doubt as to his faithfulness to this responsibility. "Behold the Lamb of God!" he cried. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" But nowhere does he display greater discernment than in the language of this text; for here John announces the Greater-than-he with the words: "There standeth one among you, whom ye know not." In their midst stood the long-awaited One, but their eyes were so blind that they did not recognize Him. For centuries they had anticipated this hour, only to miss it when it came.

3. The world never recognizes its great men; and by the same blindness it failed to recognize its Lord. In any age the men who bulk large in the eyes of their contemporaries are not, as a rule, the men that history recognizes as the great men of the age. Today there are names screamed at us from every newspaper headline and blared at us from our radio; the names of men who hold in their hands the issue of peace and war for half of the peoples of the world. But when the history of these days is written in sober and discriminating afterthought, most of them will be reduced to the level of demagogues; while greatness will be found to have resided in men who today are being crucified. It was even so with Jesus. His day and generation, led by Caiaphas, Herod, and Pontius Pilate, crucified Him; but today their names are a byword and a hissing, while His is the "name high over all."

### II. There is a timeless quality in the words of the Baptist that renders them as challenging today as when he spoke them in Judea.

1. One would think that, with such identification as John gave, Christ would have been gladly received. What a shame that it was not so! His word, freighted with grace and mercy, was an offense. The enemies of our Lord were forever distorting His clearest teachings into different and offensive meanings and seeking to employ them to bring condemnation

upon Him. His deeds of compassion, prompted by a heart that suffered in truest sympathy with the sorrows of men, were a constant source of bickering and strife. And eventually His enemies accomplished their fondest purpose: they bound Him to a Roman cross where He bled His life away. This was the attitude of the first century toward the greatest One who ever lived.

2. But today there standeth One among us. The cross did not take Jesus out of the stream of human history. Rather it put Him at the very center and heart of it. In the midst of this tangled skein of modern things—warfare, poverty, pestilence, famine, man's inhumanity to man—stands Jesus, the silent Observer of the whole disordered scene. He looks today upon marching men and the implements of war assembled for carnage. He sees the bleeding hearts of mothers and wives, robbed of their dearest and best by idiotic leaders, drunk with power and self-esteem. In the midst of our personal lives, with their ambitions, appetites, disappointments, sorrows and fears—Christ is present. We may never acknowledge and bow the knee to Him, but we cannot escape. We may deny Him a place in our hearts, but we cannot prevent Him knocking at our door.

### III. Yes, Christ is present today, but men know Him not.

1. Ours is an age of much talk about Jesus, but little loyalty to Him. He never before had so many biographers and interpreters as now; and sometimes we are almost forced to believe that in no age has He been so completely ignored as in this. Renan has written of Him as an idealist ahead of His age. Papini has found Him a perfect Roman Catholic Savior. G. Stanley Hall has applied the laws of abnormal psychology to Him, in an effort to understand the amazing structure of His mind. But all alike have failed to apprehend the true significance of this amazing Man.

2. Men may live all their days and never know Him—"though he be not far from every one of us." They may enjoy the reflected benefits of His life, yet never once recognize Him. The Master spoke of one man who was "not far from the kingdom of God." But to be nearby is not enough. A man must get into the kingdom, and into saving touch with the Lord of the kingdom, if he would experience the redeeming power of the kingdom message.

### IV. But the tragedy of this ignorance of the Greatest-of-all lies in the fact that it is so unnecessary: men may know Him if they will.

1. A man has capacity for God; the power to apprehend Him and take Him into the life. Indeed, as Augustine has said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God; and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee." It is this that gives dignity and worth to life; that makes it a thing too precious to be snuffed out into extinction. It is this that God describes as eternity set in the heart; the power to know God through Christ, and live a life of obedience to and harmony with Him.

2. But moreover, Christ is a seeking Savior. He came to earth "to seek and to save that which was lost." What a seeker was Jesus! He threw convention and prejudice overboard and went directly through Samaria to find a woman of Sychar. He made a journey by boat across the Sea of Galilee to find a fierce demoniac and heal him. He saved His disciples from their sins and was forever saving them from themselves down to the very shadow of the cross. Even yet, by the blessed Spirit, He is seeking men; you and me; yearning over us with an infinite longing.

3. The secret of knowing Him is to be found in receiving Him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not," declares John, "but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." This method is so divine and yet so simple that many a man misses it entirely, and to his eternal sorrow.

4. There is this final truth: that they may close their eyes

to His presence here, but one fearful day they will see Him. It is the day of His coming; and "every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him." We have not pierced Him with spikes and spear and crown of thorns; but we have pierced Him through with many sorrows—the sorrows inflicted by our rejection of Him. God, give us eyes and heart for the Son of God.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

### What Shall I Render Unto God?

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Psalm 116.

TEXT—*What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people* (Psalm 116:12-14).

1. There is no clearer mark of the influence of our Christian faith upon our national customs than the institution of Thanksgiving Day. In these days of ingratitude, when men have largely forgotten the divine source of every good and perfect gift, it is a salutary thing that we be reminded that from God proceedeth these mercies. As men and women gather in places of worship this morning, their hearts are moved to gratitude and praise; and as they gather in churches and around laden tables next Thursday, there should be a sacrifice of praise offered up to the infinite Giver.

1. There are, first of all, the creature comforts of our lives—blessings we are apt to accept as a matter of course or as the fruitage of our own labor. Our homes, with all their conveniences; our raiment; the food by which we live; all these are the gift of a loving and merciful God. He does not cease to give when we forget to praise, but continues to open His hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

2. There are, moreover, the blessings of friendship and fellowship—among the most precious things in life. Friendship is a most gracious and hallowed relationship, more intimate sometimes than those relationships that are sanctified by the martial bond. It is a shame to confess it, though it is true: there are husbands and wives who are not friends, in the truest sense. What a precious thing it is, then, to have friends, and to enjoy the understanding fellowship that is born of friendship!

3. There is, furthermore, the ministry of God's grace in our lives. It has assumed a multitude of forms and reaches us through divers channels. God's prevenient grace has withstood us. His providential grace has protected. His saving grace has transformed us. His sanctifying grace has made our hearts the temples of His Spirit. His sustaining grace has upheld us even until now. Surely there is no mercy comparable to the grace of God.

4. There are, in addition, those benefits that come to us in disguise; angels that we entertain unawares. We did not invite them; and when they came, we were loath to admit them. They were unwelcome strangers at our doors, received only under the pressure of an unavoidable circumstance. But they remained to bless us with their ministry of help and healing. We wept for sorrow at their coming, and wept again for sorrow at their leaving, so precious did their presence become.

5. Now, moved by gratitude, the psalmist inquires, and we should inquire with him, what can we render unto God in return for His goodness? What can I do for God for what He has done for me?

a. There is little enough that we actually do for God. Dr. George Eliot, for many years editor of the *Methodist Review*, tells of a church he was appointed to serve in the city of Baltimore. There was a group of people in that church that met once a week to talk over what God had done for them.

One week, however, the pastor proposed that in this service they should not mention what God had done for them, but should, rather, tell what they had done for God. The result was that the meeting ended without testimony. I fear that situation exists in counterpart quite generally throughout the Church.

b. But, on the other hand, there is little that we actually *can* do for Him. While there are gracious possibilities of service for the soul who lives in the center of the will of God, as channels for His flowing and instruments for His using; yet in the last analysis, our best service must seem to His infinite vision unprofitable.

**II. Now, David found a novel and striking answer to this vital question. "I will take the cup of salvation," he cries.**

1. What a paradoxical thing this is! "What shall I render? I will take." In return for the mercy and goodness of God, I will take more mercy and more goodness. As a token of my gratitude to Him for the cup of salvation, I will drink more deeply still of that blessed cup. How strange that is! And yet, how like God—the God of all grace—it is!

2. But the psalmist does not at all think in terms of further benefits. It is "the cup of salvation" that he will take. I have received life and health, home and loved ones, food and raiment at His hands. But now I will take His supreme gift—the cup of salvation—even Christ. For there is a note of prophecy about this and many other of the Psalms. David also is among the prophets. And the cup of salvation is no other than Christ our Lord. God does not care for our fullsome expressions of gratitude for creature comforts if we reject His Son.

**III. Moreover, declares the psalmist, "I will call upon the name of the Lord."**

That is worship, and worship of the sort God deeply craves and we sorely need. It may be a prayer. Prayer is perhaps the most worshipful attitude the soul can assume; and especially the prayer of adoration, when a man lingers in the presence of God, not to get anything from Him, but for sheer love of Him. It may be praise, wherein the full heart overflows with gratitude to the great Giver. How like thoughtless children we are, receiving bountifully, but never stopping to say so much as a passing "Thank you" to our infinite Benefactor. It may be testimony, wherein we tell abroad the wonder of God's grace as we have come to know it. God's bounty is not dispensed in a corner; and we who receive it should be bold to bless Him for it in the great congregation. It may be meditation, wherein the soul sits in solitude and reflects on the manner and measure of the blessing of the Lord. Meditation is one of the lost arts, and our rushing, crowded world is far from a congenial place for the practice of it. It would greatly enrich us if we could only recover this vital exercise. Or, again, our worship may be the cup of cold water given in Jesus' name; some loving service, ministered alike to friend and enemy, that reflects the spirit of the Master. All of this is implicit, I believe, in the psalmist's declaration.

It is tragic that we understand so little the meaning of worship. We give such scant place to reverence in our places of worship. We know so little of the meaning of Habakkuk's words, "The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." In results our devotion is so lean and our characters so sparsely furnished with grace. We must have a revival of wonder and worship.

**IV. But David carried the matter one step farther with the words, "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people."**

1. "My vows." We all have them. In times of affliction and adversity we have made promises to God, only to forget them straightway the danger is removed. But God never

forgets them and He expects us to keep them. Indeed the human side of a walk with God is a keeping of vows. We have entered upon covenant relations with the Almighty, and we dare not fail Him.

2. "I will pay." Nothing else will satisfy God and ease a troubled conscience but a forthright resolution such as that. At any cost of treasure and humiliation, I will pay my vows.

3. "In the presence of all his people." And why should our performance of our vows be thus public? Faithlessness is no secret—why should repentance be?

4. And I will do it "now." The matter has been too long delayed. I have dealt with God in terms of tomorrow long enough. I will perform my vows *now*. And so impressed was the psalmist with the importance of this that he came back to it in the closing words of the psalm (verses 18, 19), "I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem." And most fittingly, with the matter thus determined, he concluded his psalm with a shout of victory; "Praise the Lord!"

## EVENING SERVICE

### The Court of Last Appeal

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 9:1-25.

TEXT—*He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see (John 9:25).*

I. There is scarcely a chapter in the Gospels that bears on its face such conclusive evidence of its truth as does this one. The narrative flows along with amazing ease and every situation depicted in the story seems highly probable.

Perhaps the most striking element in it is the picture of human depravity it presents in the attitude of the unbelieving Pharisees. One would have difficulty in believing, were it not for this evidence, that men could be so evasive of truth so perfectly obvious.

1. Christ had performed a remarkable healing. Here was a man who had been blind from birth. He was a man of mature years, a member of a well-known family. There was probably no man attending the local synagogue who was a more familiar sight than he. Then one blessed day Jesus came along. Moved with compassion, He made a bit of clay moistened with spittle, anointed the blind man's eyes, and told him to go to the pool of Siloam and wash. He obeyed, and his eyes were opened forthwith. Here was the miracle.

2. The one concern of these Pharisees, however, was to minimize the wonder of this healing in the hope thereby of discrediting the Man who had wrought it. The fact that the healing was performed on the Sabbath gave them their only point of assault. "This man is not of God," they said, "for he keepeth not the sabbath day." Others of the Pharisees were not so sure, saying, "Can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" On the principle that any port will do in a storm, the former point of view prevailed, and Christ was branded a sinner.

3. But the man who had been healed demolished that argument with a few deft strokes. "Why herein is a marvelous thing," he said, "that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened my eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." There was no answer to such reasoning, and the Pharisees could only revile him.

4. But appeal was finally taken to the highest tribunal known among worldly minded men—the court of experience.



"I do not know the name of my benefactor," declared the healed man. "I do not know how he hath accomplished my healing. Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not. One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Here was a substantial, incontrovertible fact. A man blind from birth could now see, and one Jesus had wrought this change. There was no escaping this definite bit of experience; no appeal beyond this court.

## II. Can a man have definite knowledge of divine things? Is it possible to say with conviction, "One thing I know"?

1. There is a terrible uncertainty prevailing among modern men. Indeed the very spirit of modernity is one of cynicism and doubt. Dr. Clarence Edward Macartney has published a book of sermons, entitled, "Sermons from Life." They are based upon actual life situations that have come to light in the course of his pastoral ministry. In many instances they represent a tragic loss of faith and hope. Such titles as "If I Had Only Known Then What I Know Now," "Every Man Has His Own Ladder Down to Hell," "If I Had My Life to Live Over Again," and "I Believe I Am Going to Hell"—these titles tell the tragic story of uncertainty that is driving men to despair.

Every pastor has had to meet that same uncertainty in the lives of men who are blasted by misfortune, disillusioned and cynical. We meet it again in homes where death has entered and the bereaved ones are tempted to question the goodness of God and the life everlasting. I had a letter from a woman who had watched her mother die in a coma without opening her eyes to give one last sign of recognition. Pouring out the anguish of her soul, she said, "I had so hoped for some evidence of an immortal vision, some lighting of the countenance or expression of rapture, to prove to me there is a beyond. In the absence of such a sign, I am left without hope." I replied that our faith in a future life does not rest for its validation upon such deathbed experiences, but upon the sure word of promise. But her letter gave a new insight into the prevailing uncertainty in the minds of men.

2. But faith is still possible to any soul who will honestly obey God and put Him to the test. Jesus challenged every thinking man in His words, "If any man willet to do his will, *he shall know.*" There is a knowledge more settled and sure than the laws of the science of mathematics, or the postulates of the modern sciences. It cannot be attained by study and reflection; nor can the speculations of philosophy offer the sure word we crave. Jesus said that the man who places his will alongside of, and absolutely in accord with, the will of God, will know. He opens his heart to a revelation of God that cannot be experienced otherwise.

Indeed, the method Jesus announces is in perfect harmony with the experimental method of modern science. Science rests upon observation and experience. And a man can find assurance and absolute certainty by this same method. Will to do God's will and you shall know.

## III. But there is one great tragedy in human life, and we must recognize that fact if we hope for healing.

1. Sin is a universal fact. It cannot be rationalized or minimized. It is blighting and debasing and blasting and damning men throughout the world today just as tragically as ever. And not the least appalling aspect of sin is the moral and spiritual blindness it involves. The man blind from birth was suffering a relatively rare physical affliction. But the blindness of sin is universal, save as men have been able to find deliverance through Christ. Our easy complacency toward sin, our condoning attitude that robs it of its horror, is absolutely without rational justification. It is still the tap root of every force that robs men of health and hope and heaven.

2. If men are ever to find deliverance from this fierce destroyer, they must feel its horror and enormity and confess

its guilt. "I was blind," declared the man born blind. Some one has said that the five most difficult words in our language to pronounce are these: "I was in the wrong." But they must be said from the heart if deliverance is to be found. David's cry—"I have sinned"—must echo through the corridors of the repentant soul.

## IV. Then comes the healing, saving touch.

1. "Jesus passed by." How full of quiet significance is that word! There is hope and inspiration in the assurance that the Savior is at hand. And He is still passing by. Stanley Jones found Him walking the Indian road. Livingstone traversed the African jungles with Him. Moody found Him in the Main Street of the world. And today He is within easy call.

2. Moreover He is still moved with compassion, is still touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Christ is yearning over the nations today, gripped though they are in a new passion of hatred and strife, just as He yearned over Jerusalem and Capernaum and Nazareth in the days of His flesh. He longs to give the healing touch today to the man blinded by sin, as He opened the eyes of the man born blind. The one need is not a greater drain on the power and mercy of Christ than the other.

3. Christ must have, furthermore, a willing subject obedient to His word. The man born blind was eager enough for healing to accept any ministry and obey any command the Savior offered him. Obedience and simple faith in the benevolent Stranger brought him deliverance. The same method will achieve the same results for the man in the grip of sin's blindness.

4. The result is an experience of salvation from the darkness and death of sin and a complete transformation of heart. The Savior's touch makes a man a new creature instantly. It is an experience that cannot be gainsaid. Whatever question may be raised, the fact remains, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." Such assurance is available to every man here and now. Have we made it ours?

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1939

## MORNING SERVICE

### Spiritual Discernment

#### SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—1 COR. 2.

TEXT—*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God (1 Cor. 2:12).*

I. This word of apostolic testimony, for such it is, stands in the midst of the most eloquent and interesting passages that ever flowed from the pen of Saint Paul.

1. It is addressed to the church at Corinth, a vine of Paul's own planting. Here in Corinth the apostle had spent eighteen of the best months of his life hewing out a kingdom. Under the blessing of God there had been a gracious turning to the Lord, many of the converts coming out of raw paganism.

a. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that some abuses and excesses arose in the church when the guiding hand of the apostle was removed. There were some in the church who began to deny the resurrection; while others, not yet fully recovered from their lifelong habits of intemperance, were guilty of perverting the sacrament of the Lord's Supper into a time of revelry and feasting. A reading of this first Corinthian letter will reveal with what a firm hand the apostle dealt with these abuses.

b. An equally serious and weakening effect was produced by a spirit of division that arose in the church. There were groups who gathered in spirit about their favorite Christian leader—Paul, Peter, Apollos—while others rejected all these human leaders in favor of Christ himself. It was

a tragic and debilitating condition and the apostle dealt with it in no uncertain terms.

2. These conditions among the Corinthian believers we must indeed regret. Yet the teaching which the inspired apostle gives in his effort to correct must always occasion our thanksgiving. The result is that we have that marvelous treatise on the Lord's Supper in chapter 11, the hymn of love in chapter 13, and the discussion of the resurrection in chapter 15. The literature of our Christian faith has thus been immeasurably enriched.

3. As the apostle deals with these truths, he makes some things very clear indeed.

a. There is a realm of truth beyond the power of the natural man to perceive. Neither his instincts nor his searching admit him into this realm. So long as he remains an unregenerate man, though he be surrounded on every side by a world of spiritual reality, he must be dead to its appeal and out of all correspondence with its life.

b. But it is made equally clear that God can so quicken men as to make them alive to this spiritual realm. A man can be born into the realm of spirit just as he has been born into the realm of flesh, his whole being made alive to and keenly aware of the nearness of God and the great facts of spiritual life.

c. It is clear, moreover, that Saint Paul professed to have been thus quickened. "We have received . . . the spirit which of God, . . . *that we may know*." Once his eyes were holden and his soul untouched by these things. But a moment of transformation has come; a moment when his eyes were opened, his ears unstopped, and his whole spirit attuned to the voice of God. And the quickening which he received is within the grasp of every other man. In consequence he declares we "Know the things that are freely given to us of God."

## II. Now, what are those things? And what is this knowledge that eludes man's normal powers of learning, but is laid wide open to the approach of faith?

1. The apostle's treatment of this theme is particularly appropriate in view of the constitution of the Corinthian church.

a. On the one hand were Jews, who sought after a sign. It was a national characteristic that they should be looking for some convincing demonstration. It was this same caving disposition to question and raise meaningless objection that Jesus had to contend with when He ministered in Palestine. His reply was to the effect that the only sign they could expect was that of His death and rising again after three days.

b. On the other hand were Greeks, whose devotion was largely to human wisdom and understanding. There is a sense in which the Greeks were the fathers of that spirit of modernity that has been endeavoring for long centuries to make the human self-sufficient. It is today as full of pride and self-esteem as ever and does not hesitate to lift itself up against God. But in the sight of God such wisdom is folly. It needs to be chastened into repentance and a humble submission to the will of God.

2. But the revelation of the truth as it is in Jesus is in a realm apart from either of these conceptions.

a. It is rooted deeply into the soil of earth in the fact of Jesus' life on earth; His crucifixion and death; His burial and resurrection. There is no possibility of making God's truth so transcendent that it rises above these terrible, yet glorious, facts. Men stumbled at them, and still stumble. Men of Jewish mind find in the cross a token of defeat, not victory. Men of Grecian temperament stand ready to brand the cross and the tomb as events devoid of significance for us.

b. But, declares the apostle, to them who have heard and obeyed God's call, submitting their own ideas and temperaments to the discipline of the gospel, Christ has become the power of God and the wisdom of God. The man who seeks

for power finds it in the power of Christ's resurrection. The man who seeks for wisdom finds it in the redemptive plan and purpose of God brought to actual conclusion in the cross of Christ.

3. This glorious revelation has not only a past and present, but also a future tense. It is true, "Eye hath, not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." Here is assurance for every future moment of life. It embraces the life that now is and that which is to come.

## III. Now, God can put His Spirit, the spirit of understanding, within men.

There are three classes of men, as the apostle conceives the matter: there are natural men, carnal men, and spiritual men.

1. The natural man is the unregenerate man. He "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him." The language of the kingdom is a foreign tongue to him. The ideals of the kingdom have not meaning for him. He is alive in body and alert in mind, but dead in spirit.

2. The carnal man is one possessing vision, but a vision that is distorted and obscured by the passions of his own depraved heart. As Saint Paul analyzes their condition, they are unable to digest the strong meat of the Word, and are torn in spirit by bickerings and strife. Thus their spiritual energies are largely neutralized by the double-minded and divided condition of their hearts.

3. Only the spiritual man, in Paul's judgment, is qualified to receive and understand the things of the Spirit. "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit" (the things He hath prepared for us). The words of this text confirm further this teaching: "We have received the spirit which is of God." "The things we speak . . . the Holy Ghost teacheth." "He that is spiritual judgeth all things."

There is an interesting contrast in 1 Cor. 2:11 which lends color to the apostle's argument. A man appreciates and understands the things that pertain to human life because he is a man. If a man were a cow, green grass would mean everything to him. But being a man, he has an appreciation for truth, beauty and goodness. Similarly, if a man would understand the things of God, he must be quickened by the Spirit of God. Here, then, is the spirit by which we know the things that are freely given to us of God. This is spiritual discernment.

## IV. And now, the question. Have we received this quickening?

We may be more sure of heaven than of earth. We may have a keener ear for God's voice than for man's. We may so live that our whole personality is open toward and attuned to heaven. Let us purpose, by God's grace, to be *spiritual*.

### EVENING SERVICE

#### Pain that Heals

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—2 Cor. 7.

TEXT—*The pain God is allowed to guide ends in a saving repentance never to be regretted, whereas the world's pain ends in death* (2 Cor. 7:10, Moffat).

I. The great Christian apostle is here addressing himself to one of the most difficult situations he had to face in all his extraordinary career. The church at Corinth was the result of Saint Paul's apostolic labors. He it was who preached the first gospel message in that pagan city and rallied to his standard those who accepted the truth. Some came from the local Jewish community. But by far the greater number were converted out of raw heathenism and became

followers of the great Galilean. It was a notable achievement for the apostle, but involved serious hazards and brought to his soul many a grief and heartache.

1. The city of Corinth itself was a difficult place in which to preach the gospel and hope for large results. It was a veritable sinkhole of iniquity and moral decay due to its cosmopolitan population and the debasing influence of a decadent paganism. Indeed, the infamy of Corinth was a matter of common report throughout the Roman empire. Debauchery and sin were so naturally associated with the name of Corinth that a new verb—"to corinthianize"—had been coined as a synonym for the verb "to play the wanton."

2. It is no occasion for surprise that a church in such a city and made up of people but lately recovered from such wretched practices should be rather easily seduced back into the old ways of sin. Such, indeed, was the case. A spirit of division had disturbed the unity of God's people and had divided them into warring groups devoted to some human leader rather than to Christ. Some of the Christian company were bringing action against fellow Christians in the heathen law courts, thus bringing reproach upon the cause of Christ before the heathen. Moreover the exercise of spiritual gifts had degenerated into fanaticism and bedlam until many of their services were marked by confusion worse confounded. Their women had forgotten their customary modesty and were thus bringing reproach upon the name of the Lord. Even the Holy Communion had become frequently a scene of drunken revelry. It seemed that the preaching of the great apostle had been utterly in vain.

3. When Saint Paul heard of this situation, he dealt with it with the utmost vigor. He addressed himself directly to each of the evils that had arisen and called for repentance in no uncertain terms. "I will come to you shortly," he warns, "if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?"

4. It was a vigorous, straightforward handling of a difficult situation, but it bore a gracious fruitage. His faithful chiding of them and his prayers for them brought them to repentance. They had never heard the great apostle speak quite so pointedly before, and they were pricked in their hearts. Their sorrow induced a genuine spirit of repentance, and they put away the evil thing from their lives. He was not sure, when he wrote them this bitter reproof, that the pain he inflicted upon them would bear such a harvest. He realized that it might only drive them deeper into their excesses. But God used the pain he caused them and made it bear the fruit of eternal life. "Godly sorrow," or, as Moffat has rendered it with rare insight, "the pain God is allowed to guide ends in a saving repentance never to be regretted."

## II. There is a lamentable lack of understanding of the true nature of repentance today, even among those who frequently use the word.

1. Some things we call repentance are absolutely misnamed. There is, for instance, the sorrow and shame of the man who is caught in his iniquity. A young man of loose habits, unwilling to be warned, awakens from a drunken debauch to find he is in jail. He is filled with remorse, but not at all because of the reckless living that has eventuated in his arrest. Rather, his remorse is occasioned only by the fact that his drunken spree has ended in this shameful fashion. There is, again, the sorrow of the man who smarts under the disapproval of his fellows for his shameful life. I saw an intoxicated man come to an altar one night and pray most earnestly for deliverance from strong drink. But when he discovered that a Christian life meant deliverance from every other evil and unclean habit, he protested vigorously. He could use tobacco and still be decent, he thought; but he could not drink intoxicating liquor and retain his decency. It was

not the approval of God he sought, but the approval of his fellowmen. His sorrow did not bring him to repentance. I met a man one day who was suffering fearfully from arthritis, due entirely to sinful indulgence. His was a painful situation; but never once in our conversation did he indicate any sincere repentance for the sinful life that had brought him to this place. He was remorseful over the consequences of his sin, but not at all for the sin that was the underlying reason for it all.

2. Now, this is what Saint Paul means by "the sorrow of the world." And he declares that it "worketh death." It only goads men on to indulge more heavily in the thing that has already brought them to the brink of hell. There is no salvation in such remorse. It does not accomplish any moral transformation. It affords no pathway to God.

## III. Now what is the way of true repentance?

1. It begins in a "godly sorrow." Moffat has brought out an infinite wealth of meaning in that expression by this translation: "A pain God is allowed to guide ends in a saving repentance never to be regretted." If only God is permitted to direct the pain of remorse that fills the soul, as a skillful surgeon holds and directs his scalpel, He will use it to lance the festering sore of sin in the heart and bring a man to healing and health. If He is refused the guidance of that pain, the end will be disastrous in the extreme. But in His hand it will "end in a saving repentance never to be regretted."

2. True repentance, furthermore, is based upon a realization of the fact that my sin is not simply my business, but is a part of God's business as well. It concerns far more than myself and my loved ones when I choose a life of shame and transgression. It concerns God, intimately and vitally. David understood this when he cried, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." He had sinned against the sanctity of his own home and the home of a trusted servant. That was true. But his act of sin was so much more an offense against God than against any other that these lesser relationships of his paled into insignificance. This was Paul's message when he exhorted to "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. But such repentance is possible only through the Spirit's conviction. In Moffat's words, God must guide and use the pain of remorse to bring the sinner to deep consciousness of his sin.

## IV. But such repentance is followed by glorious results.

1. It ends in "a saving repentance never to be regretted." Here is the healing mission of the divinely directed pain. Nothing but the forgiveness and mercy of a loving God can give relief to the soul oppressed with guilt. Remorse, contrition and repentance, in the goodness of God, lead to salvation—the way that has no regrets.

2. And its only alternative is this grim assertion, that "the world's pain ends in death." It is the pain of the world versus the pain that is guided by God. They begin so near together. They end eternities apart. Which shall it be for us?

## Be Content

Learn to be contented with your condition. Is that animal better that hath twice two or three mountains to graze on than a little bee that feeds on dew or manna and lives on what falls each morning from the storehouse of heaven? Can a man quench his thirst better out of a river than full cup, or drink better from the fountain which is finely paved with marble than when it wells over the green turf?—TAYLOR.

## Expository Outlines for November

Lewis T. Corlett

### Christian Living

(Romans 13:7-14)

#### I. EACH CHRISTIAN HAS THE GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE OF PUTTING INTO PRACTICE IN EVERYDAY LIFE THE PRINCIPLES OF HOLINESS

1. God imparts and implants these principles in the divine nature given in Christian experience.
2. Christian experience is the beginning of Christian living.
3. Each child of God should plan and study how best to manifest the grace of God in all the practices and relationships of everyday life.
4. The influence of Christianity is strong or weak according to the practical living of the Christians (John 17:21).

#### II. SOME WAYS OF MANIFESTING CHRIST IN PRACTICAL LIVING

1. Awake to the possibilities of Christian Influence. "It is high time to awake out of sleep" (v. 11).
  - a. Too many professing Christians are asleep to their possibilities in spreading the gospel through holy living.
  - b. God is dependent upon each of His children for proper presentation in this world.
  - c. The affairs of this world entangle and take up the Christian's thought and time.
  - d. The influence of worldly conditions tend to dull the sensibilities of the spiritual nature.
  - e. Each Christian should arouse himself and get busy in the matter of presenting Christ to a sin-sick world.
2. Maintain Proper Relations to Fellowmen
 

"Render therefore to all their dues" (v. 7).

  - a. In respect and duties toward those in authority.
  - b. Respect to each person's rights and position.
3. Walk honestly (v. 13).
  - a. Let the life be such as could easily be discerned as good and for good in the daylight.
  - b. Live such a life as to always leave a constructive influence with those with whom associated.
  - c. Make straight paths for the feet.
4. Manifest love to all men (v. 8).
 

"Owe nothing to anyone except mutual love" (WEYMOUTH).

  - a. Love includes all other duties.
  - b. Love should control all motives, thoughts and actions.
  - c. This enables a person to carry out the spirit of the commandments pertaining to man's duties to man (v. 9).

- d. Love is a debt that can never be fully discharged.

#### III. THE MEANS OF SUCCESSFUL CHRISTIAN LIVING (v. 14).

1. Have the love life of Christ permeating the whole moral and motive life.
2. Put the ethics of Jesus as a pattern of living.
3. Study the teachings of Jesus to learn His will in all matters.
4. Plan at all times to suppress the desires that are not to the honor and glory of God.
5. Also prompted by the fact that the coming of the Lord draweth near. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand."

#### IV. ALL CHRISTIANS CAN LIVE A VICTORIOUS, CONSISTENT CHRISTIAN LIFE AND EXEMPLIFY THE PRINCIPLES OF CHRIST AND HIS GOSPEL

### Prayer

(Matthew 6:5-15)

#### I. THE LESSON IMPLIES THAT PRAYER IS NATURAL TO THE CHRISTIAN

"When thou prayest"; "When ye pray"; "After this manner therefore pray ye."

1. Prayer is the spontaneous communion of the soul of man with his Maker.
2. Prayer is fellowship of the child with his heavenly Father.
3. When a Christian is in normal spiritual health, prayer is a regular privilege as well as a duty.

#### II. PRAYER REACHES ITS HIGHEST POINT OF EFFICIENCY IN AND THROUGH THE CLOSED MIND (v. 6).

1. An exclusion of all the distracting elements and problems of the world.
2. A concentration of all man's mental powers to present the thanksgiving and praise to God, and also to make the desired petition.
3. Brings a sensitiveness of mental reception that enables the Christian to listen to the voice of God.
4. Secret communion with the Most High—alone with God even in the midst of many or surrounded by distracting circumstances.

#### III. PRAYER IS MOST SUCCESSFUL WHEN IT IS CONCISE AND DEFINITE

1. The Model Prayer, known as the Lord's Prayer, has only sixty-six words, yet is definite, inclusive as well as exclusive and right to the point.
2. All the prayers of the Bible are short.
3. The command is, "use not vain repetitions," meaningless, useless words.
4. The value is not so much in the length as in the definiteness in approaching God.

5. Indicates that an individual should know what his need is and be definite in asking.

6. Implies the thought of being prayed up, not lagging behind in the habit of prayer, so that access is readily gained to the ear of God.

7. As prayer lengthens it should continue to contain these same principles.

#### IV. THE REGULATIONS THAT MAKE PRAYER ACCEPTABLE

1. Pray to be acceptable before God. "Not as the Pharisees" (v. 5).
2. Use the powers of concentration and mental alertness in praying (v. 6).
3. Avoid verbosity in praying (v. 7).
4. Maintain a forgiving spirit toward all men. (vs. 14, 15).

#### V. PEOPLE CAN PRAY AND HEAR FROM HEAVEN IN THE MIDST OF THE RAPIDITY OF PRESENT DAY CONTACTS

1. The model prayer contains the elements that will work in any and all generations.
2. "Thy Father which seeth in secret will reward thee openly" (v. 6).
3. God will maintain a forgiving and listening attitude if man keeps a forgiving spirit toward all men (v. 14).
4. Thousands of Christians are proving this every day.

### The Principles of the Kingdom of God

(Romans 14)

Text—verse 17

#### I. THIS WAS GIVEN IN CONTEMPLATION OF THE RELATION TO TEMPORAL AND PHYSICAL NEEDS

1. Given for the purpose of strengthening those that are weak in the faith (v. 1).
2. Emphasizes the need of a Christian putting the principles of the kingdom of God first.

#### II. ADMONISHES THE CHRISTIAN NOT TO PLACE TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE ON TEMPORAL RELATIONS

1. Because men differ regarding standards of sacred days to be observed (vs. 5, 6).
2. Because various people view differently the proper foods to eat (vs. 1-3).
3. Because the undue emphasis of these things causes a Christian to lean to a tendency to sit in the seat of judgment toward their fellowman (vs. 3, 4).

#### III. THE ATTITUDE THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD TAKE TO THE KINGDOM

1. Know full well what the principles are (v. 17).
2. Recognize that all are living in complex social relationships (vs. 7, 8).
  - a. Each Christian should not depend on the standard of another.
  - b. Each should try to help others.

3. Earnestly follow the things that unify and make for peace (v. 19).
4. Be consistent in the individual standard (v. 22).
  - a. Do not condemn others on some physical relationship and then be lax on some fundamental principle (v. 16).  
"Your rights must not get a bad name."—MOFFATT.
  - b. Strive to live in accord with God's highest standard.
5. Proper service to Christ in these things is approved of God (v. 18).
6. Observance of these principles will

bring the approbation of men (v. 18b).

#### IV. CHRIST DIED AND ROSE AGAIN TO HELP MAN IN THIS RESPONSIBILITY (v. 9).

1. To exercise self-control in eating and drinking.
2. To live a life constructive in all spiritual and social relationships.
3. To personally and individually enjoy the righteousness, peace and joy in the possession of the Holy Spirit.
4. God will require a personal accounting of service (vs. 10, 12).

## Suggestions for Prayermeetings

H. O. Fanning

### Leadership in Our Prayermeetings

IN few places in our work is quality of leadership more important than it is in our prayermeetings. The kind of prayermeeting that "just anyone can lead" is not likely to be the kind of prayermeeting we should have in our churches. Not only do we need a man who thinks he can lead a prayermeeting helpfully, but one who demonstrates in his work that he can. In too many cases there is more room for improvement than there should be in our prayermeetings. The best efforts of the best and most capable people in the church should be enlisted here. In his leadership of his prayermeetings the pastor may build one of his most helpful strongholds and one of his greatest and most effective fields of usefulness. In his "Lectures on Preaching," Bishop Matthew Simpson said, "In conducting meetings for social prayer the tact and skill of the preacher find a wide field. This service, as in distinction from the Sabbath service, is designed for the whole church, and the minister should not occupy an undue proportion. Some ministers kill their prayermeetings by their long prayers, reading long chapters, and giving long exhortations. They should remember that the people are benefited by taking part, and that as many as possible should be induced to join in these social services. The more who speak or pray, the better is it for the growth of the church and for the development of the moral power of the congregation. In this way also the minister may best learn the religious condition of his people. Especially should the young convert be encouraged to speak and pray. Under some ministers the prayermeeting is the glory of the church, and a large part of the congregation attends. Under others interest diminishes, and scarcely as many attend as are necessary to conduct the service (pp. 265-6). When people do not come to prayermeeting, there are more reasons than one for their nonattendance. Let

us see to it that we have prayermeetings worth attending.

### Growing Faith

*We are bound to thank God always for you brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth (2 Thess. 1:3).*

One of the outstanding needs of the people of God, is now and ever has been, marked and continuing increase in faith. Faith is a living, vital thing, and, like other living, vital things, must increase or become subject to decadence, decay and death. Faith is a matter of degrees. In addressing men, our Lord addressed them as having varying degrees of faith, usually small. He marveled at the faith of a Roman centurion (Matthew 8:10). To a woman who was a Greek, a Syro-phenician by nation, He said, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matthew 15:28). Usually He addressed men in terms implying their need of an increase of faith.

I. *Faith lies at the basis of all normal human relationships.* Without faith these relationships are impossible. Faith in God is central and essential to all normal relationships in the spiritual realm. We go forward in matters spiritual as we go forward in the discovery, development and use of the faith capacities and powers with which God has endowed us. Human faith in God is confidence in the moral character and rectitude of God in all of His dealings with mankind.

II. *The real difference between the faith of a newborn babe in Christ and that of a more mature and better instructed believer, is not so much one of kind, as one of content; one of extent.* Other things being equal, it is the difference that comes through increased knowledge, understanding, enlarged vision. It comes through growth in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Through increased knowledge and experience of the words and ways of God.



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III. In his sermon on "Justification by Faith," John Wesley said, "Surely the difficulty in assenting to the proposition, That faith is the only condition of justification, must arise from not understanding it. We mean thereby this much. That it is the only thing without which no one is justified; the only thing that is immediately, indispensably, absolutely requisite in order to pardon. As on the one hand, though a man should have everything else without faith, yet he cannot be justified; so on the other, though he be supposed to want everything else, yet if he have faith, he can but be justified. John Wesley was as sound on the necessary antecedents of such faith as the soundest among us. The blessings of salvation will be eternal in their outworking. Increase in faith will be constant.

IV. Faith is the one thing that connects us with God, joins our weakness with His power; what we are with what He is. It is the hand by which we grasp all spiritual blessings with which He hath blessed us in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. The multiplicity and the magnitude of the mercies of God, may give us an idea of our need of increased faith, and of the greatness of the possibilities of such increase. The willing mind paves the way for the work of the believing heart.

V. These Thessalonian believers were doing what we must do. They were putting themselves in the way of having their faith growing exceedingly. It was not a matter of accident that their faith was so growing and they were making such strides in its increase. God was the Author of their faith. It rested on incontrovertible and enduring facts.

VI. Faith, like other living things, must have proper nourishment. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). A better and more consistent knowledge and understanding of the Word of God would bring growth and increased vigor to our faith. Prayer and communion with God tend to constant increase of faith. Whatever better acquaints us with God tends to increase our faith. Fasting has its place in the matter of increasing faith (Mark 9:14-29).

VII. Faith must be cultivated and cared for. It is the greatest thing possible to a living child of God. All things are possible to him that believeth (Mark 9:23-24). We are not to suppose that we can realize the possibilities of a matter of such transcendent magnitude easily or quickly. Nothing less than eternity can make possible such realization. The way to eminence in prayer—in the exercise of faith—is not easy, and few indeed go far in reaching its heights. Even the most modest conception of the possibilities wrapped up in the exercise of faith, should encourage us to press on in the improvement of our God-given capacities for exercising faith in God.

### The Work of the Potter

*And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it (Jeremiah 18:4).*

The most beautiful life conceivable is one freed from sin as early as possible and lived in harmony with the will of God. One which knows the least of sin in personal experience, and the most of God in every way; one saved early and the first will of God worked out in him. The most of us are of the remade sort. It is to be feared that few of us know much of God's original plan for our lives. Blessed indeed are they who are saved early in childhood and have filled out in them the divine plan for their lives. Such a one Jeremiah seems to have been.

I. It is through the shedding of Christ's blood that atonement is made for sin, and human redemption made possible. In His birth we have His incarnation and His death made possible. In the life that He lived; in His teaching, His leadership, His example, His challenging life and all that went into it, we have the things that made possible and gave value to His atoning death. Not only the death of Christ, but the perfection of the Christ who died, is essential to the work of human redemption.

II. In one thing we are all alike; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Not all in the same measure. Many of us to the hindering of the working out of the plan of God in our lives. Life, as God designs it for His people, is vastly more than the hit or miss affair that many of us make of it. God would have it beautiful, symmetrical, and harmonious with His will. There is a positive as well as a negative side to Christian living.

III. Very little of our life is lived here below, but that little should be lived well. The life of a redeemed human being is eternal in its duration. A nation is a group of human beings, and God guides the affairs of nations, as He molds the lives of the individuals of these groups.

IV. When God called out Abraham, He had great purposes in mind to be worked out through him, and the nation that would come of Him. For twenty-five hundred years Israel has been a subject people, and the working out of those plans has been delayed. During this period we are having what is known in the Word of God as the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:20-24). Conditions have changed, the working out of the plans will be different.

V. The potter did not cast away the clay when the vessel he made was marred in His hand. God's purposes to be worked out through His chosen people are too great to be abandoned because

of failure on their part. Human life is too valuable to be sacrificed, when it can be saved.

VI. God accomplished much through His people before their setting aside was made necessary by their rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah. For fifteen hundred years He had kept alive in the hearts of men a knowledge of Himself. The world was a different world because of their presence in it. For hundreds of years devout men, both Jews and Gentiles, had gone up to Jerusalem to worship the true and living God. The entire Old Testament had been given to men. The Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, had been born in Bethlehem. Through Him the Father had revealed Himself. The New Testament came to us almost entirely through the Jews. Only God knows how much had been accomplished, and the import of it. Take from us what God has accomplished for us through Israel and we would be poor indeed.

VII. God has great purposes for human lives, for our human lives. He has chosen to work out His purposes through human instrumentality. What God has been doing through Israel, He has been doing through the people of Israel. Constantly He has been accomplishing all that was possible through each member of the race. Whatever may have been His plans for us, and whatever may, or may not have been accomplished, something is still possible with the most of us. And God is still willing to use whatever of life we have left to us. It is a glorious thing to get to heaven at any cost. It is more glorious to be granted an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, after a life of faithfulness in His service, and hear His, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21-23). It is our privilege to put ourselves in the way of this sort of thing.

### Some Lessons on Forgiveness

*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses (Matt. 18:21-25).*

In all realms of life few things are more important than the matter of forgiveness. It is something we all must have. In one thing we are all alike. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin separates from God, and we do well to consider the character of the divine forgiveness, the foundation upon which it rests and the condition upon which it is granted. Not only is forgiveness something that we all need, but it is something we must all grant to others. The spirit in which we deal with others in this matter has its place in

determining what God will do for us in our need. This matter is of such importance that in answer to Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but until seventy times seven (vs. 21, 22). Then He spake a parable illustrating and enforcing this truth.

I. *In our Lord's answer to Peter, we have the measure of the forgiving spirit we should maintain toward others.* It was much larger than Peter supposed. It is much larger than others of us suppose. Few things are more distressing with many, than a disposition to be slow in forgiving others. In this we dishonor our Lord, distress our brethren and others, do ourselves great harm and hinder the cause of Christ. A forgiving spirit is normal, an unforgiving spirit, abnormal to the child of God. Back of the forgiving spirit must be the compassionate heart.

II. *The ten thousand talent debtor, with nothing to pay, represents our condition in relationship to our Lord.* We have nothing to plead but the mercy of our God. Our Lord revealed Himself to Moses as "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will be no means clear the guilty" (Exodus 34:6, 7). We cannot think of the God of all grace having an unforgiving spirit. The forgiving spirit is the touchstone of the heart's condition.

III. *Forgiveness has such a large place in the carrying out of the purposes of God, that Christ was willing to die on Calvary's cross, to make it possible.* It is essential to our enjoyment of the further benefits of the death of our Lord. In this we have a revelation of the heart of God and a revelation of the hearts He would have us as His people have. One of the distinguishing attributes of our Lord is His forgiving spirit and provision for its exercise. Divine forgiveness is based on divinely made atonement for sin and is impossible without this.

IV. *In the matter of forgiveness, it is well for us to keep in mind that the man who has wronged you, has wronged himself in far greater measure.* You cannot afford to maintain an unforgiving attitude toward him. Neither can you afford to harbor the emotions incident to an unforgiving attitude. In withholding forgiveness you do yourself a far greater injustice and injury than you do him. You cannot afford not to forgive.

V. *Much that brings annoyance into our lives, is due to the fact that we are all in the making.* We are living here and learning as we live. We are learning to be thoughtful, courteous and kind. The most of us are learning that these

are big things and that our progress in learning them is slow. Some who love us best try us most. There is lack of knowledge, poor judgment, incorrect or incomplete knowledge. We are compassed about with infirmity; we are hindered by slowness in the development of our powers and their proper functioning. In meeting life's issues manfully and victoriously we will find a forgiving spirit to be a decided asset.

VI. *In this, as in other matters, we may be sure our sin will find us out.* After a most gracious forgiveness from his king and Lord, this man found one of his fellow servants who owed him but a hundred pence. His sovereign had had compassion upon him. He has no compassion for his fellow servant. Hear the words of his lord, "O thou wicked servant, I forgive thee all that debt because thou desiredst me: shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee. And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him" (vs. 28-34).

VII. *Our Lord's application of the foregoing:* "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (v. 35). Heaven is a place for forgiven souls. A forgiving spirit is essential to a forgiven experience. An unforgiving spirit, with all that accompanies it, would be incompatible with heaven and destructive of its harmony. Such a spirit is as incompatible with Christianity here, as it will be there. Every step of advancement in Christlikeness will tend to enhance the beauty of a forgiving spirit, and reveal to its possessor its priceless worth.

### The Lord Our Helper

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth (Psalm 121).*

Man is in constant need of help. He has greater possibilities than other creatures. And these possibilities are of such a nature that they can be realized only by that help that only God gives to human beings. The spiritual man has two horizons; the natural and the spiritual. There must be volitional effort if he scans either of them. The exercise of the natural senses if the natural horizon is to be scanned. The exercise of the spiritual senses if the spiritual horizon is scanned. The content of these horizons is important. That of the natural is passing. That of the spiritual is the permanent. Both these horizons contain vastly more in the way of possibilities than we now realize. We need help that these possibilities may be realized.

I. *It is no easy matter to lift up our eyes to mountains and so keep ourselves*

*in the hand of the Lord that we may receive the help we need, under the varying circumstances of life.* We need help to keep our faith focused on the Lord, at all times and under all circumstances. Our needs are so great that only the Lord which made heaven and earth, can supply them.

II. *We do not go far in life until we discover that one of our outstanding needs is that of stability.* "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved." God deals with us as human beings, rational, and self-determining. He helps us in His own ways, and in the accomplishment of His own ends. Our stabilization is no small task. It will take faith, fortitude, patience and perseverance for its accomplishment. One of our difficulties is our indisposition or indifference in the matter of putting forth the determined and well directed effort necessary to the accomplishment of worth while ends. Co-operation with God will bring us the help we need here.

III. *The Lord is our unfailing source of help.* "He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." He who made heaven and earth, is unhindered by limitations in Himself. He deals with us as individuals, and adapts His help to meet our need.

IV. *"The Lord is thy keeper." He is the one Source of our help.* There may be many channels through which our help comes. "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night." We have perils peculiar to the day, and perils peculiar to the night. We need help for the day, and help for the night. Whatever, wherever, whenever our need, our keeper is able to supply it. May we see that such keeping is desirable and abundantly worth all it may cost us to enjoy it. He is searching among us for those who will give Him opportunities to help us. It is folly to expect the worth while things of life to be easy. They have their price, and we cannot afford not to pay it.

V. *"The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul."* Few things can be more desirable than our preservation from all evil. Every form of evil is inimical to our well being, both temporal and eternal. We need constantly to remind ourselves that evil is destructive, and only destructive, to all that is preservable in us. Here we have one of the great principles of salvation. It is preservation from all evil, not committing it and being forgiven. Wherever there is failure it is incident to our own infirmities and weaknesses (1 John 2:1-7).

VI. *"He shall preserve thy soul."* This masterpiece of God's creative power, must have the care of its Creator in its possibilities. Its creation was a great work. The realization of its possibilities will be a work for time and eternity. In



dealing with human souls, God is not dealing with things of small value, or passing significance. We can conceive of nothing more beautiful than a well-kept human soul.

VII. *"The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even forever more."* It is a comfort to us to know that in all the affairs of our lives, nothing is too small for the Lord's attention. Things seemingly inconsequential to us, may be of supreme importance, and worthy of the most careful consideration of our Lord. In His eyes everything is significant. If we are to enjoy the help He desires to give us we must bring all the affairs of our lives to His attention. They must be constantly spread out for His consideration. Forming the habit of bringing all of the affairs of our lives before our Lord for His consideration will be of great value to us in giving our Lord opportunities to help us. Having His help now is as important in its place as was His work in the crises experiences of our lives in their places.

#### Revivals God's People May Need

*Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee? (Psalm 85:6).*

There may come times when special help is needed because of conditions in the church, in the community in which it is located, or in wider areas. In our studies of God's dealings with His people Israel, we find that revivals came when they were sorely needed. Were our people ideal, or our communities ideal and all things as they should be, such times might not come. But we are of the common run of life and while provisions have been made for an abundant supply of all of our need, we do not always avail ourselves of sufficient supplies.

I. *God himself is the Author of the revivals our churches need, however the needs may arise.* Israel had a considerable record of God's dealings with them to consider. That record showed that when they had met divinely imposed conditions God had blessed them and they had flourished in all the avenues of life. They had found Him equal to every occasion that had arisen and able to supply their needs.

II. *"Wilt thou not revive us again?" These people are conscious of their need.* They had had better experiences of divine grace and had enjoyed greater measures of divine blessing. They are conscious that God has better things for them than they were then enjoying. And we too may become conscious of our condition. We may learn much from the experiences of others.

III. *These people believed in being revived by the Lord in answer to prayer.* It is likely that they knew that their

consciousness of need and their prayer to God to supply it involved the necessity of meeting conditions for revival and putting themselves in the way of being revived. It is likely that much of the failure in our prayer life and efforts is due to failure in these matters. Prayers that do not move us in these directions are not liable to move God to come to our help.

IV. *Their appeal was personal.* *"Wilt thou not revive us again?"* This would indicate that they were not strangers to discouraging conditions. They had met them before, and learned that God was able to give them the reviving, the quickening, they needed.

V. *It is humiliating—or may be—to acknowledge such a need as this.* Such a need may come to us an emergency. Forces may be arrayed against us that are staggering, and reveal to us our need of greater spiritual resources. Such times came to the apostles in their ministry. They cried to God, and were all filled with the Holy Spirit—quickened for success in the conflict. Whatever may be the condition, we should bring it to the Lord. God is as ready to supply church needs as He is to supply individual needs.

VI. *"That thy people may rejoice in thee."* Not all the things in our present experiences are joy producing, but the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ is a rejoicing religion and this rejoicing is far more than comes through the mere stirring of the emotions. These people are praying for vastly more than an emotional stirring. Anyone can rejoice when conditions are to his liking. What these people desired was reviving that would enable them to rejoice under adverse conditions. They had learned that the true source of joy is not found in conditions, but in the Lord himself. Concern for Christ's cause is a measure of our love for Him.

VII. *And here is one of the secrets of victory in our spiritual experience and service, individually and collectively.* He who has made our experience and service possible by His death, must make them actual by His life. In all that pertains to Christian life and service we need Christ as certainly as we need Him in the crises experiences of His grace. We do well to remind ourselves that Christian life and service are not indigenous to this world. Our citizenship is in heaven; and from thence cometh our help. We are here to overcome the world, not to be overcome by it. There may be many channels of the joy of the Lord. There is but one source, the Lord himself. God has honored us with places in His great work of redemption. Only as we honor Him by availing ourselves of the resources He has placed at our disposal can we hope to fill these places. We need both the resources and the God of the resources.

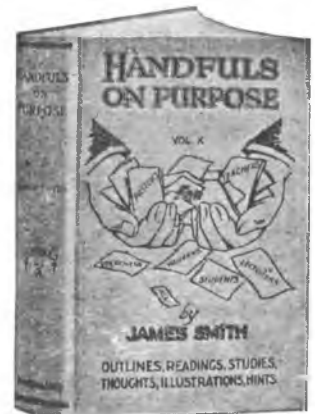


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