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Speaking for God

By Charles A. McConnell

WHEN the American ambassador speaks at the court of St. James, not only Britain, but all the world hears the authoritative voice of the United States. It is not the social rank to which this man was born that gives his words their value—he may have sat in the same classes with you and me. The ambassador may have been a royal prince or a herdsman, a fisherman or a pupil of Gamaliel. It is the authority back of the commission, the voice speaking through him, that gives value to his message.

It is true that no high authority will be careless in the selection of its representative. He must be trustworthy. In human affairs the very existence of a nation may hang upon the honor of its representative. He must be in perfect harmony with the character and policy of the power which he represents. He must understand clearly the meaning of the words he bears and be void of fear in their delivery. The American ambassador brought to England, to the world, this nation's stand for universal peace.

But there have been greater ambassadors than he, representing a dominion infinitely superior to the grandest of earthly governments—forthtellers, prophets of the King of kings, the Prince of Peace. And their word has been and is of supreme authority. Hear ye! "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Whom shall God send with this message, and who will go for Him with that good news which is salvation from eternal death?

The call is for all, even those whom He can trust; those whose lives are in harmony with His character; those who know and can give His word in truth; those whose courage and consecration have been Spirit-refined and Spirit-tested. The same God who commissioned Amos and Isaiah is still calling for ambassadors who have received the fiery preparation and hence are willing to cry, "Look me over and see if I will do."

The Preacher's Magazine

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True, But Not Timely

By the Editor

THE congregation had a crude but ample tabernacle as its place of worship. There had been a misunderstanding about the use of the place on a given night, so that a prayer meeting group was disturbed just after their meeting had started by the arrival of a political group who understood they had been promised the use of the building. Seeing there was bound to be disappointment, the trustees calculated that the prayer meeting group could take it more gracefully, so they decided in favor of the political meeting, and the change interfered with a visiting minister's plan to preach. But the next night marked the beginning of a convention that had no connection with either the prayer meeting or the political group, and the minister who was disappointed on the night of confusion was invited to preach the opening sermon of the convention. Rankling from the blow his pride had received the night before, he proceeded to indulge in personalities and to draw comparisons as to one's allegiance to Christ and to other things. What he said was true, but it was untimely, and the sermon brought on tension between neighbors and friends and contributed to the spirit of schism and suspicion. Under such conditions a wise preacher would have preached on the love of God or on some phase of the gospel altogether unrelated to the occurrence of the night before. The preacher did what a great many expected he would do, but for all that, he was a disappointment to those who loved God and wanted His cause to prosper and had no wish for vengeance.

A preacher was the driver of a car which was struck by a train, and although he and his wife escaped serious injury, the neighbor woman in the back seat was killed. At the funeral which was held by another minister, the preacher-driver of the death car asked to say a few words, and gave a dissertation on submission to God's will.

What he said was true, but it was untimely, for the bereaved loved ones were fighting against the suggestion in their own minds that the preacher was careless and somewhat to blame for the tragedy. Silence would have been golden in such a case, but if he was compelled to speak, his words should have been on some theme that would not have smacked of self-justification.

A noted preacher was just getting started in his sermon on "Moses" when about two hundred delegates from a preachers' convention meeting nearby walked into the service. The preacher turned aside then to make a somewhat extended boast to the effect that he would preach the truth no matter who tried to hinder him and that he would not cringe or kowtow before any crowd of preachers that might come to hear him. He spoke a good truth on an important subject, but his words were untimely. There was no evidence that the visiting preachers thought to embarrass him or restrict his liberty, and his notice of the matter put these preachers out of his reach and dulled his sword for other listeners also. How much better that he should have stuck to Moses and enlarged upon his meekness and exemplified his boast rather than to have made it in words.

Just now I have read a paper published by a body of people well known for their high profession, and, so far as I know, generally consistent with their claims. But this paper is pretty well filled up with discussions of race questions, with a decided bias toward a provincial interpretation of this age-old subject. Figures are quoted, statements are made, deductions are exhibited. So far as I know what is said is true, but just now in the crisis of war when race prejudices serve so large a place in the mischief of inflaming imagination and engendering hatred, the theme is out of place. What good does it do to stir up the base prejudices of men in a time when sanity is at high premium?

Before a day crowd of thirteen sanctified Christians a young preacher preached on, "The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God." To an afternoon crowd of indifferent sinners a preacher spent his time on a religious indictment of the use of tobacco. In a Sunday evening service where there was a good chance for a successful altar service the preacher spent his time indicting women's styles of dress, and spoke in a vein which was a near approach to offensiveness to refined feelings and common decency. In a community where it was important that a hearing should be gained, the preacher entered the lists of politics and spoke with heat on the morals of the people's chosen candidate. A traveling preacher made his home community the standard by which he measured the places he visited and soon there was a feeling that a man who could do so much in one place as this man seemed to have done ought to be able to do better here also.

But enough of examples and illustrations. It is not enough that what the preacher says shall

be true—it must also be timely and must be spoken in love. And that question of timeliness is an important and exacting one. I suppose we have all been shocked, after we have been trying for twenty minutes to get people's attention, by the discovery that what we are saying has no particular application to the people and to the occasion. There are no rules for the discovery of timeliness. The only way is for the preacher to "feel his way." It is well that subjects dealing

with law and judgment should be avoided unless and until the preacher is overcome with tenderness of heart, for there is nothing more gruesome than a sermon on judgment by a tearless prophet. Why should I tell these people this at this time? What end can such truth serve just now? Why this and no other? The answer can come only by means of the Spirit's impression on the heart of the preacher, and so this subject becomes a challenge to a closer walk with God for us all.

Thoughts on Holiness

Christian Experience and Our Natural Dispositions

Olive M. Winchester

Let us not therefore judge one another any more (Romans 14:13).

WHILE in the experience of entire sanctification sin is eradicated from the heart, yet dispositional characteristics remain the same. There is a uniformity in individual believers in the fact of heart cleansing, but the same diversity that existed previously along the line of natural tendencies still remains. At times we have looked for uniformity in natural reactions and inherent dispositions, but in this we are mistaken. Therefore we should always remember that traits of behavior persist, and in consequence we should be very careful in judging.

TEMPERAMENT AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

The word temperament is often used to indicate dispositional traits, and while we have a hazy idea of its meaning, yet often it has not been too explicit, so we will stop for a few minutes and see if we can obtain a more specific understanding of the term. It has been defined as a fixed emotional attitude. Then another definition given that temperament is a native constitution of the mind which determines the type and intensity of the various emotional states. One thing that stands out in these definitions is that temperament relates to the emotions and has to do with the type of emotions.

Carrying the thought of the emotional aspect farther, we will seek to define the various types. Generally four are given. First there is the sanguine person who is always hopeful; he is not inclined to discount anything, but is willing to undertake almost any enterprise, feeling that all will come out well. Sometimes he plunges rather recklessly into debt with his generally optimistic attitude toward all things. Then there is the phlegmatic person who is rather unperturbed and is not seized with intense, passionate feelings. Further, another type is described as melancholic. In this case there is an inclination to

sadness which becomes rather chronic in the life. Finally, there is the choleric individual, a person of irritable temperament; yet while he is easily provoked, he quickly recovers. The impulsive type is to be classed here.

Thus we have the different temperamental characteristics, and as we have noted, these persist after the heart has been cleansed. The sanguine individual will be sanguine still, the phlegmatic will have the same imperturbability and the melancholic still will possess the touch of sadness while the choleric will be impulsive and easily annoyed. It is true that the experience of entire sanctification will help to modify these traits, but will not change them; it will destroy all distemper in them but dispositionally one will be the same.

Thus a writer for the *Guide to Holiness* observed, "Christian perfection does not change the peculiarities of character which belong to every man. God has made each of us different from the other, and never designs that those distinguishing characteristics which are not deficiencies, should be changed. They may be modified by grace—they should be wholly sanctified to God but every perfect Christian will be distinguished by his own peculiar characteristics. If he is naturally a man of strong feelings, he will show them in his religion. If of a mild character, this blessing will never make him a boisterous man, or one of deep pathos. He may enjoy as fully the blessing of perfect love as the other, but it will show itself differently."

As well-known illustrations of difference of temperamental type, we may refer to Peter and John in our New Testament history. Peter was the quick, impulsive type without too great stability while John was more contemplative and generally slower to move. After the day of Pentecost there was a modification in these traits, but no essential change. Studying other cases, we would find the same results.

CAUTION TO BE USED IN JUDGING

Because there are these various traits which deflect emotional and thought reactions, we must not expect other people to have the same outlook on life or its special phases that we have. He sees the world so to speak through a different colored glass and it looks different to him. We have all watched the play of lights on objects and have seen the various effects that colored lights have produced, so it is with temperament.

Writers have noted this in days gone by and have sounded out a warning. In the *Advocate of Christian Holiness*, 1881, this word of caution is given. "Great injustice in judging both ourselves and our neighbors constantly arises from the failure to recognize how powerfully temperament modifies the outward aspects and working of religion. Persons who are what is called phlegmatic, that is, cold-blooded, sluggish, not easily moved to action or passion, can by no possibility be brought into the same mold with those who are very excitable, impetuous, mercurial, and hot-headed. A nation made up chiefly of the one class would formulate, from the same written records, a very different system of theology and a different set of religious observances from a nation made up chiefly of the other class. The divergence would be inevitable and blameless."

Then again we note that Foster, so well known for his book on *Christian Purity*, gives a like admonition. He says, "Two men equally, and, if you please, entirely holy, may, under certain circumstances, appear with very different advantage, and may generally indeed exhibit quite variant manifestations of character. If judged without respect to constitutional makeup and educational influences, and peculiar circumstances and temptations, they may seem most dissimilar, when in truth they are equally holy in the sight of God. It is for this reason mainly that we ought to judge without palpable indications. One man is of a highly nervous temperament—another is as decidedly imperturbable; one is sanguine—the other disturbing; one is impulsive—another dispassionate; now let all these be brought under the influence of sanctifying grace; it will not change their temperament all into one—it will not remove the constitutional difference between them, but only control and regulate them."

So we see that writers on holiness have recognized these facts and have used them as a basis for conservation in judging individuals. If we follow their example, it will save us many a time from misjudging ourselves and our own personal experience. If we are inclined to sadness temperamentally, then we will not always have the same exuberant reactions as someone who is more sanguine in his makeup. The enemy will often sweep in upon us and accuse us wrongfully, chiding us that if we had the experience that we profess, we would not be troubled with such melancholy tendencies. While it is true that the Christian religion is the best antidote for melancholy there is,

yet certain tinges of sadness will persist in a temperament of that nature, so we should resist the foe and declare our faith in Christ Jesus. Likewise also should we do with other traits.

Furthermore the same measure of allowance we grant to ourselves should be exercised toward others, and if we find that our brother or sister is tempted along certain temperamental lines, we should not charge him as possessing a defect in his experience, but admonish him that the Word of God tells us that divine grace is made perfect in weakness, and that our Lord and Master will enable us to appropriate grace to triumph over some of these temperamental weaknesses and to modify others.

If we do these things, we will save ourselves and others from many a snare of the enemy, and we will foster peace and harmony in the church. Moreover, we will build our lives after the fashion of the One who gave Himself for us to redeem us from sin and thereafter to remove the wrinkles from our natural dispositions and bring us to perfection of Christian maturity.

Rules for Effective Preaching

1. In your preparation go to the bottom of your subject and think of all that might be said upon it.
2. Do not torture your subject or the people by saying all that can be said.
3. Do not make your sentences too thick with thought. Water poured too fast into a funnel runs over and makes a mess of things.
4. Do not preach too long; the length of a sermon is measured by the extent of hearer interest. Take aim—fire—quit!
5. Do not fire your sermon as though it were gunshot rather than a bullet. Aim at results that are likely to strike and stick.
6. Preach as if Christ were standing at your elbow.
7. Be downright in earnest. Preaching is earnest work. Set forth Christ crucified and risen again as the center of all Christian truth and life.—*North Carolina Christian Advocate*.

Correct Aim—

Our only safeguard amid the babels of opinions around us is a fuller and more accurate knowledge of Holy Scripture. This alone will enable us to distinguish, in teaching new to us, the true from the false, and it is not too much to hope that such fuller knowledge will not only preserve us from disquietude, but will reveal to us a nearer and clearer view of the Son of God, and thus work in our hearts and lives a richer likeness to Him. And this is the true aim of all biblical scholarship.—JOSEPH AGAR BEET.

The More Excellent Way

Sanctification—The Nature of God

Peter Wiseman

God is love (1 John 4:16); *The greatest of these is love* (1 Cor. 13:13).

THE whole plan of redemption is but an unfolding of love. God "so loved" that He gave His only Son. Christ so loved that He gave Himself. His sacrifice is proof of the Father's love. "The gift of Christ to man," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "is the measure of God's love; the death of Christ for man is the measure of Christ's love."

The great test of religion is love, for the Christian religion is love—love to God and man. Perfect religion is perfect love. Without love there is no Christian religion. There are creeds many, gods many, but true Christian religion there cannot be without love; for the Christian religion is Christ, "Christ in you, the hope of glory"; and Christ is God, "the Word was God"; and "God is love."

This love, *agape*, is divine love; "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us"; "the love of Christ"; the love that brought Him down from above, down to man, to the way of poverty, to the way of the cross, and was and is despised, down to death; all for others.

DIVINE LOVE AND GIFTS

After enumerating the various gifts in the twelfth chapter of his First epistle to the Corinthians, Paul ends the chapter with the striking words, "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way"; the way of divine love. In the next chapter (the 13th) he compares gifts and love. Love is greater than the tongues of men and of angels (v. 1), greater than prophecy (v. 2), greater than faith (v. 2), greater than charity (v. 3), greater than loyalty to one's religion or belief (v. 3). It is greater than words (v. 1), greater than thoughts (v. 2), greater than deeds (v. 3).

By a comparison of 1 Thessalonians 1:3, with Revelation 2:2-4, we have a further illustration of the aforementioned. The church of Ephesus had works, labor and patience, but they had not the works of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope as did the church of the Thessalonians (1:3). They had lost the three cardinals of Christianity as seen in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians.

Divine love in its nature is long-suffering and kind. "Has a long mind to the end of which neither trials, adversities, persecutions, nor provocation can reach. The love of God, and of our neighbor for God's sake, is patient toward all men: it suffers all the weakness, ignorance, errors, and infirmities of the children of God; and

all the malice and wickedness of the children of the world; and all this, not merely for a time, but long, without end; it is still a mind or disposition, to the end of which trials, difficulties, etc., never reach" (Clarke). It is kind, tender, compassionate in itself, and kind and obliging to others. "Kindness," says one, "has converted more sinners than zeal, or eloquence, or learning, and these three have never converted anyone unless they were kind." "Kind words are the music of the world." "Charity envieth not" the financial, intellectual, or spiritual blessings of others. "Vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up," yea is humble, for it knows what is worth having is from God.

A heart full of perfect love is full of humility. Holy people are very humble. "Doth not behave itself unseemly." "Love never acts out of its place or character; observes good manners; is never rude, bearish or brutish; and is ever willing to become all things to all men, that it may please them for their good to edification" (Clarke). "Seeketh not its own," ease, pleasure, and such like. "Grasps not at her own rights" (Clarke). "Thinketh no evil." Indeed, it can but see and hear evil things, and know that they are so; but it does not willingly think evil of any; neither infer evil where it does not appear. It tears up, root and branch, all imagining of what we have not proved. It casts out all jealousies, all evil surmisings, all readiness to believe evil" (Wesley).

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity," yea weeps over it, "but rejoiceth in the truth," for it is of the truth. Holy people speak the truth in love and always rejoice in the truth. "Beareth all things," that is, covers all things. "Whatever evil the lover of mankind sees, hears, or knows of anyone, he mentions it to none; it never goes out of his lips, unless where absolute duty constrains to speak" (Wesley). "Believeth all things"; a charitable construction is God's plan. "Hopeth all things and endureth all things" First, it covers, as much as possible; if unable to cover, it believes; if unable to believe, it hopes; if unable to hope, the facts being clear and unanswerable, then it endures. "Love never faileth." While gifts disappear, tongues cease, knowledge vanisheth, love continues. Love is eternal, for love is God.

DIVINE LOVE THE GREAT END

The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart. "All the laws are fulfilled in one word even in this, Thou shalt love." "God is love. He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

This love is as high as heaven. It is as deep as

the heart of the Eternal. It is as broad as the universe of God. It is as long as eternity; longer than the longest day; longer than the longest night; longer than the longest road; longer than the longest life. It is eternal (Eph. 13:6-21).

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God is as long as eternity; longer than the with all thy heart—sincerity; with all thy mind—intelligence; with all thy soul—emotion; with all thy strength—energy." Hence our love must be sincere, intelligent, emotional and energetic. We love God with all our heart, when we love nothing but in reference to Him; when we are ready to do or suffer anything for His glory. We love God with all our soul, or rather life, when we are ready to give up life for His sake; ready to endure all kinds of trials and sufferings for His glory. We love God with all our strength when we exert all the powers of body, mind, soul and spirit in His service. (See Dr. Adam Clarke's comment on this passage.)

DIVINE LOVE THE GREAT CONSTRAINING POWER

"The love of Christ constraineth us"; a force, a power, a compelling power. They tell us that there was a time when the Niagara failed owing to an ice dam thrown across the river, the rainbow vanished, the vast music was hushed. But there has never been a moment when the love of God has failed; when its eternal music has been broken, or the rainbow has ceased to span the throne. There never will be such a moment. The crystal tide flows richly and flows forever."

*Love on, love on; love higher, deeper;
Let love's ocean close above her;
Only love thou more love's Keeper,
More the love-creating Lover.*

DIVINE LOVE HOLDS

Paul speaks of an inseparable love, a love that holds in the face of every conceivable opposition, even death. Of this he was persuaded. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

DIVINE LOVE PRE-EMINENT

"Another ground of these and a thousand mistakes, is, the not considering deeply, that love is the highest gift of God; humble, gentle, patient love; that all with visions, revelations, manifestations whatever, are little things compared with love; and that all the gifts mentioned above are either the same with, or infinitely inferior to it."

"It were well you were thoroughly sensible of this, the heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing

else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. When you are asking others, Have you received this or that blessing, if you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. Settle it then in your heart, that from the moment God has saved you from all sin, you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of 1 Corinthians. You can go no higher than this till you are carried into Abraham's bosom" (Wesley).

"*The greatest of these is love.*" Henry Drummond: "Only give me love, pure, burning love, and loyalty to Him, and I shall climb from law to law, through grace and glory, to the place beside the throne where the angels do His will."

Four Perils of a Preacher

A. S. London

THE minister is beset with dire perils. The Apostle Paul knew of these perils and said, "I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain." The assaults on a minister's life are many. There are many devices Satan uses to wreck the life and work of a gospel preacher. A recent reading of the court proceedings of the trial of a minister makes one shudder at the subtle influences at work to wreck a minister.

First, there is the peril of man worship. Preachers are beset by the pitfall of all eyes being focused upon them. There is always tragedy when the work of the Lord revolves around a man with a strong personality, a commanding appearance and a winsome way. He is in danger. A preacher of this type is open to temptations on every hand. Often his picture is sought as an eager prize. His name becomes a household word for those who are evil and those who mean well. The human element often looms so largely in the work of carrying on church machinery, that the preacher is in peril. There is a tendency to focus the attention of the people upon himself, rather than the cause he represents.

A preacher should work and conduct himself in such a manner as to cause the people to say that they "saw no one, save Jesus only." Any preacher who trifles with his sacred calling and drags it in the dust, is not worthy of a place in the ministry. Flirting, doing questionable things, causing others to talk of things unbecoming to a gospel preacher, brings the Church of the living God into disrepute.

Brethren, if God is not able to keep our ministry clean and above reproach we are in a deplorable condition! "He is able." But our ministry must constantly be on guard, "lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

Second, there is the peril of negligence of inner spiritual living. I believe after touching our ministry in my travels in every state of the nation, that this is one of the most dreadful perils to preachers. They get so busy with the work of the church that they neglect the fuel which maintains the spiritual fire. Here is the beginning of the downfall of any minister. Men do not plunge into gross sins overnight. There is a beginning far back from the actual plunge and fall. The ministry makes demands upon anyone who gives himself to it. Laziness, an unconcerned attitude toward the church, holy living and saving of the lost bring spiritual paralysis and in the end, death, to any preacher. "And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." No matter how gifted, how talented, how well educated, or how intense his enthusiasm may be, if a preacher's inner life is barren and cold he is headed for the breakers. A preacher must live what he preaches. He must be inwardly what he professes to be outwardly.

Any preacher is headed for the rocks who does not live at home and in his secret life what he publicly professes to be! There is no escape for a hypocritical preacher. His days are numbered. And beware! Do not think you are different, or will not get caught. God's bloodhounds are on the trail of any preacher who wilfully and maliciously pretends to be something he is not. Keep the inner life burning with the fires from off the altar of Almighty God, or suffer the consequences of a humiliated, ostracized, and defeated ministry. Be sure your sin will find you out, is as true for the preacher as it is for the layman.

Third, there is the peril of green-eyed jealousy. Jealousy strips one of his right to the high calling of the ministry. Listen to that jealous and God-forsaken, Saul! "They have ascribed to David tens of thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands." David was looked upon from that time on out of a jealous eye of Saul. How deceiving! How tricky, and what a peril is jealousy! It will eat the heart out of any preacher. It will rob him of spiritual power, make him lose sleep, take away his appetite and cause him to be a tinkling cymbal and a sounding brass. Jealousy crucified

our Christ. The Jews killed Jesus because of this peril. A preacher must labor for the glory of our Christ. This is to be his supreme objective. Wire-pulling and such like must not be known among us. It is death to even the name of a worthy ministry.

The preacher who fights back and throws the javelin that is thrown at him is doomed. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." This battle is not ours but Thine.

Fourth, there is the peril of substituting results for the Holy Spirit. Crowds, professions and visible things are not evidences that the preacher is a holy man. You cannot substitute things seen for things unseen. Only God knows the heart. Do not be deceived by thinking that because you are having success, as the term is generally used, that you can live just any way, and everything will be all right.

A preacher sent word to a friend and told him that he was having good success, and not to worry over whisperings that were going the round about him. But one who knew the life in other days sent word back that he could not go on that as an evidence of being right with God, for when he was conducting himself in an unbecoming way as a minister while in another town, he was having the same kind of success that he was pretending to have where he now resides.

If a minister is doing things unbecoming to a Christian gentleman, living a double life, playing loose with the opposite sex, visiting too often at a place until the town and community begin to talk, neglecting his own for another, and paying too much attention to certain members, there is death in the pot. A minister of that type is headed for a toboggan slide that will take him over the precipice.

No amount of tears will substitute for a holy life. Getting happy and being blessed will not take the place of living in accord to the Word of God. Flipping around with a group of silly girls, petting and acting in a manner unbecoming to a gospel preacher, spells doom for any man, regardless of place or position.

A broken, sin-wrecked preacher, is the saddest sight on this earth! It is enough to make angels weep.

As William Burns, the apostle to China, said as he walked down the street and saw the multitudes hurrying on without a ray of hope, we say of any preacher who has lost the way and been trapped by any one of these perils, "O God, these perishing souls break my heart!"

Archaeology and the Bible

Part Eleven: The Historicity of the Book of Daniel

Basil Miller

THE veracity and truthfulness of each book of the Old Testament can be proved. In a general way Orr, in his *The Problem of the Old Testament*, clearly proves the insufficiency of the hypothesis of criticism as applied to the religion of the Old Testament. The outstanding problems as presented by criticism are herein scholarly and skillfully answered. What Orr has done for the Old Testament, can be done for every book of the same.

It is possible for one to begin with Genesis and answer all the difficulties that higher criticism claims to invalidate the veracity of the Old Testament books. To do this is beyond the scope of the present work. But that the student might be able to understand the method of criticism and how such is met, we shall take the Book of Daniel as an example. All the historical statements that are made which criticism denies, and all the facts which seem contradictory to what we know of life during that age we shall discuss, and show that so far no documentary evidence has been presented that in any way negates the true historicity of the book.¹

1. *Argument from silence.* The argument from silence is simply based on the fact that since no mention is made of a statement in the contemporary records of its age that the statement is untrue. But it will be seen that since no other record of an event is made save the one source, it is not necessarily true that the event did not occur. Most of the events of antiquity are mentioned in but one or two sources. For practically all the information concerning Cyrus, Darius and Xerxes we are dependent upon the information of Herodotus.

For Artaxerxes and Darius II our information comes from the partial account of Xenophon. For the history of Assyria and Babylonia, and for Syria and Egypt before 500 B.C. we have no historian who was contemporaneous with the events. About 300 B.C. Manetho wrote in Greek what purported to be the history of the Egyptians from the earliest times. About the same time Berosus wrote a history of the Babylonians; Meander a history of Tyre and Nicolaus a history of Damascus. And but fragments of these histories are preserved for us.

The Bible gives many illustrations of silence concerning events which occurred at different

times. In Isaiah 20:1, Sargon is called the king of Assyria, though nowhere else is he mentioned by that name. In Ezra Asnapper is spoken of, but nowhere else by this name is he referred to again. Facts are also given on the monuments which are not mentioned in the Bible.

Shalmaneser III of Assyria mentions a campaign against the king of Damascus and his allies, among whom is Ahab of Israel, who contributed 2,000 chariots and 10,000 warriors to the king of Damascus. But concerning this the Scriptures are silent. Moreover the Bible is usually silent concerning the history of great monarchies in the midst of whom the Hebrews are placed. Numerous instances occur in the Bible of mention of events and persons not spoken of on the monuments. Among the persons we need only mention Abraham, and Moses, and among the events, the plagues and the wars of David and Solomon.

As to some decades of Israelitish history there is a silence in the Scriptures. Nothing is stated of the people during the sojourn in Egypt, and but few things concerning the wandering in the wilderness. The forty-seven chapters in the Books of Kings contain all that is written of the history of Israel from the beginning of the rule of Solomon to the destruction of Jerusalem. There are many decades and centuries of the history of the Jews not referred to at all on the monuments. On the monuments of Egypt there is but one mention of Israel down to the time of Shishak. The next reference comes about two hundred and fifty years later. But comparatively few times are they spoken of on the monuments of Assyria and only once on the Babylonian monuments.

In the records of Israel only occasionally is a foreign power spoken of. There are numerous events in the lives of kings referred to on one of his monuments, but passed over on others. With regard to the Medes we have no original information. Many eminent men are referred to on the monuments by their names alone. As only a few inscriptions and monuments have been preserved from the past, how differently would read the history of the nations should all the monuments be possessed at present!

Hence the argument from silence cannot be taken as decisive in any matter of historical interest. We shall refuse to accept as true charges unsupported by evidence against the incidents quoted or referred to in the Book of Daniel. When critics deny the historicity of persons and

¹ For sake of clarity and brevity, we shall follow the renowned work of Dr. Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel*.

events of the book, would it not be well to wait for further evidence before reaching a conclusion based on the argument from silence?

2. *Was Daniel a historic character?* The first question we face is whether or not was there ever such a man as Daniel? In *The Expositor's Bible, The Book of Daniel*, page 5, we read, 'It is natural that we should turn to the monuments and inscriptions of the Babylonian, Persian and Median empires to see if mention can be found of so prominent a ruler. But hitherto neither has his name been discovered, nor the faintest trace of his existence.' In this two assumptions are involved: (1) that the absence of the name of Daniel from the inscriptions would prove that he did not exist, and (2) that inasmuch as we have not found on the monuments so far unearthed any trace of his existence, he did not exist.

a. On the *contract* tablets no trace of the name of Daniel has been found, though several thousand of these have been collated and many names appear on them. Several difficulties make it hard to find any trace of Hebrew names on these tablets. The forms and roots of Hebrew names are common with those of Moabites, Edomites and Arameans. Also many Hebrews who came to Babylon adopted Babylonian names. For these reasons we are skeptical as to whether we can identify personal Hebrew names on the tablets of the period of Daniel, from the reign of Nabopolassar to Darius Hystaspis. The argument from silence of the monuments in this case will prove too much. If since Daniel is not mentioned, he did not exist, neither can we say that any Jews were ever in exile in Babylon; for on the monuments we are not certain that any Hebrew names appear.

But the new name of Daniel, given him by the king, in its Babylonian equivalent many believe to be found on the monuments. Dr. Wilson gives several instances of the new name appearing on the monuments. One is found on a tablet from the fourth year of Cyrus, another from his eighth year, and again in the second year of Darius Hystaspis. In the change of names it is possible that they wrote Daniel's new name as Belshazzar, the same as the son of the king. In transliterating both the new name of Daniel and that of Belshazzar, the Septuagint version and Josephus make them Baltasar. If such transliteration be accepted as correct on the contract tablets, then Daniel is here mentioned as an "*asharidu*"—the first, the noblest of the king.

b. On the *building inscriptions* of this period no mention of the old or new name appears.

c. On the *historical inscriptions* practically no names save those of the kings are used. Hence Daniel is not mentioned.

There is thus no undoubted reference to Daniel on the monuments. But this no more proves that he did not exist than that the numerous governors, judges, generals, priests, wise men, architects of this age not referred to on the monuments, did not exist. Who led the armies, supervised the

building of the large canals, who ruled supreme in the councils? Surely these men existed, even though their names do not appear on the monuments. Had the king no friends, priests, wives, or daughters worthy of mention? None that their names should have been inscribed on the monuments? Surely such lived, even though in the inscriptions their deeds are not written. And the argument from silence does not prove that Daniel did not exist.

3. *Did Nebuchadnezzar go up against Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim?* (Daniel 1:1). It is objected that according to Jer. 25:1; 44:2 the fourth year of Jehoiakim is the first year of Nebuchadnezzar; and according to Jer. 25:9 and 36:9 the Chaldeans had not yet come to Jerusalem in the fifth year of Jehoiakim; hence this statement of Daniel that the expedition was made in their third year of the king is false. This is due, critics state, to an erroneous combination of 2 Kings 24:1, 2 and 2 Chron. 36:6. For they reason that since Kings is silent with regard to this expedition in the third year, the statement in Daniel is improbable.

From the passage in Kings it is noted that Jehoiakim served Nebuchadnezzar three years after the latter came up against Jerusalem; then Jehoiakim rebelled. The Book of Kings does not say in what year Nebuchadnezzar came up to Jerusalem. From this it cannot be shown that before the death of Nebuchadnezzar's father, he was not called "King of Babylon." If he was so termed, which was common in those days, since the two kings ruled contemporaneously eight years—Jehoiakim ruled eleven years and the fourth year of this reign Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne—then there would have been sufficient time for Jehoiakim to have served Nebuchadnezzar three years.

The Book of Jeremiah mentions no expedition of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem. But the fourth year of Jehoiakim is synchronized with the first year of Nebuchadnezzar.

2 Chron. 34:4-8 states that Nebuchadnezzar did come up against Jerusalem in the days of Jehoiakim; that he carried him in chains as a captive to Babylon; and that Nebuchadnezzar took some of the vessels from the temple in Jerusalem and put them in the temple at Babylon. No other Old Testament passage refers to Jehoiakim.

In his *Antiquities*, XI, vi, 1-3, Josephus says that Nebuchadnezzar before he became king was sent by his father on an expedition against Egypt and Palestine; that he took over the government of Babylon in the fourth year of Jehoiakim; that Jehoiakim paid tribute for three years; that Jerusalem was taken the eleventh year of Jehoiakim.

Berosus says that Nebuchadnezzar was sent by his father against Egypt and Judea; that he conquered Jerusalem and took the people captive to Babylon; and that on another expedition he learned that his father had died and that he was king.

Summing up the testimony we find: (1) That Kings, Chronicles, Berosus, Joseph and Daniel all affirm that Nebuchadnezzar did come up against Jerusalem in the days of Jehoiakim. (2) They affirm that many captives were carried from Judea to Babylon. (3) Berosus supports the statement with reference to the vessels of the temple being taken to Babylon. (4) The same writer further supports Daniel in declaring an expedition to have been sent against Jerusalem before the death of Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar. (5) He also states that the father had died while Nebuchadnezzar was away on an expedition. Since this is true he may have been king *de jure* before he came up against Jerusalem, during which time he could easily have conquered the city. Hence there is no evidence produced from any reliable source that in the third year of Jehoiakim Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and took the king captive, and also took vessels from the temple to Babylon.

After establishing the fact that the expedition was made by Nebuchadnezzar, critics change the argument and state that though the expedition was made, still it is impossible for it to have been in the third year, that the king came up against Jerusalem. For Nebuchadnezzar was not made king of Babylon until the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

It is likely that the captured king would have been carried away to Babylon. For kings commonly did such in their wars. Zedekiah was twice a captive in Babylon. It is also likely that sacred vessels were taken to Babylon. The same is true with reference to the nobles of Jerusalem being taken captives to the city of the conquerors.

Daniel did not mistake the third year of Jehoiakim for the reference in Jeremiah for the fourth year of this king. Methods of reckoning the years of a king differed in many nations. The monuments of Babylon and Egypt show that the last year of the king who died is called the beginning year of the new king. In other words, the first year of the new king was accounted as his second year. Wilson states that the forty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar was the same as the beginning year of the reign of Evil-merodach; the latter's first year is what would be termed his second. Hence Daniel was merely using the Babylonish method of counting the years of a king; while the statement of Jeremiah is based on the method of reckoning the years of a king according to the Hebrews. 'Owing to these two methods of reckoning, it is obvious that the third year of a king according to the Babylonian calendar would be the fourth year according to the Egyptian. Among the Hebrews it is generally agreed that the Egyptian method of reckoning the years of a king are employed.'¹ Wilson continues, "... in concluding the discussion of the objections to Daniel on the ground of the date ... we have only to suppose that Jeremiah writing

in Palestine used the manner of reckoning common in that country, and that Daniel writing in Babylon used the method employed there; or to assume that here were two distinct expeditions, one in the 3rd and one in the 4th year of Jehoiakim."

4. *The meaning of the word "king" in Daniel.* The argument of modernists is that Nebuchadnezzar could not have been *king* in the third year of Jehoiakim. It is assumed that a man could not have been called king unless he was reigning at that time; that one related to the king could not have been termed king for the mere reason of honor or distinction; and that the word king used by Daniel must have had the same connotation and meaning as it does for us at present.

The facts in the case have been well stated already. Nebuchadnezzar while on an expedition hears that his father had died and left him the kingdom. As soon as possible, which might have taken him a few months, he returns to Babylon, though having been *de jure* king, he is then made *de facto* king. Daniel is writing of these events not at the time they occurred, but possibly seventy-five years later, and twenty-five years after the death of the general in charge of the expedition, Nebuchadnezzar. It was but natural for him to speak of the leader of the expedition as the King Nebuchadnezzar; the same as today we speak of President Lincoln having been a lawyer, or President Roosevelt having been governor of New York.

In Matt. 1:6 we read, "Jesse begat David the king"; evidently David was not king when he was born, but he is referred to as king in the same way as Nebuchadnezzar, the general, was called king. The word king could have also been used to distinguish the Nebuchadnezzar spoken of. The word is also used with reference to the sons of kings, as well might have been the case with him. This word is at times used in speaking of the father of a king, who in reality never ruled. On one cylinder inscription Nergal-sharusur calls his father "king of Babylon" while on another he is spoken of as "the wise prince, the perfect lord, the guardian of the guards." This illustrates the fact that the title was not only to the reigning monarch.

We do not rightly interpret the original words meaning king. The Hebrew *melek*, the Aramaic *malka* are uniformly translated king in the English Version, *rex* in the Latin Vulgate and *basileus* in the Septuagint. When we think of king it is always as the supreme ruler of an empire. While among the ancient Semites, the Greeks and the Romans, the term might mean the ruler of a city, a small state, a kingdom, or an empire. The word *basileus* meant the ruler of such cities as Argos and Sparta, of the countries great and small such as Macedon, Media, and Egypt, or of great empires as those of Cyrus, Darius and Alexander. The Latin *rex* denotes king of the city of Rome.

¹ Wilson, *Studies in Daniel*, 69.

Herod was the subject king of Judea. The Hebrew *melek* referred to the ruler of a city, or of a small country such as Judah and Israel, or of the king of kings, such as Esarhaddon and Darius.

Hence there is no reason why Nebuchadnezzar could not rightly have been called king of Babylon even before he ascended the throne of the empire. He could have been so named through respect, or because in later years he was the king, or because he was the son of a king, or he might have been a subking, or the king of a city under his father. In this case as is always true, the results of criticism will not stand the test.

Ministerial Ethics*

D. S. Somerville

THE call to the ministry involves the choice of the Almighty. To be "chosen, ordained, and called" of God to preach the wonderful gospel of Christ represents the highest honor that could be conferred on an individual.

The person so honored should, therefore, always maintain the proper appreciation of the nobility of his profession or calling. If one's conception of this "high and holy calling" should become commonplace, incidental, or a means to an end, then, by all means, the minister should either pray through to a normal ministerial vision, or retire from active service.

Each minister should take care that his public or private conduct be not unbecoming to the best traditions of his profession. There is an offense for which military officers are sometimes court-martialed, known as "conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman." Conduct unbecoming a gentleman is always unbecoming to a minister. But sometimes "conduct allowable," or permissible to other gentlemen, may be unbecoming to the ambassador of the cross. "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient," said St. Paul.

PASTORAL ETHICS

"All's well that ends well," but in order that one may end well there should be a good beginning. A bad start in a pastorate is disastrous. The blunders of the first few weeks may throw a shadow over many years. When the minister goes into his new pastorate he ought to give himself at once to his supreme task, *feeding the sheep*. Whatever else a minister may be, he is first of all a shepherd. To feed the people entrusted to his keeping is his first and most urgent duty. If he attends first of all to this and keeps on attending to it, blessed is he. The minister who on the first Sunday magnifies himself by telling his hearers

what he has a right to expect of them and what they may expect of him, is guilty of an indiscretion for which he may be forgiven, but which a man of tact will not commit. Do what he may, the minister on his opening Sundays is sufficiently in the public eye, and it is the part of wisdom for him to obliterate himself so far as possible in the humble work of feeding the sheep. Keep the congregation's eyes fixed upon Christ.

Why not first of all feed the sheep? To feed the sheep is not an act of presumption nor does it stir up opposition. Sheep like to be fed. They never resist. When repeatedly fed by the same shepherd they will follow him whithersoever he leads them. He can shear them again and again, and weave their wool into all sorts of lovely patterns for the glory of God, but when the new pastor attempts to shear a flock of strange sheep the first day before noon, he usually precipitates a furious scrimmage which is likely to leave the shepherd discomfited and out of breath. Many a man has complained bitterly of the foolishness and stubbornness of his sheep, who would have had no trouble had he only placed the feeding before the shearing.

The new pastor should not be in a hurry to revolutionize the constitution and by-laws of the church before the people learn to trust his judgment and come to occupy his point of view. He may be able to introduce an improvement here and there as time goes by, but he should wait until at least after dinner to start. Instead of splitting the former methods into kindling wood why not be content to feed the sheep? Feeding sheep involves no perils, whereas kindling wood may lead to a conflagration.

The pastoral change is a time when nearly every person has to readjust himself. Some time before the change is made it is usually known by all; and in either case whether the pastor is voted out or has resigned the result is about the same. The congregation ceases to look to the old pastor for leadership and therefore he is unable to make any plans for the future and the church comes to a standstill. During this time of transition great care should be taken by all concerned so that the proper ethics will be maintained. The outgoing pastor has certain standards that he must maintain. He may be prompted to get a few of his people told that they were the cause of all the failures of his ministry with them. He may slack up on his work and not keep up the contact with those who are becoming interested in the church.

It is much better for the old pastor to keep a sweet spirit during his last few weeks of service. The people will appreciate being fed instead of being skinned. Being a mechanic before entering the ministry I cannot go by this opportunity to make this exhortation balance. There is a definite responsibility during this time that the church has too. Any attempt by one or more of any of the church members to assume a certain amount of authority which is not legitimate should be re-

* Paper presented at Kentucky District Preachers' Meeting by the pastor of the Richmond Church.

sisted by the entire church. Then, too, just because the ministry of this good man has come to a close is no reason at all for his good name to be pulled down. The church can and does have a part to play in the making or breaking of the minister. Usually the pastor has enough to undergo at this time without his best support letting him down. Then when the new pastor comes the church should try to adjust themselves as rapidly as possible to the methods of the new pastor. The proper ethics during a pastoral change will go a long way in proving to the world that holiness is not only preached by the Church of the Nazarene; but is lived by the church also.

THE MINISTER'S COMMUNITY ETHICS

The pastor's relationship with the community is one of great importance. The success of the minister is somewhat limited by his ability to keep the proper relationship existing between his church and the community. And, too, there is a proper unwritten code of ethics that should exist between the pastor and ministers of other denominations of his community. There are certain codes of ethics that exist between the other professional men, and if the ministry is to hold the proper place of being an example to all men then there is going to be certain ethical conditions that shall be maintained whatever the cost. The lawyer will not take the client from another lawyer until the former lawyer is dismissed. The doctor will not go to another doctor's waiting room and tell the patients to come to his office; but when the patient desires to dismiss the former doctor then he will take the case.

Therefore, even if the pastor is called into the home of another denomination, I think that he should be very careful what is said about the various church doctrines and church membership. However, if a person is saved at our altars I believe that we have the right as well as the responsibility then to ask him to become a member of our church. Or, if he has been attending our services for some time and we have evidences to believe that he is dissatisfied with his church relationship and is saved from sin, then it becomes our duty to press upon him the value of church membership.

Every pastor should be interested in the Ministerial Association of the city in which he lives. There will be many things in which we can co-operate with the other churches of the city in which we live, which will also be a blessing to us as well as a help to the community. There will be a number of things that we can work together and accomplish which will help nonchurch members such as: Christmas baskets given to the needy, union Thanksgiving services, World's Day of Prayer and so on. However, there are going to be some things that we cannot do and we can frankly but courteously refrain.

The minister will have to live in a material world while he proclaims the gospel to a group of spiritual people. His living in this materialistic

world will compel him to be associated with business men and corporations that measure one's salvation by his promptness to take care of his business. The minister should never allow a shadow to be cast over his business relations with these men of financial affairs. The day that one is to look after his business obligations is the time to do it. There may be a legitimate reason why you cannot meet the entire obligation but your creditor does not know this until you tell him. The same excuse offered again and again soon becomes a "gag" and the influence of the minister and the church has been injured by negligence.

It is a pleasure to be able to call to any house of merchandise and order any amount of material and to have the conversation to be concluded with a, "Thank you for this fine order." The only way that this can exist is for each pastor of a local church to pay all bills when due.

Here again I think that the exhortation needs balancing. The members should consider what a precarious position the pastor is in and give, that they may pay him a salary that he may be able to meet his obligations; and that there may be money in the treasury to meet the obligations of the church.

Now in closing, just a word about ethics of ministers to ministers. There is a proper relationship that should exist between the resident minister and the pastor. The relationship should be one of courtesy, frankness and co-operation. The resident minister does not have the burdens and spiritual leadings from the Lord that the pastor has; therefore the minister should co-operate rather than to force himself on the pastor. A minister should be careful lest he establish himself as a local, district and general pest, because of a lack of co-operation. The local resident minister if he will, can be a great blessing to the pastor, if he is sweet-spirited, humble, kind and noncommittal on matters concerning the leadership of the church.

Ministers are leaders and should live exemplary lives. The relationship that a minister preaches should exist between the members of his own congregation must be experienced by himself and other ministers if his preaching is to be effective. If sanctification of a lay member will make him easy to be entreated it will do the same thing for a minister. And if this blessing will make a lay member rejoice to see his brother succeed when he seems to be failing; it will do the same thing for the minister. And surely if we expect each member to take the vow to be courteous to all men, then the ministry should take the lead.

Meekness cannot well be counterfeited. It is not insensibility, or unmanliness, or servility; it does not cringe or whine. It is benevolences imitating Christ in patience, forbearance, and quietness. It feels keenly, but not malignantly; it abounds in good will, and bears all things.—W. S. PLUMER.

HOMILETICAL

The Preaching Program for August, 1942

Hugh C. Benner

Showing Forth God

TEXT—*Oh that I knew where I might find him!* (Job 23:3).

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises [virtues] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Peter 2:9).

INTRODUCTION

The question of the ages has been, "Where is God?" "How can He identify Himself? How will He reveal Himself to human beings?"

It has been said that God is revealed through many sources, that He can be found in many ways. God is said to be found in nature: the heavens, the earth, flowers, mountains, oceans, trees, etc.; the revelation of God has been argued from the standpoint of "plan," "purpose," "intelligence of design." While it is true that, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork," yet in the last analysis, these objects and facts of nature, though causing men to recognize God, do not lead men to God. It has been said that God may be found in the "worship instinct," but this is inconclusive for though it may lead men to worship something, it does not, of itself, lead men to the true God.

The only conclusive manifestation of God is in and through redeemed, consecrated human personality. The only revelation of God that is effective in leading men to God is found in human lives and experience.

I. IN OLD TESTAMENT TIMES

1. Moses. When God came to Moses in the desert, He said more than, "I am God"; He significantly said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:6). To most satisfyingly identify Himself to Moses, God used His manifestations in the lives of these men. He was reminding Moses of His promises to those who had gone before and reminding him as well that His promises had not failed. In other words, it seems that God's best guaranty to Moses was His manifestation of grace and power in the lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

2. Elisha. When Elisha faced his first great trial of faith and spiritual power at Jordan, after the translation of Elijah, he asked not, "Where is God?" Rather he asked, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" (2 Kings 2:14). Apparently Elisha thought of God in terms of His manifestation in the life and ministry of Elijah: the effective prophecy of drought; the multiplying of the meal and oil; the raising from the dead of the widow's son; the fire from heaven on Mt. Carmel. Elisha's faith gripped the God who had done miraculous things for and through Elijah and as a result, the Jordan was rolled back, the widow's oil was multiplied, Naaman was cured of his

leprosy and a ministry filled with manifestations of God's power followed.

3. Nebuchadnezzar, after the deliverance of the three Hebrews from the fiery furnace, expressed the amazement of his heart and his recognition of the divine presence thus: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." To him, God was identified and manifested by His intervention in their lives.

4. Darius was moved to express his recognition of God, not in terms of philosophy or theology, but by declaring, "The God of Daniel . . . he is the living God."

II. IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

1. Peter and John. After they healed the lame man at the gate of the temple they were imprisoned. The next morning Peter gave his defense before the Jewish leaders and it is recorded, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). The manifestation of Christ that was effective was that which came through the lives of these disciples.

2. Paul. When Stephen was martyred, "the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." As Stephen died, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit . . . Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," Saul received such a revelation of the spirit and presence of Jesus Christ that when he met Him on the road to Damascus, his first reaction was, "Who art thou, Lord?"

3. (While we digress somewhat at this point from the immediate idea of our message, it is significant that God chose to reveal Himself in Jesus Christ as a man among men, rather than as an angelic being. It was the revelation of God through human personality.)

III. GOD'S PLAN TODAY: TO REVEAL HIMSELF THROUGH HIS PEOPLE

1. The world needs more than the "footprints" of Christ in nature or in some vague instincts. The world is waiting for a genuine manifestation of God in the lives of redeemed human beings. No other manifestation is conclusive or effective. "That ye should show forth" the spirit and power of Christ, is the divine purpose. The need is not so much a matter of "In His steps," as Christ being revealed "in our steps."

2. Changed lives and achievements of faith always convict people of their need of God. The world is seeing so little of these miracles of character and action that they are ignoring God. "Let your light so shine," said Jesus, "that they may see your good works." Is the lost world finding Jesus Christ revealed in and through your life?

Dodging the Promises

TEXT—*When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?* (Luke 18:8).

INTRODUCTION

A few random promises: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever" (John 14:16). "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). "Ye shall receive power,

after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8). "I will come again, and receive you unto myself" (John 14:3).

I. THE CHURCH AND THE PROMISES

1. The early church enjoyed unusual spiritual power and victory because they apparently did not attempt to "dodge" any implications of God's promises. They accepted the Christian way of life, the outpoured power of the Holy Spirit, the presence of Christ, the power of the Spirit in service, the providence of God in every situation, even though it entailed self-denial, sacrifice and death, the provision for holy living, the supernatural, miraculous power of God to meet their needs. They really appropriated the promises of God with all their outreach of blessing, joy and victory.

2. The church today is *dodging* much that those early Christians accepted and by which they normally lived: New Testament standards of experience and life; the possibilities of the supernatural, the miraculous.

3. The promises of God are extravagant in their provision for the spiritual, temporal and physical interests of God's people. They are designed to make Christians happy, victorious, effective, spiritually powerful, confident, steadfast, bearing the stamp of deity on their personalities.

4. In the face of such extravagant promises, why the spiritual dearth of these days; why the impotent condition, even though it entailed self-denial, sacrifice and are inseparably connected; the promises must be *believed* in true appropriating faith if they are to be operative. These promises must cease to be merely theoretical and become practical. We must make them *our own, now*.

II. FAITH, THEN, THE KEY TO SPIRITUAL SUCCESS—"Without faith it is impossible to please (God)"

1. What is the basic purpose of faith? To *get things from God*. To *help us*? To perform miracles to attest our righteousness? To *save us* from discomfort or want? Surely not! Faith is for the purpose of enabling us to *help God* in His work; to *get things for God*; to achieve for the *glory of God*. Much that is called faith is merely projected selfishness: *our* desires, needs, notions.

2. What is the character of true faith? Faith is not a kind of "magic button" which one may learn to press in order to satisfy his own desire. It is not a "business proposition." Neither is it a matter of "ordering God around." Faith is basically a *personal relation*.

- Based on love. The true lover does not demand constant and immediate "proofs" of love. There is a confidence that is deeper than "sight." True love for God will impel true faith, which operates effectively even when we cannot see immediate and continuous results.
- Implies abandonment to God and His will. In this there is a clear realization of our inability to know *what* to do or *how* to do it. Faith implies fitting our will into the will of God, rather than attempting to bend God's will to ours.
- Responding to the call of God in obedience. Faith is not merely calling on God for something, but also fitting our actions into our faith. Faith involves having confidence that God has the power to achieve His purpose for which we pray, and then *acting like it*.

III. WHY NOT MORE EFFECTIVE FAITH?

- Not enough love; not enough abandonment to God; too much of self and self-interest; too little obedience.
- We limit ourselves too much to the "reasonable" as determined by human standards.

- We prefer to manufacture excuses and alibis rather than pay the price of effective faith.
- We are interested ourselves first in results, rather than in the conditions to be met if God is to answer.

CONCLUSION

Let us make our lives "Promise Laboratories," in which God can demonstrate to the world His wonderful provisions for His people; where the full benefits of the promises of our loving heavenly Father can be wrought out to the exceeding joy and blessing of our hearts and to the eternal spiritual good of those around us. Let us openly and confidently face the promises in relation to spiritual power, temporal needs, effective service, the promotion and progress of the kingdom of Christ and every phase of Christian living in personal experience.

The Christian's Land of Promise

SCRIPTURE READING—Genesis 17:1-8.

TEXT—*And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession* (Genesis 17:8).
Wait for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4).

INTRODUCTION

Our Scripture Reading is the record of the epochal covenant between God and Abraham which has influenced the whole course of history since that time. It is recorded elsewhere in various forms, but always represents an everlasting agreement of God with His faithful servant which was to include the possession of Canaan. After many centuries this covenant was realized when the Israelites entered Canaan to "possess the land."

But this is but a type of another covenant: the temporal symbol of an eternal spiritual reality; the earthly figure of the heavenly experience; the passing shadow of an abiding spiritual substance. God's covenant with Abraham pointed to "the promise of the Father," God's covenant with His people to give to them the "gift of the Holy Ghost." This latter covenant is as definite and real as the first; it was realized on the Day of Pentecost and represents for the Church, the modern Israel, "The Christian's Land of Promise."

We shall consider five parallel provisions of these covenants.

I. CANAAN WAS PROMISED TO CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM

God promised Canaan only to those who bore the nature of Abraham. They had to enjoy a blood relationship to the "friend of God," and had to be alive in order to receive the promised land. Canaan was not to be the possession of strangers and aliens, but to the "children of the promise."

Just so, "the promise of the Father" is a covenant directed only toward "children of God." Before this covenant becomes effective, the individual must be "born again," miraculously brought into "the family of God" by the power of the atonement of Jesus Christ. This glorious "gift of the Holy Ghost" is not for spiritual aliens and strangers but for those who have become "partakers of the divine nature," those who are spiritually alive, for only the living can claim an inheritance. It is the "second definite work of divine grace," it is "subsequent to regeneration."

II. CANAAN WAS OBTAINED BY FAITH

Canaan came into the possession of Israel not by reason of Israel's merit, strength or ability. God said, "I will give . . . Canaan." It was to be secured only by the will and power of God as an inheritance. "We have heard . . . how thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; how thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out. For they got not the land in possession by their

own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance" (Psalm 44:2, 3).

"The promise of the Father" cannot be received by merit, by works, by effort, but comes to the believer as a token of the loving will of God. One does not have to "work" for an inheritance; it is a matter of meeting conditions laid down to receive the essence of the covenant. We must believe God's promise and realize that "faith is the victory."

III. CANAAN WAS ENTERED BY A CRISIS: JORDAN

Although there had been much preparation, there finally came the time when they took the course of immediate obedience, courage and action: the priests stepped into the water with a willingness to risk all, and the people followed. By a divine miracle "all the people were passed clean over Jordan" (Josh. 3:17).

"The gift of the Holy Ghost" comes as a crisis of spiritual experience. While there may be considerable preparation, there must finally come the time when we "die out" to the risks involved and with full obedience, courage and faith we step out on God's promise. By a divine miracle we can pass through this "valley of the shadow of death" to glorious entrance into this Christian's Land of Promise.

IV. THE PURPOSE OF CANAAN

Sustenance, abundance, wealth and permanence for God's people were God's purpose in His covenant. God wanted His people to have the blessings of establishment and to enjoy abundant resources. Instead of the limited manna, "they did eat of the old corn of the land . . . the fruit of the land of Canaan" (See Josh. 5:10-12).

In the "baptism with the Holy Spirit" there is the provision for spiritual sustenance, wealth and permanence. The blessings of power, establishment and spiritual resources are provided through the Holy Spirit.

V. CANAAN WAS A PERPETUAL STEWARDSHIP

God said, "The land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is mine" (Lev. 25:23). Canaan was not to be used selfishly but for the glory of God. It was an everlasting trust under the covenant and was to be administered according to the divine will.

The sanctified life is a perpetual stewardship: "stewards of the manifold grace of God." We are called to administer our lives, our influence, our possessions, our talents according to the will of God. "The gift of the Holy Ghost" is not an experience to be merely enjoyed, but is to enable us to serve Christ with full effectiveness and to accomplish His purposes. The Christian's Land of Promise is a place of loving obedience and of consistent bearing of responsibility.

Sleeping Disciples

SCRIPTURE READING—Matthew 26:31-46.

TEXT—*And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep* (Matthew 26:40).

INTRODUCTION

This surely is one of the most pathetic and tragic episodes in the life of Jesus Christ. He had warned the disciples of their impending failure, only to hear Peter, in his self-assurance and self-ignorance declare, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. . . . Though I die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." "Likewise also said all the disciples." Coming to Gethsemane, He left eight of His followers at the entrance of the garden and took Peter, James and John nearer to His place of agony with this sorrowful plea: "Tarry ye here, and watch with me." Going "a little farther," He "fell on his face and prayed."

1. After a period of prayer, Jesus returned to find the three disciples asleep and gently chided them saying, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

2. After the second period of prayer, He returned to find them "asleep again."

3. Returning after the third period of agonizing prayer and finding them sleeping, He said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest."

I. THESE "SLEEPING DISCIPLES" WERE THE PICTURE OF

1. A great need and a unique opportunity. Jesus Christ was fighting one of the epochal battles of His ministry of redemption. He was bearing the most terrible burden ever carried by a human being and but for the ministering angels that came, might have been crushed beneath the staggering spiritual load. Then, as never before, our Lord must have desired human sympathy and a sense of companionship. Then also was presented such an opportunity as could not come again; to share in this mighty moment in the plan of redemption.

2. The expectation of Christ. For three years He had walked and talked with these men, giving them the full benefit of His gracious ministry in word and deed. For three years He had tried to give them the spiritual vision of Himself and His redemptive mission. Jesus Christ had a right to expect faithfulness from these to whom He had given such devotion and training.

3. Failure in crisis. In spite of Christ's warnings, in spite of the apparent burden on His heart, heedless of His exhortation, "Watch with me," and insensible to the significance of His words, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," they soon slumbered, and in the crisis they failed.

4. Lost opportunity. "Sleep on now," said Jesus, for the time for sharing the heavy burden was gone, their opportunity had passed, it was too late to help.

II. THE BASIC REASON FOR "SLEEPING DISCIPLES"

"The spirit indeed is willing, but *the flesh is weak*." In this declaration of Jesus is the key to their weakness, the clue to their failure. The difficulty was not mere physical exhaustion, but a fundamental spiritual lack. "The flesh" here is that which "lusteth against the Spirit," that carnal disposition of the unsanctified heart that makes the individual indifferent and apathetic in the midst of the direst spiritual need. Along with Judas as the betrayer, we must put these carnal hearts that would let Christ bear His burden alone while they would sleep. The tragedy was not what they *did*, but what they *were*. There was an inner "fifth column" that was "not subject to the law of God," that defeated them in the very presence of Christ.

III. THESE ARE "GETHSEMANE DAYS"

The forces of evil, as in the closing days of the earthly life of Christ, are bringing all their power to bear upon the people of God. Never have the forces of righteousness been confronted with such tremendous, sinister and determined powers of iniquity, challenging God and His cause in the earth. In the midst of such a situation, the church is filled with "sleeping disciples."

1. Unspeakable spiritual need and unlimited opportunity.

2. Jesus Christ expecting the full support of His professing followers, and with good right, for behind them are nineteen centuries of Christian faith and experience.

3. Tragic failure because "the flesh is weak." Carnal hearts that "can't be bothered"; spiritual apathy; little of compassion or soul burden; apparently little realization of the essential moral and spiritual problem.

4. Soon the word will come, "Sleep on now." Opportunity is passing rapidly for the situation of the world and its spiritual interests is changing so swiftly that the church has almost lost its chance to meet the challenge of evil.

CONCLUSION

The need of the Church is the fiery baptism with the Holy Spirit that will purge and purify the hearts of "sleeping disciples," taking out that debilitating carnal spirit, putting in its place the "power from on high," that keen interest in the burden and mission of Jesus Christ. "Filled with the Holy Spirit," the Church can meet the tremendous issues of this day in assurance and victory. "Awake, thou that sleepest."

Children of God

TEXT—Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 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. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (1 John 3:1-3).

INTRODUCTION

There is much loose thinking today upon the matter of "divine sonship," with a very general emphasis on the idea that all men are "sons of God." While there is a sense in which, by creation, "we are his offspring," yet in the deeper spiritual sense we are in reality "sons of God" only by redemption through Jesus Christ, by being "born again," "born of the Spirit."

I. THE CHARACTER OF DIVINE SONSHIP

1. Rooted in the love of God. "Behold what manner [quality] of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." Surely it is a wonderful manifestation of divine love "that we," sinful, hopeless, helpless, rebellious, should be so changed as to "be called the sons of God." No more fundamental explanation ever has been given, in the revelation of God to man, for redemption.

2. Effected by divine power. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). "Ye are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 3:26). "Born of God."

3. A conscious relationship. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." "The Spirit [himself] beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16). "We know that we are of God" (1 John 5:19).

4. Brings conflict with the spirit of the world. "The world knoweth us not." Divine sonship brings to the soul a clear sense of variance from the spirit and standards of the world. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

II. VITAL ELEMENTS OF DIVINE SONSHIP

1. Dignity. "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1). "Walk worthy of the Lord" (Col. 1:10). "Walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). "The high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). "Partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1). "Sons of God" are called to walk through this world with the sense of heavenly nobility upon them. In the true dignity of children of God, there is no room for carelessness, pettiness, inconsistency, or an apologetic spirit.

2. Privileges.

- a. Freedom of access to the Father. "Come boldly."
- b. Assurance. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matt. 6:32).

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8:35).

- c. Liberty. "No more a servant [slave]" (Gal. 4:7).
- d. Inheritance. "If a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. 4:7). "If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." "An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4).

3. Responsibilities. It would be splendid if we could close on this high thought, but it would not be a true and complete picture, for divine sonship implies:

- a. The desire to be like the Father. No higher compliment can be paid to a good father than that his son should desire to be like him. So with our heavenly Father, we honor Him most when we desire to be like Him in His most fundamental attribute: holiness. "Every man that hath this hope in him" (Christ)—this hope of eternal inheritance set or fixed on Christ—"purifieth himself"—meets God's conditions for heart purity—"even as he [Christ] is pure." No amount of activity or external conformity to religious codes or creeds can compensate for a lack of this inner godlikeness.
- b. Doing the will of the Father. It is inconceivable that the true child of God should be indifferent to the interests of the kingdom of God. With the psalmist the loving, obedient, consecrated son of God says, "I delight to do thy will, O my God."

A Paradox and God

SCRIPTURE READING—Joel 2:12 through the first phrase of verse 19.

TEXT—Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God (Joel 2:13).

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Joel contains only three chapters, but they portray two dramatic pictures, so extreme in their contrast as to be veritable paradoxes. (For the purposes of this message we shall not attempt to explain the prophetic implications of Joel, but shall deal with the spiritual message of the book as a whole, remembering that the prophets were first of all preachers to the people of their generation.)

I. THE FIRST PICTURE (Joel 1 through 2:11.)

A portrayal of terrible judgment; so severe that it had not been equaled in the past, and will be told to generation after generation in the future (Joel 1:2, 3).

1. An aggressive enemy. May have been literal locusts, or it may have been the symbol of a warring nation. In any case, they were the instruments of defeat and humiliation for the people of God.

2. Material desolation. Famine, drought and pestilence: "the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth," and so on.

3. Sorrow and lamentation. "Joy is withered away from the sons of men."

4. Spiritual desolation. "The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the Lord." The land is so destitute that even the simplest services of the temple are impossible. The House of God is deserted.

5. Reproach. The people of God who profess to serve a living, powerful deity, are the subject of reproachful slurs and questionings by the heathen about them, saying, "Where is your God?"

II. THE SECOND PICTURE (Beginning at Joel 2:19) A portrayal of unmeasured blessing.

1. Victory over the enemy (Joel 3:12-16).
2. Material abundance and satisfaction. "I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith." "The mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk."
3. Joy and blessing. "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice." Rain and refreshment have come and they are told that they "shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God." Their losses are to be restored to them: "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten."
4. Spiritual abundance. "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." "A fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord." "The Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion."
5. The reproach gone. "My people shall never be ashamed." "I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen."

III. HOW CAN THESE PICTURES BE RECONCILED?

The text is the answer: the path from judgment to blessing.

1. "Rend your heart." Humility, confession, contrition.
2. "Turn unto the Lord your God." A complete change of direction, from selfishness and rebellion to a full devotion to the will of God.
3. "Then will the Lord be jealous, and pity his people. Yea, the Lord will answer" (2:18, 19). "The Lord will do great things" (2:21).

IV. THE APPLICATION

1. To group life. In varying degrees, the modern church presents the counterpart of the First Picture. Aggressive enemies are victorious; spiritual famine and dearth; lack of joy and refreshment; the house of God deserted and His work languishing; reproach to the name of the living Christ.

If the church will "humble themselves," and turn to God with all their heart, "The Lord will answer," the Holy Spirit will be poured out in power and effectiveness, the people will rejoice in God, the cause of Christ will prosper and the world will be convinced of the reality of the redemptive power of the Son of God.

2. To the individual. All about us are those whose hearts are spiritually destitute. They are defeated, unhappy, hungry for God and often feel that there is no hope and no use trying to get to God. To them God is saying, "Turn to the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great mercy" (2:13). God never can be indifferent to "a broken and a contrite spirit." His mercy is extended to all who turn to Him in humility, confession and contrition. Defeat can be changed to victory, famine to plenty, sorrow to joy, storm to calm, bondage to deliverance, emptiness to satisfaction. Hear it again! "He is gracious and merciful." "The Lord will answer . . . the Lord will do great things." God is equal to the demands of this paradox.

Miracles in Color

TEXT—*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool* (Isaiah 1:18).

INTRODUCTION

This verse in the first chapter of Isaiah is like a beacon light in dense darkness, for the earlier portion of the chapter is filled with a terrible indictment against Judah,

Addressing them as "ye rulers of Sodom," and "ye people of Gomorrah," the Lord declares, "I am full of burnt offerings of rams . . . incense is an abomination unto me . . . your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth." He calls them "a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity." But suddenly, in the midst of these solemn accusations, the yearning heart of God speaks in this text.

I. GOD'S INVITATION: "Come now, and let us reason together."

1. Divine Initiative: "Come."

Here we find the miracle of God's personal initiative in seeking those who have strayed away from Him. In His great love and wisdom, He has given us more than impersonal truth; He has revealed Himself as a God of personal interest and willing to make the first overture in the hope of leading the sinner and the backslider to mercy and pardon.

2. Divine Urgency: "Now."

This is God's consistent attitude, that men should hasten to attend to the matter of their souls' welfare and their relation toward Him. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." The devil says, "Wait"; but God always says, "Now."

3. Divine Reasonableness: "Let us reason together."

God is not driving men toward righteousness, but is saying, "Let's talk it over; let me discuss this matter with you with a view to decision." God is not interested in "arguing," but always invites humanity to reason concerning these things. Such a challenge is sincere, for God's truth, will and standards will bear up under any process of legitimate reasoning.

"Let us reason," signifies: (a) God's respect for human personality; (b) His patience; (c) His love. The call of God is not unreasonable for in it He faces facts and gives the solution for the problems involved. No man can reason sincerely with God and fail to see the divine truth and heed the divine call. Men refuse God only by refusing to think and act reasonably; good judgment commends God and His will every time.

II. GOD'S PROMISE: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

1. "Scarlet," in ancient days was recognized as:

- a. Standing for the highest degree.
- b. The most vivid color.
- c. The most persistent color. There was no human means known whereby scarlet could be removed from cloth. "Neither dew, nor rain, nor washing, nor long use could remove it." So long as there was even a tiny thread of scarlet-dyed cloth remaining, that thread retained its vivid scarlet color.

2. Surely sin is "as scarlet." It touches every part of the personality until it seems that every "thread" of the human fabric is deep-dyed with its stain, and no human means is sufficient to wash it away. But in God there is the provision for "Miracles in Color"; there is hope in God for He has the power to change even "scarlet" until it is "as white as snow."

III. ILLUSTRATED BY THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (Leviticus 16).

1. The high priest offered a bullock as an atoning sacrifice for himself and his family, sprinkling its blood upon and before the mercy seat within the veil.

2. He then took a goat that had been chosen by lot from two such animals, and offered the goat for the sins of the people, again sprinkling the mercy seat as before.

3. The other of the two goats was the "scapegoat," upon whose head the high priest laid his hands, confessing the sins of the people, after which the goat was led into

the wilderness: "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited" (v. 22).

4. Early rabbinical writers declare that in the course of this ritual, a scarlet cloth was fastened to the scapegoat and another such cloth was attached to the door of the temple. After the high priest had confessed over him the sins of the people, a trusted individual led the goat twelve miles into the wilderness and cast it over a precipice to death. They assert that as the scapegoat was hurled to its death, the scarlet cloths on the animal and on the temple door instantly changed to pure white. It is of more than passing significance that these writers say that this miracle ceased forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, for that was approximately the time of Jesus Christ's atoning death on the cross, which made unnecessary such transitory symbols and figures. But whether this tradition is true or false, the miracle represented in it has its full realization in Jesus Christ, and His power is available today to make "as white as snow," the sins that "be as scarlet." As on the Day of Atonement, through Christ there is satisfaction for our guilt and our sins are taken away, to be "remembered no more against us forever." God is still working "Miracles in Color."

Waiting

SCRIPTURE READING—John 5:1-9.

TEXT—A great multitude . . . waiting (John 5:3).

INTRODUCTION

This is one of those pathetic scenes which so often confronted our Lord as He went about in His blessed ministry. Apparently, the space about the Pool of Bethesda was crowded with this "great multitude of impotent folks, of blind, halt, withered," and among them was this man to whom Jesus addressed himself particularly.

The usual emphasis, in sermonic treatments of this passage of scripture, is placed upon the phrase, "I have no man . . . to put me into the pool." This emphasis is important and legitimate, for there is a tragic neglect of those who need spiritual help. But in this message we have another interest: the word, "waiting."

I. THIS MAN WAS "WAITING"

1. In his need and helplessness.
2. For certain conditions: "a certain season"; "the troubling of the water"; the opportunity to be "first."
3. For human help: some man to put him into the pool.
4. Hopelessly, for after years of waiting he seemed no nearer to deliverance than at the first.

II. MULTITUDES ARE "WAITING" TODAY

1. In the need and helplessness of their sin.
2. Waiting for certain conditions; then they will be Christians.
 - a. The youth says, "When I have had my good time"; or "When I have entered adult life."
 - b. The mature individual says, "When I am established in business"; or "When I retire from active work." "When I find a perfect church"; "When I am moved in a certain way"; "When I am in more favorable surroundings"; "When I have less opposition."
3. Waiting for human assistance: friends, husband or wife, children, parents. Putting off the matter of salvation until someone else moves toward God.
4. Most of these are waiting hopelessly, for these conditions, these human helpers fail to materialize.

III. "WHEN JESUS SAW HIM . . ."

To this man, "waiting," came a strange character, asking what seemed to be an utterly meaningless question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" The man answered with a

review of his problems and a declaration of his helplessness. To his utter surprise, Jesus brushed aside the whole complaint, ignored the problems and said not one word concerning conditions—"seasons," or "troubled waters"; He made absolutely no comment on the matter of human failure to assist the man to help and victory. Here was One who was independent of conditions, unhampered by human frailties and failures. Here was One who could make an end of futile "waiting." In Jesus Christ was all that this poor man needed—more than the capricious "angel" with his spasmodic "troubling of the waters,"—for He had resources that could operate independently of these lesser forces. His power was available immediately. Thus, He said to the man, discouraged in his "waiting," "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The man's faith seized upon the divine hope that was voiced in that challenge; gone were his years of waiting; gone was his hopelessness and helplessness; gone was his dependence on "conditions" and people. "Immediately, the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked."

CONCLUSION

Tonight there are too many just "waiting." Sinners are waiting. Unsanctified believers are waiting. Prodigals, far from Father's house, weary, hungry, poverty stricken, are waiting. To them all Jesus Christ is speaking His challenge to trust Him now. He is asking, "Wilt thou be made whole?" And if you will obey and trust Him, He will cut through conditions and human failures and will make an end to your "waiting."

The Range of Redemption

TEXT—Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him (Hebrews 7:25).

INTRODUCTION

Here is the gospel of Jesus Christ in a sentence; a sentence-summary of the fundamental purpose of Christ's coming to earth—"to save"—and of "The Range of Redemption" provided through His atoning sacrifice on the cross.

I. THE RANGE OF NEED: "He is able to save."

1. The infinite price paid for man's redemption is an indication of the desperate need of a lost soul. Humanity in sin has that need, whether they realize it or not, for indifference to need does not abolish the need. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Sin is no respecter of persons.

2. But in Jesus Christ is a provision broad enough and deep enough to compass this need for salvation from sin. "He is able to save" the wicked, degraded, vile, hardened sinner; and "He is able to save" the moral, decent, respectable kind of a sinner. In Christ is redemptive authority and power to meet the whole problem of sin. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

II. THE RANGE OF EFFECTIVENESS: "To the uttermost."

1. In point of quality. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). Full provision has been made in Christ to deal with sin "to the uttermost."

- a. "To forgive us our sins." In the first work of divine grace, our sins are forgiven and divine life is restored to our souls: we are "born again," "born of the Spirit," regenerated and justified.
- b. "And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In the second work of divine grace the principle of sin is eradicated from the heart of the believing child of God. the heart is made pure, and the

Holy Spirit in His fullness is poured out upon the individual. "Saved to the uttermost!"

2. In point of time. The redemptive purpose of God in Jesus Christ not only provides for the limited period of time in this life, but also has an eternal outreach. In Christ is victory over death and eternal life in the presence of God.

III. THE RANGE OF THE WAY: "By him," Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, "I am the way." Knowing that He is the way to God, we are not dependent upon our limited human knowledge or inadequate human efforts. There are those who declare that insistence on Christ as the only way to God is a narrow and intolerant attitude. But the many other purported ways to God are evasions of the legitimate truths revealed in God's Word concerning sin and repentance. "There is none other name . . . whereby we must be saved," and there is no other needed.

IV. THE RANGE OF THE INVITATION: "Them . . . that come."

Who can find any limits to the divine invitation? "Come unto me, *all ye* that labour and are heavy laden." "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6: 37). "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). This outreach of divine love is so wide that only the hardness or rebellion of our own hearts can make it ineffective. It includes the lowest of the low and the highest of the high, for all are leveled by the fundamental need of redemption through Christ.

Bill Riley was a guard for Jesse James while the outlaw gang participated in robberies in Minnesota. After James' death, Riley was taken for murder in New York. Pardoned after thirteen years in Sing Sing, he could not hold any position long because of his past record. With three other men, he planned a train robbery near Los Angeles. Just before going to the scene of the proposed crime, he dropped into a Los Angeles mission. The message of hope in Christ came to his heart, he was saved, testified to his partners in crime and became an honored Christian worker.

Christ or Barabbas

SCRIPTURE READING—Matthew 27:11-26.

TEXT—*Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?* (Matthew 27:17).

INTRODUCTION

The scene is in Pilate's judgment hall. Armed guards are everywhere. Outside, the mob has gathered, sullen, restless, demanding. Out of the Garden of Gethsemane they had brought Jesus of Nazareth, who had just passed through the most agonizing season of prayer the world ever had known, a prayer that had guaranteed redemption for a lost race. Out of the dungeon, where he had been incarcerated, "bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection" (Mark 15:7), they brought Barabbas. In what seems to have been a sincere attempt to save Christ from the murderous hatred of the people, Pilate, according to an annual custom, offered them the choice of releasing Christ or Barabbas.

I. THE NECESSITY OF THEIR CHOICE

Pilate gave the people just two alternatives and they were compelled to choose. There was no neutral ground on which they could take their stand and evade the issue. This situation is symbolic of the whole message and ministry of Jesus Christ. His character and teachings were so fundamental that they could not be ignored or evaded indefinitely.

Today, as then, there is no neutrality in relation to Him. Inevitably we face Him and must make a choice concern-

ing Him. Indifference or scorn cannot suffice to release us from that choice.

II. THE DUAL ACTION OF THEIR CHOICE

The release of Christ automatically meant the death of Barabbas. The release of Barabbas automatically meant the death of Christ.

Spiritual choices and attitudes are always dual in action and direction. As one chooses Christ, he resists and denies the devil. As one chooses the will of the devil, he resists and denies Christ. This principle is constitutional in the spiritual realm: it represents the basic conflict between the power and will of God and of the devil. Stephen, in his defense, declared, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," and as they resisted God's Spirit, they automatically submitted to the power of the devil and before sunset they were murderers.

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THEIR CHOICE

In choosing Barabbas instead of Christ, they chose:

1. Insurrection rather than peace.
2. Robbery rather than divine giving.
3. Murder rather than salvation and eternal life.
4. The worst of humanity rather than the best of deity.

Choice against Jesus Christ will release the devil and sin in your life. When you make such a choice, out of the dark dungeon of your heart will come forces of evil which you do not suspect and which you cannot control: lawlessness and rebellion; robbery of your peace, happiness and security; and eternal death to your soul. The worst that is in you will live and thrive; the best in you will be crucified.

Choice for Christ will crucify the sin of your heart and will release Christ in your life. With him will come the peace and joy of doing the will of God; your heart will become a treasure house of the "unsearchable riches of Christ"; and you will live in the security of life everlasting. When you release Christ in your life, the worst in you of sin and self will be crucified and the best will be multiplied.

IV. THE RESULTS OF THEIR CHOICE

After Pilate protested his innocence of the blood of Christ, the people answered, "His blood be on us, and on our children." It was. At the fall of Jerusalem, unspeakable cruelties were perpetrated on them. Jesus Christ's prophecy of their terror and fate was fulfilled.

God is in earnest about sin. The only safety for any of us is to choose Jesus Christ.

Ambition

*To hear the Master when He speaks; to go
Or stoop as He directs; to be content
To serve though none may praise or even know;
To do, not what I choose, but what He meant
For me (and when a task of mine is done,
Have grace for others' sake to step aside);
Above all else to bring him souls I've won—
But so they come to Him be satisfied
Though in it I may have a minor part;
To look to Him always that He may touch
With power trembling hands or timid heart
And fill my lack. That He who suffered much
Might through a simple life be praised, I would
That He might say, "She hath done what she
could."*

—LUCILLE WHARTON in *Arkansas Methodist*.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Basil Miller

Try Jesus

"Russia needs a national leader," said a Russian diplomat to a famous preacher not long since.

The two were crossing the Atlantic on the same ship and became quite friendly, and the minister was able to grasp much of the Russian psychology.

"We have no Lincoln, no Washington as national heroes. We have thought of making Lincoln our national hero, but then he is American. We have sought but all have been cast aside as not quite fitting the need."

"Have you tried Jesus?" quickly responded the preacher.

Yes, the hero of the world is Jesus. He is a sufficient national leader for any age or clime or nation.

And as an individual Leader, there is none to match Christ. Try Him first—not last, and no soul will be disappointed.

Before closing the conversation, the Russian added tersely, "Yes, we have thought of Him. He would do and meet our needs but He has made such a poor showing with you," and turned on his heel and left the preacher standing by the ship's rail.

He has been too poorly tried by America. The results are not Jesus', but our fault.

The Guessing Game

"I guess," I said, as we were driving through Pasadena with General Superintendent Chapman.

"You guess, so we can know. Is that the way it is?" he retorted, then after a pause added, "That's the way it is with those who question the Bible. They guess and give their guesses to others as a sure 'know.'"

This is the problem of those who are uncertain in their faith and its rock foundation upon the Book of God. They give their guesses as truth and guessing long enough they try to make themselves believe they know what is man's right way without respect to the Word of God.

We know what is salvation's way because we base our knowledge upon the Bible and not human guesses.

Two Preachers

Recently I heard two popular and famous preachers, poles apart in their beliefs. Each is famous in his circle. One has been the university preacher for many leading universities, and has delivered many addresses on forums at colleges and universities of the nation. He is a popular writer (in his field). He is pastor of a leading liberal church in Pasadena where his fame thus becomes nation wide, and is lecturer in Ethics at the California Institute of Technology, the scientific institution with 800 professors and lecturers and fellows with 750 students, and four or five Nobel prize winners in science.

The other is a southern pastor and has been called upon to deliver many sermons throughout the nation among evangelicals. He is the author of numerous books of sermons, and as a speaker is one of the most eloquent in the nation.

I heard them both speak, one on the meaning of Columbus Day in religion and the other on the Bible. The first tore every foundation away from the Bible, leaving it but the guesses of men and the unscientific dicta of

distant ages. In its fabrication it is human and inspired only as Shakespeare is inspired. When I left the Neighborhood Church of Pasadena, where T. G. Soares is the minister (and the man of whom I speak), I felt that there was no God to inspire and no sure way of salvation, unless one calls the uncertain path of man's inventive genius a sure one.

There was nothing spiritually constructive. Every word was destructive.

When I left the Bible Institute in Los Angeles where Robert G. Lee, the famous Baptist preacher of Memphis, Tenn., spoke on the Bible I had in my possession the richest treasure of the ages, crammed with glory and God, and was to me the sure path from sin's blight to heaven's height.

Lee was eloquent and proclaimed the unassailable Book. Soares was masterful and wrecked faith. Lee marched out the enemies of the Bible and under the dust of oblivion crumbled their theories and dogmas to naught. Soares heaped the Bible with other forgotten literature in the wrecked thought of the past.

Said Fulton Ousler, editor of *Liberty*, certainly not to be accused of being a religious magazine, "It looked like for some time that the ministers were going to empty the churches with their doubts" (quoting freely). And this I thought is the true reason why the churches are empty.

It takes a sure faith to lay a foundation for a true worship. Doubt will never do it. A sincere proclaiming of God's Word as God's Word alone will put people back into the churches.

Just Holler

"And what do you do, Brother Hutchens," asked a student at Pasadena College where Rev. E. M. Hutchens had just spoken, "when you get into the brush?"

"Just holler," came the terse reply.

"Have you ever been in the brush?" asked the student.

"Too many times," said the minister.

And by way of emphasis too many ministers substitute, "just holler" for true preparation and inspiration.

Launch the Boat

"Launch the boat," commanded the captain of the Coast Guard cutter that had arrived at the scene of an ocean wreck.

Out there the waves were high, the storm turbulent, the sea in the throes of a convulsion. On the quickly sinking vessel near the rocks the passengers and crew were huddled expecting at a moment's notice to be hurled into the bosom of that wild and raging sea.

"Launch the boat," cried the captain.

Returned the new recruit, "The storm, captain, we can't get back."

Snapped the captain the third time, "Young man, we have to go out but we don't have to come back."

There's no rule in the book of life for our "coming back" as Christ's crew, manning the boats that sail the ocean of time. We are to go, die for Him, and worry not about coming back. We are to go as Esther Carson Winans did—though she died in going. As Dr. Leonard Wilbur did when he arose from his sick bed, as he was suffering with typhus fever and performed a life-saving operation on an old withered Chinese woman and returned to his typhus bed to die. They went out, but they made no preparation about coming back.

So must we go into the world of woe and assuage the pain of the needs. Christ will take care of "the coming back."

Painting the Barn

"I'm painting the barn," answered the artist who sat long hours in the farmer's pasture with his brushes busy at the scene.

Before him lay a pastoral scene of unmatched beauty. Long sweeps of greenland led gently down to the emerald bay that notched the coastline on the gentle Pacific. Behind towered the pine-clad mountains, and the old historic adobe house was marked with the carving hand of a century.

When evening came the old farmer returned to the painter to ask what he had done, and just as he was putting his tubes and brushes away to return to the city, the farmer looked at what he thought would be a glorious picture of his place. All he saw was the barn.

With a dropping jaw he said, "Only the barn!"

He had wasted his time with the barn!

"So are young people," said Rev. S. T. Ludwig in a Pasadena youth meeting, "often so busy with the non-essentials that they never get to the vital issues of life. Paint the barns when needful, but do not spend all your time on the barn. Remember the important things, the grand issues, the challenging items that demand your attention and do these."

Memory's Horrors

"So you killed your mother," said Holland London, who is chairman of the Penal Board, State of Arkansas, to a young man who was sentenced to die for murder.

"Yes, Mr. London, I killed my mother."

"Why did you do it?" asked the preacher, who was visiting in the penitentiary and talking with the condemned man.

"It was like this. I killed my mother on August 21. I'll die in the electric chair for it. I know that all right. I ought to. But—"

"But what?" asked the minister, who expected the youth to request leniency since he was head of the Penal Board.

"What makes it the worst of all," the criminal youth went on, "is the fact of memory. I can't forget that for fifteen years my mother taught me the better way, took me to a Methodist Sunday school, and then I got in with the wrong crowd. Got to drinking. Did what I shouldn't. And then—"

"Yes?"

"Then, Mr. London, I got dead drunk that night, went home and got my gun," sobbed the youth, his head down. "And I killed my mother. I knew better. I can't get away from the memory of it."

Hell will be more hellish because of memory. "Son, remember," are the words of Jesus to the man in hell. And in hell memory will blazon across the walls of fire, "Son, remember!"

Sin's Wreck

"I've just heard from him," said a woman whose husband had run off and left her.

"Did he?" I asked.

"Yes, he left the woman that caused the wreck of our home and is now in the East. He's married to a woman."

"Divorce you?"

"No, he didn't. He just took up with this girl and then married her."

I thought back through the months that I had known the family. I had seen that man at the altar praying for souls, when he himself was victorious in his faith. I had heard him testify and the glory was on his soul. I had visited in his home which was a happy one. Then came the attack of sin.

He met a girl—not an innocent one—that knew the ropes that lead to a man's heart.

From then on it was the old story of sin—nights together in parked automobiles—long rides when no one suspected but that they were each at home—nights at a hotel together. Then came the crash, when the wife found out.

Today the home is wrecked. The little children are in need. The sick boy is without medicine and the care of a father. All because of sin! Sin did it! It could have been stopped by just one hour of prayer at the right time.

Healed of Cancer

"There is no doubt, Mrs. Davis, but you have cancer of the breast," said the cancer specialist Dr. N. P. Keen of Shawnee, Okla.

Those were tragical words spoken to this woman.

"I had darting pains shooting through me and intense burning sensations. As I prayed I asked God to show me if there was anything in my life that would hinder me from being healed."

"And did you find anything in your life?"

"He did not show me anything, so I called on God with all my heart for healing. The pains stopped as I prayed and I slept well that night, and the next day the fight began again," says Mrs. A. Davis.

She called for the minister and a Christian lady to pray with her for healing. After prayer she felt stronger, but the symptoms kept coming back with increased fury.

"I rebuked them," she says, "and got victory over them, and it felt like I was fighting the devil face to face. Each time the symptoms returned I went to praising God for victory. The glory rolled over my soul in waves of triumph. I was healed."

"Any doubt about your having had cancer?" I inquired.

"None whatever. I wanted to know if it was really cancer so I went to an experienced cancer specialist. He said I had had all the symptoms of cancer—and that if anyone doubted my testimony they should write him—Dr. N. P. Keen, Shawnee, Okla."

The Cost of Gambling and Drinking

"So you can't keep from drinking and gambling?" asked Judge Kenneth Newell, of the superior court, Pasadena, California.

"No, your honor, I am not able to keep away from drink," answered the man.

"You understand that if you are to receive the benefits of this will, amounting to approximately \$200 a month for life, that you must keep from gambling and drinking?" asked the judge.

"I understand that's the statement of the will—and—"

"And between the time of the codicil of the will and the probating of the same you have been found drunk and have been gambling, according to the testimony of the trustee of the estate."

"Yes, your honor."

"Then because of the weakness of your will power and your inability to stay sober and not to gamble you have forfeited the estate."

Gambling, says the youth, is an insignificant matter and can be given up at will.

Drinking, says the girl, can be stopped at any time.

Ask this man who but shortly ago lost this income for life, if gambling and drinking are habits easily broken.

He testifies, "I would have given anything I had could I have only given up these habits."

The blood of Jesus' route is the only one to freedom from the clutches of sin's habits. "The cleansing blood" will free.

God Protects the Innocent

"God doesn't let innocent men die in prison," said Scott Stone, 68, who once was within seven and a half minutes of hanging, and later four and a half minutes of the same fate.

In 1925 Stone was convicted of the Red Riding Hood murders of Mae and Nina Martin, thirteen and nine years old, and after sixteen years was unconditionally freed of the crime by Governor Olson of California.

"I knew," said Stone, "that God would free me from prison just as He saved me from the gallows. Once I was three steps from the gallows and again two steps from the traps. But I wasn't afraid. I was innocent and I knew that God would save me."

The second time when they were preparing to execute

Stone, the officer said, "Now will you tell the truth?"

Said Stone, "I have told the truth. I didn't do it. God almighty will save me."

The guard said as they walked to the trap, "Well, it doesn't look like He is going to do it this time."

"Don't worry," returned the convicted man, "He will."

Just then a man came waving a white handkerchief, and shouted, "Take him down. Take him down."

Stone said of his feeling at the time, "I guess I was the least surprised man there."

God would not let an innocent man die, Stone believes, and he attributed his belief to the fact that he built a firm faith in God and His goodness.

"I felt calm in the face of it all," he states.

This is the victory that overcomes, even faith!

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

The Rune of Hospitality

*I saw a stranger yestere'en;
I put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place;
He blessed myself and my house,
My cattle and my dear ones.
And the lark said in her son,
Often, often, often.
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise;
Often, often, often.
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.
—Old Gaelic Rune.*

Mr. "Glory-face"

Adoniram Judson went as a missionary to Burma. He so burned with the desire to preach the gospel before he learned the language that he walked up to a Burman and embraced him. The man went home and reported that he had seen an angel. The living Christ was so radiant in Judson's countenance that men called him "Mr. Glory-face." When Christian workers really come to know the love God has given unto them, the Christian gospel will become irresistible.—*The Call to Prayer.*

GRACE AND GRACES

"Grace is given us for ourselves; graces are given us for others."—ABRAHAM KUYPER.

Would this Do in America?

In south India 45,000 Christians have adopted a sixteen-point program. Brevity but pointedness characterize these tenets: no illiteracy, no filth in or around the house, every Christian's

clothes clean, cleansing of tobacco from personal and social habits, no expensive feasts, no liquor, no excessive interest charges, no debts contracted through marriage, all disputes settled out of court, a co-operative in every village, no recreation that cannot be taken in the name of the Lord Jesus, one-tenth of each one's income to the church, caste remnants wiped out, punctuality stressed, salute everyone in a respectful Christian manner.—*United Presbyterian.*

The Issue

This tremendous struggle (the present World War Number II) is something far more than a clash between sovereign states. Western civilization, when it was split in twain by the Reformation, produced the national sovereign state. Now, after four centuries during which western man operating in the frameworks of his states has explored and exploited the whole surface of the globe, the material problems of existence are solved, or if not solved, we know that the machine can solve them. Remains the deep and searching question, "What is the purpose of life?" That is the question this war is being fought to resolve.

On December 16, 1918, General Smuts said, "There is no doubt that mankind is once more on the move. The very foundations have been shaken and loosened and things are again fluid. The tents have been struck, and the great caravan of humanity is once more on the march."

Ponder those words. Examine them against the background of the events which have taken place since they were spoken nearly twenty-five years ago. Since then we have seen the ineffective attempt to organize peace on the basis of collective security; the rise of the Nazi-Fascist dictatorships; the emergence of Soviet Russia which, once feared and hated by the West, now stands in the forefront of a battle in which democracy fights for survival; Japan, drunk with western materialism, apes the empire builders of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the U.S.A., guardian of the American dream, isolationist by tradition and intention, drawn inevitably into the whirlpool.

Can there be any doubt that, when we are dead and gone and the paper on which these words are printed is again dust from which new trees will grow, men will look back and talk of our times as those of the World Revolution?

Therefore it is well that from time to time we should lift up our eyes from the jungles of Malaya, from the stormy waters of the Atlantic, from the sands of Libya and the snows of Russia, and remember that all these vast and bloody exertions on land, sea and in the air are means to an end and not ends in themselves.—*National News Letter*, England, February 5, 1942.

When the Bishop Slept

You and I cannot end this war or bring peace to a world threatened with universal disaster, but we can refuse to let anxiety and fear rob our nights of sleep and darken our days with despair. We can hope and pray and pay our taxes and, with gratitude for living in this land not across the sea, take what comfort and pleasure life has to offer, and greet our friends with a smile whether we feel like it or not.

It was a fine old bishop, who, years ago, worrying his heart over what seemed to him the evils of a doomed world, tossing on his bed at midnight, thought he heard the Lord say, "Go to sleep, Bishop, I'll sit up the rest of the night."—*Our Dumb Animals*.

"Heaven is blessed with perfect rest;
But the blessing of earth is toil."

HENRY VAN DYKE.

Prayers that Made History

George Whitefield, the famous English evangelist said, "O Lord, give me souls or take my soul."

Henry Martyn, missionary, kneeling on India's coral strand, cried out, "Here let me burn out for God."

David Brainerd, missionary to the North American Indians, 1718-1747: "Lord, to Thee I dedicate myself. O accept me and let me be Thine forever. Lord, I desire nothing else, I desire nothing more." The last words in his diary, seven days before he died, "O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen."

Dwight L. Moody: "Use me then, my Savior, for whatever purpose and in whatever way Thou mayest require. Here is my poor heart, an empty vessel; fill it with Thy grace."

Martin Luther—A few words from his great agony of prayer on the night preceding his appearance before the Diet of Worms: "Do Thou, my God, do thou, God, stand by me against all the world's wisdom and reason. O, do it! Thou must do it. Stand by me, Thou true eternal God."

John McKenzie—A prayer of a young missionary candidate as he knelt on the banks of the Lossie: "O Lord, send me to the darkest spot on earth!"

Praying Hyde, a missionary in India: "Father, give me these souls or I die."

Mrs. Comstock, a missionary in India—A prayer of parting when she sent her children home: "Lord Jesus, I do this for Thee."

John Hunt, missionary to the Fiji Islands—A prayer upon his dying bed: "Lord, save Fiji, save Fiji, save Fiji. Save these people, O Lord, have mercy upon Fiji, save Fiji!"—SELECTED.

Briefs

It would be a sin to please some people by preaching to suit them.

Very few worries live very long unless they are given careful nursing.

It does not make much difference who gets the credit so long as someone gets the results.

The length of a sermon is its least important dimension.—*The Christian Advocate*.

For Christ, Church and Country

Defense priorities make church building programs practically impossible. At the same time circumstances may be creating pressure for expansion of the church plant. Rev. W. D. McGraw, Jr., and his forward looking people at Hutchinson, Kansas, First Church are utilizing the pressure of need together with the current desire to aid in national defense, harnessing both in getting ready for building as soon as circumstances permit. Money is being raised for a Sunday school annex through the purchase of Defense Stamps and Bonds. The pledge card contains the following:

FOR CHRIST, CHURCH AND COUNTRY

To help accumulate a fund for a new brick annex to our church, I subscribe to pay the sum of \$_____ within the next twelve months.

Since the building plans will probably be deferred until after materials are not so vital to our government's Victory program, I will either pay my pledge in Defense Stamps or Bonds, or authorize the treasurer to purchase them with cash paid in.

Total Pledge.....

Name

Address Date....

Payable:

\$.....weekly

\$.....monthly

\$.....

Both pledge cards and collection envelopes are decorated with the government's official defense stamp and bond advertisement.

Faith Is Power

All the strength and force of man comes from his faith in the unseen. He who believes is strong; he who doubts is weak.—JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

The Hour of Prayer

My God, is any hour so sweet,
From blush of morn to evening star,
As that which calls me to Thy feet,
The hour of prayer?

No words can tell what sweet relief
Here for my every want I find;
What strength for warfare, balm for grief,
What peace of mind.

Hushed is each doubt, gone every fear;
My spirit seems in heaven to stay;
And e'en the penitential tear
Is wiped away.
Lord, till I reach that blissful shore,
No privilege so dear shall be,
As thus my inmost soul to pour
In prayer to Thee.

—CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT, in
Wesleyan Methodist.

For My Church

Somewhere, some way,
Some time each day
I'll turn aside
And stop and pray
That God will make
This church THE WAY
OF RIGHTEOUSNESS to men.
—*Selected in Church Bulletin*,
Hutchinson, Kansas.

Members or Adherents

"If a movement is intended to tear down one world order to replace it with another, then its leaders must clearly understand the following principles: Each movement will first have to sift the human material won over by it, and to divide it into two large groups: adherents and members.

"It is the task of propaganda to win adherents, that of the organization to win members.

"An adherent of a movement is he who declares himself to be in harmony with its aims; a member is he who fights for it.

"Adherence requires but a passive acceptance of an idea, while membership demands its active representation and defense. Adherence is based upon understanding; membership upon the courage to personally represent the newly found truth and to propagate it.

"Understanding in its passive form will be found with the majority of mankind which is indolent and faint-hearted. Membership requires an active mind, which is found only in a minority of mankind.

Therefore it must be the incessant care of propaganda to win over adherents to an idea, while the untiring effort of an organization, however, must be to convert the most valuable of the adherents into members.

"The more comprehensively propaganda has worked the masses, and the more exclusively, rigidly and firmly the organization has been built up, the more likely is the final triumph of an idea."—ADOLPH HITLER in *Mein Kampf*.

The Spirit of Missions

"Is the spirit of missions dead? It does not even sleep. What is the spirit of missions? Missions means 'sent forth.' When the sun forgets to send forth its light and warmth, and shed summer upon the face of dying winter; to throw its influence abroad over the earth, then will divine love in human hearts forget to beat and the gospel to bring men to Christ."—*The Other Sheep*.

An Indian's Testimony

In the state of Oklahoma lives an aged Kiowa brave, grandson of a chief and a devoted Christian. "Before I found the Jesus way," he said, "I felt my soul was drying up; I felt a great need for God's cold water poured upon my soul (the Holy Spirit). I have found the Jesus way much better than the old way. . . . I expect to pitch my tepee in the Happy Hunting Grounds whose maker is the God I have tried to serve since I have found the light."—*World Outlook*.

Monthly Sunday School Report

Rev. Reeford L. Chaney, Secretary of the District Church School Board of the Tennessee District, has recently sent in to the "Preacher's Workshop" a sample of the convenient monthly report for pastors which he has devised. A double government postal card (with return) is the basis. On the outgoing card is a brief message to the pastor from the District Church School Board Secretary outlining directions for the report. On the stamp side of the same card in the upper left hand corner is ATTENTION, PASTOR. This is your monthly report card for the Sunday school. Give us five minutes of your time. PLEASE! The return card is self-addressed on the stamp side and on the other side contains in simple tabulated form spaces for NAME of SUNDAY SCHOOL, MONTH, and for each of five Sundays of the month ATTENDANCE and OFFERING.

This might help secretaries of District Church School Boards, if not statistically harassed pastors.

Epigrams

No man is doing the will of God when he is fighting to have his own way.

* * *

The most harmony in the choir is not always produced by the ones who sing the solos.

* * *

The man who marches at the head of the parade is not always the most patriotic.

* * *

It does not make much difference what else we hear when we go to church if we can hear God, and sometimes He speaks when we are least expecting to hear Him.

* * *

Blessed is the man who can adjust to a new set of circumstances without surrendering his convictions.

* * *

The hardest thing any man ever does is to surrender a prejudice.—DR. ROY L. SMITH, in *The Christian Advocate*.

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