

The PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

JULY-AUGUST, 1948

We Would See Jesus!

"We would see Jesus," said the men who came
To worship at the feast so long ago;
And still the cry is heard the world around,
In every land wherever man is found;
"We would see Jesus, we would see and know."

"We would see Jesus," say the worldly throng;
"Would see Him in the lives of you who say
You follow Him and worship at His feet,
And spend your lives in service glad and sweet.
And keep His blest commandments every day!"

"We would see Jesus!" Oh, the yearning cry
Of countless thousands lost in misery!
Then, blessed Master, dwell so close within
That I shall never yield my heart to sin;
So shall Thy beauty glow for all to see.

—KATHRYN BLACKBURN PECK, in *Golden Windows*,
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D. SHELBY CORLETT, D.D., Editor

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Temptations Common to Preachers

D. Shelby Corlett, D.D., Editor

Part Two

BECAUSE of the peculiar relationship a preacher sustains to life and people, he is subjected to a type of temptation not common to all people, while at the same time he is not immune to the ordinary temptations of life. In the last issue of this periodical, we began a discussion of this subject of temptations common to preachers by drawing somewhat of a parallel between the three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness to the present-day temptations of ministers; at least we found in them something that was indicative of the nature of the temptations to which preachers are subjected. In that discussion we treated the first temptation as an appeal to selfishness, to use power, position, and privileges for wrong and selfish ends. We shall now study the other temptations, applying their principles to the ministerial life.

HOW SHALL WE GET A HEARING?

The second temptation of Jesus (as recorded by Matthew) is somewhat based upon His reply to Satan's first appeal. Jesus replied by using the Word of God, "It is written." Satan, taking advantage of Jesus' confidence in God and in His Word, makes his appeal by use of that Word. The scene is the pinnacle of the temple. The appeal is to make a display of His confidence and reliance upon God by casting himself down from that pinnacle, thus gaining the approval of the crowd by a miraculous display of His confidence in God's Word, which Satan quotes thus: "For it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

In other words, Satan seems to say, "If You have such confidence in the Word of God as to live by it instead of making bread out of stones, make a display of it; show the crowd how much confidence You have in God." It was an appeal to presumption, to tempt God, as Jesus indicated in His reply: "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

God has promised His presence and protection to His people as they walk in the

pathway of duty, but He does not assure them of that protection when they engage in acts of presumption or engage in a public display of their faith and piety. To endeavor to use God's promises for one's own advantage and advancement, to make a false use of the promises of God to secure public attention, means to yield to this temptation.

Jesus preferred to get His hearing and to gain the attention of the people on lines entirely different from these suggested by Satan; He would continue upon the basis of glorifying the Father in all things, in seeking and doing only His will.

This temptation, as it is related to the preacher, is based upon an appeal to vanity, the desire to shine, to get a large hearing at whatever cost it may require; an appeal to use sensational and spectacular methods at the expense of true spiritual principles. No doubt Paul had something of this nature in mind when he wrote about those "which glory in appearance, and not in heart" (II Cor. 5:12).

There are certain principles upon which all spiritual activity is based. These are the principles which were taught and exemplified by Jesus in His life: sincerity, unselfishness, righteousness, sacrificial living, seeking always to glorify God and not to glorify self, and the highest type of devotion to God. Any appeal to deviate from these true principles of spiritual life is the temptation of Satan.

Preachers yield to this temptation when they make merchandise of their ministerial position; when they resort to questionable methods, unethical conduct, and deceitful practices to increase their popularity with the public and with the church and its officials, or to gain a hearing. Preachers have been known to be self-seeking to gain the attention of the public, or to secure calls to larger churches; to employ all methods available, questionable and otherwise, to gain the attention of the public and to fill their auditoriums with people.

At times Satan brings great pressure upon the sincere preacher to yield to this temptation. He points to the preachers who

are getting the crowds, to those whose names and reports are filling large places in the papers, to the approval that some church officials put upon these preachers (although it may be the case that these officials have not taken time to know the background of the work being done); and often well-meaning church members give aid to Satan by calling attention to the work of these ministers and by asking, "Why cannot we do that here?" It may be difficult to stay by the true principles of spiritual life and stand in the shadows of the seeming success of a preacher who is casting himself down from the pinnacle of high spiritual truth to gain a hearing; but it pays to take the way that Jesus took, and to overcome this temptation by the same confidence in God and in His Word that He manifested.

The preacher is ever in need of strengthening his inner life, of deepening his relationship with God, of maintaining keen spiritual discernment through the help of the Holy Spirit, and of possessing such Christian fortitude as only prayer and consistent devotional living will bring. Then he may be able to stand in the hour of temptation of this or any other kind.

The yielding to this temptation destroys personal integrity, sincerity, and courage. Preachers must resist it in the name and power of Christ. They must not tempt God by presumptuous acts or by doing things "for show" and not for the glory of God. They must stand uncondemned at the bar of their own conscience as well as at the bar of God's judgment. Preachers must not "sell out" for anything; to cheap sensational methods, to shallow, spectacular appeals, or to anything that is a presumptuous display of their faith in God. They must not make false use of God's promises to His people, especially to ministers.

HOW SHALL WE SUCCEED?

The third temptation, that of bowing down to worship Satan who had shown to Jesus the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, is an appeal to compromise—to make a short cut to success.

Satan evidently knew that Jesus was destined to rule the kingdoms of the world. His appeal is to avoid the hardships and sufferings of a life of obscurity and a cruel death upon a cross; to spare himself the long, patient process of conquest which would require millenniums to accomplish, and come to a quick possession of His ultimate lordship. He was promised all of this by just one act of worship to Satan.

Jesus quickly ended this contest with Satan by using the Sword of the Spirit once more: "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." He was "willing," as someone has said, "even to die in obscurity and misunderstanding as a criminal and a failure, because He was building for permanent power, not for a short-lived earthly kingdom."

How shall the preacher succeed? By compromise? By using methods which he knows to be questionable but which others are using with seeming success? By bowing down to the world of his day? By worshipping success? By bowing down to Satan, accepting his ideals and temporary advancements, shunning the suffering that comes for righteousness' sake, the cross-bearing and sacrifices essential to true spiritual success? If he does, he sacrifices that which is permanent and lasting in life, that which is Godlike and good; and in the sight of God, and at the judgment, he is a failure!

Ministers must meet these temptations as confidently as Jesus met them, resting in the Word and power of God to overcome them. All appeals to selfishness, to use power, privilege, and position for selfish ends, must be resisted; all suggestions to use acts of display or presumption must be spurned. God and the seeking of His glory must have the first place in life; for, by loving Him with all the heart, there will be no worship of Satan or anything that is evil.

The Lord's Supper

ONE of the most significant services in which a minister engages is that of presiding at the Lord's table and administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is also a very solemn occasion, a service of great spiritual uplift. The occasion demands of the minister sincere heart preparation, that he may fill this position in a manner acceptable and pleasing to God, and that by his spirit and personal devotion to God he may indeed lead his people in this act of holy communion. The pastor himself must be communing with the risen Lord as he leads his people in this corporate act of worship to God and of communing with Him.

It is a formal occasion requiring much reverence. There is no place for anything that is light and chaffy here, as the people of the Lord gather around His table and in

His presence partake of the emblems of His broken body and shed blood. There should be no effort to make the service popular, that is, appealing to the people of the world; this is a service for God's own children and the minister should consider only those factors which will assist God's family to meet Him at His table and hold communion with their crucified, but risen Lord, whose return is also anticipated by this event. It is the intimate meeting of the family of God, reviewing again the cost of their redemption, meditating upon the love, the sufferings, and the power of Christ, deepening their devotion to Him, and renewing their covenant to serve Him acceptably by His grace. It is the blending of the hearts of God's children in a mutual act of worship or communion into a holy fellowship—a fellowship in the Spirit, as Paul termed it—which gives a greater appreciation for the relationship sustained to other Christians in the Church, the body of Christ.

The pastor does well if he has memorized the portion of the ritual he will use in conducting this service. The less distraction there is by use of books, by fumbling around in last minute preparations, by failure properly to arrange for those to assist in the distribution of the elements, or by confusion in the manner in which people come to the altar to partake of the bread and wine, the more likely is the true significance of the service to be realized by the pastor and people.

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emphasizes the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The articles will give the reader a deeper appreciation for this sacrament, and will offer some suggestions for conducting the service. The sermon outlines (of which there will be more in future issues) will provide some thoughts for the preparation of messages for this significant occasion. The editor's purpose in presenting the material in this issue is to assist pastors in this important phase of their ministry, that they and their people may be more greatly blessed and edified in the observance of this holy sacrament.

Series on "Eradication"

The January-February issue of 1948, in which we conducted a symposium on the term "eradication," was so well received, and so many of our readers requested more material on this subject, that we solicited Dr. Stephen S. White, Professor of Systematic Theology of our Nazarene Theological Seminary, to prepare a series of six articles on this theme. The first of that series is printed in this issue; the others will appear in order for the next five numbers of our magazine. Dr. White has done extensive study on this theme, has assembled much helpful and convincing material, and is presenting in an attractive manner great truths which should enable holiness preachers to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

Blow on Blow

Pains, furnace heat, within me quiver; God's breath upon the flame doth blow. And all my heart within me shivers, and trembles in the fiery glow. And yet I whisper, "As God will!" and in His hottest fire hold still.

He comes and lays my heart, all heated, on His hard anvil, minded so into His own fair shape to beat it, with His great hammer blow on blow. And still I whisper, "As God will," and at His heaviest blow hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it; the sparks fly off at every blow. He turns it o'er and o'er and heats it, and lets it cool and makes it glow. Yet still I whisper, "As God will," and in His mighty hand hold still.

Why should I murmur? for the sorrow thus only longer-lived would be; the end may come, and will tomorrow, when He has done His work in me. So I say, trusting, "As God will!" and trusting to the end, hold still.

He kindles, for my profit purely, affliction's fierce and glowing brand, and all His heaviest blows are surely inflicted by a Master's hand. So I say, praying, "As God will!" and trust in Him and suffer still.—HERALD OF HIS COMING.

The Term Eradication*

Dr. Stephen S. White

IN any discussion of "eradication," the first point at issue is the meaning of the term. All who discuss this subject seem to be very much aware of its etymological or literal connotation. Especially is this the case with those who are not sure as to the wisdom of employing it in connection with the doctrine of entire sanctification. In fact, many of those who deal with eradication from the standpoint of holiness fail to mention any other meaning. In view of this situation we shall seek to discover what the dictionaries and usage indicate as to the import of this word.

DEFINITIONS

Webster's *New International Dictionary* (the latest unabridged edition) defines "eradicate" thus: "To pluck up by the roots; to root up or out; hence, to extirpate; as to eradicate disease." Here we have disease eradicated; and certainly a disease does not have roots. This dictionary goes on to give three synonyms: Abolish, destroy, and annihilate. Please note that not one of these synonyms signifies plucking up by the roots. The dictionary also tells the investigator to see "exterminate."

When we turn to "exterminate" we find some interesting information. The first definition which is given for "exterminate" is "to drive out or away, to expel." This is obsolete. The second meaning for exterminate is "to destroy utterly, to cut off, to extirpate; to annihilate; to root out; as to exterminate vermin." Then we are informed that exterminate, extirpate, and eradicate are synonyms which are to be differentiated as follows: "To exterminate (originally to banish) is, in modern usage, to destroy utterly or bring in any way to extinction; to extirpate implies a violent and intentional rooting out, whether literal or figurative; eradicate (now commonly figurative) implies a less violent rooting up than extirpate; as, to exterminate (or extirpate) a species (of birds, animals, etc.); to exterminate (or extirpate) a heresy, a vice; to eradicate a fault." In this connection, as you see, we are informed that eradicate is *now commonly figurative*; and the example given is the eradication of a fault, which is neither a thing nor an outgrowth of or development from a root.

* Dr. Stephen S. White, Professor of Systematic Theology, has prepared an extensive study of the term "eradication" which is presented to the readers of THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE in a series of six articles, the first of which is printed here. The titles of the other articles will be "Objections to the Term Eradication"; "Wesley and Eradication"; "Eradication and Suppression"; "Eradication and Integration"; and "What Is Eradication?" This series of articles should be of untold benefit to preachers of the holiness movement in giving them an understanding of the general use and meaning of the term which is so often challenged by those who oppose the Wesleyan interpretation of entire sanctification, and to those preachers within the movement who have had some hesitation about using this term because of its physical connotations. —EDITOR.

Funk and Wagnall's *New Standard Dictionary* agrees with Webster essentially. It first defines eradicate according to its etymology as follows: "To pull up by the roots or root out." That this is the literal meaning of the word no one who is informed can question. However, that it is not now the primary purport of the term will be implied again and again as we proceed with this discussion. In fact, we shall discover that the figurative meaning, completely or utterly destroy, is with but few exceptions the only connotation today. Even in giving this first definition of pulling out by the roots or rooting out, Funk and Wagnalls continues thus: "hence to destroy thoroughly, extirpate; as, to eradicate error." In so many words, it is informing us that the true signification of eradicate is now figurative and not literal. Error is psychical and does not have roots. Thus it is not a material thing. Neither is it a psychical entity. (We use entity here in the sense of real being. This is the first definition which is ascribed to it in *Runes' Dictionary of Philosophy*. Thus, when we state that error is psychical and yet not a psychical entity, we mean that it is only a psychical quality, state, condition, or principle.)

But let us go on and give the whole picture from Funk and Wagnalls. Under "exterminate" it tells us that "eradicate is

always applied to numbers and groups of plants which it is desired to remove effectually from the soil; a single tree may be uprooted, but it is not said to be eradicated; we labor to eradicate or root out noxious weeds." (Thus the only leftover from the literal content of the word eradicate is its reference to a group of things—trees or plants—which have roots; but in this case, even, the emphasis is upon removing rather than uprooting the things. Further, in actual usage we shall find it difficult to secure examples which illustrate this implication.) "To extirpate is not only to destroy the individuals of any race of plants or animals, but the very stock, so that the race can never be restored." (Thus, from the literal standpoint extirpate is a more radical term than eradicate and is also more involved in materialism. Nevertheless, there are those who freely use extirpate while at the same time rejecting eradication on the basis of its materialism.)

Next Funk and Wagnalls gives a final comparison of these three words from the standpoint of their usage. This is as follows: "We speak of eradicating a disease, of extirpating a cancer, of exterminating wild beasts or hostile tribes; we seek to eradicate or extirpate all vices and evils." Vices and evils do not have roots and they are not things or entities. Still, they are eradicated.

Crabb's *English Synonyms* starts out by giving the literal significance of eradicate and extirpate. Then it proceeds with the following explanation: "These words are seldom used in the physical than in the moral sense; where the former is applied to such objects as are conceived to be plucked up by the roots, as habits, vices, abuses, evils; and the latter to whatever is united or supposed to be united into a race or family, and is destroyed root and branch. Youth is the season when vicious habits may be thoroughly eradicated; by the universal deluge the whole human family was extirpated, with the exception of Noah and his family." Then Crabb gives the following quotation from Blair to illustrate the use of eradicate: "It must be every man's care to begin by eradicating those corruptions which, at different times, have tempted him to violate conscience." Thus we perceive that eradicate was largely figurative in meaning when Crabb's *Synonyms* was published, and that was some years ago.

Murray's (now the Oxford) *English Dictionary* traces the word eradicate and its

kindred forms from the time of their entrance into the English language. Let us notice what it has to say. First, we shall consider some irregular forms of this term which are also among the earliest. Irradicable is one of these and was once used as an equivalent of ineradicable. At another time irradiate was employed as a synonym of eradicate. Murray gives a quotation from a poem in which irradiate stands for eradicate. It reads as follows: "He (Christ) . . . mote gefe us pease so well irradiate here in this worlde, that after all this feste we mowe have pease in the londe of Bhyeste." The date of this poem was 1436. This is the earliest appearance of any form of the word to which Murray calls our attention. He gives us another example of this use of irradiate which is dated 1656. Here are the words of it: "to irradiate all vertue from out of his subjects souls." There is no reference in either of these quotations to the etymological or physical meaning of eradicate. Peace and virtue are psychical in character but are not psychical entities.

The next instance which we shall cite from Murray is one of the earliest and is also irregular. Its date is 1533 and it is a quotation from Henry VIII. It is the term eradicate but it is used for eradicated. This meaning is easily evident when one reads the sentence which is as follows: "Heresie, shulde . . . vtterly be abhored, detested, and eradicate [eradicated]." Heresy is not a physical thing either with or without roots. As a nonorthodox belief it is psychical, but it is not a psychical entity. Another illustration of the use of eradicate as eradicated is found in the following quotation, which Murray dates as 1556: "And zour succession they shall be eradicate [eradicated] from zour ryngs [reigns, or kingdoms]." There is no reference in this case to that which has roots or is an entity, either physical or psychical.

Thus far in our consideration of Murray's discussion we have dealt with irradiate as eradicate and eradicate as eradicated; now we shall have to do with eradivative with its somewhat limited significance. It is defined by Murray as "tending or having the power to root out or expel (disease, etc.). Eradicative cure: originally the 'curative treatment of disease as opposed to palliative.'" The following example, which is dated as 1543, is given: "We wyll speake of his cure as well eradication as palliature." This reading is rather unusual for us, but it connects one form of our term with disease, which is physical but does

not have roots and is not an entity. The same may be said as to the three other uses of the term eradication which Murray gives us. They sound more familiar and are more in line with present-day usage. These and their dates are as follows: 1684—"eradication of the whole disease," 1691—"eradication of morbid matter," and "eradication cure of this distemper."

The writer is inclined to think that one of the important factors which prompted the choice of the term eradication by the holiness movement was this relation which it had to disease through the word eradication. The sin nature has perhaps been more often described as a moral and spiritual disease than in any other way. This being the case, it was easy to seize on the term eradication to indicate the cure or destruction of this disease, since it had already, in one of its forms, often been used to signify the cure or destruction of various physical ills.

After dealing with these earlier and somewhat irregular forms, let us take up eradication as Murray sets it before us. He explains two general connotations of the word. One is the etymological—"To pull or tear up by the roots; to root out (a tree, plant, or anything that is spoken of as having roots)." Several illustrations are presented in this connection, with the date of each as follows: 1564—"eradicate roots of carbuncle," 1635—Okes [oaks] eradicated by a prodigious whirlwind," 1725—"eradicate weeds," 1860—"eradicating trees," 1871—(from Darwin's *Descent of Man*) "the Indians of Paraguay eradicate their eyebrows and eyelashes." The second and final general meaning of eradicate is stated thus: "to remove entirely, extirpate, get rid of."

This, of course, is the figurative significance of the term. Most of the examples which appear above in connection with the irregular and earlier forms of the word are of this type. However, Murray calls our attention to several other examples which are in this class (we shall give them in chronological order): 1628—"eradicating reformation," 1647—"seeds of discord eradicated," 1658—"blood eradicated from body," 1659—"Sihon is eradicator, that evil spirit that endeavors to root up all of the plants of righteousness," 1660—"eradicating other enemies of God," 1667—"eradicating judgments," 1748—"that man should eradicate his fellowman," 1751—"the eradication of envy from the human heart," 1788—"desires and fears eradicated," 1801—"unfeel-

ingly eradicator of the domestic charities," 1825—(Thomas Jefferson's autobiography) "this stopped the increase of the evil by importation, leaving to future efforts its final eradication," 1857—"eradicating the incorrigible," 1865—"even rage and hate . . . are eradicable, as most systems of ethics have assumed," and 1869—"eradicating mendicancy."

SUMMARY

We have completed a study of three dictionaries and one book of synonyms. These are all recognized authorities and they have a standing which is unquestionable. The result of this investigation leads to but one conclusion, and that is that eradication has two fundamental meanings, the literal or etymological and the figurative. This has been true of the term since it first entered the English language back in the first half of the fifteenth century. Further, the figurative meaning, which is nothing more nor less than to completely destroy, has been the primary connotation of the word practically from the first. And what change there has been across the years has been so definitely in the direction of the figurative meaning that we can state the situation as it is today in the words of the *New Winston Dictionary*: "Eradicate, though still applied literally to plants in numbers, is now commonly employed in the figurative sense; we eradicate evils, faults, or offensive mannerisms." But somebody may tell us that dictionaries only report usage and sometimes they do not do this accurately, that is, they may fail at times to keep up with usage. This is very true; and, therefore, our next task will be to make a study of present-day usage.

PRESENT-DAY USAGE

Young men in the Nazarene Theological Seminary gathered many recent quotations where the word eradication or eradicate is used. Some of the exponents of holiness may be afraid to use this term in connection with entire sanctification, but there are plenty of people in other walks of life who do not hesitate to employ it in its figurative sense. They do not seem to worry about being thought of as speaking crudely or materialistically. These quotations range all of the way from things without any semblance of roots to the highest concepts of religion. Let us now present some of them. An advertisement in a small-town paper offers expert body and fender repair with the assurance that all dents will be

completely eradicated. "The Douglas Company urged all users of the 4-engined planes to ground them until the causes of recent fires aboard 'have been established and eradicated.'"

Next we move into *the field of health and medicine*. A pamphlet from the United States Public Health Service referred to certain diseases "which may be controlled and eventually eradicated by general measures undertaken by the community in which the individual citizen is seldom called upon to take a part." The editor of the *Christian Advocate*, Roy L. Smith, recently headed one of his editorials thus: "In My Opinion Alcoholism Can Be Eradicated." A Farmer's Bulletin from the United States Department of Agriculture states its subject in the following words: "The Sheep Tick and Its Eradication by Dipping." The W.C.T.U. in its National Convention, adopted as its aim the eradication of the self-inflicted disease of drunkenness. The United States Department of Agriculture, in a recent broadcast, discussed the hoof-and-mouth disease eradication program. An article appeared in the January 20, 1948, *Kansas City Star* which emphasized the fact that at least some cancers can be eradicated. The Methodist church puts out a tract on drink which tells us that "the American people have gladly given multiplied millions of dollars for the eradication of this disease which preys upon our children."

The fields of politics and sociology provide us with illustrations of the use of this term. We begin with a news-heading which declares that the Taft-Hartley Labor Law does not eradicate the closed shop. Another newspaper informs us of the fact that the eradication of the Taft-Hartley Act supporters in Congress is the goal of the A. F. L. League. Bishop Oxnham asserts that to defeat Russia in a war would not eradicate her philosophy of materialism, solve her economic problems, nor end her atheism. Juan Peron, of Argentina, offers this suggestion: "The work to be carried out . . . must consist in the eradication of capitalistic and totalitarian extremism." Professor Sorokin, the famous sociologist of Harvard University, in *The Crisis of Our Age*, writes in more than one place, of the eradication of social evils such as poverty, war, tyranny, and exploitation, and also of social diseases.

Next, we turn to *the field of education and psychology*. One writer, speaking of the self-centeredness of some children,

gives us these words: "This is seen even in infants and seems not to be eradicated in all adults." Goddard, in his book on *Juvenile Delinquency*, entitles one chapter thus: "The Eradication of Delinquency." In *Christian Religious Education*, by De Blois and Gorham, we are told that certain powerful tendencies toward evil in the work of the Church should be eradicated. Five quotations from Stolz's *Pastoral Psychology* employ the term eradicate as follows: Certain social urges should express themselves "in a readiness to submerge or eradicate the self for the welfare of the group, and in participation in the activities of the group." Speaking of certain fundamental human functions and drives, Stolz says that they "should be neither suppressed nor eradicated but disciplined and directed in accordance with the precepts of Christianity." In regard to mental hygiene he asserts that it "strives to correct or eradicate pernicious habits or attitudes in their early stages and before they have done irreparable harm." In another section of his book he declares that sex difficulties are so complex that "rare insights, patience, and skill are the preconditions of their relief or eradication." And in the last quotation from him we are given to understand that some evils perish with confession while "others require prayer for their complete eradication or for their transmutation into activities of higher ethical value."

When we come to what may loosely be called *religion*, we find that the word eradicate is used in many ways. We read about man's ineradicable sense of right and wrong. We are exhorted as preachers "to eradicate and eschew all meaningless mannerisms," and are told that one of the aims of Jeremiah's prophecy was to eradicate certain prevalent misconceptions. We read that the Protestant world has inherited a prejudice against the Middle Ages which historians have found it difficult to eradicate; that Kant posited a radical evil (not original sin) which cannot be eradicated; and that Augustine affirmed that after the fall the will, although helplessly bound, was not eradicated. A Jewish leader has paraphrased Ezekiel 36:26 as follows: "And God said, 'In this world because the evil impulse exists in you, ye have sinned against me; but in the world to come I will eradicate it with you.'" We are told that "America can never seek the re-establishment of Christianity as it was in the Reformation because she can never eradicate the marks left upon her by the Great Revival of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,"

and that the Communists believe that, "after the complete eradication of the exploitation of capitalism, there will be no more frustration and hence there will be no more need of religion." We learn further that "the preacher shortage in the Upper Midwest of the United States is now being eased, and may soon be eradicated."

MEANS COMPLETE DESTRUCTION

These quotations could be multiplied almost without limit. Also, please bear in mind the fact that not one of these references is connected with a material thing which has roots. Every one of them, without exception, means nothing more nor less than complete or thorough destruction of that to which it refers, whether it be a physical thing, a psychical attitude or trait, or a spiritual condition. Regardless of what we are talking about, we have the right to use some form of the word eradicate if we

wish to assert its complete destruction. This holds good for physical things, for that which is in the realm of health and medicine, sociology and politics, education and psychology, philosophy, religion, or any other field of human study or existence.

Thus, usage points even more definitely to the figurative meaning of this term eradicate than did the definitions in the dictionaries—and, in the last analysis, usage is the final criterion. In line with this, and as a fitting close to the discussion, permit us to quote a few lines from Davidson's *Old Testament Theology*. They are as follows: "Etymology is rarely a safe guide to the real meaning of words. Language, as we have it in any literature, has already drifted away far from the primary sense of its words. Usage is the only safe guide. When usage is ascertained, then we may inquire into derivation and radical signification. Hence the concordance is always a safer companion than the lexicon."

The History and Significance of The Lord's Supper

Dr. L. A. Reed

THE Lord's Supper, one of the sacraments of the Christian Church, was so named because it was instituted by our Saviour at the time when, on the occasion of celebrating the Passover feast, He took His last meal with the disciples. It also carries the names of the Eucharist and Communion and, among the Catholics, the Mass. It has undoubtedly been celebrated with certain differences since its institution, and is still celebrated by both the Protestant and the Catholic churches, except the Quakers, who give the sacrament of the Lord's Supper a spiritual significance only.

The controversies regarding the nature of this sacrament have been chiefly on the question of the "real presence" of Christ's body and blood and the doctrine of transubstantiation. This doctrine was first started by Paschasius Radbertus in the ninth century; it was soon generally accepted, and finally was officially approved

by the Council of Rome in 1079 and solemnly confirmed by the fourth Lateran Council in 1215. According to the doctrine of transubstantiation, "the whole substance of the bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ, only the appearance of the bread and wine remaining." The Roman Catholic church further affirms that "Christ is given wholly and entirely both under the form of the bread and under that of the wine." From this doctrine among the Catholics there sprang the adoration of the host as well as the custom of refusing the cup in the Communion to the laity and non-officiating priests. This practice was first authoritatively sanctioned at the Council of Constance in 1415.

At the time of the Reformation, both the German and the Swiss reformers agreed to reject both the doctrine of transubstantiation and the Mass, further maintaining that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated with the whole congregation partici-

pating, and with the administration of both bread and wine. Considering the Roman Catholic background, it is no wonder that a controversy arose, the first difference being between Luther and Zwingli; and their different opinions on this subject formed one of the principal subjects of dissension between the Lutheran and the Calvinistic churches. Luther took the words, "This is my body," in the literal sense, holding to a lesser degree to the Catholic tenet, contending that the body and blood of Christ are united in a mysterious way with the bread and wine which, however, remain unchanged so that the communicant really receives it as bread and wine, yet the real body and blood of the Redeemer.

Zwingli accepted the words in a figurative sense, and maintained that the Lord's Supper was a mere commemoration of the death of Christ and a profession of belonging to His Church. This view is, in substance, that of the Socinians, Arminians, and others. Calvin held that the spiritual presence of Christ is in the Communion, by partaking of which the faithful receiver is brought into union with Christ through the medium of the Holy Ghost. The twenty-eighth article of the Church of England, referring to the Holy Communion, declares that "the body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner."

In the ranks of Protestantism, some groups, such as the Christian Church, consider it a necessity as a weekly practice. Other groups will serve Communion only to their own members; hence it is recognized as "closed" Communion. Most of the Protestant denominations, however, expect one to give at least assent to the fact of his being a follower of Christ in order to partake of this sacred feast.

In the early days of the Church of the Nazarene, especially the Eastern group, the Communion service was commemorated monthly; but when the union took place, it was mutually agreed that it should be held quarterly. Some churches still hold to the old custom, but the rule requires the quarterly practice as a minimum expression of acquiescence to a liberal decree.

The significance of this service is deep and profound, yet revealing and blessed. Such sacred significance has been placed on this service that to compromise oneself in regard to it almost constitutes anathema.

Of course, the service is one of memorial. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." We cannot partake of the Communion with-

out the presence of the Master bringing to us a very keen consciousness of His suffering and sacrifice. The remembrance of the passion of our Lord always brings one into close fellowship with His Holy Spirit; and memory readily conjures through the imagination impulse, the entire picture of a suffering Saviour who shed His blood on Calvary's cross to redeem the race. Yes, it is a memorial which any true Christian cannot well do without. Carelessness in participation or administration might well be significant of questionable tensions within the life which would cause one to draw back from such a holy communion.

One of the most significant parts of such a service is in the bringing to mind that Christ died for us; yes, for each one of us. It is a personal matter when we partake of the elements. When we eat the bread, we remember that His body was broken for us; and, when we drink the wine, we remember that His blood was shed for us. It is a personal matter, and also a sanction of a personal salvation. In the Passover feast, the "blood of grapes" was used, and the cup which held it was known as "the cup of blessing." A special benediction was pronounced over it, and no doubt Jesus followed the same practice and blessed the cup before He gave it to His disciples.

His death was a sacrifice which was made for all. We can easily understand now that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." To the sanctified Christian it has added significance as we read that Jesus also, "that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." The works of grace which we enjoy, and which make us radiant with His Spirit's presence, all have come to us through the shedding of His precious blood; and the Communion, although significant in its solemnity, also carries with it a glorious consciousness of that same resurrection presence which greeted the disciples in Galilee.

Further, it is a time of examination; "Let a man examine himself," so that he may not partake unworthily. Knowing the significance of this sacrament, I never have known a person deliberately to partake of it who was conscious of unforgiven sin in his life. That is a very broad statement; but as a minister of Christ, when I have made plain that only those who know that their sins are forgiven and who have fellowship with the Lord should partake, who am I to judge that they are unprepared to meet such a challenge? Who knows but

that many a person has been forgiven while sitting in his seat as the preacher was giving the invitation to the table of the Lord, or while he was consecrating the elements? God is not confined to an open act of coming to an altar of prayer to be saved.

I never have challenged a person who wanted to take Communion, regardless of what I thought of his or her spiritual condition. The burden of responsibility is on the shoulders of the participant. It is a time, in fact, when each should examine himself and see "whether we be of God." I always have been so involved in examining my own heart that I had little time to be judging others; and, when one recognizes the fact that his fellowship is unbroken, then comes a period of tender communion with the Lord. As we partake of these emblems of His broken body and shed blood, there pours through our souls a new appreciation of His passion, and a new bond of love connects us with the heart of our loving Saviour.

Finally, this sacrament projects us into the future. He tells us to "do this in remembrance of me" and "till he come." Yes, Jesus is coming again, and someday we will partake of our last Communion service on earth. Jesus said, "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of

God." No doubt this refers to the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and the joys that await us in the new heaven and the new earth. Jesus is coming again! Heaven testified to that fact at the time of His ascension; hence, when we partake of this sacrament, we are showing that we believe that Jesus is coming again. "Till he come"—what a glorious thought! All these practices have a prophetic significance.

Then it shall be the "new wine" of the Kingdom! Not the new wine of this world, but a fountain of gladness and rapture such as never hath entered into the human heart. The Lord shall share this gladness with the redeemed; "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." The old covenant between God and His people had been ratified at Sinai by the blood of many victims; the blood of Christ shed upon the cross ratifies the "new or Christian" covenant individually to each Christian. The full inheritance can be realized only in the heavenlies when our Lord comes in the air and catches us away to be with Him forever!

My heart is stirred and blessed at every Lord's Supper, as my mind runs the whole gamut of this significant symbolism, and I look forward to the time when I shall see Him face to face, and partake of the "new wine" of the Kingdom!

The Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace

Rev. Fletcher Galloway

THE sacraments are the visible word of God. They have the same office as the Scriptures, that is, to present Christ. When the Word of God is read, the message of salvation is heard. When the sacrament is given, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers. The sacrament silently proclaims the facts of the Christian faith. In speaking of the Lord's Supper, Paul said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

No service of the Church is so sacred and meaningful when rightly and reverently observed. On the other hand, nothing seems quite so crude as an awkward, unplanned observance of this time-honored memorial.

The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene calls for quarterly observance of the Lord's Supper. This should be complied with. A less frequent observance does not give sufficient emphasis to the importance of this service, and a more frequent observance makes it seem too common. It is well to plan long in advance how you will fit the Communion services into the program of the year. For instance, the observance in the fall of the year might well coincide with World Communion Sunday. There is great value in showing the fact that in some things, at least, all Protestant Christians stand upon common ground. The time of observance in the spring of the year needs to be related to the date of Easter Sunday. Thursday night of Holy

Week is the anniversary of its first observance and would be a fitting time. On the other hand, many churches will find this impractical, especially where there are no pre-Easter services being held during that week. It could be held two weeks before Easter and thus avoid Palm Sunday.

The primary thing is that there be a planned time, and that this be announced long enough in advance to prepare the congregation for a proper and reverent observance. It helps to create a right atmosphere if the people know about the Communion service a week or more beforehand. A letter to all the congregation announcing it, asking them to prepare their own hearts for its observance, and urging them all to plan to be present helps greatly. Some denominations take a roll call of the membership at the Lord's table. A reminder on prayer meeting night will help.

The service itself should be planned carefully. A verse of "Break Thou the Bread of Life" might be sung by the choir as a call to worship, at the close of which the pastor would offer a brief prayer before the opening hymn is announced. The hymns should all be selected ahead of time and should be appropriate to the service—hymns relating to the Cross, the Atonement, and the love of Christ for the Church. The pastor in his morning prayer should so prepare his own heart that this will blend in with the central emphasis of the entire service. The choir could sing "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." The message itself should be brief and should have as its purpose the leading of the congregation to the Lord's table, where they can receive the full benefits of the Communion.

Dr. J. W. Goodwin, in his Communion message at the General Assembly in 1944, beautifully illustrated what might be done in preparing a congregation for receiving the sacrament. He took the words which have been applied to this sacred service and explained them. He said it had been called "The Lord's Supper." This was because the Lord himself instituted it and because in symbol the bread represented His broken body and the juice of the grape, His blood that was shed. Then he took the word "communion." He recalled the close circle of friends who first participated in the Upper Room. Then he spoke of how, in the observance of this memorial, we draw into close communion with one another and with our Lord. He explained the word "Eucharist," which literally means thanksgiving. How appropriate that we

should recall with great gratitude the sacrifice of Christ which is the foundation of our faith and hope! "Sacrament," he said, "is an oath—a military oath—an oath sometimes sealed in the blood of the one making it."

Here is a list of Communion subjects and texts:

"The Sacramental Evangel"—"This do in remembrance of me."

"The World's Greatest Sermon"—"Ye proclaim the Lord's death."

"The Spell of the Cross"—"Who did bewitch you, . . . before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?"

"The Guest Chamber"—"Where is my guest-chamber?"

"Christ the Bread of Life"—"I am the bread of life."

"The Eucharistic Feast"—"When he had given thanks."

"The Sacrament of Life"—"This is my body, which is broken for you."

"Our Lord's Sacramental Claim"—"He that eateth this bread shall live forever."

"The Second Crucifixion"—"They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh."

"The Guests of God"—"Thou preparest a table before me."

"Sacramental Simplicity"—"Come unto me, all ye that labour."

"The Upper Room"—"Let not your heart be troubled."

"The Sacramental Invitation"—"Drink ye all of it."

"Memory and Hope"—"This do . . . till he come."

"Bread and Water"—"I am the bread of life." "The water that I shall give."

"The Sacramental Hymn"—"When they had sung an hymn."

"Sacrifice and Song"—"When the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also."

"The Sacrament and the Gospel"—"Ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come."

There are many other appropriate texts and sermon topics which may be used. These are only a few suggestive ones which have been used by some of the preachers of our day. In order to receive spiritual blessing from the Communion service, a congregation must understand its meaning and purpose, and thus appropriate for themselves its benefits.

The atmosphere in which the elements are served is significant. All who participate in serving should be in their places and ready when the time comes. I like to have the congregation stand and read as a scripture lesson the invitation to the Lord's

Supper which is recorded in I Corinthians 11:23-29, 33, 34. This is found in the Scripture reading in the *Glorious Gospel Hymns* and also in the *Devotion and Praise Hymns*. The altar of the church is the proper place to partake of the elements, according to my way of thinking, unless the size of the congregation makes this prohibitive.

It is surprising how many people can be served in a short time if the ushers have them come, pew by pew, and kneel at the altar and if the pastor dismisses them by groups as soon as they have been served. If the organ or piano is played softly, giving the melody of strains of some of the great devotional hymns which exalt the blood of Christ, it helps to maintain a spirit of reverence. What is a more fitting background than "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood," "Near the Cross," "At the Cross," "Blest Be the Fountain of Blood," and "How Much I Owe"?

Those who serve should move unhurriedly and in a subdued voice may say, "This to you, my brother (sister), is a symbol of the broken body (shed blood) of our Lord which was broken (shed) for you, and who said, 'This do in remembrance of me'; or he may say, "'As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.'" As quickly as the server has finished with one, he should move to the next. A rail on the backside of the altar, with holes large enough to receive the Communion cups, will greatly facilitate the serving. Thus the one who bears the tray does not have to wait until the cup has been emptied, and each worshiper can place his own cup in the receptacle when he has finished.

Great care needs to be given to those selected to do the serving. If elders or licensed ministers are in the congregation, of course these are the logical helpers. If these are not available, then men whose piety and devotion are unquestioned should be used. As far as possible they ought to be men who would contribute to the quiet dignity of the service.

I always like to close the service with all standing and singing the "Doxology."

Thoughts of the suffering of Christ, and of our own unworthiness, tend to leave a depressing atmosphere unless the complete message of the sacrament is included. It was not meant to end on a minor note. It is "till he come." We serve a living Saviour, who conquered Satan's empire by His death and resurrection. Someday He is coming again, and then, "He shall reign whose right it is to reign"; His blood is our sufficient covering for sin now, and finally His kingdom will prevail in the earth.

The week following the Communion service in the church there ought to be private Communion services for the sick and shut-ins as far as possible. Also there are other times when a private Communion service would be of great value to an individual or a deeply distressed family. Jesus gave us this memorial for a purpose. There are times when it is the greatest possible medium of bringing His presence near and making His grace available.

It has always seemed to me that the use of ordinary bread or crackers robbed the Communion service of part of its sacredness. There are wafers which may be bought, prepared especially for the Communion. Also the bread may be made if a little effort is put forth.

Here is a recipe which my wife has used for a number of years. The pastor's wife can learn to make this; or, if some woman in the church were given this responsibility, she could prepare it.

1 cup flour

2 tablespoons butter

Pinch of salt

Water to make stick together

Pound this with a potato masher until it is well mixed.

Roll out paper-thin on the back of a cookie tin.

Mark in 1/4-inch squares with a ruler and table knife.

Prick each square with tine of fork.

Bake at 350°.

Watch very closely and remove from oven when it barely begins to brown.

Break into individual squares and place on Communion plates.

In the light of modern astronomy, with the millions of shining orbs marching through space with mathematical precision, the heavens declare the glory of God in accents more positive than was possible to the ancient world.—*Selected.*

Conducting the Communion Service

Dr. C. B. Strang

THE manner in which the Communion service is conducted can add much to or detract from the significance of it. Careful preparation should be made for it, and the method of conducting it should be the result of a study of the particular need of the congregation. It goes without saying that there may be great variations in the manner of conducting it in the larger churches as compared with the smaller ones. But while there are of necessity some differences there are, of course, many parallels.

The stewards of the church should see that the proper elements are provided. A suitable Communion table should be used. The linen should be spotlessly clean. Where individual glasses are used, they should be clean and shining. The tray containing the bread should have a clean napkin on it; and, when the bread has been placed on it, the napkin should be placed over the bread. A large napkin or cloth should be placed over the container holding the glasses. The table containing the elements should be placed just inside the altar rail before the service commences.

The service itself should have ample publicity, and the pastor should point ahead to it in such a way that the members of his congregation will be conditioned for it.

The preliminaries leading up to the call to the table should be short but very effective. Appropriate hymns should introduce the service; the *Nazarene Hymnal* contains some that are quite usable. The responsive reading should lend itself to the service. This may be taken from the *Nazarene Hymnal* or suitable scripture may be read from a printed bulletin. Attention should be given to the special song of the morning, whether rendered by the choir or by an individual. It should fit into the planned service.

The pastor's message should be abbreviated into a sermonette. Some pastors, including myself, use what they call a "Communion meditation." This need not be more than ten minutes in length to be very effective.

The pastor should close his message with prayer; and, as he brings it to a close, background music from the piano or organ or both can be employed.

Now the pastor, who has chosen his assistants, partakes with them of the Communion. Wherever it is possible, the pastor can employ to great advantage the use of two such assistants. Kneeling with them beside the Communion table, the pastor administers first the bread and then the wine to them, then to himself, and they partake simultaneously.

Then the first call to the table is made. In larger churches it is a good practice to request only ordained elders to come to the first table. These may come from any part of the audience and, after they have been served, may find their respective places again.

Serving from one hundred to seven hundred persons in large churches may take a great deal of time and, if the service is not well planned, may result in some confusion. It is, therefore, wise procedure to employ several helpers and also to have the ushers well instructed as to their duties. In smaller churches stewards might actually be used as assistants, the minister himself being the one who in effect administers.

In many services that I have conducted I have used as many as eight elders as assistants. Three of these serve bread, each one serving one-third of the altar: one working from left to right until he serves one-third, one working from right to left until he serves one-third, and one taking the middle section of the altar, working either from left to right or right to left, serving the remaining third. The bearers of the cup follow closely behind the servers of the bread. In addition, one elder carries the elements from the room where the stewards prepare it to the table, and there an elder hands in methodic manner each server his plate of bread or tray of glasses.

Having efficient and well-trained ushers makes the service a joy. The other kind might result in confusion. An experienced usher knows how many can kneel at the altar at one time. Two ushers, therefore, designate the number to make the response to each call. As the music plays softly and as the choir sings, the ushers, working from the front to the rear of the church, indicate which particular group is to go to the table. As the required number of indi-

viduals stand, another usher precedes them as they march in single file to the front of the altar. As they all stand facing the pastor he may use the statement: "May God bless you as you kneel at His table this morning." As the group kneels the singing and the music cease. Only the pastor's voice is heard now as he gently instructs, teaches, or exhorts.

A favorite employment of the author is to use what might be called "Communion poems." These are used to create an atmosphere of worship at each table and to indicate the significance of the occasion. A few samples of these are here given:

1

*According to Thy gracious word,
In meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord,
I will remember Thee!
Thy body broken for my sake,
My bread from heaven shall be;
Thy testamental cup I take,
And thus remember Thee!*

or

2

*In memory of the Saviour's love
We keep the sacred feast,
Where every humble, contrite heart
Is made a welcome guest.
By faith we take the bread of life,
With which our souls are fed;
The cup in token of His blood,
That was for sinners shed.*

or

3

*See the feast of love is spread,
Drink the wine, and break the bread;
Sweet memorials—till the Lord
Call us round His heavenly board;
Some from earth, from glory some,
Severed only—"till He come."*

These are portions of hymns from the *Methodist Hymnal*. There are many of them, and by experience it has been found that their use is very effectual.

Following the quotation of the "Communion poem," the pastor may quote such scripture as is applicable to the occasion.

The servers have by this time permitted each communicant to obtain both the bread and the cup. The communicant holds the bread in one hand and has the cup before him on the Communion rail. Kneeling there in silent prayer he does not partake of either until so instructed by the pastor. The signal to do so may be given thus: "'And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said' unto them, as I now say unto you, 'Take, eat.'"

Simultaneously all the communicants partake of the bread. This makes for a unity, harmony, and effectiveness that is very fitting.

Immediately following this comes the indication to partake of the cup. The pastor may give it in this manner: "'After the same manner also he took the cup, . . . saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood'; and I say unto you what He said unto them, 'Drink it.'"

At this point all the communicants drink of the cup. The united action is very effective.

Now the pastor may say something like this: "Tarry a moment for introspection and prayer. Take a moment to tell God that you will love Him more and serve Him better." Then the pastor may add the following:

*Now in parting, Father, bless us;
Saviour, still Thy peace bestow;
Gracious Comforter, be with us,
As we from Thy table go.*

In addition he may add a closing benediction to each group: "Now you may arise and go in peace, and may the God of peace go with you."

Here the music may take up again, and the choir sings until the next group is brought to the table.

The ushers working effectively bring first one group from the left side of the church, the second from the right side, and the third from the center. Such alternation may be carried out with the minimum amount of confusion and the maximum amount of efficiency, thus saving many precious moments in the service.

Last of all, the choir and players of instruments may partake, and it is always appreciated when substitutes may be used for the players while they come to the table. As the choir and musicians come, it offers an opportunity for what might amount to a distinct consecration service for them.

Now the entire congregation may stand and the benediction may be pronounced.

It is of course assumed that the entire congregation will remain until the benediction is given. Some members of the church have formed the unspeakable practice of leaving as soon as, or shortly after, they are served. The pastor might prevent this by calling attention to the fact that the entire service is for all, and by pointing out the fact that only Judas left the service the night it was instituted.

Of course, all the techniques suggested above are not applicable to all the smaller

churches, but all can employ some modification of the practices.

In order to obtain the desired results relative to coming to the table and of simultaneous participation, the pastor might offer a word of instruction before entering into the service proper.

Perhaps one of the most objectionable practices in a Communion service is the attempt to serve those not actually kneeling at the altar. The author has seen efforts made to serve communicants who were kneeling two and three deep. This may be avoided by the co-operation of the ushers and by having those who are unable to find a kneeling place sit on the front seat until the next table.

In some services there are those who are not physically able to kneel. These may be served at a specific time either as they sit in their respective pews or as they are seated on the front pews.

In order to break the monotony in services where many are served, the pastor may suggest that all the members assist the choir in singing a verse while communicants are coming to the table or leaving it. He may vary the table technique by asking a different assistant to dismiss each table with prayer.

The service as a whole is not to become so mechanical that it will be formal, but it should have the blessing of the Lord upon it at all times.

The Truth We Will Not Face

Dr. Paul S. Rees

TEXT—*What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?* (Jeremiah 13:21).

"I hate the very thought of hell," said a cultured lady one day. Well, I wonder if God doesn't feel the same way, though not. I suspect, in the same sense or with the same motives as might have been true of this woman. I, for one, hate criminal law courts. I hate the penitentiary, the gallows, the electric chair; and I hate as well the burglary, the rape, the murder, that send men to these ugly places. Yet, regardless of my detesting them, all these crimes and their consequences are stark realities in the world in which I live.

If you say that the idea of hell is not tolerable, the Bible-believing Christian will agree with you. It is not tolerable, just as the idea of a rapist on a gallows is not tolerable; but it is true just the same.

SHALL WE THINK OR SHRINK?

Arthur Hewitt, that vigorous and yet gentle soul who toils for Christ among the hills of New England, raises a question in one of his recent books. "What is the matter with contemporary theology," he asks, "that it *simply will not* face the doctrine of hell?" And he adds, "Folks used to think on hell and shrink from it. Now they simply shrink from thinking of it at all." This same tendency is recognized by Dr. Bob Shuler, Sr., in a recent volume of sermons. He, too, speaks of hell as "the truth

we will not face," and he makes the observation that "Sidestepping the unpleasant in reality is one of the great feats of this generation What we do not like we push aside as error, a phantom of the mortal mind, an illusion, a mirage." I am calling today for an honest and realistic approach to this admittedly dreadful subject of the destiny of the wicked and impenitent.

The scholars are not altogether satisfied with the translation of our text as it appears in the King James Version, but they are agreed that it is a warning to the ancient people of Judah regarding the judgment that is to fall upon them. Moffatt translates the second half of the verse and all of verse 22 as follows: "Shall not anguish seize you, like the throes of a woman in labour? And if you say to yourself, 'Why ever has this befallen me?'—it is for a host of sins that you are exposed and stripped."

Let me now make this question—"What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?"—the starting point. After all, the Bible never undertakes to make hell an easy doctrine to accept. It seeks only to establish the fact that it is a morally just and necessary doctrine, once the total picture of God and man is brought into view.

This can be shown, I believe, by examining the objections that are popularly offered, or felt, against the biblical view of hell.

I.

Let me introduce, first of all, the objector who says, "*We of the twentieth century have progressed beyond the notion of hell.*" He is the man who usually says it with a toss of the head or a curl of the lip in supercilious self-assurance, without, mind you, offering one solid reason why twentieth-century man has any more right to scuttle hell than had tenth-century man.

Sometimes, I regret to admit, some of my own fraternity in the ministry are guilty of this rather stupid pose. A few summers ago, at an institute camp for young people, one of the listeners asked a preacher, who was teaching the class, about the doctrine of future punishment. The questioner was told with a smiling cocksureness that he had no need to worry about that, for, said the teacher, "We are living in 1941!"

Since 1941 happened to be the year when World War II entered the phase of its widest and most woeful engulfment, one wonders why there should be anything about that year of tragedy to justify the notion of a universe without any hell in it!

NO HIDING PLACE

If you want to indulge in wishful thinking that fairly drips with illogical sentimentalism, just go around parroting the popular saying that "We are too modern to believe in hell." Modern we may be, but our modernity has not spared us from being sunk in the sewage up to our muddy ears in a cesspool of materialism and mass murder which threatens to drown all the cultural values left us by other and more humane ages. No, the phrase about being modern is hardly a safe hole in which to hide if you are seeking escape from the truth of hell.

II.

Consider a second objection. It is voiced by the man who says, "*The very idea of punishment as retribution is unacceptable.*" This complaint deserves, in my opinion, an honest examination.

All of us must realize that a marked change has come over many sections of society with respect to the treatment of those who violate its laws and offend against its well-being. The old practice of punishment for punishment's sake has been greatly modified. We do not encourage the procedure of taking a youngster who is

convicted of his first offense and throwing him in jail with hardened lawbreakers. We have learned that this is one way to confirm a youngster in crime, to make him "jell" as a permanent enemy of society.

We have therefore enlarged our concept of punishment so as to make it include both retribution and redemption. We desire to preserve respect for law, but we also desire to correct and rehabilitate the offender who has transgressed the law. The new concept is sound. It is humane. It is intelligent. It is Christian.

Now I raise the pointed question: Is the biblical doctrine of eternal punishment disproved by the objection that punishment must *always* be remedial and never retributive alone? The answer, I am persuaded, is No, and for at least two reasons.

THE PUNISHMENT ANGLE

For one thing, it should not be forgotten that even in remedial punishment there is an element of retribution. The offender may deserve something *more* than retribution, but he does not deserve *less*. This truth must be seen, unless, of course, we are going to take the position that all punishment is unjust.

The other, and more important, consideration is this: that neither man nor God has been able to find a way to use pain constructively, that is, so as to bring the offender around to acknowledge his wrong and to amend his life, *without that man's consent*. Every judge, every probation officer, every social worker, not to mention every experienced minister, will tell you of cases where the most enlightened and intelligent and persevering methods of remedial treatment failed utterly to produce a sound and safe citizen out of the young delinquent. Nor am I thinking now about pathological or psychopathic cases. There is a factor of perverseness, not infrequently seen, before which the sociologist and the evangelist must alike throw up their hands in grief and frustration.

I remind you that Jesus faced such persons in His day. He faced them not as problem-cases in the social sense, but as human beings who, in pride and stubbornness, refused to be changed, rejected His grace, turned a deaf ear to His warnings, and chose deliberately to remain their own sin-blinded, hell-destined selves. Many of them were religious. They passed for respectable folk. But they were hardened in their egotism, their hypocrisy, and their mishandling of the rights of other people. To them Christ said: "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

And if you say that God, being kind, should fogle such persons while they remain as they are, then surely you have some view of forgiveness wholly different from that which one finds in the Christian gospel. If Jesus ever tried to make anything clear, it was that a man who admits no guilt can accept no forgiveness. His very pride of refusal adds guilt to his guilt, and his punishment becomes, from the moral point of view, all the more inescapable. Remember, it is not forgiveness *offered* that saves men, it is forgiveness *accepted*.

III.

I pass to a further objection. It is frequently expressed in some such language as this: "*After all, the Bible accounts of hell are figurative, not literal.*" This is believed to be an effective way of toning down, if not canceling out, the ugly realities of that shame and doom which await the godless soul.

Now, straight away, let's admit that the descriptions of hell that we find in the Holy Scriptures carry with them an enormous intensity. Take our Lord's word concerning the fate of the selfish rich man in Luke 16:23, 24, "And in hell" (that is, in Hades where abide the disembodied spirits of the lost between death and judgment day) "in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

Or, take Christ's words in the Sermon on the Mount, which is here quoted in the Weymouth New Testament: "If therefore your right eye causes you to fall, tear it out and away with it; it is better for you that one member should be destroyed rather than that your whole body should be thrown into hell" (Matthew 5:29). Here it is the word "Gehenna," concerning which Professor Vos writes, in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, that it is used eleven times in the teachings of Jesus and that "in all of these it designates the place of eternal punishment of the wicked, generally in connection with the final judgment."

Or again, take Jesus' pronouncement in Matthew 25:41 regarding the doom of those on the left hand in the day of judgment: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

And, finally, take St. Paul's teaching in II Thessalonians 1:7, 9, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." In place of our English word "vengeance," Moffatt uses the more accurate word "punishment"—"punishment on those who ignore God, even on those who refuse obedience to the gospel of our Lord Jesus, men who will pay the penalty of being destroyed eternally from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might."

Before dealing with the issue of whether such passages are to be interpreted literally or figuratively, I should like to pause for a parenthetical comment. It is an amazing and solemn fact that those sections of Scripture which describe most vividly and powerfully the future punishment of the unsaved are to be found, not amid the partial light of the Old Testament, but amid the blazing light of the New. And what is even more impressive and arresting is that, with the exception of certain passages in the Book of Revelation, the doctrine of hell in the New Testament is nowhere taught so frankly, so forcefully, so repeatedly, or so terribly, as in the words of Jesus himself. The gentlest lips that ever spoke to the sin-burdened, sin-bound sons and daughters of Adam were the lips over which passed the most appalling warnings of hell ever heard on this planet.

But back to the problem: is the language *figurative* or otherwise? If I tell you that you can line up excellent evangelical scholars on both sides of the problem, do not, I beg you, take any false comfort from it. If I tell you, further, that in my own view the language of Jesus and the apostles on this doctrine is, for the greater part, figurative, again, I beg you, do not draw any false conclusion from it.

POWERFUL PICTURES

It is a sign of our shallowness and prejudice that we have been unwilling to play fair with the powerful picture language of the Word of God. The function of a parable or a metaphor is to give some adequate idea of something which, if described in ordinary language, would appear to be less beautiful or less tragic, as the case may be,

than it is. Thus heaven is described as a place where there are fruit-bearing trees. If you wish to believe that those trees are like Michigan peaches or California oranges, you are entitled to do so. For my part, after reading elsewhere in the New Testament that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," I regard those trees of the New Jerusalem as symbols of eternal satisfaction and delights whose full meaning I shall not know until I experience them.

So—I say it solemnly—with the phrases about hell: "gehenna," the ever burning garbage heap outside Jerusalem; the "worm that dieth not"; "the bottomless pit"; "the lake of fire"; and the rest. Jesus Christ and the apostles were either fools or they were frauds if they employed such terms as these without intending to teach some incalculably, unimaginably tragic destiny which awaits those who prefer their will to God's will, evil to good, and a mess of pottage to the bread of life.

After all, every psychiatrist, many a doctor, and most ministers, know perfectly well from what they have seen that there is an agony of the mind, a torture of the spirit, which goes so much deeper than sheer physical pain as to make the physical mere child's play compared with the mental. Try, if you can, to get on the inside of these lines and to grasp the profound truth that the poet has caught:

*Forever round the mercy seat
The guiding lights of love shall burn;
But what if, habit bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn!
What if thine eyes refuse to see,
Thine ear the call of mercy fail,
And thou eternal captive be,
Thyself, thine own dark jail?*

*O doom beyond the saddest guess,
As the long years of God unroll,
To make thy sordid sinfulness
The prison of thy soul!
Thy selfishness a gnawing worm,
Thy hopelessness an eating fire,
What hell, to pull and twist and squirm
Forever deeper in the mire!*

IV.

And that suggests the fourth objection to the doctrine of future punishment, for which I have only a moment or two. It is this: "If there is a hell in which one single soul is to be finally lost, then God is not omnipotent and His love is defeated."

First, let me say that ever since God made man a free moral agent, He volun-

tarily accepted certain limitations on His omnipotence. Besides, any victory that God might win by force over the evil in man would not be a *moral* victory and would add nothing to His glory with respect to the final society of His redeemed ones.

TWO KINDS OF SERVICE

Second, while God's omnipotence, from one point of view, has upon it self-imposed limitations, still *His final universe, compassing both heaven and hell, will bear witness to His sovereignty*. The day is coming, says Paul, when every knee shall bow and every tongue "confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." But not all knees will bow in the same fashion or with the same spirit. Some will bow voluntarily, have indeed already bowed voluntarily, while the remainder will bow involuntarily.

As I see the picture in the New Testament, God will have two kinds of service rendered to Him in eternity: the service of *love* rendered by His redeemed ones who confessed Christ as their Saviour, and the service of *fear* rendered by the lost in hell. Service? you say. Yes, in the sense that they will, even in their damnation, testify to the holiness and justice of the Eternal God, whose mercy they refused and by whose righteousness they are forever excluded from the society of the holy.

And third, I do not hesitate to say that, as for God's love, it will remain forever defeated and frustrated to the extent that moral beings, made in His image, wooed by His Spirit, died for by His Son, refuse to surrender to Him and to His grace.

"I TRIED TO SAVE YOU!"

Many years ago, when the late Gypsy Smith's father was a youngster, a band of gypsies were picking hops in a field near Tunbridge in England. Finishing one field, they started in their wagons to another which lay on the other side of the Medway River. When they came to the bridge, they found the river in flood and the waters swirling high and menacing about it. The women screamed, and the horses pulling the crowded wagons took fright and ran away. The wagons were thrown against the side of the bridge with such force that the occupants were hurled into the water. That day thirty-nine gypsies were drowned in the mad current of the Medway.

Among them was a mother whose death was singularly tragic because it was unnecessary. Her gypsy son, a strong, fine swimmer, saw her distress and went to her rescue. But she seized him in such a way

that he and she were both going down. So, breaking her hold on him, he swam around her and pleaded with her to follow his instructions. Again in panic she seized him, and he had to break her hold or go down with her. Finally she went down, to appear no more until her lifeless form was pulled out of the murky waters far down the stream.

Came the afternoon of the funeral—a united service for the thirty-nine. Ignoring the crowd and the clergyman, the brokenhearted gypsy boy crept down into the long trench and knelt beside the coffin of his mother. There he was heard to cry, "Mother, mother, I tried to save you; I did all a son could do to save you, but you would not let me."

The illustration is not perfect, I know. What human picture of such things as I am at grips with *would* be perfect? But hear me: if you miss the way of life and peace, if you take your selfish, proud, unholy way to the place of lost souls, it will be only because you refuse God's remedy for sin. And over your damnation the love of Calvary's Christ will brood, saying, "I did all a God could do to save you, but you would not let me."

"What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?" The answer was written down long ago, in the language of Jesus Christ. When the man without the wedding garment was detected and rejected at the wedding feast, Jesus says, "And he was speechless!"

The Minister's Call and Commission

Dr. George W. Ridout

THE greatest and most comprehensive statement on the call and commission of the minister is that of Paul's in Acts 26:15-19. I would counsel young ministers especially to read that scripture once a week on their knees; it will make them better ministers of Jesus Christ. Philip Doddridge in his hymn on the ministry says:

*From Christ they all their gifts derive,
And fed by Christ their graces live;
While guarded by His mighty hand,
'Midst all the rage of hell they stand.*

One of the greatest of our Southern holiness preachers and evangelists tells of that time in his life when the call to preach came to him. He was trying to settle the question. The following story tells how hearing a negro singing an old hymn enabled him to "cross the Rubicon" and throw in his lot with God's heralds of the great salvation. He became a great pastor and one of the great holiness evangelists.

"I was five miles from town when the day began to break. The cotton and corn fields had little spots and banks of silver haze upon them. A sweetness and freshness was in the air of the early dawn that was like an elixir to brain and heart. The hills were standing up in the indistinct light, solemn and gray, like great altars. A

slight mist on their heads looked like rising incense. Nature seemed to be sacrificing to God. I was drinking it all into my already overflowing soul, when fully a quarter of a mile away, on one of the hills, I heard a negro man singing. His voice was rich, deep, and solemn. The hymn was a plaintive old melody. The words and music God brought to me through the misty, tremulous, beautiful morning air were:

*Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,
And press with vigor on.
A heavenly race demands thy zeal
And an immortal crown.*

"How the sacred song echoed and echoed over the fields, in the valley, and was thrown back from the opposite hill-sides! I was almost breathless, while the words 'heavenly race' and 'immortal crown' seemed to linger the longest.

"The singer was hidden from me in the trees on the hill. He knew not that his song was reaching, filling and blessing me, and this made it all the more powerful. I had checked the canter of my horse, and was walking him along the road, that I might catch every strain and hear every word. The singer was deliberate. He seemed to be employed in some kind of work, and hence took his time; so that a full minute elapsed, giving the strains of the first verse

full time to die away in the distance before he resumed. This time it was:

*A cloud of witnesses around,
Hold thee in full survey;
Forget the steps already trod,
And onward urge thy way.*

"This time I felt the wonderful strength and girding power of the words, and said most fervently, 'Lord, it shall be so.'

"Again, after a pause, came another verse, thrown outward by the mellow, solemn voice of the singer:

*'Tis God's all-animating voice
That calls thee from on high;
'Tis His own hand presents the prize
To thine aspiring eye.*

"As the negro sang that morning, would that all could have heard him in one of God's natural temples! And yet, as far as I could see, there was but one listener and worshiper beside himself. What a pity not to have heard such a sacred song, with the sides of the valley for the sounding boards, the opaline sky for a ceiling, the floating mist on the hilltops like incense rising from majestic altars, while the silent woods and fragrant canebrakes seemed actually to be drinking the scene and sound in, like the solitary listener!

"The singer reached the fourth stanza. How triumphantly it rang out! Not a note or word was lost:

*That crown, with peerless glories bright,
Which shall new luster boast,
When victors' wreaths and monarch's gems
Shall blend in common dust.*

"The world looked very little, and its honors and rewards very contemptible, under the words of the last verse. Heaven seemed the only thing worth living for. My heart was all melted, and the tears dropped fast."

* * *

The minister is to be more than a builder of sermons and a speaker; he is to be a witness. He can say:

*What we have felt and seen,
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible.*

Sometimes the sermon fails—then it is that the testimony will tell. This point is illustrated by the following incident in the early life of one who has seen great gospel triumphs both at home and abroad. He says:

"When I was called to the ministry I had a vague notion that I was to be God's lawyer—I was to argue His case for Him and

put it up brilliantly. When I told my pastor of my call, he surprised and thoroughly frightened me by asking me to preach my first sermon on a certain Sunday night. I prepared very thoroughly, for I was anxious to make a good impression and argue His case acceptably. There was a large crowd there full of expectancy, for they wished the young man well.

"I began on rather a high key. I had not gone a half-dozen sentences when I used a word I never had used before (nor have I used it since!)—'Indifferentism.' When I used that word I saw a college girl in the auditorium put down her head and smile. It so upset me that when I came back to the thread of my discourse it was gone—absolutely. I do not know how long I stood there, rubbing my hands, hoping that something would come back. It seemed an age. Finally I blurted out: 'Friends, I am sorry, but I have forgotten my sermon!' I started down the steps leading from the pulpit in shame and confusion. This was the beginning of my ministry, I thought—a tragic failure. As I was about to leave the pulpit, a Voice seemed to say to me, 'Haven't I done anything for you?'

"'Yes,' I replied. 'You have done everything for me.'

"'Well,' answered the Voice, 'couldn't you tell that?'

"'Yes, I suppose I could,' I eagerly replied.

"So instead of going to my seat, I came around in front of the pulpit below (I felt very lowly by this time and was persuaded I did not belong up there) and said: 'Friends, I see I cannot preach, but I love Jesus Christ. You know what my life was here in this community—that of a wild, reckless, young man—and you know what it now is. You know He has made life new for me, and though I cannot preach, I am determined to love and serve Him.'

"At the close, a lad came up and said, 'I wish I could find what you have found.' He did find it then and there. He is a member of that church now—a fine Christian man.

"No one congratulated me on that sermon that night, but after the sting of it had passed away, I have been congratulating myself ever since. The Lord let me down with a terrible thump, but I got a lesson never to be forgotten; in my ministry I was to be, not God's lawyer, but His witness. That would mean that there would have to be living communion with Christ so that there always would be something to pass

on. Since that day I have tried to witness before high and low what Christ has been to an unworthy life."

* * *

Let us consider now some things the minister should dedicate himself to:

1. He must preach the great *finalities of faith*. These are very powerfully put by Dr. Conrad of Boston, thus:

"(1) God is. (2) God created. (3) God spake. (4) God came. (5) God redeemed. (6) God is here. (7) God is coming again."

2. He must preach *aggressive truth*. Martin Luther was such a preacher, and he said: "I was born to fight devils and factions. It is my business to remove obstructions, to cut down thorns, to fill up quagmires, and to open and make straight the paths. But if I must have some failing, let me rather speak the truth with too great severity than once to act the hypocrite and conceal the truth."

3. He must preach *sin and redemption through the blood of Jesus*. Jerome once said, "He who hath slight thoughts of sin never had great thoughts of God." This means that when the preacher has a defective theology of sin he has a defective and insufficient redemption to preach; he does not preach salvation unto the uttermost.

4. He must preach *with passion and power on the great truths of the Bible*. Think of Bishop Simpson; some of his greatest sermons were upon such themes as "The Gospel the Power of God"; "The Resurrection"; "The Victory of Faith"; "The Contest for Eternal Life"; "Multitudes in the Valley of Decision"; "Jesus Suffered Without the Gate." The sermon he preached before the British Conference in 1870 was upon the text, "But none of these things move me." Dr. Foster, afterwards Bishop, was present, and he and Dr. Ridgway decided they would go up in the gallery and study, critically, the effects of the sermon on the Britishers. The Bishop came to the part of the sermon where he told his mother of his call to preach. Her reply was, "Why, Matthew. I have been expecting that ever since you were a child; your father and I dedicated you to God when you were born." This story had a telling effect; the two big doctors in the gallery were in tears;

they looked at each other as tears rolled down their cheeks; the spell of the preacher inspired and gripped them. A professor of elocution said to his student who went with him to hear Simpson, "That was not elocution; that was the Holy Ghost."

Transfigured

WE SHALL be glorified with Christ when He appears in His glory. Our life is hidden now as His was in the days of His humiliation; but He shall appear in glory even as He did on the Mount of Transfiguration, and we shall be like Him when we see Him as He is.

Sometimes, perhaps, you have passed in the daytime through some public place where at night there was to be a magnificent exhibition of pyrotechnic art, and you have seen the figures that are to be lighted up as they stand ready for the exhibition. They are very plain and common looking. You can see in rude outlines the forms of men, the crown upon the kingly brow, and the jewels that flash from it; but there is no beauty or glory whatever about them. But wait till the eventide, till the sun goes down, the stars appear, and the shades of night have covered all the earth; till the mighty throng has gathered and the master of ceremonies appears on the scene. Suddenly at the signal, perhaps at a trumpet blast or a chorus of melody, the lights are turned on and a blaze of glory lights up the scene. Every figure stands out in radiant light, and the whole scene is illuminated, and seems almost supernatural.

So it will be when Christ appears, and these bodies of humiliation shall be lighted up with His glory. All the members will shine with the beauty and majesty of their living Head; and no doubt, perhaps, as He loves to do, He will stand back and reveal all His glory, not in His own person, but in His heavenly bride, for He has said, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." This is the consummation of our resurrection life—the complete redemption of our body, soul, and spirit, and the eternal glory which His coming will usher in.—A. B. SIMPSON.

Nothing in life is more wonderful than faith—the one great moving force which we can neither weigh in the balance nor test in the crucible.

—SIR WILLIAM OSLER

Forty Thieves—with Portfolio!

By H. M. von Stein

HE preached for sixteen minutes, because the resident pastor had used up most of the time talking about finance and the announcements. When he was through, everyone was sorry; and at the evening service the church was nearly full. His message, then, was over in twenty-five minutes; but he prolonged that by telling a story. I think I, too, would have gone to the altar; but that conclusion lifted the impression of fact and put the effect of the sermon rather hesitantly in the realm of fiction. The effect, you know, of a sermon or story is determined by the most impressive part. It was a good story, but only a story. Alongside of the beauty of Bible exposition, it seemed highly sentimental.

People came to the altar but slowly. You could not blame it all upon the people. When a preacher gets hold of an audience, a great deal depends upon what he does with his hold.

Men who are writers—who make their living that way—are keenly alive to the thievery of words. Words are the vehicle of their story, the color of their picture, the aroma of their poetry; but a single excess word is a thief.

If preachers the world over had to submit their sermons to an editor of almost any publication, religious or otherwise, for possible acceptance for publication, 80 per cent of them would be turned down; and the chief criticism would not be of their religion, but that the effect is covered up by wordiness.

Criticism is easy and rampant, but protection from constructive criticism is no help to anyone. How many times have you groaned inwardly, listening to a preacher you loved, garbling an otherwise excellent message by a flight of words that came tumbling to his mind, and of which he obviously became suddenly enamored!

If the devil has entrance to the pulpit during the worship hour, it is through the ministry of *too many words*!

The certain mark of the amateur, in print or pulpit, is his fumbling around for words in the beginning, covering up the fact that what he has to say is either inadequate or too elaborate for the treatment he intended

in the time allowed. A subject may be too large for a single sermon. A writer learns this before he sells his first short story, but some preachers never learn it. It is ineffective to compass too large a subject by a mass of words.

The heathen, we are told, thought themselves heard for their *much speaking*.

A preacher has a hard time of it all right, but not so difficult as the transgressor. It is the preacher's portion to suffer persecution, but there is no merit in seeking to be persecuted.

Wordy sermons, the excess baggage of any discourse, are thieves of the preacher's effectiveness, his habits of thinking (where this evil originates), and the time of the people to whom he ministers, to say nothing of his popularity on the district, which is part of his effectiveness.

The time of the people of any audience is a valuable commodity—it is their substance. Anyone who takes more of it than he needs—what would you call him?

The preacher who thinks for a moment that the people come to church to hear him preach is mistaken. People come to church to worship God—not the preacher, though it seems strangely difficult for him to realize this. The more quickly the preacher can get across the message God has laid upon his heart—clearly—the more effective it will be.

The people have the right to offer their time as a sacrifice to God in their worship of Him, but no one has the right to steal the valuable time of His people through the thievery of words.

This is harsh. Let him who thinks it too harsh try his ministry in the world of print. Radio experts, editors, and writers spend billions, and half their lives, learning how to eliminate excess words. The objective is to reach the audience with an incisive, convincing message. Yet ministers, by and large, ignore this trend utterly and continue to garble the message of salvation with words which soften the impact and even obliterate it!

What excuse can a man have for stealing three-quarters of an hour of the time of fifty or a hundred people with a fifteen-minute sermon?

Some Advice to Ministers

Rev. F. Lincicome

WATCH your vocabulary, for it can be a serious barrier to the effectiveness of your message. You must make yourself understood and to make yourself understood you will need to clothe your thought in language that your listeners can understand. A sermon that is not understood is wasted effort.

A Scotchman complained to his pastor that he made himself invisible all week and incomprehensible on Sunday. He told the pastor that he did not object to his making himself invisible all week but he did object to his making himself incomprehensible on Sunday. Too many double-jointed words will make you incomprehensible to some people; it will put you over their heads. Going over their heads does not "prove that you have a superior ammunition, it only proves you do not know how to shoot."

The most useful words in our language are those of the Anglo-Saxon origin, for they are the words that make no effort to be seen or heard. I like John the Baptist. He was a plain preacher; he called a spade, a spade, and black, black. The words he used to express himself with for the most part were words of one syllable. The people did not have to carry a dictionary around with them to get his message and he never used "a gallon of words to express a spoonful of thought." He said it in terms that the common people could understand.

Some ministers not only need to simplify their vocabulary, they need to replenish it. Unless it is continually fed it loses its ardor, its vigor. A minister's vocabulary is subjected to tremendous wear and tear which soon leaves it threadbare unless replenished. We should cull out the overworked words and shut them up in an asylum until they recover from their exhaustion. "Words are like human beings; they have nervous prostration when long overworked—they need a rest." There is one word, especially, that needs a rest and that is the word "*great*"—so as to give it a chance to recover from exhaustion.

Every preacher should know that there is a psychological law that will prevent his sermon making a greater impression on those who hear it than it makes on himself.

If it does not grip the preacher it will not grip the listeners. Only as the preacher feels will he make those who listen to him feel. Without the drive of passion, preaching can easily degenerate into mere talk; it will become more "verbal than vital." Without a heart passion our sermons will raise no heat in those who hear them, for only as I am fired, can I fire others. A sermon is not much unless it is touched with emotion and emotion is something that can't be manufactured. The minister has many problems but his supreme problem is keeping himself spiritually sensitive—keeping the zeal and passion he had when he first started to preaching. I am amazed how easily I can become wrapped in the soft wool of self-indulgence and how easily I become insensitive and calloused to the world's need.

A minister must work if he succeeds. He must work with his head, work with his pen, work with his feet, work with his spirit. Working with your spirit is best done by prayer. You can work too much on your sermons but you can't work too much on yourself. Few of us pray enough. Even ministers can hinder their prayers by their conduct. Prayer is very sensitive and always affected by the character and conduct of the one who prays. Prayer and a holy life are one—they mutually act and react; one cannot survive without the other. A man's life will broaden or contract his prayers and his prayers will broaden or contract his life.

A spotless prayer cannot flow through a spotted heart. Straight praying is never born of crooked conduct. It is neither words, nor thoughts, nor ideas, nor feelings that shape praying—it is character and conduct. When your character and conduct are at a low ebb, praying can but barely live, much less thrive. Prayer is the mainspring of life; we pray as we live and we live as we pray. We are living feebly because we are praying feebly and we are praying feebly because we are living feebly. The mercury of life will rise only by the warmth of the closet. Everything vital to godliness is nourished by closet air.

A good delivery is a great asset to a preacher. Someone said, "It is all in the

delivery." Fortunate is the minister who has a good delivery. It can make a sermon more meaningful and is a great help in gaining and holding the attention. This being true, then a public speaker should set out to deliver in a style as simple and interesting and direct as possible. To be sure, a good delivery is something but it is not as one said, "everything." Having something to deliver is far more important than having a good delivery. Someone has said, "No end of personal charm, no assortment of pulpit tricks, can conceal a lack of sermonic content or compensate for a lack of "stuff" on the homiletical ball. Too many men commissioned of God to give their message seem to have no message to give. When they have said all, they have said but little or nothing. This lack of having something to say cannot be hidden by the most valuable, natural gifts of oratory. Those wonderful gifts will only provoke the criticism of Carlyle when he said, "If that man had something to say he could say it."

The lack of having something to say may be due to the false notion about how sermons come about. Some think that sermons are born and not made, others think that sermons are worked up; but sermons are not born, they are made—sermons are not worked up, they are worked out. I have listened to worked-up sermons and the born sermon, and as a rule they have far more noise than nourishment.

Write That Sermon—

If your sermons aren't very good, maybe one reason is that you do not take the trouble to write them. Probably not all sermons should be written; a minister should try varied techniques. But most sermons should be written, for the following seven reasons:

1. A written sermon will not be too long. In the excitement of preaching, the speaker

may and ought to forget the clock. But in the quiet of his own study he can measure the extent of his paragraphs. He will prune the sermon and trim it untiringly so that it, too, will be untiring.

2. A written sermon comes to a definite planned end. Some sermons remind one of an airplane that keeps circling around and around, completely off the beam, trying to find a landing place in the fog.

3. A written sermon will show the preacher whether he really has a sermon or only an outline. Many a sermon that is only in the mind, not on paper, seems to have body and substance; but when it comes out on Sunday it turns out to have only a diaphanous outline filled with ill-digested trivia.

4. A written sermon improves the preacher's English. It keeps him from overusing pet words and phrases. It keeps him from wandering into junglesome sentences from which he can neither back out nor push out.

5. Superfluous juices can be squeezed out of a written sermon. It is less likely to be watery and slushy than an extempore effort. A good rule for most preachers would be: Write eight pages, then reduce to four.

6. Writing sermons keeps the preacher from repeating himself. The older a man grows, the more likely he is to say the same thing over and over again, without remembering or realizing it. Written sermons are a constant reminder: Don't say this again this way! Say it better next time!

7. And, finally, a written sermon keeps the preacher humble. It is fatally easy to think one has been a pretty fair preacher, if one does not have that sermon file to take out all one's conceit. Against all the compliments, against the self-congratulations, the unwriting preacher has small defense. But the preacher whose own sermons sit there in a long, accusing file is constantly made to realize his own defects—some of them.

—*The Presbyterian of the South*

The Value of Love:

We can see that love does not consist simply in the amount of benefit we confer upon other people, but in our devotion of heart and soul and mind, in our readiness to give. It is the giving, rather than the gift, if we may put it so, that is the heart of love.—*Selected.*

SEARCHING TRUTHS FOR MINISTERS . .

A Preacher's Advice to Preachers

H. C. MORRISON

This generation of rollicking, dancing, card-playing, theatre-going, God-forgetting, Christ-rejecting sinners needs to hear some earnest preaching, preaching that deals with sin and the punishment that sin will inevitably bring; faithful, earnest, fearless preaching on God and His attributes, His creation of the world and His rights in it. His creation of man, His love for him, and His right to rule over him and guide him, ought to be faithfully urged upon our generation. There is a great need for preachers who have no desire for ecclesiastical office, for the applause of men, for the wealth of the world, for ease of body, for an escape from the reproach of the Cross; but whose universe is filled with the presence of the infinitely holy God, who walk in awe of Him in the beauty of holiness.—*Selected.*

What tells most of all is the personality of the preacher. This is one of the prime elements in preaching. The effect of a sermon depends, first of all, on what is said, and next, on how it is said; but hardly less on who says it. There are men, says Emerson, who are heard to the ends of the earth, though they speak in a whisper. We are so constituted that what we hear depends very much for its effect on how we are disposed toward him who speaks.—JAMES STALKER.

"Be Still—"

We are told that, when the telephone was in its early stages of development, one of the greatest problems was how to eliminate the noises of the world so that the human voice could be clearly distinguished. Is not this an illustration of one of the great difficulties of our prayer life? The noises of the world, writes Dr. G. Ray Jordan in his excellent book, *The Supreme Possession*, drown out the message Heaven has for us. "We must eliminate the confusing clamor of the world long enough to hear what God has to say." How we may do this God himself has told us in His Word through the Psalmist of old: "Be still," he says, "and know that I am God."—*Exchange.*

How many of us are satisfied to work hard in humble places? You see, the watch could go anywhere the wearer would take it. He could tell the time in places Big Ben could never go. The watch had a job to do which it alone could do.

Although our station in life be lowly, let us pray that God will help us to do our work for Him in the very best way we can. Earthly fame and praise will seem very unimportant when we stand before our Heavenly Father.—*Selected.*

Take Time to Pray

Dr. S. D. Gordon has said, "The great people of the earth today are the people who pray—people who take time to pray. They have not time. It must be taken from something else. That something is important, very important and pressing, but still less important and pressing than prayer. There are people who put prayer first and group the other items in life's schedule around and after prayer. These are the people today who are doing the most for God in winning souls; in solving problems; in awakening churches to supply both men and money for mission posts; in keeping their lives fresh and strong in sacrificial service on the foreign field, where the thickest fighting is going on; in keeping the old earth sweet a little while longer."

A Faithful Pastor

Doctor Conant tells of a pastor who, passing a big department store, felt a sudden impulse to go in and talk to the proprietor on the subject of his salvation. Finding him, he said: "Mr. T., I've talked beds and carpets and bookcases with you, but I've never talked my business with you. Would you give me a few minutes to do so?" Being led to the private office, the minister took out his New Testament and showed passage after passage which brought before that businessman his duty to accept Jesus Christ. Finally the tears began to roll down his cheeks, and he said to the pastor, "I'm seventy years of age. I was born in this city, and more than a hundred ministers and more than five hundred church officers have known me as you have, to do business with; but in all those years you are the only man who ever spoke to me about my soul."—*Selected.*

What Preachers Say to Preachers

It has been the sin of my life that I have not always taken aim. I have been a lover of subjects. If I had loved men more, and loved subjects only as God's instruments of good for men, it would have been better, and I should have more to show for all my labor under the sun.

—NATHANIEL BURTON

Not Mine or Thine

But when ye pray, say our—not mine or thine.

Our debts, our debtors, and our daily bread!

Before the thronged cathedral's gracious shrine,

Or in thy closet's solitude instead,
Whoe'er thou art, where'er thou livest prayer,

However humble or how great thou be,
Say our, thy brother man including there.

And more and more it may be thou shalt see

Upon life's loom how thread to thread is bound;

None for himself, but man and fellow man,

Or far or near, meet on one common ground,

Sons of one Father since the world began.
So shall God's kingdom come in might and power,

When all can pray, not mine or thine, but our.

—FRANCES CROSBY HAMLET

Among the things that this day brings

Will come to you a call,

The which, unless you're listening,

You may not hear at all.

Lest it be very soft and low,

Whate'er you do, where'er you go,

Be listening!

Then whatsoever the call may be,

To service small or great,

To cross the seas and speak God's love,

To smile, to rule a state—

When God shall come and say to you,

Here is the thing that you must do,

Be listening!

—Author Unknown

The House of Prayer

My Father's Holy House of Prayer

Stands on foundations firm and true—

His Spirit and His Word are there;

For, be the number great or few,

The Lord himself will present be,

If in His name we're gathered there,

Within God's Holy House of Prayer.

And beautiful should be the place

That's consecrated to our God,

Where sunlight streams through windows high

And sacred music cleaves the sky;

Where songs of love and sacrifice

Float through the flower-scented air

Within His Holy House of Prayer.

But God is not confined by walls,
No matter how ornate they be;
He fills all space, the world is His,
He made it, and His own are we.
He knows our thoughts and sees our acts
Outside the church as well as in—
We cannot hide our lives from Him.

Should we not walk with softer tread
When to this Holy Place we're led?

And when inside the House of Prayer

Do not disturb the silence there,

And let not voice of man be heard

Except in supplication, praise,

And exposition of His Word.

—GRACE VIOLET MCDILL, in *The United Presbyterian*

Epistles of Christ

The Spirit of God is writing

His letters of love to men

In hearts that are wholly yielded,

In souls that are born again.

"Epistles of Christ," so surely

Sent forth with power from above,

To souls that are lost in darkness,

To tell of a Saviour's love.

The world will not read His Bible;

Your life it will surely heed.

Let Jesus indwell your being

And speak in your ev'ry deed.

Oh, ye who are trusting Jesus,

Redeemed at infinite cost,

Are you showing Christ to others,

And seeking to win the lost?

—BESSIE PATTEN GILMORE

The Zigzag Way

* We climbed the height by the zigzag path

And wondered why—until

We understood it was made zigzag

To break the force of the hill.

A road straight up would prove too steep

For the traveler's feet to tread;

The thought was kind in its wise design

Of a zigzag path instead.

It is often so in our daily life;

We fail to understand

That the twisting way our feet must tread

By love alone was planned.

Then murmur not at the winding way.

It is our Father's will

To lead us home by the zigzag path

To break the force of the hill.

—HEART TO HEART TALKS

Prove Me Now

Prove Me now—will I not open
Heaven's windows unto thee,
Pour thee out a mighty blessing?
Room enough there shall not be
To receive it, saith Jehovah—
No devourer shall invade
On the blessing I will send thee;
'Tis the promise I have made.
—FLORENCE MOTT

Poems and Hymns for Use in the Communion Service

Submitted by Rev. James Hudson

Gethsemane, can I forget?
Or there Thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember Thee?

When to the Cross I turn my eyes
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice,
I must remember Thee!

Remember Thee, and all Thy pains,
And all Thy love to me;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains,
Will I remember Thee!

And when these failing lips grow dumb
And mind and memory flee,
When Thou shalt in Thy kingdom come,
Jesus, remember me!

—JAMES MONTGOMERY

In memory of the Saviour's love,
We keep the sacred feast,
Where every humble, contrite heart
Is made a welcome guest.

By faith we take the Bread of Life,
With which our souls are fed;
The cup, in token of His blood,
That was for sinners shed.

Under His banner thus we sing
The wonders of His love,
And thus anticipate by faith
The heavenly feast above!

—Author Unknown

He took into His hands the cup,
To crown the sacramental feast,
And, full of kind concern, looked up,
And gave to them what He had blest:
And, "Drink ye all of this," He said,
"In solemn memory of the dead.

"This is My blood, which seals the new,
Eternal covenant of grace;
My blood, so freely shed for you,
For you and all the sinful race:

My blood, that speaks your sins forgiven,
And justifies your claim to heaven."

We too with Him are dead,
And shall with Him arise;
The cross on which He bows His head
Shall lift us to the skies.

All the power of sin remove;
Fill us with Thy perfect love;
Stamp us with the stamp divine;
Seal our souls forever Thine!

—CHARLES WESLEY

The King of heaven His table spreads,
And blessings crown the board;
Not paradise, with all its joys,
Could such delight afford.

Pardon and peace to dying men,
And endless life, are given
Through the rich blood that Jesus shed
To raise our souls to heaven.

Millions of souls, in glory now,
Were fed and feasted here;
And millions more, still on the way,
Around the board appear.

—PHILIP DODDRIDGE

That doleful night before His death,
The Lamb, for sinners slain,
Did, almost with His dying breath,
This solemn feast ordain.

To keep the feast, Lord, we have met,
And to remember Thee;
Help each poor trembler to repeat,
"For me He died, for me."

Thy sufferings, Lord, each sacred sign
To our remembrance brings;
We eat the bread, and drink the wine,
But think on nobler things.

Glory to God on high,
Our peace is made with Heaven;
The Son of God came down to die,
That we might be forgiven.

The Father gives the Son;
The Son, His flesh and blood;
The Spirit seals; and faith puts on
The righteousness of God.

—JOSEPH HART

All who bear their Saviour's name
Here their common faith proclaim;
Though diverse in tongue or rite,
Here, one body, we unite;
Breaking thus one mystic bread,
Members of one common head.

—JOSIAH CONDER

Now in parting, Father, bless us;
Saviour, still Thy peace bestow;
Gracious Comforter, be with us,
As we from Thy table go.

—HORATIUS BONAR

THE PREACHER'S SCRAPBOOK

Grumbling

Nothing is easier than faultfinding. No talent, no self-denial, no brains and no character are required to set up in the grumbling business. Does it appeal to you?—*Rotary Bit.*

Some Timely Proverbs

By F. LINCICOME

You can't throw dirt without losing ground.

The value of a sermon does not consist so much in its form as in its effect.

What a man obtains in life is an acquisition, but what he attains is a growth.

Where you go hereafter depends on what you go after here.

The place to begin curbing crime is in the high chair and not the electric chair.—*Pentecostal Herald.*

An Unfailing Help

Most gladly I add the testimony of my experience concerning the memorizing of scripture. To me it has been an unfailing help in doubt, anxiety, sorrow, and all the countless vicissitudes and problems of life. I believe in it enough to have devoted many, many hours to stowing away passages where I can neither leave them behind me nor be unable to get at them.

The Word of God is the Christian soldier's best weapon, and it is essential to have it with him always. In doubt it decides; in consultation it directs; in anxiety it reassures; in sorrow it comforts; in failure it encourages; in defense it protects; in offense it is mightier than the mighty.

Facing death alone on a floating piece of ice on a frozen ocean, the comradeship it afforded me supplied all I needed. It stood by me like the truest of true friends that it is. With my whole soul I commend to others the giving of some little time each day to secure the immense returns it offers and insures.—DR. WILFRED T. GRENFELL, of Laborador, in *The Covenanter Witness.*

Missionary Unbelief

The Christian who does not believe in foreign missions does not believe in the Great Commission. Repeat it and see.

The Christian who does not believe in foreign missions does not believe in the Apostles' Creed. Repeat it and see.

The Christian who does not believe in foreign missions does not believe in the Lord's Prayer. Repeat it and see.

The Christian who does not believe in foreign missions does not believe in the

"Doxology" in long meter. Repeat it and see.

The Christian who does not believe in foreign missions does not believe that verse so often quoted, John 3:16. Repeat it and see.

The Christian who does not believe in foreign missions believes that two-thirds of the earth's population should perish without hope.

How many more millions must die before the Church of God moves forward? "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."—*Selected.*

Prayer

Prayer is never an isolated thing. Whenever anybody prays for you, it means that he bears you on his heart. When a mother prays for her boy who is a prodigal, that is a token that she loves him. When a sister prays for a brother who is careless, that means he is very dear to her. Prayers are mockeries that do not lead to action. True prayers issue in endeavor.—G. H. MORRISON.

What They Have Said—

Rev. J. C. McPheeters: Holiness is standing without blame before God . . . not before men.

Rev. Peter Wiseman: Let it be realized that without a right motive there cannot be a proper understanding of the Book.

Rev. John Paul: Evangelism is a branch of the ministry that cannot be set aside without hindering the progress of the Church.

Famous Five-Word Scriptures

Prepare to meet thy God (Amos 4:12).
Acquaint now thyself with him (Job 22:21).

Behold the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36).
Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

Christ died for our sins (I Cor. 15:3).
Ye must be born again (John 3:7).

What think ye of Christ? (Matt. 22:42).
Seek, and ye shall find (Matt. 7:7).

By grace ye are saved (Eph. 2:5).
Now is the accepted time (II Cor. 6:2).

Boast not thyself of tomorrow (Prov. 27:1).

I am crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20).

I will give you rest (Matt. 11:28).
Peace I leave with you (John 14:27).

Let us love one another (I John 4:7).
Be thou faithful unto death (Rev. 22:12).

Every eye shall see him (Rev. 1:7).
And, behold, I come quickly (Rev. 22:12).

Therefore be ye also ready (Matt. 24:44).
—*Exchange.*

A PREACHING PROGRAM

Prepared by Rev. John E. Riley

"I Love Thy Church, O God"

SCRIPTURE—Psalms 84.

TEXT—*How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! (Psalms 84:1).*

Introduction:

1. "Church" is a New Testament word. Does not occur in Old Testament, but is found at least one hundred times in the New Testament. Furthermore, it is used to signify the assembly of the people, the people themselves, and not the building.

2. What is the Church?

a) There are two ways in which the Church is spoken of in the New Testament.

(1) The invisible Church, the body of Christ.

(2) The assembly of believers—visible Church.

b) It can be very readily seen that as nearly as possible the two should be identified, i. e., no one should be accepted into the visible Church until he has been born again.

3. What are the characteristics of the Church? If you want to appreciate the Church leave the irreverent, skeptical attitude that is so commonly found today and go back through history. You will find there the Church spoken of in terms of highest reverence and affection. The Psalmist David cries: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalms 84 says: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God," etc.

The house of the Lord is spoken of as a place of beauty, as a place of refuge from the storm, as a place of meditation and quiet, of peace, of forgiveness, of power, of greater glory. But the world today in its mad worship of money and machine can see little value in the Church. Too largely we have lost the secret of worship. To slip into the church, pray, meditate, and wait upon God is meaningless to us. The realm of spirit beauty, the empire within, is lost to us, since we are so eager to grasp the world without. Religion is something more than doing good, though it is vitally connected with good deeds—it is spirit relationship to God.

The Church is not a band of self-righteous people, unattractive and lifeless. It

is the most beautiful institution in all the world—lofty, living, loving. It is the link with idealism, with the spiritual world, with God. It is the heart of the universe with love and beauty and moral perfection enthroned. In the church it is that man is humbled before God; but with that humility is a bursting pride that he is an immortal soul, made by God and for His company—he is the son of God. The church is the symbol of perfection, perfection of life and love, perfection for which the divinely created soul of man longs with exquisite longing.

a) The Church is vital and living. It is permeated by the spirit of Christ, likened to a building made up of lively or living stones, likened to a body—through which lifeblood flows to each living, growing part. The Church is made up of spiritually alive individuals, full of joy, love, and peace—happy, singing, courageous people. When these people come together in worship, there is a spiritual power that attracts and convicts and challenges outsiders.

b) The Church is organized.

(1) It is organized for effectiveness. Work can be done well only when there are plan and purpose and organization.

(2) It is organized for endurance. Some people are afraid that organization will kill spiritual life. It may, but not half as soon as no organization will.

I. I love the Church for her history.

A. Born in a hostile land in a blaze of fire.

B. Scattered by persecution but persisting in spite of it and setting fires of holy passion ablaze east and west of the Mediterranean.

C. Solidly organizing throughout the civilized world.

D. Blazing underground when driven there by hundreds of years of persecution (6,000,000 Christians in the catacombs).

E. Living on through the Dark Ages, betrayed by hypocrites within and bereft of her power except for a few prophetic souls.

F. Blazing out afresh under Luther, Calvin, the Moravians, the Wesleys.

G. Spreading out to missionary work over the world.

H. Purifying society of evils of slavery, etc.

I. Living today in spite of modernism and spiritual coldness and wickedness.

J. The Church has been the mother of schools, colleges, hospitals—of civilization.

K. The Church has been the salt that has preserved society against the corruption of sin.

L. The Church has a few blots on her escutcheon; but, on the whole, her record is the cleanest of any institution.

M. I love our church for her brief yet glorious history.

II. I love the Church for her doctrine.

A. Oh, yes, the church councils had their arguments. There were many long discussions about single words.

B. Oh, yes, many groups have divided over splitting hairs.

C. Oh, yes, there are still many differences.

D. But, all in all, the message of the Church is the most glorious truth of the world.

1. A God of power.

2. A God of justice.

3. A God of love.

4. A God who delivers from sin and makes life what it ought to be.

E. I love the Church of the Nazarene for her doctrine, for the fifteen articles of faith.

III. I love the Church for what her gospel can do in the lives of men.

A. Because Jesus loved it.

B. Because I was saved in it.

C. Because it is a meeting place.

D. Because it is the purest place in the world.

E. Because it is the place to work.

F. Because it is instrument of God for salvation of the world.

IV. I love the Church for her Lord.

A. The word "church" means "of or pertaining to the Lord." Like the Scotch word "kirk" it is derived from the Greek word "Lord."

B. Loving the Church should mean to love her Lord, and loving the Lord should mean to love His Church.

Rejoicing in Hope

SCRIPTURE—Romans 12.

TEXT—*Rejoicing in hope . . .* (Romans 12:12).

Introduction:

1. I wish to speak to you of one of the Christian graces about which little is said.

a) In fact, sometimes we speak of it rather slightly, as though it were an unspiritual quality. I have heard men scorn the beautiful statement of Tennyson—"I hope to meet my Pilot face to face when I have crossed the bar."

b) But "hope" is one of the Christian graces—I Corinthians 13:13; Romans 5:4; Psalms 42 and 43.

2. It is true that we cannot understand hope until we recognize the reality of sin and suffering.

a) Hard things nearly crush men.

(1) World conditions

(2) Individual heartaches

b) A real solution would be invaluable.

(1) Does no good to deny

(2) Worse still to become calloused

(3) Only the Bible has the solution—"Hope thou in God."

I. The Bible breathes of courage and hope.

A. It is the most wonderful picture of God and of man that was ever written.

B. It expresses every human emotion.

1. The Bible is a frank book, and for that reason it is natural and wholesome. It deals with some ugly things, but it leaves the right impression.

2. The Bible is an open-minded book. Let it be accused of narrowness and bigotry and superstition. It remains the most universal book of all time. It was written by so many different individuals over such a long time that it could not be narrow. When the textbooks and etiquette books of today have been scrapped, when the rules and standards of this day are ancient—the Bible will remain the most up-to-date book, the most practical book, the most human, the most divine.

3. The Bible is an interesting book because of its varied content.

a) Let any other book be read and studied, scrutinized and criticized as the Bible has been, and it would centuries ago have been thrown aside as old straw.

b) Let any other book be read by children, by aged and mature, and it would long ago have lost its charm. It tells of childhood and growth, of play and work, adventure and struggle. It tells of kings on the throne and of beggars eating crumbs and then going to heaven. It deals with the beginnings of things and sees the end. It is dark with sorrow and red with blood. In it is every human emotion.

C. The most sustained note in the Bible is hope. It is the purpose of the Bible, its theme, its plot, its greatest interest.

II. Its characters are an eternal inspiration.

A. They are so well known that they have become a part of us. Many of the characters that lived centuries ago are more real to us than those who live today. Noah is more real to more people than President Truman of U.S.A. is. Abraham—of whom do you think? The one who left Ur of the Chaldees, and so on. Very true it is that we do not know much about the Bible today, but nevertheless its characters are real to us. "As wise as Solomon, as patient as Job," we say.

B. They had found such a source of strength that they inspire us. Romans 15:4—"written for . . . our hope."

1. We wonder, first, if they are just as human as we are.

2. Then we wonder if the story is not exaggerated.

3. Then we decide that they are real human beings who have gloriously overcome.

4. Then we appropriate the strength and hope they had for ourselves. Daniel prayed three times a day, landed in lions' den. Came out poised and courageous. Joseph—steady and courageous and hopeful in spite of great handicaps. James—"count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." Paul—"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." Habakkuk 3:17—"Although the fig tree shall not blossom . . . yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Something here that men need during these hard times.

III. Its hopefulness is basic and essential.

A. That which is found in the Bible is not a shallow optimism.

1. It recognizes sin and sorrow and hell.
2. It gives more emphasis to them than anything or anyone else does.

B. Its hopefulness is basic—it is found in God. "Hope thou in God."

1. Hope—because God so loved that He gave.

2. Hope—because He is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by Him.

3. Hope—because others have proved His grace sufficient.

C. Its hopefulness springs from and depends upon spiritual values.

1. The big trouble with the world today is that men have forgotten God and their own souls and have staked everything upon worldly possessions.

2. The chief source of hopefulness and courage in the Bible is that there is a companionship between God and the individual soul that the world cannot touch. Possessions may go and life may be dark, but the most precious thing remains unharmed.

3. Another source of hopefulness is the confidence that all things work together for good, etc., that there is a kind providence which bends *everything* to His will.

D. Outside of this in the Bible there is no hope.

E. It has cleansing efficiency. I John 3:3—"Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

F. Its source is the Holy Ghost. Romans 15:13—"Abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

G. An expressive hope. I Peter 3:15—"Be ready always to give . . . a reason of the hope that is in you."

Conclusion:

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

- Sincere sorrow at separation.
- Admonition to perfection, hope, peace, and concord.
- Promise of God's presence.

Looking Forward To the Day of the Lord

SCRIPTURE—I Thessalonians 5.

TEXT—*Know . . . that the day of the Lord cometh* (I Thessalonians 5:2).

Introduction:

1. Our subject today is "The Day of the Lord," a term which has been used in the Scriptures in different forms and with different meanings.

a) There are various scriptural usages of the term "day."

(1) "Day"

(a) Natural—24 hours

(b) Artificial—while sun gives light

(c) Civil—Hebrew, one evening to next; Babylonian, sunrise to sunrise; Italian, sunset to sunset; English, midnight to midnight.

(d) Day sometimes means period, as is likely in regard to creation. "Today if ye will hear his voice"—in this present period of grace—Heb. 3:15. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," "Abraham desired to see my day," says Jesus—evidently His incarnation and redemption.

(2) Different forms.

(a) "The Lord's day" is the Christian Sabbath.

(b) "The day of the Lord" usually refers to Christ's second coming and the judgment, and the consummation of all things—I Thessalonians 5:2. Sometimes it refers to some specific day which is made plain in the context—such as in Lamentations 2:22—"in the day of the Lord's anger none escaped." Also in Joel 1:15; Malachi 4:5; I Corinthians 5:5; II Peter 3:10.

(c) "That day"—it is interesting to note that in many cases this term in the New Testament refers to the end of things also. "I have committed unto him against that day" (II Timothy 1:12); II Thessalonians 2:3; I Thessalonians 5:4; Luke 10:12; 21:34.

b) There is no denying that the New Testament Christians lived in the consciousness of the immanence of Christ's coming. The Rapture, the end of the world, the Judgment, and all the events related to them were often in their minds and on their lips. So much so that Paul calls them "children of the day" (moral, spiritual quality or attitude as against "children of the night").

c) And there is no question that here in I Thessalonians 5:2 "the day of the Lord" refers to the second coming of the Lord and the consummation of all things.

2. In this day when everyone is looking with wondering fear toward the future, we have some definite information that doesn't come from news commentators or political analysts or any other man—it comes from God himself.

What does God say about tomorrow?

I. Devastation for the world, verse three, "destruction cometh upon them."

A. It is not for me to say that World War II was the prelude to that divine devastation that is coming, because I do not know. I would not dare to tell you because I do not know what to believe myself. I can only say that it might well have been.

B. But that it is coming we do know, and somewhat what it shall be like we know.

1. It will be unexpected, "as a thief in the night."

2. It will be "sudden." We may think sometimes that God is slow in His providences, and He is. But when God chooses to be sudden, He is like the flash of lightning, like the eruption of a volcano, like a hurricane.

3. It will be distressing, "as travail upon a woman with child." It will be blinding and cutting, blotting out every other joy and sorrow in the world. Carnal pleasures of the world will be forgotten then.

4. It will be inescapable—"they shall not escape." Perhaps you have read of the distress and unspeakable sufferings of those who tried to escape from Germany and Russia during recent persecutions, across the border, hiding fearfully in the night, etc.

5. It will be eternal. I know that in the series of events that make up the consummation of world history there may well be a place where a soul might be saved, but it's a terrible thing for a man to put off giving his heart to Christ until the world is crashing about his ears.

C. But someone says, "Why do you preach such somber and dark things?"

1. Because they are true—as part of God's Word—and certainly we want to face facts.

2. Because we ought to be warned—we might thus save our souls.

D. And remember that all of this is the inexorable working of law, not a cruel God run amuck. Men suffer for their wrong as the world is suffering today.

II. Salvation for the child of God. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation . . . (v. 9).

A. Understand that as we draw the distinction here it does not mean that God desires wrath for anyone.

1. God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

2. But He has left the choice to man—"whosoever."

a) Those who reject are lost.

b) Only those who believe are saved.

B. In vivid pictorial form in the dawning light of revelation we see a little what it means to be saved.

1. Flood—Noah saved.

2. Sodom and Gomorrah—Lot saved.

3. Passover—Israelites saved.

4. Jude; "Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire" (Jude 23).

C. Notice the distinction here between salvation provided and salvation perfected.

1. Salvation provided by the death of Christ—verses 9, 10.

2. The purpose and nature of salvation is revealed here—"that . . . we should live together with him" (v. 10).

3. Salvation is not perfectly or absolutely complete until we have been glorified.

D. "Wherefore comfort yourselves together" (v. 11).

III. Exhortation for the interim, for "today," while we wait for "that day." It doesn't matter how long "today" is, the exhortation remains the same. Someone asked John Wesley, "What would you do if you knew that Jesus would come today?" "The same as I have planned."

A. Preparation

1. For "that day." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness [the sanctification], without which no man shall see the Lord." Here in verse 23—"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

2. The same "sanctification" is also a preparation for living, for "today." "Go ye into all the world"—"but tarry ye in . . . Jerusalem, until." Verse 8 amplifies the preparation, "putting on the breastplate," etc.

B. Behavior—notice that Paul says little or nothing here about saving the lost, though certainly he intended that the Church should save the lost. But he says much of Christian behavior.

1. Be aware—verse 6—"Let us not sleep . . . let us watch."

2. Be sober—verse 6—"Let us be sober."

3. Be humble and obedient to Christian authority—verses 12, 13. One cynical and rebellious is not spiritual at the same time.

4. Be joyous—verse 16—"Rejoice evermore."

5. Be prayerful—verse 17—"Pray without ceasing."

6. Be thankful—verse 18.

7. Be Spirit-led—verse 19.

8. Be receptive but not gullible—verses 20, 21.

a) Don't take any gold bricks.

b) "Hold fast that which is good"—you have proved it. Hold onto it.

9. Insofar as possible live above reproach—verses 15 and 22.

10. Maintain the best relations in the family of God.

a) Don't get even—verse 15.

b) Let love and patience and peace and helpfulness and sympathy control your relations with others—verses 14, 15.

Conclusion:

Thus you will be saved yourself and help to save others.

Benediction: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." Amen."

A Program of Construction

SCRIPTURE—Ephesians 4:1-16.

TEXT—Jude 20.

Introduction:

1. Whole world is mad today about production or construction.

a) For twenty years it was production for peace.

(1) Prosperous twenties.

(2) Feverish activity of depression years. Alphabet regime.

b) Then it was production for destruction, for war.

c) Now we need a great reconstruction.

(1) Of international life

(2) Of personal life.

2. A plan is necessary to anything worth while. Not machinery or excess baggage—but necessities.

3. So with the Christian life. Jesus said that no man would start to build a house without first sitting down and counting the cost.

I. One premise must be laid down—before we can build we must have a foundation—sin must be destroyed within us.

A. "On your most holy faith."

1. In Christ as world's Redeemer. A scientist looking at an ant hill said, "I must become one of them so that I can understand them, but must remain a man to help." So Christ is God-Man.

2. In Christ as your present, complete Saviour.

B. It is vain to try to do good works without a foundation of saving faith in Christ. Dr. Stephen Paine tells of working in a railroad freight shed without first having an understanding with the boss. He received no pay.

C. Growth in grace is not gradual elimination of sin—it is development in Christ-likeness after we have been saved from sin.

II. Then our program shall be a positive, challenging one.

A. The primary thing is keeping the sky clear between us and the Saviour. It is amazing how that will help.

1. Neutralizes the pull of temptation.

2. Makes burdens seem light.

3. Pours oil on the wounds.

4. Makes everything bright and encouraging.

5. Gives peculiar success to our efforts.

A young man found a \$1,000 bill. He bawled out his boss, was called before the newspaper editor, told him what was wrong with the city, started reforms, awakened the public, increased his business, and got a raise. He was going to buy furniture,

when he discovered that the bill was counterfeit. The boost it gave him was worth more than the cash.

6. Encourages spontaneous growth.

B. General program of I Thessalonians 1:3.

1. "Work of faith."

a) Prayer

b) Bible reading

c) Meditation

2. "Labour of love"

a) Testimony

b) Good works

c) "Situational evangelism"

3. "Patience of hope."

III. Our progress will be shown by the fruits of the Spirit within and the fruits of salvation in the lives of others.

A. Inward fruit—Galatians 5:22, 23; Romans 14:17.

1. "Righteousness"

2. "Peace"

3. "Joy in the Holy Ghost."

B. Kingdom fruit—souls won to Christ.

A Trinity of Terrors

SCRIPTURE—Ephesians 5:1-18.

TEXTS—*They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge* (Romans 10:2).

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof (II Timothy 3:5).

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion (Amos 6:1). *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise* (Ephesians 5:15).

Introduction:

1. We generally think of a lighthouse as a welcome sign, but it isn't; it is a sign of danger. You don't steer to a lighthouse, for it is set upon the rocks. You steer by it. So let us consider three lighthouses this morning.

2. Our text is Ephesians 5:15—"See then that ye walk circumspectly." Because there are dangers. If I were to speak against fanaticism, someone might say, "He's a formalist"; if against formalism, "He's a fanatic." But I wish to speak of them both and then emphasize a greater danger.

I. Fanaticism

A. Fanaticism—Romans 10:2—"they have a zeal . . . but not according to knowledge." We hear people say, "I'll get to heaven if I mean all right." Taken in the loose way thus spoken, it is not true. Paul here speaks of Israelites' being zealously religious and yet being lost, for Paul in verse one prays for their salvation. Zeal without knowledge—that is fanaticism. Fanaticism is extremism, of course, but it is one extreme.

B. Fanaticism is the apotheosis of emotion. It exalts emotion above the intellect and above the will. Emotion is necessary as we all realize. But it must be harmonious.

1. Fanaticism will attract those who are not what they ought to be—immoral, double-living, disobedient, backslidden, light-rejecting, dishonest, hypocritical. People rejecting light will look for an easier way, a way to bury conscience in fuss and storm.

2. Fanaticism has a tendency to make even good and straight people relax morally.

a) I exalt my feelings.

b) I soon judge right and wrong by my feelings.

c) Then gradually or suddenly will come desire for wrong. I have been accustomed to say, "Want means right," and so I do wrong. If ever you feel that "it must be right because it pleases me," be careful—that is fanaticism. Fanaticism endangers my integrity, my moral nature.

C. Fanaticism violates reason and thus endangers the Kingdom. Does not endanger me so much as it does the Kingdom, i.e., others. I can be unwise, or even feeble-minded, or even violently crazy, and get to heaven if I am honest. But I may keep somebody else from heaven by what I do. Thus it behooves me to be wise, because God is and because by wisdom I shall win others. "He that winneth souls is wise."

1. Fanaticism attracts the unwise as well as the unstable emotionally.

2. Fanaticism leads all its devotees toward un wisdom and irrationality.

a) Does not sanctify or consecrate the mind—it denies and deprecates the mind; offends reasonable people by its erratic and foolish practices.

b) The Bible is objective—Bible, church, preaching, teaching, reason, experience, Holy Spirit. Bible glorifies the mind—"Faith cometh by hearing," etc. "Study to shew . . ." "Whatsoever things . . . think." "Meditate . . . and give thyself continually." "Come now, and let us reason together." "Let your light so shine before men," etc., that is, take thought about your life so that you may win others. Paul said, "If you do foolish things (I Corinthians 14), they will think you mad and you will lose them." Men hated Christ and thought Him mad—but Christ never did an unwise or foolish thing. Jesus wept, groaned, cried, prayed, rejoiced, etc.; but ever there was the mastery of a sovereign, sinless, all-wise person in it all.

See that light? It is sitting on a rocky ledge. Stay away from it, but use it to steer your course.

II. Formalism—II Timothy 3:5—"having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

A. I could not and would not say which of these first two is the greater danger individually, but without hesitation I would say that as a Church (general) the far greater danger is formalism.

1. First, because the larger and more widely separate the group, the less likely it is to go to fanaticism.

2. Secondly, because most churches have been wrecked on the rocks of formalism rather than fanaticism.

B. "Formalism" is defined as a "scrupulous observance of forms or ceremonies."

1. Formalism attracts those who are spiritually dead.

2. Formalism has a tendency to lead to spiritual deadness.

a) Fosters pride.

b) Throttles spontaneity, individuality.

c) Detracts from heart and motive emphasis.

d) Generalizes for everyone.

e) Repetition produces staleness.

f) Puts appearance ahead of inward religion.

g) Favors rich—color and cathedral.

h) Fixes religion in church—pulls it away from informality of everyday life.

i) Puts form ahead of noble feeling and good resolve.

j) Becomes mechanical.

k) Becomes self-contained—go to church, then do as one pleases.

3. Nearly every church (historic) has gone this way.

a) Vital religion produced churches and forms.

b) Then churches and forms took place of vital religion or, rather, vital religion receded. Some churches are like frozen clothes on the line. Dead trees—sap is gone. Formalism paints outside—wires on leaves—sprays it with gilt paint to make it look light, etc.

But the greatest of these three dangers is that which leads to both the others, namely—

III. Inactivity (or fanned-to-sleep-ism).

Our greatest danger is not that we will become unreasonable and unethical or that we will become ritualistic. Our greatest danger is that we will let down, slow up, cool off, lose the vision, let down on faith, and take things easy. If we will keep busy and prayerful, we will be neither fanatical nor formal. We need not worry a lot about fanaticism nor about formalism. It is the step which leads to those two which we need to watch. "Woe to them . . . at ease in Zion" (Amos 6:1). "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). There are a people who have a name to live and are dead (Revelation 3:1).

A. Loss of first love.

B. Loss of vision.

C. Loss of faith.

D. Loss of fervency.

E. Loss of simplicity (humility, industry, etc.; vain and wise in our conceits). "My soul followeth hard after thee," etc. (Psalms 63:8).

Conclusion:

Suppose a motor launch were offshore at night and had to travel between two lighthouses. There would not be so much danger of deliberately heading toward one lighthouse or the other as there would be danger of the motor's stalling and the boat's drifting onto the rocks.

So our greatest danger is not becoming fanatical or stiff and starchy; it is losing the drive of soul and becoming stalled.

If you will keep active, keep growing, you will be safe. Psalms 63:8—"My soul followeth hard after thee."

The Road Ahead

SCRIPTURE—Philippians 3.

TEXT—I press toward the mark
(Philippians 3:14).

Introduction:

1. *The Road Back*, by Erick Remarque, was one of the real books that followed the World War I. It showed the difficulties of readjustment for soldiers out of muddy, bloody trenches.

We may well consider "the road back" before we travel any given course. It is easy enough to go downstream but the return may be fraught with sorrow, war, gamblings, immorality. One cannot trifle with sacred things without paying the penalty, selfishness.

2. But the scripture here suggests "the road ahead" rather than the road back.

a) The figure is one of the several athletic events which Paul uses to describe the Christian life. He speaks of boxing, wrestling, running, etc. Here it is running, pressing or running toward the mark.

b) There are many things to discourage talk of progress.

(1) Undeniable seriousness of world conditions.

(2) Apostasy of great church groups. These two things are quite real. But there are some other very human reasons that we must evaluate.

(3) Aged people who are weary in the way and naturally thinking of dying are not ordinarily an encouragement to progress.

(4) People who have become petrified spiritually are not an encouragement to progress.

c) But despite all this the New Testament breathes of progress. If we ever get blue or discouraged or quit—it's not from meditating on God's Word or His power.

I. Christian experience is not a terminus. It isn't the end of the line. It's a life to be lived. It's a road to take you some place. Many people treat religion like a roller coaster to swoop up and down upon and have a good time with—and to deposit them in the same place. It's a road—sometimes easy and smooth—sometimes rough and

steep—the condition doesn't matter as long as it takes us there.

A. Paul says here, "To be sure, this isn't the start with me."

1. I was well born—"If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more."

2. I was born again that day on the road to Damascus.

3. To be sure, "the very God of peace" has sanctified me wholly—I Thess. 5:23—and hath perfected me in love—"As many as be perfect" (Philippians 3:15).

B. But I haven't reached the goal yet. There is a perfection I have—verse 15. There is a perfection I seek—verse 12.

II. The road ahead is determined somewhat by our present position. If someone were to call you on the phone and ask, "How do I get to your house?" you would answer, "Where are you now?"

A. Have you just been saved?

1. You may have more restitutions.

2. You must establish new habits.

3. You must make new friends.

4. You must let the world know where you stand.

5. You must press on to the blessing of holiness.

B. Are you at a standstill?

1. Ask yourself, "Am I really saved or have I rebelled and lost God?"

2. You may need a time of bitter dying out to find the blessing of entire sanctification.

C. Are you really sanctified—does the Holy Spirit abide in cleansing?

1. Then don't seek some other work of grace.

2. But grow in grace.

3. And be a soul winner.

III. The road ahead is determined most of all by our future action. There is no use crying about the past or blaming someone else. By God's grace the future is ours.

A. One of the first principles to get settled is this—we will succeed more by perspiration than by inspiration.

1. Some people run well for a season, but

Not to the strong is the battle,

Not to the swift is the race,

But to the true and the faithful

Victory is promised through grace.

2. It is the sailboat versus auxiliary motor. God wants us to chug along by faith and obedience and determination, then when a breeze comes along to pick it up and profit by it. He does not want us to sail with the wind and then lie becalmed. Dr. Chapman said to his wife one day, "Sometimes I work hard and don't seem to get anywhere. Other days go easy and I get a great deal done." She said, "Why don't you quit and wait until it gets easy?" "No, it's like driving across country," he answered. "The rough road must

be covered; and, if you park your car and wait, it will still be there."

B. But a second principle of the Christian road is—"The joy of the Lord is your strength."

1. The Christian life is determination and will, but it's far more.

2. It's human will laying hold upon the great power of God.

a) The joy of anticipation.

b) The joy of present realization.

C. Another principle is—"Feed more on the Word."

1. The chart and compass of life.

2. The bread of heaven.

D. Another principle is—Not less but more effort to win others to Christ.

E. Another principle is—Take that next step.

—But infinite holiness suffered exposure to sin—shame, fear, guilt

—Paid the debt qualitatively, not quantitatively

C. What His sacrifice accomplished.

1. "Satisfactory to God."

a) Sustained holy law

b) Restrained sin (moral deterrent)

2. Influential with man (power in the Cross)

a) To grip man

b) To convict of sin

c) To forgive sin

d) To cleanse.

Conclusion:

Since He has given himself for us, let us give ourselves to Him.

There Is a Green Hill Far Away

SCRIPTURE—Luke 22:13-20.

TEXT—Given for you (Luke 22:19).

Introduction:

A summary of the context.

I. The red thread of sacrifice runs through all of life.

A. Society sacrifices for the future.

1. Gives up present ease for permanency.

a) Lasting buildings

(1) Homes

(2) Schools

b) Lasting institutions—governments and other organizations.

2. To be sure, this is counterbalanced by the fact that sometimes society lives at the expense of the future—war, debt.

3. The greatest men have been those who gave up quiet and comfort for the service of country—Moses, Washington, Jefferson.

B. Parents sacrifice for children—some animals, insects, fish die in giving birth to young.

1. Mother—birth and home cares.

2. Father—weary labor and self-neglect.

II. Yet all the world reverently acknowledges that Jesus' sacrifice is infinitely superior to all others. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote:

*Let all the world fall down and know
That none but God such love can show.*

III. The unique, awful glory of the sacrifice of Christ lies in—

A. Who He was—the God-Man.

1. Infinite God.

2. Emptied himself of privileges and prerogatives and became man—kenosis, incarnation.

B. What He did.

1. He took our place. A native of Bechuanaland, upon hearing the story of the Cross for the first time, cried aloud while tears coursed down his black face, "Jesus, away from there! That is my place!"

2. He tasted death for every man.

—Bore the central awfulness of sin

—Not physical death

Christian Covetousness

TEXT—Covet earnestly the best gifts . . .

(I Corinthians 12:31).

(Covet—1. To have an inordinate or unlawful desire for, or 2. To have an eager and worthy desire for, crave.)

Introduction:

1. By way of introduction I wish to take a verse which seems to be contradictory—Exodus 20:17—"Thou shalt not covet . . . any thing that is thy neighbour's." It can easily be seen that the last phrase qualifies that which is one of the Ten Commandments.

a) Covetousness, as inordinate or unlawful desire, is constantly condemned by word and illustration in the Scriptures.

Achan (Joshua 7:21), in the destruction of Jericho, coveted a "Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight" and took them. This brings us a moral lesson—the individual who yields to carnal covetousness will be beaten to death by the objects of his wrong desire and be consumed by the desire itself.

David coveted Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, and was led to commit murder and adultery. Such a sear upon his soul never came to David before or after.

Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard; and, aided by his wicked wife Jezebel, seized it after having Naboth killed on false charges. But both of them were slain, and eaten by the dogs on the very place.

Judas coveted the silver in the bag he carried for the poor men who had given up all to go with Jesus. But the thirty pieces of silver so pained his soul that he threw them down at the feet of the high priest and flung himself into a suicide's grave.

b) How much sorrow covetousness has brought

(1) Among church members

(2) Among neighbors

(3) Among nations.

"Thou shalt not covet."

2. But no negative command is sufficient unless coupled to something positive.

a) If you say, "Don't, don't, etc." to your children they will soon ask, "What shall I do?" It is up to you not only to show them what to do but to create in them a desire for those things.

b) And scripture doesn't stop with "don'ts." It goes on with the most beautiful positive commands. As examples:

(1) "Love not the world . . ." vs. "Thou shalt love the Lord . . ."

(2) "Thou shalt not kill . . ." vs. "Love your enemies . . ."

(3) "Thou shalt not covet . . ." vs. "Covet earnestly the best gifts"—the text.

There is really a multiple command here.

(a) "Thou shalt not covet"—what is thy neighbor's, what is wrong, etc. (Exodus).

(b) It is acceptable if you covet some of the lesser gifts (I Corinthians 12:4, 28).

(c) "Covet earnestly the best gifts."

(d) "And yet shew I unto you a more excellent way"—perfect love.

I. Covet the highest being for yourself, i.e., earnestly desire for yourself the best possible relationship to God. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's cattle—thou shalt covet his character. One fundamental difference between these positive commands and the negative is that you and your neighbor can have the same thing.

A. Covet a clear conscience. St. Paul said, "I have a conscience that is void of offence to God and to man." To have no mean words, mean deeds, dishonest transactions or wrong thoughts on your conscience is the most wonderful experience in all the world.

B. Covet a pure heart. Can anything be more desirable than a pure heart?

*A heart in every thought renewed
And full of love divine,
Perfect and right and pure and good—
A copy, Lord, of Thine.*

C. Covet an ever deepening relationship to God. Covet to be better; covet to be right, to be good, noble, pure, unselfish, right in the heart of you. Regardless of what people may think of you, the thing of real importance is that you should be right.

II. Covet the highest experiences, i.e., earnestly desire the most ennobling thoughts and feelings, that you may thereby be made better yourself and because these are intrinsically worth while. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's estate—thou shalt covet his experiences.

A. Not the easy experience—but the hard if need be.

B. Not the physical, material experience—but the spiritual experience.

C. Not the selfish—but the unselfish experience. Experience is the process that refines us and makes us. Philippians 4:8—

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, . . . honest, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

III. Covet the highest service, i.e., earnestly desire to do the greatest possible good for others regardless of rewards. Someone has said that there would be a lot more good done in the world if we were not so careful as to who received the credit. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's servants—thou shalt covet his service. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

A. There's a great question in my mind whether or not we would find much in our lives of real service where we know that for the time being we are not going to get any credit.

B. But the great motive impulse of our lives should be to do for others because we love them and want to see them saved, because He gave His life for them. We must learn the lesson that, if anyone else is to receive benefit or blessing, then it is going to cost us something.

Gipsy Smith was asked by letter from a lady in London: "I have a meeting I want you to come and speak. It is only a small meeting, and it will take nothing out of you." He answered, "I cannot come: and it would be no use if I did come. If it takes nothing out of me, it will do nobody any good."

A little girl was dying in a New York hospital and could be saved by a blood transfusion. Her brother was called in and blood was taken from him and the girl was saved. Several minutes after the transfusion the boy spoke to the nurse, "When am I going to die?" She was surprised to learn that he had expected to die that his sister might live. I wonder how much we would yield ourselves to service if we expected it would cost us our lives.

Conclusion:

I think back over the message to the negative command—"Thou shalt not covet"—and I know there are some covetous hearts that need the work of divine grace. Then I think of the positive command—"Covet earnestly"—and I know that many people are weak and hesitant and useless because they don't covet the best.

Let me urge you:

1. Covet a pure heart, a deep growing goodness.

2. Covet the best experiences—stay away from the frivolous and the shoddy.

3. Covet a usefulness in the salvation of others regardless of cost to yourselves. These are the best things.

On Grieving the Holy Spirit

SCRIPTURE—Isaiah 63:10; Psalms 78:40; Genesis 6:6; Mark 3:5; Psalms 95:10; Hebrews 3:10, 17.

TEXT—*And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption* (Ephesians 4:30).

Introduction:

1. There is no perfect likeness to the relationship between God and man. There are various analogies in the Scriptures: Shepherd and sheep; father and son; husband and wife; master and servant; brethren, and friends. None of them are complete and satisfactory.

2. The closer the relationship the more seriously small things may trouble it. A little grit might get into the oil of a great engine and not be serious damage—but it would ruin a watch or a piece of delicate mechanism where the clearance between two moving parts is a thousandth of an inch. You may have many friendships and one friendship shouldn't keep you from having another. But the marriage relationship demands so much of your personality and offers so much to you that a straying fancy or an unfaithful thought will cause a scratch or jar between those two persons.

3. Hence we ought to be concerned that we please Him and not grieve Him.

a) Our course is not that not-too-narrow road between the outspoken punishment of God and His tolerance.

b) It is that narrow path where He guides us with His eye, the path from which we might stray and not be punished, but from which we cannot stray without displeasing Him. God gives us far more freedom before He punishes us than it pleases Him for us to take.

I. The goal toward which we strive is that we may please God absolutely and to the fullest possible degree. That is more than a lifetime; it is an eternity-long quest.

II. There is no one who pleases God absolutely in this life. That is, we all grieve God to a degree, even in our most conscientious living.

A. The Scriptures bear us out in this statement.

1. The disciples' prayer, for example. "Forgive us our debts (sins, trespasses), as we forgive our debtors."

a) I do not believe that this has reference to deliberate sins of disobedience. I believe it has reference to the weaknesses, frailties, mistakes in judgment and understanding, etc. of the human soul. While we love God and do not sin against Him in the sense that "he that committeth sin is of the devil," yet we do fall far short of the absolute wisdom, beauty, correctness, and holiness of the will of God. Hence we ought always to pray this prayer—"Forgive us our debts."

b) For the sake of clarity in my own mind and heart—I suggest it to you that it may possibly help you—I pray, "Lord, be patient and bear with my failings." I would say, "Lord, forgive me," only if I were conscious of deliberate sin.

2. Only Christ could say (John 8:29), "I do always those things which please him"—that is, always and to an absolute degree. God the Father would not have changed one word or one thought or one act or glance of God the Son—John 4:34; John 5:30; John 6:38.

B. Our experience bears us out also in this statement.

1. Even those who have the assurance that "the blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth . . . from all sin" often weep over their own limitations and unworthiness.

2. We never will feel like standing in God's presence without "For Jesus' sake" on our lips.

III. But there is such a thing as grieving the Spirit of God until our own soul is hurt, our joy is gone, and He departs.

A. The love and patience of God are broader than the measure of man's mind.

1. He still loves and bears with us even when He is grieved with

- a) The smallness of our faith.
 - b) The shortness of our patience.
 - c) The haziness of our spiritual vision.
 - d) The dullness of our understanding.
 - e) The superficiality of our thought.
 - f) The shallowness of our loyalties.
 - g) The lukewarmness of our love.
2. He knows we are children.

B. But there is a place where the grief of God disowns and disinherits the soul. Oh, how careful we ought to be lest we presume on the patience of God!

1. Genesis 6:6—God was grieved at the unrestrained sin of the antediluvian world, and destroyed it with a flood.

2. God was grieved with the unbelieving Israelites and left them to die in the wilderness.

a) He fought against them—Isaiah 63:10.

b) He swore in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest—Psalms 95:11; Hebrews 3:10-19.

3. Christ was grieved at the sin and hardness and blindness of the Pharisees, and He rebuked them in healing the withered hand—looked on them with anger—Mark 3:5.

C. What is it in our lives that grieves the Holy Spirit?

1. Unbelief—Hebrews 3:10 f.

2. Careless life—that's the implication of Ephesians 4:17 f, where Paul exhorts them to a careful walk.

3. Careless conversation—unclean, unkind, idle, gossiping, unprofitable talk—Ephesians 4:29.

4. An unloving spirit—Ephesians 4:32.

5. Refusal because of fear or doubt or

selfishness to go on into the experience of entire sanctification—Hebrews 3:10 f.

6. Worldliness—"walk not as other Gentiles walk"—Ephesians 4:17.

7. Neglect of the means of grace—"Therefore we ought . . . , lest we should run out as leaking vessels" (Hebrews 2:1). Neglect of prayer, Bible reading, attendance upon divine worship.

D. What happens when we grieve Him?

1. Lowering of our spiritual vitality.

a) Less love

b) Less joy

c) Less peace, etc.

2. Until, finally, the sacred seal is broken and the Holy Spirit has departed from us.

Jehu the King

SCRIPTURE—II Kings 10.

TEXT—*And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord . . . But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart (II Kings 10:16, 31).*

Introduction:

1. The paths of kings is strewn with evil, wickedness, cruelty, bloodshed, tyranny, robbery, dishonesty, and betrayal of trust.

2. Israel's line of kings was not greatly different from those of any other nation. At Sinai their law and ritual and customs were codified and their organization was developed in remarkable simplicity and effectiveness.

3. The most wicked of all these kings was Ahab, and the only individual more wicked than he was his wife Jezebel. They did their best to establish Baal and the most heathenish of beliefs and practices. During Ahab's reign God had that prince among prophets, Elijah, to carry His messages. Elijah prophesied a drought, then its finish. He killed four hundred prophets of Baal, but then he quailed under the threat of Jezebel and fled for his life to the desert. There it was that the Lord met him and told him to return and anoint Elisha as the prophet and Jehu, the son of Nimshi, as the king.

4. A study of the context shows that Jehu had been zealous in fulfilling the commands he had received from the prophet.

a) He had destroyed Ahab's family.

b) He had destroyed Baal worship. "Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan." Jeroboam, the first king of divided Israel, built golden idols at Bethel and at Dan lest his people, returning yearly to Jerusalem, should be won again to the king of Judah.

5. Jehu failed in that

a) He didn't destroy these golden calves, and

b) He did not serve God with a whole

heart. And the scripture continues: "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short" (margin—to cut off the ends).

I. Notice that Jehu, the son of Nimshi, was divinely chosen as the king of Israel.

A. The Lord told Elijah in the desert, years before, to anoint him king of Israel.

B. The Lord had prospered him until he became the captain of the host and a favorite of the people.

C. The Lord had sent, through Elisha, a prophet to anoint Jehu and to tell him to destroy Ahab's influence.

II. Notice that Jehu zealously began to do as he had been bidden.

A. Immediately he planned his course of action and went to Jezreel and gave the enemy no quarter. How many people when they are converted, dillydally around, not quitting their old companions, trying to hang on to old habits, failing to take a definite stand for God. Jehu began immediately to burn every bridge behind him. A good start is half the race. If only people would begin well, by letting three worlds know that they were done with sin! Jehu had a good start.

B. He proceeded to do thoroughly what the prophet told him to do.

1. He destroyed all of Ahab's kinsmen, and chief men and priests, and also Ahaziah's family.

2. Then he struck at the greatest evil in Israel, i.e., the worship of a heathen idol, Baal. He carefully rounded up all the Baalites and killed them. Then he made an ash heap of the house of Baal, finishing once and for all the worship of Baal in Israel.

C. He had done well thus far and the Lord commended him for it. "Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel."

III. But Jehu failed, for

A. He didn't finish the cleaning up work.

1. He allowed the golden calves which were idolatrously worshipped at Bethel and Dan to remain. How many folks begin well, but they come up to some place where they refuse to walk in the light, where they don't pay the price, where they fail God! Paul writes: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you . . . ?" "Ye did run well, who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" How many start well, then fail, lose the blessing of God, fall into condemnation, slip away from hope and God! Many who once knew God are now in darkness and unhappiness.

2. The sad condition of Israel was prolonged because Jehu failed; many a year of idolatry, of captivity, many a sorrow, many a death, because Jehu failed. What tremendous sadness is brought to people

because they refuse to do all the Lord wants them to do! Their lives are wasted, their talents are destroyed, their souls lost. And their influence—think of it. How many might have been saved if some father or mother, son or daughter, husband or wife, brother or sister, had remained true!

B. He didn't serve God with a whole heart.

1. He was willing to do some things for God, but he didn't love Him as he should. He was zealous in reforms, but he didn't have a truly devoted heart.

2. How many people are willing to do, to reform, to give, etc.—but their hearts are not all God's! There's something within contrary to God, something cold, something selfish, impatient. How many are saved and get along fine, but when they come to the light of holiness, when they observe the sinful condition of their hearts, they refuse to walk in the light!

Conclusion:

1. Let me urge you who have started (and almost everybody has)

a) Pay the price and finish the work you have to do.

b) Let the Spirit make your carnal heart what it should be.

2. For—

a) There's no halfway.

b) Compromise and sin will take their toll.

"Excuse, Please!"

SCRIPTURE—Luke 14:15-24, Matthew 22:1-14.

TEXT—*And they all with one consent began to make excuse* (Luke 14:18a).

Introduction:

1. Occasion of this parable was a meal which Jesus was attending in the home of one of the chief Pharisees. Jesus always caught something from the surroundings or from the interests of His hearers from which to start preaching.

2. This parable (very much like the parable of Marriage Feast for the King's Son, Matthew 22) probably refers particularly to the Jews as those who refused to come to the supper. But it certainly has general application to all those who neglect or reject the kingdom of God. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto . . ."

I. We see, here, the free grace of God in

A. Preparing a "great supper" of His own initiative at His own expense.

B. Extending the invitation

1. Generally—"bade many"

2. Specifically and repeatedly. Sent servants to remind them and to say, "It is now ready"—persistent, hospitable, urgent.

3. Still extended to others when invited guests refused. Jesus said that publicans and harlots will enter in while others are shut out.

II. The cold response or lack of response on the part of the invited guests.

A. Note that there must have been a reason why all or most of the invited guests made excuses.

1. They didn't all have a real reason for not going to the feast. These given are not legitimate reasons. Some of them might have had a real reason. Anyone of numberless things might have happened so that some of the invited guests would find it impossible to attend the supper. And let me say parenthetically that none of us know what is going to happen to us in the immediate future. But most of them just made excuse.

2. Why did they "make excuse" for not going?

a) It was that they didn't care to go. They were so engrossed in their own affairs that they didn't care to respond to love and hospitality.

(1) Note the excuses offered. We can find time for the things we want to do, for the things we consider important.

(a) They considered minor things of more importance than courtesy, friendship, and hospitality.

(b) They put off friendship and love to the future and decided they would take a chance on losing it.

B. This is the vivid picture Jesus gives of the response men make to the gospel.

1. Some might have had a reason for not going to the supper in the story, but nobody has a real reason for not accepting Jesus and the kingdom of God. Men just make excuses.

2. Why do they make excuses?

a) Is it because they have anything against God?

(1) Some men think they have.

(2) But most men acknowledge the goodness of God and the necessarily related fact that they ought to love Him.

b) Do men make excuses because that which is offered is not satisfactory?

(1) Some would find fault with the king's fare and some find fault with the way of salvation.

(2) But most men of unprejudiced mind will acknowledge that the salvation that God offers is not only satisfactory, but also of supremely incomparable worth. They will assent to its being "the pearl of great price."

c) Is it because the company isn't good enough?

(1) Men find sufficient fault with the Church of Jesus.

(2) But most men will admit that those who are really members of the body of Christ are the salt of the earth, the cream of society, the jewels of the world, and that without them life wouldn't be worth living. Why is it men reject Jesus Christ?

d) It is because—

(1) They consider minor things of more importance than the kingdom of God.

(2) They decide to put God off until the future and decide to take a chance on Him.

That action indicates that they consider religion simply as a fire escape from hell or as worth while in the semi-angelic state of the next life—but not worth while in this.

C. The sad part of this story is that making excuses forfeits the kingdom of God.

III. The final rejection of those who rejected.

A. There are three classes here (looking at Matthew 22 and Luke 16 together.)

1. Those who ignored.

2. Those who killed the servants.

3. He who came without wedding garment paid lip service but did not meet the conditions.

B. All were left in outer darkness. Jewish weddings were held at night. The halls were brightly lighted and one thrust suddenly into the darkness would be blinded and helpless.

Conclusion:

That story is finished and that feast is over. But the Lord's feast is not over and the invitation rings out—"All things are ready! Come to the feast!"

An Invitation from God

SCRIPTURE—Isaiah 45: 16 to 22.

TEXT—*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else*" (Isaiah 45:22).

Introduction:

1. The text is a personal invitation from God.

2. The text reveals the purpose of God—"be ye saved."

3. The text reveals the person of God—"I am God, and there is none else."

I. Note the simplicity of the invitation—"Look . . . and be ye saved."

A. Invited to look to God, not to man.

B. Some stumble over the simplicity of the gospel; "Look and live"; "Ho, every one that thirsteth."

C. Looking to God takes our gaze from self and the world.

D. Looking to God creates faith and expectancy.

II. The vast scope of God's invitation—"all the ends of the earth."

A. Text includes all men, races, and colors.

B. We are commanded to tell it to all nations.

C. The call is also to those farthest from God.

D. Invites the drunkard, the harlot, the outcast—"Look unto me, and be ye saved."

III. The exclusiveness of God's invitation—"I am God, and there is none else."

A. Indicates that God is the sinner's only hope.

B. Peter once discovered this, "Lord, to whom else . . ."

C. Trying to "climb up some other way"

is folly, for, "I am God, and there is none else."

IV. The result of looking to Jesus—"be ye saved."

A. Look to a suffering Christ in Gethsemane.

B. Look to a bleeding Christ on Calvary.

C. Look to the "Man of sorrows" who offers mercy.

D. So much depends on where you look:

1. Look to your past and be disappointed.

2. Look to your present and be disturbed.

3. Look to the future and be dismayed.

4. Look to Jesus and be delivered.—H. B. GARVIN.

Blessed Assurance

SCRIPTURE—II Timothy 1:12.

Introduction:

Assurance is desirable in business, in the marriage relation, in the nation, and in grace.

I. The basis of Paul's assurance: A Person.

A. It wasn't centered in a creed.

B. It wasn't centered in a church.

C. It wasn't centered on how, when, where, or why he was converted (baptism). Not what, or about whom, but *Whom*, himself. To trust Christ settles all (Acts 4:12).

II. Some witnesses we cannot, and can, trust.

A. Not the voice of the priest or preacher.

B. Not the testimony of others for us.

C. Not the testimony of conscience exactly.

D. The testimony of the Scriptures (Rom. 10:13).

1. More sure than senses (I Peter 1:18-20).

2. More certain than man's testimony.

E. The witness of the Spirit (I John 4:13 with Rom. 8:16).

1. It is more prominent with some than others.

2. It is stronger at some times than at others in the same person.

3. Some Christians have a brighter witness constantly than others. Why?

F. The witness of the fruit we bear (Gal. 5:22-23).

1. Christ taught this as the supreme test; so did John the Baptist.

2. Any witness without fruit is dangerous.

3. Any fruit without witness is dangerous.

III. Some concluding facts about it are—

A. It should not be lightly surrendered (Heb. 10:34-35).

B. It should be strengthened (II Peter 3:18).

C. It should not be abused.

1. By becoming disobedient to duty.

2. By becoming less fearful of sin.—H. C. HATHCOAT.

Communion Sermon Outlines

NOTE: These sermon outlines are only a small portion of the total number received in response to the appeal made to our readers to submit outlines for messages on the Lord's Supper. We plan to print the others submitted from time to time as space will permit.—EDITOR.

Examination Time

SCRIPTURE—I Corinthians 11:23-29.

TEXT—*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup* (I Corinthians 11:28).

Introduction:

The Lord's Supper, one of two ordinances of church; most beloved of the two; draws us nearer to Saviour; helps us appreciate His sacrifice for us. Can be a time of heart searching (II Cor. 13:5); evidences of being "in the faith" (I John).

- I. No sin in our lives (I John 5:18).
- A. See I John 3:6-10.
- B. Consciousness of sin makes for fear.
- II. Believes Jesus is the Christ (I John 5:1).
- A. Peter, "Thou art the Christ."
- B. Personal faith, experience involved.
- C. Infers keeping His commands.
- III. Present personal victory (I John 5:4).
- A. By faith—overcomer.
- B. See Rev. 12:11.
- IV. Love for brethren (I John 3:14).
- A. Christ's words in Matt. 5:23.
- B. Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Peter—doesn't infer agreement in detail.

Conclusion:

Let us examine our hearts and see if we are worthy.

Read Psalms 139:24.—ERIC E. JORDEN, *Cypress, Calif.*

The Universal Cup

TEXT—*Drink ye all of it* (Matthew 26:27).

Introduction:

- A. Describe the scene.
- B. The text may have two meanings.
 1. It may mean that Christ wants them to drink all that the cup contains; elaborate very briefly.
 2. It may also mean that Jesus wants all of His disciples to drink from the cup; "Drink ye all of it"—this will be our position.
- I. Who drank from the universal cup that day?
 - A. Betraying Judas
 - B. Peter, who was about to deny Him
 - C. Thomas, who was to doubt
 - D. Self-seeking disciples
 - E. Place-seeking disciples
 - F. Disciples who were to sleep in Gethsemane

II. Who may drink from the universal cup today?

A. Those who have never sinned? That would exclude everyone.

B. Those of the "close communion"? That may not be in line with His invitation.

C. Those who have tried to live it and failed? (Many of us in this group.)

D. Those who do not feel worthy? That perhaps would exclude only the worthy.

E. This is the universal cup! Look at the scene! "Drink ye all of it!"

III. The universal cup includes me.

A. If it included Judas, it includes me; for I, too, have been tempted to betray Him.

B. If it included Peter, it includes me; for I, too, have denied Him, before my Pentecost.

C. If it included self-seekers, it includes me; for I, too, once was guilty.

D. If it includes all who ever sinned, I am included!

E. Not, "Have you sinned?" but, "Do you repent?"

F. Not, "Are you weak?" but, "Are you trusting?"

G. You can be "made worthy" even now, before the invitation to the Communion table is opened!

Conclusion:

In the last war, a general knelt by a private at a battlefield Communion altar. When the private started to move, the general said, "We are all the same rank here."

—FLETCHER SPRUCE, *Kansas City, Kansas.*

The Lord's Supper

TEXT—*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins* (Matthew 26:26-28).

Introduction:

The simplicity of this memorial meal is to be contrasted with ornate ritual of the present day.

I. Christ took an everyday commodity as a symbol. Jesus took bread; something recognized over all the world; continually used throughout the world; scarcely any meal without bread. He chose to be remembered by humble means; not a great exploit, or a beautiful painting, etc.; but by a simple meal.

II. He took man's stay of life and sanctified it.

A. And blessed it; He broke right into the commonplace meal—the supper became a sacrament.

B. Token of Christ's desire to come to the center of our life and radiate His blessing

—in personal matters, family, social, vocational, etc.

C. We have not to rely upon the "dim religious light" of an abbey to provide atmosphere, for Christ's life was not cloistered. But He took the commonplace and sanctified it. For a believer the secular becomes sacred through Christ.

III. He taught spiritual lessons by breaking the bread: "and brake it."

A. Not the wholeness (holiness) of His life saves sinners; but His body, broken in death, atones.

B. The beauty and glory of the Ideal Life is immeasurably enhanced by the majestic selflessness of His death.

C. That which seemed the world's greatest tragedy proved to be the greatest triumph.

IV. He showed the universal value of His death by distributing the broken bread.

A. Bread feeds: spiritual food for men.

B. Broken bread feeds many: spiritual food for world.

C. Easily obtained.

D. Universally needed.

E. Ideal food. We do not know Christ until we know His satisfaction of peace, purity, purpose, and power.

V. He showed the possibility of sharing life with Him: "Take, eat."

A. To take was not sufficient; to eat is to share with Him.

B. This is fellowship. Fellowship is living intercourse between personalities; man has fellowship with God in sharing Christ.

C. Without fellowship Christian life is empty. In other spheres—lack of fellowship in married life is misery; lack of fellowship in home life is a menace, socially; lack in business life means strikes, etc.; lack of fellowship among nations means war.

D. Fellowship with Christ is eternal life.

VI. He taught us to give thanks for His blood: He took the cup, and gave thanks." His precious blood is the ground of our redemption, justification, reconciliation, access, communion.

VII. He showed that His sacrifice was for all: "Drink ye all of it."

A. His death and resultant salvation is for all who will believe.

B. To believe is to be willing to share in what the cup signifies—shame, suffering, possibly death; but also, in due time, resurrection, reigning.

VIII. He initiated a new order of things: "My blood of the new covenant."

A. Two parties to a covenant—God and man; witnessed and attested by a third, Christ.

B. Based upon remission of sins; not as old covenant, on adherence to laws.

IX. He gave a temporary character to this Supper: "Until that day—in my Father's kingdom."

A. Until He comes—glad anticipation.

B. He may come as we are remembering Him at the table.

Conclusion: "This do"

There are those who keep this feast, but should not.

There are those who should keep the feast, but do not.

There are those who should and do.—
G. E. HOLMES, *Walthamstow, England.*

The Blood of the New Covenant

TEXT—*This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins* (Matthew 26:28).

I. The sacrament

A. Exaltation (took cup and gave thanks).

B. Presentation (gave cup to disciples).

C. Participation ("drink ye all of it").

II. The sacrifice

A. New (much better than the old).

B. Inclusive (for many).

C. Powerful (for remission of sins).

III. The supernatural

A. His death (smitten Shepherd).

B. The Kingdom ("My Father's kingdom").

C. The Eternal ("After I am risen again").—ROSS W. HAYSLEY, *Wooster, Ohio.*

The Way, the Truth, and the Life

TEXT—*He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?* (Matthew 16:15).

SCRIPTURE—Matthew 26:17-30.

Introduction:

A. Controversy raged around the Master: "What manner of man is this?" men were asking in perplexed wonder; "Who is He?"

B. Then, because Jesus sensed the confusion of His disciples, He asked, "Whom do men say that I am?" They answered eagerly, "Some say, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

C. There was a hush, then a deeper question from the lips of Jesus, "But whom say ye that I am?" They all turned to Peter in mute appeal; he was their spokesman. In one flashing moment his thinking crystallized in a tremendous truth: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Thus the faith of the ages was born to travel a rugged road through history; a faith that to this day meets doubt as well as trusting response.

I. "Whom say ye that I am?"

A. It is a question we must answer. Whether He is the way, the truth, and the life, or whether He was a foolish dreamer, out of touch with the realities of a harsh world. Either God was in Christ revealing His will and himself, or else we follow a mirage when we take up a cross for Christ's sake. Either He was and is the Prince of Peace, or we are fools to travel the rugged road He suggests.

B. If Jesus was a dreamer, then Hitler was right and there is nothing left to live for but "blood and soil." If Jesus was no

more than an impractical idealist, then Mussolini was right, and a man had better gamble for empire, knowing that mercy and love are sheer weakness.

C. Walter Lippman observed not too long ago that the basic trouble with our generation lies in the fact that we have lost faith in our ideals. With tragic moral and spiritual consequences of the war, multitudes began to answer the Master's question, "Whom say ye that I am?" with a sad shake of the head, and they would look on Jesus and say, "Thou art only an impractical dreamer."

II. The ethics of Jesus

A. There are many who recognize that the ethics of Jesus is the necessary basis for all orderly life and society. There is no other way but His way to personal triumph or social order, they will tell you. When they face the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" they answer, "Thou art a prophet like Isaiah and Jeremiah." They see the Master as a teacher, perhaps the greatest teacher of all time.

B. Let there be no mistake, Jesus was a prophet; for a prophet is one who speaks for another, one who knows the mind of God and speaks it with a human voice. The prophets understood the will of God and affirmed the impossibility of life on any but righteous terms. Jesus stood in the tradition of the prophets, revealing the moral will of God.

III. "The power of God unto salvation"

A. Happily, however, Jesus went far beyond the prophets; the prophets revealed the will of God—Jesus was "the power of God unto salvation." We must begin with what Paul called "newness of life" in Christ or else the ethics of Jesus is an impractical ideal.

B. One of our most pressing problems today, for example, is brotherhood—we are having a frightful time living together in the world. Brotherhood on a purely human level is an impractical ideal. Suppose, however, you bring men face to face with God in Christ; let them feel the impact of Jesus on their lives and come under the spell of His great spirit. Brotherhood is the inevitable consequence.

C. We have to start with Jesus. Let a man sing with Charles Wesley:

*Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find,*

and if he means it, he finds power and moral competence to deal with his problems and needs whatever they may be.

Conclusion:

If a man means it, the ethics of Jesus is no impractical dream, but rather, a reality in his own life. "Whom say ye that I am?" The answer is to be found not in books, not in theology, but in an experience with Christ.—JAMES HUDSON, *Edmond, Oklahoma*.

The Lord's Supper

SCRIPTURE—Matthew 26:26-30.

Introduction:

The meaning of the Lord's Supper is at least threefold; it embraces confession, communion, and commitment.

I. Confession. The Supper is a confession—

A. That we are redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ, that our salvation is solely through His broken body and shed blood (I Peter 1:18-19).

B. That we must perpetually appropriate the benefits of the Atonement (I John 1:7).

II. Communion.

A. The Supper is more than a confession; it is the means of communion with Christ (I Cor. 10:16).

B. As we partake of the visible elements, we may *by faith* realize the living Presence of Christ.

C. At the Lord's table, moreover, Christian fellowship is vividly realized (I Cor. 10:17).

III. Commitment.

A. The Supper should also mean a reviewing and renewing of our covenant with Christ, a pledge of devotion to Him who died for us (II Cor. 5:14-15).

B. The word "sacrament" is from the Latin word *sacramentum*, which meant the pledge of loyalty and allegiance made by the Roman soldier upon joining the imperial army.—W. M. GREATHOUSE, *Nashville, Tenn.*

The Lord's Supper

SCRIPTURE—I Corinthians 11:20-34.

TEXT—*What mean ye by this service?* (Exodus 12:26).

Introduction:

Some errors concerning the Lord's Supper corrected by Paul. He also tells the Christian what this Supper should mean to him.

I. A commemoration of Jesus Christ (vv. 24-25). A public holding up of Him; not His Church, His work, nor His gospel, but Him.

II. A testimony to the truth. It is a showing forth of the great evangelical spiritual truths.

A. The Incarnation. "This is my body" (v. 24).

B. His sacrifice, "My body broken" (v. 24).

C. His vicarious sacrifice, "Broken for you" (v. 24).

D. The new covenant (v. 25); not our covenant with Him, but His with us.

E. The shed blood (v. 25).

F. Appropriating faith, "take" (v. 24); "this do ye" (v. 25).

G. The Lord's return (v. 26).

III. A communication. We should receive new spiritual and physical life at this table.

IV. A fellowship; a communion service. Fellowship with Him and with one another.

V. A service of worship. Called the "Eucharist" from Greek word meaning praise and thanksgiving.

VI. A service of consecration. Called the "Sacrament"; this was the oath of allegiance taken by the Roman soldier.

VII. Our preparation for it.

A. Must be His.

B. Should discern the Lord's body; ask the Holy Spirit to help you to see Him.

C. Should discern ourselves; ask Him to show us what is lacking in ourselves; then let Him supply the need.

D. We must keep before us His love and sacrifice.

Conclusion:

So let us come expecting Him to manifest himself to us.—L. B. MATHEWS, *Valparaiso, Ind.*

Seven Aspects of the Cup In the Lord's Supper

I. The cup of salvation (Matt. 26:27-28)

II. The cup of blessing (I Cor. 10:16)

III. The cup of thanksgiving (Luke 22:17)

IV. The cup of communion (Mark 14:23)

V. The cup of remembrance (I Cor. 11:25)

VI. The cup of hope (I Cor. 11:26)

VII. The cup of expectation (Matt. 26:29).—NORMAN M. BLOORE, *Fort Worth, Texas.*

My Jesus, I Love Thee

TEXT—John 21:15-19.

Introduction:

Peter had miserably failed after having professed steadfastness. Jesus here tests him three times, and tenderly though deeply probes his heart. Although Peter had failed, Jesus knew what lay beneath that failure, and was bringing out the best in him. Peter, through many faithful years of service, brilliantly justified Christ's faith in him.

I. This question comes to every follower of Christ.

A. Jesus does not ask, "Do you admire Me, My teaching and example?" Nor, "Do you accept My words?" These are not of focal importance.

B. Not even does He ask, "Have you succeeded or failed?"

C. He does ask the vital question, "Do you love Me?" This confronts us all today as we come to the Communion table. "Love covers a multitude of faults." Our service may have been poor and halting; but, if our hearts have been filled with love, He will accept us. Like Peter, we may have broken down; but if we come back to Him with genuine affection, we will know the forgiving mercy of Christ.

II. Our answer: "My Jesus, I love Thee."

A. "We love him, because he first loved us." Unworthy though we were and are, His love sought and found us, and freed us from the shackles of sin. We love Him for the suffering He bore to purchase our salvation. "I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow."

B. We love Him for what He has saved us from. A few are saved *out of* great sin; most are saved *from* it. How we should love Him for His mercy!

C. Our love will make our service a happy, glorious thing. Burdens will seem light for the love we bear Him. As Jacob's love for Rachel made the seven years seem but a few days for the love he had to her, so our love to Christ will make serving Him a glad privilege.

Conclusion:

Let this be a time of reaffirming our love and devotion to the Christ who has loved us with an eternal love, and who means everything to us as Christians.—VERNON L. WILCOX, *Seattle, Wash.*

When Jesus Draws Near

SCRIPTURE READING—Luke 24:13-32.

TEXT—*And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them* (Luke 24:15).

Introduction:

As we come to partake of the Lord's Supper, we should seek to make this a time when Jesus himself will draw near.

As Jesus draws near we may expect:

I. Rebuke (vv. 25, 26). "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."

A. As Christ draws near He rebukes lack of faith—"... slow of heart to believe."

B. As Christ draws near He rebukes halfheartedness—"... slow . . . to believe *all*."

C. As Christ draws near He rebukes sin.

II. Revelation (v. 27). "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

A. Christ's revelation is simple—"... beginning at Moses."

B. Christ's revelation is complete—"... in *all* the scriptures."

C. Christ's revelation is heart-warming—"Did not our heart burn within us, while . . . he opened to us the scriptures?" (v. 32).

III. Fellowship (v. 29).

A. Christ abode with them.

B. Christ tarried because they constrained Him.

1. Some blessings come only to those who want Christ the most.

2. We are too often in too much of a hurry.

3. In the taking of Communion we should take time to seek Christ's continued presence.

C. Christ was made known in the breaking of bread.

Conclusion:

May the Christ of Calvary be made known unto us afresh as we partake of the emblems of His broken body and shed blood.—M. ARCHIE WILSON, JR., *Grangeville, Ida.*

A Worthy Sacrifice

SCRIPTURE—Matthew 26:17-28.

TEXT—*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him* (Colossians 2:6).

Introduction:

1. The Communion service is a time of heart-searching, of self-examination, of re-consecration, of taking a firmer hold upon God, of renewing our vision of the great love of God which has been extended in our direction.

2. Just a few years ago on the far-flung battlefields of the world our boys attempted to write a "charter of freedom" that would insure peace and security for the whole world for generations to come. They wrote this charter with the ink of human blood—their own blood.

How it humbles us to think of their great sacrifice, their substitutionary offering, their lives' being given instead of yours and mine! May we ever be found worthy of the life that we are now living at such terrific cost.

3. As we consider this magnificent effort, our minds turn back to another "Charter of Peace" which was written in letters of blood by God himself, the blood being that of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Again we are humbled as we meditate today upon that event of long ago which has made it possible for us to have forgiveness of sins and hope of eternal life in heaven. "Such love, such wondrous love!" We "stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene!"

4. The text tells us the known fact that every true Christian has received Christ Jesus into his heart, and it goes further to say: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

Note: What kind of Saviour we have received and how we should walk since we have received Him.

I. A sinless Saviour.

A. Study as you will the life of Christ and you cannot find sin in it—not in thought, word, or deed.

1. Holiness is one of the outstanding characteristics of Jesus. His holiness inspires us because purity means strength, and we know that Christ was strong and still is able to deliver any who yield to Him.

Satan tried to defile Him, the second Adam, and thus throw God's plan into a

chaotic state again, as he had done when he overthrew the first Adam in the Garden of Eden. However, Jesus conquered and has become the living symbol of strength and purity.

B. We have a sinless Saviour, and thus, if we are to walk as He walked, we should also be sinless. "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:16).

1. Many people back up at this point and say this state of grace is impossible. This is due largely to a wrong conception of sin. I John 3:4—"Sin is the transgression of the law."

a) This scripture does not imply the thought that one who makes a mistake commits sin, or that one, who through poor judgment, commits a wrong or fails somewhere has thus sinned, but

b) It refers to the one who deliberately transgresses the law.

2. We are to be without sin by the grace of God. This is accomplished by "walking in the light" and becomes a gracious preventive against the making of serious mistakes.

C. How can one attain such a state of grace?

1. Col. 2:7—"Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."

a) "Rooted in him." Our strength and fruitfulness depend upon the depth to which we have been imbedded into the life and love of God—rooted and grounded in Him.

b) We can only reach loftily upward and broadly outward as we strike deeply downward. Height is proportionate to depth, as is also the outreach.

c) Our fruitfulness is dependent upon spiritual depth.

Corn and wheat that withers in the summer drought is often the result of too much rain in the spring, thus causing the roots to be too near the surface. The mighty oak tree that is smitten by the whirlwind, caught in the tempest's embrace, and beaten about is held steadfast because its roots are buried deep.

(1) It is pitiful to see a godless man trying to be steadfast in affliction. Friends may try to prop him up with beautiful maxims and flattery; but only when one is rooted and grounded in the love of God can he make it through successfully in such times.

(2) Dig deep until the Holy Spirit comes to abide and then let the storms of persecution, the drought of feeling, the deluge of adversity come, and you will be able to stand!

D. "Rooted" and "built up."

1. One cannot be built up until he has become rooted as a Christian.

a) Not like a house, but like a tree that is built up from the heart. Cannot build

layers of good works over a corrupt heart, for the house will collapse.

II. A sincere Saviour.

A. Jesus came to the world, not to receive a martyr's crown and thus be eulogized by the multitudes, but because of a sincere love burning in His heart for the lost.

1. We note His sincerity in all that He did.

a) Matt. 9:36—"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (See Matt. 23:37; John 11:35).

b) Sincerity was one of His outstanding characteristics.

B. We should be sincere, too.

1. True worship is to worship God in spirit and in truth. From your heart.

A statue upon a tomb, with hands uplifted and eyes raised to heaven, offers up as true and good service as a person who does not worship in spirit. We only present God with a picture, a voice, a compliment, unless He has our true hearts' devotion.

2. Test of sincerity.

a) Rich young ruler. Jesus had tried him by precept of temperance, chastity, and just dealings, and never sounded bottom—he was perfect along this line. But He came close, touched his heartstring—his beloved possessions—and the man became adamant and indifferent. We must give all!

III. A sacrificing Saviour.

A. He emptied himself of all comfort, honor, ease, and pleasure—this Prince of Life, who has pioneered the way to life eternal.

1. Volumes have been written upon this divine manifestation of love, this incomprehensible overture of mercy, this prodigious expenditure of divinity; and yet the half has never been told of *divine love*.

B. In view of all this—such infinite sacrifice upon the part of Jesus, which we have received—what are we to do in order to walk rightly in Him?

1. All of our energy, effort, time, labor, money, etc. that we can give for the furtherance of His kingdom will not be too much. Give until it hurts or else you have not sacrificed.

2. God's greatest wish and our best way to repay Him for our debt of love is by helping to spread His kingdom.

I AM A DEBTOR

*When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glaring sun,
When we stand with Christ in Glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.*

*When I stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not my own,*

*When I see Thee as Thou art,
Love Thee with unsinning heart,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.*

—ROBERT MURRAY MCHENE

Conclusion:

As we come to the Communion table of the Lord, may we determine to walk with the Lord in regard to sinless living, sincerity of purpose, and sacrificial duty to our Saviour, who has done so much for us.

How our hearts ought to burn with devotion as we remember afresh what He has done for us!

Edward Rayson Scott was a missionary to India. He felt convinced that God wanted him to preach to a hill tribe known as the Naga. He had never visited them, but he managed to master some of the language, and set out. Friends tried to dissuade him because of their reputed fierceness; but he had the promise, "Go ye . . . and, lo, I am with you." He set out and refused a military escort, lest they mistake his mission of peace.

All by himself with his violin, after three or four days, he found himself in the foothills of the Naga country. The tribesmen planned an ambush, and suddenly Scott found himself surrounded by savage men with spears leveled at his heart. Any moment might be death. Promise came to him afresh: "Lo, I am with you."

At the prompting of the Spirit he unslung his violin and began to play and sing the hymn he had translated into their language:

Alas and did my Saviour bleed,

And did my Sov'reign die?

Would He devote that sacred head

For such a worm as I?

The men stood spellbound as he continued:

Was it for crimes that I have done

He groaned upon the tree?

Amazing pity! Grace unknown!

And love beyond degree.

But drops of grief can ne'er repay

The debt of love I owe:

Here, Lord, I give myself away—

'Tis all that I can do.

When he had finished singing he looked up, and saw, to his amazement, that tears were flowing freely down the cheeks of some of those tribesmen, and all trace of hostility had disappeared. He had proved in that extremity the mighty power of Christ to deliver and protect. He led many to Christ and spent the rest of his life among them.

What made them stand in awe and amazement? It was the revelation that Jesus had died upon a cross to bring peace to their troubled hearts.

Let us catch anew the glory of the Cross this morning.—RAYMOND C. KRATZER, Moscow, Idaho.

The Greatest of These Is Evangelism

THOUGH I speak with the tongues of scholarship, and though I use approved methods of education, and fail to win my pupils to Christ, or to build them up in Christian character, I am become as the moan of the wind in a Syrian desert.

And though I have the best of teaching skill and knowledge and understand all mysteries of religious knowledge, and lose not myself in the task of winning others to Christ, I become as a cloud of mist in an open sea.

And though I read all Sunday-school literature, and attend Sunday-school conventions and institutes and summer schools, and yet am satisfied with less than winning to Christ and establishing my pupils in Christian character and service, it profiteth me nothing.

The soul-winning teacher, the character-building teacher, suffereth long and is kind; he envieth not others who are free from the teaching task; he vaunteth not himself, is not puffed up with intellectual pride.

Such a teacher doth not behave himself unseemly between Sundays, seeketh not his own comfort, is not easily provoked.

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.

And now abideth knowledge, methods, evangelism, these three; but the greatest of these is evangelism.—A paraphrase of I Corinthians 13; Dr. JOSEPH CLARK, in *Gospel Herald*.

He was an old Cornishman, and he had seen most of the world in his younger days as a sailor in the British merchant marine. Then he had been a farmer on this side of the water, and now, past his working days, he lived quietly with his married daughter.

When I first called at the home he would sit in his easy chair, smoke his pipe, and go on reading while I chatted or prayed with the family. But finally we struck a common ground of interest, and in time he thawed out. It was a real task for him to get to church afoot; but he started, at first sporadically, and then, in good weather, regularly. I noticed that the truth began to grip him. I prayed and others prayed. Could a man so old, so long without Christ, become as a little child and enter into the Kingdom?

One day his daughter reported: "Dad is reading the Bible." A little later he and his pipe parted company. Then one Sunday night with a new light in his failing eyes

he gripped my hand and whispered: "You can count on me! I've turned in with God's offer of mercy!" And he had. For a few months only his life bore witness to Christ's transforming power. But before he crossed over, a letter from him testified in these words: "I can never be thankful enough that you were faithful to my soul. If I never see you again here, I will meet you in heaven."—Submitted by ARNOLD AIRHART.

There was a revival in progress in a hall in the town. A faithful Christian who had been attending the services was passing by a cheap lodging house when he saw a young man standing near the entrance. Sensing that he was discouraged, our Christian friend spoke to him in a cheery voice, "Old man, you look lonely." He invited him to have something to eat with him at the restaurant on the corner. As they ate, they carried on a general conversation in which there was no reference to religion whatsoever. The youth told of his being out of work and away from home. As they were leaving the restaurant his benefactor gave him the address of the hall without telling him why—"Just meet me at this address at 7:30 tonight; it may be I can help you."

As the young man walked into the hall that evening the tears coursed down his face. He took his friend by the hand and said, "I've been wondering all afternoon what made you speak to me on the street. I might have known it was Jesus."

And thus a soul was won through just a little interest and the price of a simple meal.—Submitted by RICHARD BUSHEY.

A Tavern Keeper Saved

Once a minister decided to visit a tavern operator who lived only two blocks down the street. This man was breaking the law by selling liquor to minors. The minister had been asked by some citizens to prosecute him, but he felt led of the Lord to visit his neighbor and talk to him about his activities. His first visit proved successful, for he had an opportunity to talk to the saloon keeper about the Bible and religion. He kept going back to see him. When the man's wife took sick, the preacher faithfully ministered to her.

After his wife died, the tavern keeper and his little granddaughter began to attend the church services. Within a few weeks he gave his heart to the Lord. He became a sincere follower of Christ. He sold out his liquor business. A few months later he was seriously burned. Before he

died, he gave a testimony of what Jesus had done for him.

Yes, a personal contact saved a soul. But this is not all of the story. Many of the young men who had been drinking in the saloon were converted. Two of these men became Sunday-school teachers and one became the superintendent. Not only had a sinner been converted "from the error of his way," but influence caused others to know a like experience—all because one man believed in, and practiced, personal evangelism.

Visitation "Pays Off" Again

A young minister went into a farm community in the state of New York to hold services in a vacant church. There had been no services in that community for twenty-five years. To get a congregation to which to preach, he conducted a systematic visitation program. He and his wife walked as many as twenty miles a day visiting the farmhouses. Sometimes they stayed overnight. They read the Bible and prayed in every home. When an opportunity presented itself, they talked salvation. Several families were brought into the church by this means.

The Lord gave them a family of six, which many folks said was impossible to win. One by one they came to the church and were saved. Three daughters were first saved. Then the eighteen-year-old son gave his heart to the Lord. The mother and father were not so easily won. The mother vowed that she would never go to the altar. The young pastor visited that home for nearly a year before that mother gave her heart to the Lord. One day she came, and after she prayed through she said she had been praying for several weeks at home. A little later the father came to the altar. The whole family had been won to the Lord.

A Church of the Nazarene was organized with thirty members. Every one was a new member of the Church of the Nazarene. Twenty-nine of the thirty were baptized in one service. Visitation and personal work bring the greatest results!

How They Were Won

In the Northwest a certain young man, who was not a Christian, operated a saw shop. Although he lived across the street from a church, he had not attended in fifteen years. One day a Christian layman entered the shop to have his saw repaired. After the two men had been engaged in conversation a few minutes, the Christian asked, "You are caring for your body and mind; why don't you give some attention to your soul?" The young man was further urged to attend church services. He did attend the services, and consequently found Christ as his Saviour.—B. WADE DOWNTING.

Start at Home!

The newly transformed Finney was afire with the love of Christ. Immediately he was successful in leading many into the Christian way. He seemed directed to the home of his parents, where he had not been for some time. His father inquired of him, "How do you do, Charles?"

"I am well, Father, body and soul," he replied. "But, Father, you are an old man; all your children are grown up and have left your home, and I never heard a prayer in my father's house."

The elder Finney was instantly struck with conviction and asked Charles to pray for him. There, both his father and mother were genuinely saved.

He Prayed Through in a Car

A young seminary student became disturbed over the fact that he had not won any souls for a long time. He was forced to work at nights and part of every Sunday. Upon realizing his failure, he prayed earnestly that the Lord would help him to recognize opportunities and to have courage to speak to men about their souls. The Lord heard that prayer. He wrote later:

"Just as the key was unlocking the car door, I heard the voice of a young man. 'Say, could you tell me where Thirty-second and Main is?' It was only a couple of blocks away, so I told him to get in, and I would take him right there. We went into the drugstore to inquire as to the location of the Alcoholics Anonymous Hall. We found that it was just above the drugstore and would begin its service in fifteen minutes. The young fellow seemed reluctant to leave. 'I'm an alcoholic,' he said. 'I have been drinking for fifteen years, and I am just thirty now. I just can't leave it alone. I have sold my clothes in order to buy something to drink.' It was February and he had no coat or hat. 'I stole my dad's clothes and sold them because I had to get a drink,' he continued. 'I'm an alcoholic; I must have help. They say I can get help from Alcoholics Anonymous.'

"I was glad to tell him that Alcoholics Anonymous could help him. I was glad to tell him that Christ came to help just such a man as he. His response to the suggestion that Christ could help him was immediate.

"'Would you do me a favor?' he said. 'Would you go to the car with me and pray that God will help me?' In the car I told him to pray and confess his sins while I prayed for him. He said he did not know how to pray, but shortly after I began he had his head under the instrument panel weeping and crying to God to forgive his sins and help him. It was only a short time until he met the conditions of God's grace and was converted. He was a new man when he went to the meeting in the hall that night."

Supplied by Rev. Buford Battin

Reward to the Grateful

Once when there was a famine, a rich baker sent for twenty of the poorest children in the town, and said to them, "In this basket there is a loaf for each of you. Take a loaf and come back to me every day at this hour until God sends us better times. The hungry children gathered eagerly about the basket and quarreled for the largest of the loaves. At last they went away without even thanking the good man.

A poorly dressed little girl did not quarrel or struggle with the rest but remained standing modestly in the distance. When the ill-behaved children had left, she took the smallest loaf which alone was left in the basket. She thanked the gentleman and went home.

The next day the children were as ill-behaved as before and the poor, timid girl received a loaf scarcely half the size of the one she got the first day. Again she thanked the man. When she came home and her mother cut the loaf open, many new, shining pieces of silver fell out of it. Her mother was very much alarmed, and said, "Take the money back to the good gentleman at once, for it must have fallen into the dough by accident." But when the little girl gave the rich man her mother's message, he said, "No, no, my child, it was no mistake. I had the silver pieces put into the smallest loaf to reward you. Always be as contented, peaceable, and grateful as you are now."

The Bird Trap

There is a fable that tells of two birds who lived merrily together in a dim old forest. A boy came one day carrying a beautiful little cage. The boy set the cage down on a mossy bank and around it he strewed many seeds. The boy disappeared and the birds flew down to the bank and ate the seeds greedily. Then the child strewed more seeds, this time very near to the cage. These they ate also. The next day the seeds were strewed inside the cage. Then the birds said one to another, "What means this? Is it a snare set for our destruction?" Shaking their heads, they flew back to their perch in a treetop and would not venture near. But having tasted the seeds and becoming very fond of them, they came to the spot again in a day or two. "Shall we venture in?" they said. Reason said, "No," but appetite said, "The seeds taste so good, why not have them?" So in they hopped, and in stepping about

they touched a secret spring. The door flew shut and they were prisoners. The boy came from his hiding place, took up the cage, and carried the beautiful birds away as captives.

Thus are people deceived by sin. They see no harm, feel no danger, and things look safe. They venture into forbidden paths where they are suddenly deceived, trapped, and taken captive.

Lost First Love

Charles G. Finney was conducting a service in which many penitents were seeking salvation. As Finney finished his fervent prayer for the seekers, a negro arose from the back of the audience to speak. The negro was weeping as other penitents wept, and, given the privilege to speak, the colored brother said, "When I was young I was a slave and my back quivered under the master's lash. But through those years of hardship as a slave, I clung close to God and felt the comfort of true religion. But since gaining my freedom, prosperity has been too much for me. I have come under the dominion of the world and have lost my first love."

It may take the adversities of life to keep us in close fellowship with God.

The Discontented Pendulum

There is the story of an old clock that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen and recorded time without offering any complaint. Early one morning before the family was stirring the old clock suddenly stopped. The dial plate became concerned and changed countenance. The hands made a vain effort to continue their course, but they could not move. The wheels inside became motionless. Each part of the clock felt disposed to lay the blame on other parts of the clock. At length the dial made an inquiry as to the cause of the stagnation. With one voice the various parts of the clock declared their innocence. A faint tick of the pendulum was heard, and the pendulum that had been so faithful to swing back and forth in measured beat spoke, "I confess myself to be the sole cause of the stoppage and I am willing to give my reasons. The truth is that I am tired of ticking."

The dial was ready to strike out in protest when the pendulum spoke, "It is easy for you, as the dial, to set yourself above me and have nothing to do but accuse other

people of their laziness. It is easy for you to stare other people in the face and to amuse yourself with watching all that goes on in the kitchen. How would you like to be shut up for life in this dark closet, and to wag back and forward year after year, as I do? It is very dark here. There is only one little window to see through and I dare not stop for an instant to look out at it. Besides, I am really tired of my way of life. My utter disgust came this morning when I happened to be calculating how many times I should have to tick in the course of only the next twenty-four hours. When I consider what is required of me in a month or a year, then I must give up. After this reasoning I have decided to stop."

The dial said, "Dear Mr. Pendulum, I am astonished that such a useful and industrious person as you are should have been seized by such weariness. It is true that you have done a great deal and yet have much to do. But did you realize that for every stroke you have to make you have a moment that gives you ample time to make the stroke? You have all the time you need to do that which is required of you." The weights and the wheels and the great spring said, "We are here to help you in making your strokes." With one consent the pendulum began to swing, the wheels began to move, and the hands began to turn.

Saint Francis and the Birds

Saint Francis was walking in the fields one day and the birds were twittering about him. Francis stopped and spoke to them, preaching a little sermon to them. He told them they should be very thankful for the power of flight and of song, for the fresh air and sunshine. When he had given them his blessing they all flew away and he saw them in the form of a cross. This then reminded Francis that all the blessings that come to man have come because of the cross.

Pleading to Die for a Friend

In the days of a wicked Roman ruler there were two Romans who were arrested and tried under trivial charges. The men were Damon and Pythias. Damon was set free and Pythias was condemned to be hanged. The ruler was hopeful that money would be paid for his release. Pythias was a married man and he wanted to go home to see his wife and children before he died; and Damon, a single man, volunteered to take his place in prison. The ruler said that this was foolish, to take the condemned man's place, saying that Pythias would never come back. Damon said, "I wish he would stay away and let me die for him, as it would be my delight, but I know he will come back. He loves me as

dearly as I love him, and he is not going to let me die for him."

As the days passed, people looked through the bars and said, "Damon, how foolish you are, as he is not going to come back to be hanged." He remained at ease until the day came when they were going to hang him, and he still said, "Pythias, my friend, will be on hand; yet I wish he would stay away and let me die for him." The hour arrived and Pythias was not there. Damon stood up, and the sheriff was tying the rope around his neck when a shout was heard, "Hold on, you are hanging the wrong man." It was Pythias running with all his might. He leaped upon the scaffold, grabbed the rope, proceeded to untie it from Damon's neck that he might put it around his own. Meanwhile Damon protested and said, "O Pythias, do let me die for you; you know what a friend you have been to me and I will die for you." Pythias untied the rope from the neck of his friend and said, "Damon, I love you so; you never can die for me."

By this time the cruel ruler was paralyzed with astonishment. He never saw such a sharp controversy between two men for the privilege of being hanged. Consequently he ordered the sheriff to take the rope off both of them, and said in the presence of the vast multitude, "I will not be the man to part two such friends as I never saw before." Damon and Pythias both went free.

These men had never heard of the Saviour's dying love, and yet the love of friendship caused one to be willing and even plead for the privilege of dying for the other. Jesus was willing to die, even for His enemies!

Heathen Cruelty

A missionary in Haiti tells of a mother who punished her seven-year-old boy by holding his hand in the fire until it was burned to a crisp. He adds, "Surely as David said, 'The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.'—*The Watchman*."

Christian Martyrs

Some Christians in China have suffered for their faith. In one province communists entered a city and asked the Chinese pastor if he believed in Jesus Christ. He said he did. When asked whether he preached to others about belief in Christ, he again answered in the affirmative. So they drew their guns and shot him. Then they told his wife the same thing would happen to her if she still professed to be a Christian. She proclaimed her loyalty to her Lord, no matter what they did. She too was shot.

A church member was brought and shown the pastor and his wife. His courage failed and he denied the Lord. From the crowd of spectators stepped a Buddhist nun saying, "Until now I have not openly confessed that I am a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. I have long loved Him and I will be His follower no matter what the cost. He is the true God!" She too was immediately put to death.—*World Wide Prayer and Missionary Union.*

My Talent Isn't Mine!

Robert Harkness, one of the best-known hymn writers living today, was attending a social in California. He was asked to play some hymns, and did so. Later he was asked to play for a girl while she danced. There was a painful pause, then Mr. Harkness stood and said to the chairman and all the people: "My talent isn't mine; it is God's. I can't use the Lord's talent to play for a dance."—*Selected.*

BOOK NOTES

By Rev. P. H. Lunn

THE GREATEST QUESTIONS OF THE BIBLE AND LIFE

By Clarence E. Macartney (Abingdon, \$2.00)

Eighteen sermons, each text being a striking interrogation. Dr. Macartney's flair for direct, evangelistic preaching has never been more apparent than in this series. The illustrations are pointed and pertinent. It is a book of real worth with much usable material.

THE THEORY OF PREACHING

By Austin Phelps. Abridged by F. D. Whitesell (Eerdmans, \$2.50)

The original volume by Dr. Austin Phelps was published in 1881. The 588 pages in that edition have been abridged to 167 pages. It is strictly a book on homiletics. It emphasizes the importance of logical sermon organization and discusses various types of sermons such as: inferential, topical, textual, expository, doctrinal, practical, historical, ethical, and philosophical. This book will be of value to any minister regardless of the breadth of his training or previous reading.

EVERYDAY SCIENCE FOR THE CHRISTIAN

By Theodore L. Handrich (Concordia, \$2.25)

This is a practical, popular presentation of everyday science written for Christian workers and Bible students. It counteracts pseudo-scientific theories and propaganda that are anti-biblical. The book particularly does a thorough piece of work in undermining the theory of evolution. Every minister who is seeking material with which to help his young people will find this book of inestimable value. The ninth and final chapter is especially good: "A Brief Biblical Philosophy of Life." There is a topical index.

CYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS

By Paul E. Holdcraft (Abingdon, \$3.00)

1400 illustrations, apt stories, poems, and incidents illustrating Bible truths. There is a scripture index, a name index of sources,

and a subject index. This Book Man hesitates to give any book of illustrations a 100 per cent endorsement for reasons that any minister will appreciate. Good illustrations do not come at a dime a dozen. They are rare and must be culled from every conceivable source. If one gets ten or twelve usable illustrations from a book costing two or three dollars the book has been worth its cost. This volume compares favorably with other books of illustrations.

SERMON STORIES OF FAITH AND HOPE

By William L. Stidger (Abingdon, \$1.50)

Ninety-five human interest stories with which to make sermons, addresses, and talks sparkle and "come alive."

WHAT SHALL I PREACH?

By George Brown Thomas (Abingdon, \$2.50)

If this book is not unique, it is at least something different. It gives 2,200 sermon titles and texts, commencing at Genesis and ending in Revelation. No outlines or skeletons, merely the sermon title and text and, of course, the scripture reference.

THE BIBLE GUIDE BOOK

By Mary Entwistle (Abingdon, \$2.50)

Here is a splendid reference book for the Sunday-school teacher and the pastor who has a rather limited library. It discusses "The Land of the Bible," "Life in Palestine in Bible Times," "Times and Seasons," as well as other topics of value for those who teach the Bible.

The section on "Beliefs About God," though not satisfactory to a conservative, is fortunately very brief. The "Time Chart of the Books of the Bible" is also constructed from the liberal point of view.

But aside from these two brief sections the book is very usable. It will help the reader to become acquainted with the land of Palestine, its topography and vegetation, and also the customs of Bible lands. Here is a book worth recommending to your Sunday-school teachers.—RALPH EARLE.

A Study of Holiness from the Early Church Fathers

By Professor J. B. Galloway, B.S., Ph.B., B.D.

Chapter Four

Clement of Alexandria

A LINK IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

HIS full name was Titus Flavius Clemens. He was a celebrated Greek father of the Early Church, of about A.D. 153 to 217. It is uncertain whether he was born in Alexandria, Egypt, or Athens. He was probably born of heathen parents and received a liberal education and sought many teachers; for this purpose he traveled extensively through Greece, Italy, Egypt, Palestine, and the East. He finally resorted to Pantaneus, who presided over the Christian school at Alexandria. Here he entered the Church and was made a presbyter. He taught with great distinction and succeeded Pantaneus as the head of this famous school. During the persecution of Septimius Severus he left Egypt and later we hear of him in Palestine and Asia Minor. His last days are veiled with obscurity, so that we do not know the place or time of his death. He was followed in the school by his pupil Origen. Clement of Alexandria was a man of great learning and proficient in Greek philosophy, literature, and history.

His greatest works are: *Exhortation to the Heathen*, the object of which was to win them to the Christian faith; the *Instructor*, which contains instruction in morals and matters of everyday life; and the *Stromata*, which is a miscellaneous collection of unsystematic discussions of doctrinal points. In these he tries to guide the mature Christian to perfect knowledge.

He speaks of a young man's being baptized and then anointed with oil. After the Church began to anoint the young converts with oil, they would pray that they might be filled with the Holy Ghost. The anointing was called sealing; this was probably from Ephesians 1:13 (see Eusebius, Book III, chap. 17).

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA ON HOLINESS FREE FROM ALL SIN

He believed that a man could be freed from all sin, but thought that it would be done at baptism. In his *Instructor*, Book I, chapter 6, he says:

Thus also we who are baptized, have wiped off the sins which obscure the light of the divine Spirit, and have

the eye of the Spirit free and unimpaired, full of light, by which we contemplate the divine, the Holy Spirit flowing down from above. This is the eternal adjustment of vision, which is able to see the eternal light, since like loves like; and that which is holy loves that from which holiness proceeds, which has appropriately been termed light.

Still Carnal

A little further on in the chapter he sees a distinction between the spiritual and the carnal Christian, for he says: "For he called those who had already believed, spiritual, and those newly instructed and not yet purified, carnal, whom with justice he calls still carnal, as minding equally with the heathen the things of the flesh."

Perfect Women

In Book 4, chapter 19, he shows that woman is capable of perfection as well as man. In chapters 20 and 21 he gives a description of the perfect man. "Who then is perfect? He who professes abstinence from what is bad." He shows that the Spirit distributes the gifts of the Spirit that each may be perfect in his own place of service.

And the same Spirit, distributing to each according to His will. Such being the case, the prophets are perfect in prophecy, the righteous in righteousness, the martyrs in confession, and others in preaching, not that they are not sharers in the common virtues, but are proficient in those to which they are appointed.

Holy Thoughts

In chapter 22 he says:

We ought to go washed to the sacrifices and prayers, clean and bright; that this external adornment and purification are practiced for a sign. Now purity is to think holy thoughts . . . For purity, as I conceive it, is perfect pureness in mind, and deeds and thoughts, and words too.

Dignified with the Spirit

In chapter 25 he shows that true perfection consists in the knowledge of the love of God, and in chapter 26 he shows how the perfect man treats the body and the things of the world. He says:

. . . . that those who run down created existence and vilify the body are wrong Whence this abode becomes receptive of the soul which is most precious to God; and is dignified with the Holy Spirit through the sanctification of soul and body, perfected with the perfection of the Saviour The body too, is one sent on a distant pilgrimage, using inns and dwellings by the way, caring for the things by the way, of the place where he halts; but leaving his dwelling and property without excessive emotion, giving thanks for the sojourn,

and blessing God for his departure, embracing the mansion in heaven.

Holy Builders

In his *Stromata*, Book 7, chapter 5, he shows that a holy soul is a more excellent temple than any man-made edifice. He begins by saying, "For is it not the case that rightly and truly we do not circumscribe in any place that which cannot be circumscribed; nor do we shut up in temples made with hands that which contains all things? What work of builders, and stone-cutters, and mechanical art can be holy?"

Holy Altar of Prayer

In the next chapter we read that prayer and praise from a pure mind is better than sacrifices. "But if, by nature needing nothing, He delights to be honored, it is not without reason that we honor God in prayer; and thus the best and holiest sacrifice with righteousness we bring, presenting it as an offering to the most righteous Word, by whom we receive knowledge, giving glory to Him for that we have learned." A little further on he says, "And will they not believe us when we say that the righteous soul is the truly sacred altar, and the incense arising from it is holy prayer?"

Steps to Perfection

In chapter 10 he gives the steps to perfection, and begins with knowledge.

For knowledge to speak generally, a perfecting of man as man, is consummated by acquaintance with divine things, in character, life, and word, accordant and conformable to itself and to the divine Word. For by it faith is perfected, inasmuch as it is solely by that the believer becomes perfect. Faith is an internal good, and without searching for God, confesses His existence, and glorifies Him as existent.

Commenting further on faith he says: "And this takes place when one hangs on the Lord by faith, by knowledge, by love, and ascends along with Him to where the God and guard of our faith is It leads us to an endless and perfect end, teaching us beforehand the future life, that we shall lead, according to God." Again he says in the same chapter, "After which redemption the rewards and honors are assigned to those who have become perfect; when they have done with purification, and cease from all service, though it be holy service."

Society of Angels

In chapter 12 he says of a holy man:

His whole life is prayer and converse with God. And if he be pure from sins, he will by all means obtain what he wishes. For He says to the righteous man, "Ask, and I will give thee." So he is always pure for prayer.

He also prays in the society of angels, as being already of angelic rank, and he is never out of their holy keeping; and though he pray alone, he has the choir of saints standing around him.

We will close with a statement from chapter 12. Here he is commenting upon I Corinthians 6:1, and he says of a holy man, "But ye are sanctified, for he who has come to this state is in a condition to be holy, falling in none of the passions in any way, but as it were separated and already grown holy without this earth."

Chapter Five

Tertullian, the Chief of the Latin Apologists

TERTULLIAN, THE CHRISTIAN DEFENDER

He was born at Carthage in North Africa, probably of pagan parents. He was the son of a proconsular centurion. He was well educated, especially in Roman law. His birth is placed at about A.D. 145. Attracted by the courage of the Christians he was converted and used his great literary gifts for the Church. He was a married man and wrote treatises addressed to his wife. He was a presbyter until middle age and later in life espoused the party of Montanus. Persecution was prevalent during the early part of his life but he escaped, in spite of his vigorous protests against the persecutors. His chief service to the Church was that of a Christian defender, which he did with great zeal, and was not interrupted until death. No early father is more valuable to us than Tertullian, for the vivid pictures he gives us of both pagan and Christian life.

Tertullian, the Montanist

His fierce temperament led him always to extremes, and in middle life he joined the Montanists, finding their rigid asceticism and spiritual enthusiasm more congenial than the ordinary life of the Church which was beginning to drift away from the truth. His doctrine, however, is strictly orthodox, and he is the father of Latin theology. Such words as Trinity, substance, person, sacrament, and church as used for a building occur first in their Latin form in his writings.

The Montanists arose in Asia Minor in the century. They were eminently spiritual people, and bitterly persecuted. They became a separate sect in the third century and were expelled by Rome, for they stood by the old paths against the

Catholic hierarchal tendency. They insisted upon regeneration followed by heart purity with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which they professed to enjoy. They contended for Christian perfection and a pure, spotless Church; fasted frequently, prayed much, testified with joy; gave freedom to the Holy Ghost, and shouted in their worship. They insisted upon a divine call to preach. They forbade all ornamentation in clothing and the appearance of their women in immodest attire. They looked with contempt upon this present world, living under a vivid impression of the great final catastrophe, believing that Christ would come and reign personally during the Millennium. They were ardent believers in the second advent of Christ, which they believed near at hand. John Wesley says of Montanus, their founder, that "he was not only a truly good man, but one of the best men then on the earth."

Tertullian, the Writer

He was the first great Latin writer in the Church. Even at Rome the language of the Church was Greek to the end of the second century. His writings include several apologetic works, more bitter in tone than the Greek apologists; a long doctrinal work *Against Marcion* (the most formidable heretic who had yet opposed the Christians); and many ethical and theological essays. His *Apology Against the Pagans*, written about A.D. 197, is the most brilliant defensive writing in the Early Church. It is a masterpiece in unity and skill. He shows the unjustness of persecution, and proves the error of the charges against the Christians. He proves the unity of God in his *Proof of the Soul* and *Against the Heathen Mythology*. He wrote a book to the proconsul Scapula, who was very cruel to the Christians. He answered the Jewish arguments in his book *Against the Jews*, and proves the immortality of man in his book on *The Resurrection*.

TERTULLIAN ON HOLINESS

The early Christian writers say that it was customary in the second century and afterward to pray for the Christians to be filled with the Spirit. From Tertullian we learn that it was the practice to anoint the baptized believer with oil before praying that he be filled with the Holy Ghost. Oil was used as a symbol of the Spirit. Kings and priests were anointed with oil in the Old Testament and the sick were anointed in the New Testament for healing. As water in baptism symbolized cleansing from sin, so the anointing with oil symbolized the baptism of the Spirit.

Inviting the Holy Spirit

In Tertullian's *On Baptism*, chapter 8, he says: "In the next place the hand is laid on us invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit through benediction." Further on, "Then over our cleansed and blessed bodies willingly descends from the Father the holiest Spirit." In chapter 10 of the same book we read, "And so the baptism of repentance was dealt with as if it were a candidate for sanctification shortly about to follow Christ."

Sanctified by the Holy One

Water was looked upon as a chosen vehicle of divine operation, a type of cleansing. In chapter 4 we read:

By the very attitude assumed for a type of baptism, that the Spirit of God, who hovered over the waters from the beginning, would continue to linger over the waters of the baptized. But a holy thing, of course hovers over a holy; or else, from that which was hovered over borroweth a holiness, since it is necessary that in every case an underlying substance should catch the quality of that which overhangs it. . . . Thus the nature of the waters, sanctified by the Holy One, itself conceived the power of sanctifying.

Not so clear on how you get holiness, but expecting it.

Gifts of the Spirit

In *Against Marcion*, Book I, chapter 28, Tertullian shows that if Marcion is right the sacraments have no virtue, and there would be no need for regeneration, nor the gift of the Spirit. His words are:

If the regeneration of man, how can he regenerate that which has never been generated? If the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, how will he bestow the Spirit, who did not at first impart life? For the life is in a sense the supple ment of the Spirit. He therefore seals men, who have never been unsealed in respect of him; washed men who had never been defiled so far as he was concerned . . . Why then impose sanctity upon our most infirm and unworthy flesh, either as a burden or as a glory? What shall I say, too, of the uselessness of a discipline which sanctifies what is already sanctified? . . . Why keep back from a work its due reward?

In Book V, chapter 8, he has a long chapter discussing the gifts of the Spirit, comparing the prophets' prophecy and the apostles' declaration fulfillment and challenging Marcion to produce anything like the gifts of the Spirit foretold by the prophets.

Illumination of the Spirit

He shows the need of being filled with the Spirit. In *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, he says: "The flesh is washed, that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed, that the

soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed or sealed, that the soul may be fortified; the flesh is overshadowed with the imposing of hands, that the soul may be illuminated by the Spirit."

The Old and the New Man

In chapter 45 of the same book he explains the old man and new man in Paul's epistles. And in chapter 46 he shows that it is the work of the flesh and not the bodily flesh itself that is carnal and sinful. A quotation reads:

In like manner he (the apostle) called "the carnal mind" first "death," and afterwards "enmity against God"; but he never predicated this against the flesh itself. But to what then, you will say, must the carnal mind be ascribed, if it is not to the carnal substance itself? I will allow your objection, if you will prove that the flesh has any discernment of its own. If however, it has no conception of anything without the soul, you must understand that the carnal mind must be referred to the soul, although ascribed sometimes to the flesh, on the grounds that it is ministered for the flesh and through the flesh. And therefore the apostle says that "sin dwelleth in the flesh," because the soul by which sin is provoked has its temporary lodging in the flesh, which is doomed indeed to death, not however on its own account, but on account of sin.

Christian Modesty

He is very strong in his arguments against worldliness. He covers almost every phase of dress and conduct in his two books *On the Apparel of Women*. He begins Book I, chapter 1, by saying, "If there dwell upon earth a faith as great as the reward which is expected in heaven, no one at all, beloved sisters, from the time she first knew the Lord, and learned the truth concerning her own condition, would have a desire to gladsome (not to say too ostentatious) a style of dress."

He says perfect modesty will abstain from everything that tends to sin. In Book II, chapter 2, we read:

You must know that in the eye of perfect, that is Christian modesty, carnal desire of one's self on the part of others, is not only not to be desired or even expected of you: first, because the study of personal grace as a means of pleasing does not spring from a sound conscience. Why therefore excite towards yourself that evil passion? Why invite that to which you profess your self a stranger? Second, because we ought not to open a way to temptation, which by their instancy sometimes achieves wickedness which God expels from those who are His. We ought indeed to walk so holily, and with so entire substantiality of faith to be confident and secure in regard of our conscience.

Chapter Six

In the Fires of Persecution

THE STORY OF PERPETUA AND FELICITAS

(Condensed from what is claimed to be the story begun by Perpetua herself and finished by Tertullian, an eyewitness)—J.B.G.

This beautiful story comes from the second century and begins as follows: "If ancient illustrations of faith which both testify to God's grace and tend to man's edification are collected in writing, so by the perusal of them, as if by that reproduction of the facts, as well God may be honored, as man may be strengthened; why should not new instances be collected, that should be equally suitable for such purposes?"

Chapter 1. The Young Christians Thrust into a Dungeon.

Five young catechumens from among the early Christians were apprehended. They were Saturnias, Secundulas, Revocatus, Felicitas, and Perpetua. The last two mentioned were respectable, educated, married young women. Perpetua had a father, mother, and two brothers, one of whom was a catechumen like herself. She was twenty-two years of age and had an infant son at her breast. While she was being taught the way of the Christians, her father tried to persuade her away from her faith, but she said to him, "Father, do you see this little vessel lying here to be a pitcher?" And he said, "I see it to be." And she answered him, "Can it be called by any other name but a pitcher?" He said "No." "Neither can I be called anything else than what I am, a Christian."

This provoked her father and he rushed toward her as if he would tear her eyes out. But he only distressed her and went away, and the Lord became a source of consolation to her. After a few days she was baptized, and shortly afterwards she was taken to the dungeon by her enemies with her fellow Christians. At first she was much frightened by the terrible darkness, the great heat, the soldiers, and the mob about her; and unusually disturbed for her infant. Christian friends came and ministered to her, arranged for some comforts, and brought to her her babe that was becoming feeble by hunger. Such solicitude she suffered many days and her child was allowed to remain with her, and she says, "Forthwith I became strong and the dungeon became to me as it were a palace."

Soon afterwards her brother came to her and said, "You are already highly honored, and you may ask a vision that it

may be known to you whether you are to be martyred or released." She said, "I will let you know tomorrow."

In the meanwhile she saw a golden ladder of marvelous height reaching up to heaven, so that anyone could ascend up to heaven on it one by one. There were swords, lances, hooks and daggers; so that if any one went up carelessly he would be torn, and caught on the cruel weapons of iron. A great and dreadful dragon was at the bottom to frighten anyone who would ascend away. Saturnias ascended to the top and cried to her, "Perpetua, I am waiting for you, but be careful that the dragon does not get you." Then she went up into a beautiful garden and saw a shepherd at the gate who said, "Thou art welcome." And he gave her a little cake and she ate it, and all about her said, "Amen." When she told this to her brother and friends, they realized that she was to be martyred.

Chapter 2. Perpetua Avows Herself a Christian and Is Condemned with Her Fellow Christians to the Wild Beasts

A few days after her father heard the report, and he came to her and tried to persuade her away from the Christians. He said, "Have pity, my daughter, on my gray hairs. Have pity on thy father. With my own hands have I brought thee up to this, the flower of thy age. I have preferred thee above all thy brothers. Have regard for thy brothers, thy mother and aunts. Have regard for thy infant son, who will not be able to live without thee. Do not bring this destruction upon us all." These things said her father, and affectionately kissed her hands, throwing himself at her feet in bitter tears. She comforted him and said, "Whatever God wills shall happen." Then he departed in sorrow.

Sometime afterwards while she was at dinner she heard a great noise, and saw that great crowds were gathering to the town hall. At once a rumor spread through the neighborhood that the Christians were to be taken to the court platform and interrogated. She saw an immense crowd of people gathering. When she stepped out for the trial she saw her father with her little boy, and he tried to persuade her against the Christians, saying, "Have mercy upon thy child."

And Hilarianus, who had just received the power of life and death as a proconsul, said, "Spare the gray hairs of your father, spare thy son. Offer up sacrifices for the honor of the emperor." And she replied, "I will not do so." Hilarianus asked, "Are you a Christian?" And she said, "I am a Christian." Then her father tried to lead her from the platform, but he was ordered to be cast down and beaten with rods. She was greatly grieved for her father's misfortune and suffering,

for he was old and feeble. Then the proconsul delivered judgment upon all the Christians, and pronounced that all should be condemned to the wild beasts. She sent and asked her father that her infant son might remain with her, but he would not. While she yet remained in fetters, she had a vision of her brother who years ago, when he was seven years old, died. He appeared to her as bright and beautiful, and drinking from a vessel filled to the brim.

Chapter 3. Perpetua Has Further Trials and Visions

After a few days Prudens, a soldier overseer of the prison, who had regard for and held her in high esteem, perceived that God was with her, and admitted her Christian friends to see her. As the day of her execution drew nigh, her father, worn with suffering, came again to her, and began to tear his beard, and throw himself to the ground, and reproach himself in such words that would move a heart of stone. She was greatly grieved.

The day before her execution she saw in a vision Pomponius, the deacon, come to her and knock at her door. He was clothed in a richly ornamented robe of white. He said to her, "Perpetua, we are waiting for you to come!" And he reached out his hand to help her over the rough places. When they reached the amphitheater, he led her breathlessly into the arena. Then he said, "Do not fear, I am with you," and disappeared. She marveled that the wild beasts did not appear; but soon she saw an Egyptian, terrible in appearance, come out to fight with her with backers. Then there came helpers to her and she seemed to be transformed into a soldier. Also she saw the tall trainer of the gladiators; he wore a loose tunic and had a purple robe between bands over his breast, and he carried a rod and a green branch upon which were apples of gold; who said, "If this Egyptian overcome this woman he shall be killed with a sword, and if she conquer she shall have this branch." They drew near together and began to deal out blows. She was victorious, and he fell upon his face. The branch was given to her and the people shouted and said, "Daughter, peace be unto thee." When she awoke she understood that her great fight was with Satan rather than the beasts.

Then Saturnias told his vision to Perpetua. He said he saw four angels floating upward, and they bore Perpetua through space to the pleasure-gardens where were roses of every kind blossoming. They were as tall as a cypress and leaves were falling incessantly. Other four angels, brighter than the previous ones, appeared; and they said to the rest of the angels,

"Here they are! Here they are!" And the walls of the place were such as were built of light, and before the gates stood angels clothed in white robes, and their united voices said, "Holy! Holy! Holy!" And also he saw one in the midst with snow-like hair, and on his right hand and on his left were twenty-four elders. The elders said, "Go in and enjoy. Perpetua, you have your wish." All were nourished with an indescribable odor which satisfied all. And then he awoke.

Chapter 4. The Arena and the Crown of Glory

The day of their victory shone forth brightly. The Christians proceeded from the prison cells into the amphitheater, as to an assembly, joyous and of brilliant countenances; with joy and without shrinking or fear. To Felicitas had been born a child just recently; yet she rejoiced that she was able to go forth with the other Christians to die for her faith. When they were brought to the gate the men were constrained to put on the garments of the priests of Saturn, and the women that which was consecrated to Ceres. Felicitas said, "We have thus far come of our own accord. And it has been agreed with you that we should come thus." So they were allowed to enter as they were. Then Perpetua sang psalms. When they came into sight of Hilarianus, the proconsul, Revocatus and Saturnias said of him, "Thou judgest us, but God will judge thee." To this the people shouted in exasperation that they should be tortured with scourges as they passed along the ranks. They rejoiced that they should thus suffer for the Lord.

Saturnias was thrown to the wild beasts. Revocatus was harassed by the bear and the leopard. But Saturnias was recalled unhurt. Then the wild boar was called and would not be enticed from his den, so he was recalled again.

When the young women were called, their enemies prepared a very fierce cow. So they were clothed in nets and led forth. The crowd shuddered when they saw these two young mothers delicate and led away from their infants. Perpetua was led into the arena first. She was tossed and fell upon her side. When she saw that her garments were torn she wrapped them about her. She was called forth again and bound up her disheveled hair. This time as she raised up she saw Felicitas crushed. So she approached her and gave her her hand, and lifted her up; both stood together. Then Perpetua as roused from sleep, being so much in the Spirit that she did not realize what had happened until she saw the signs of it in her body and garments; then she recognized another Christian addressing her, saying, "Stand fast in the faith."

At the same moment Saturnias, entering again, exhorted Prudens, the friendly soldier saying, "Up to this moment I have felt no hurt, now believe with the whole heart. Lo, I am going forth to the beasts. I shall be destroyed with one bite." Prudens desired a token dipped in his blood, and he said to him, "Farewell, be mindful of thy faith." Thus, according to the vision of Perpetua, that she saw of Saturnias ascending the ladder before her and waiting in spirit until she came, was fulfilled. But Perpetua, when she felt the pain of the sword, waved her hand to the youthful gladiator. Thus the brave martyrs entered in and took the crowns for their faith!

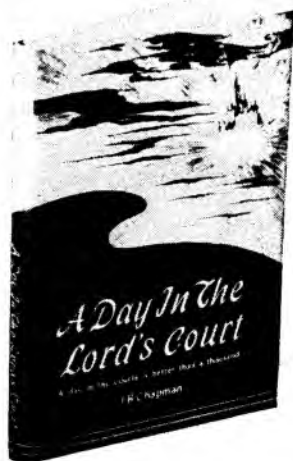
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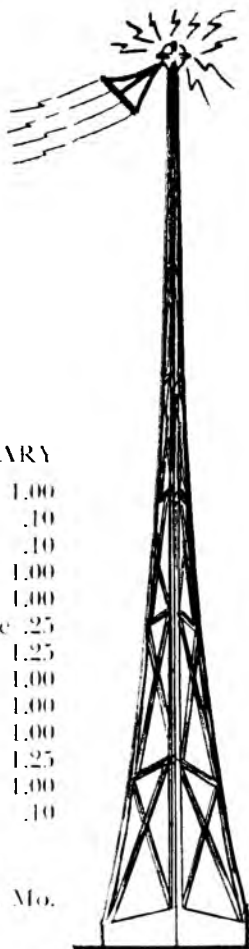
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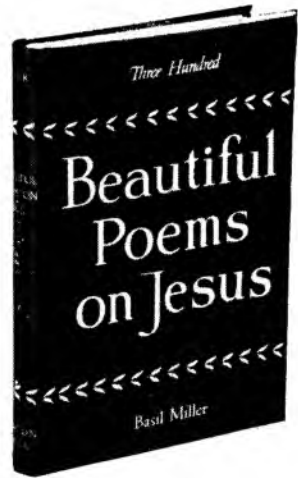
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