

# The PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

IF YOU warn the brethren of these dangers you will be a good and faithful servant of Christ Jesus, inwardly feeding on the lessons of the faith and of the sound teaching of which you have been, and are, so close a follower. But worldly stories, fit only for credulous old women, have nothing to do with.

"Train yourself in godliness. Exercise for the body is not useless, but godliness is useful in every respect, possessing, as it does, the promise of Life now and of the Life which is soon coming. Faithful is this saying and deserving of universal acceptance: and here is the motive of our toiling and wrestling, because we have our hopes fixed on the ever-living God, who is the Saviour of all mankind, and especially of believers.

"Command this and teach this. Let no one think slightly of you because you are a young man; but in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, be an example for your fellow Christians to imitate. Till I come, bestow your attention on reading, exhortation and teaching. Do not be careless about the gifts with which you are endowed, which were conferred on you through a divine revelation when the hands of the elders were placed upon you. Habitually practise these duties, and be absorbed in them; so that your growing proficiency in them may be evident to all. Be on your guard as to yourself and your teaching. Persevere in these things; for by doing this you will make certain your own salvation and that of your hearers."—WEYMOUTH, (1 Timothy 4:6-16).

## The Preacher's Magazine

Published monthly by the Nazarene Publishing House, 2923 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, Mo., maintained by and in the interest of the Church of the Nazarene.

Subscription Price: \$1.00 a year. Entered as second class matter at the Postoffice at Kansas City, Mo. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized December 30, 1925.

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### *The Ministry a Calling and a Profession*

THE EDITOR

WITH some the ministry is altogether a calling. With some it is altogether a profession. With many it is mixed in unbalanced proportions. With some it is a calling at one period and a profession at another period of life. And, strange to say, it is often the earlier periods when the purer motive is in the ascendancy. Within the last few weeks a minister under disfavor with his brethren in the ministry complained to me that he could not abide a sentence of silence because he had to feed his family and knew no way of making a living except by preaching. Within the same space of time a preacher has written me a letter begging for a pastorate on account of his desperate economic needs and his inability to make a living at secular employment.

Everybody knows a preacher and his family must eat bread and wear clothes, and everybody knows the preacher can do better work if he is adequately supported. But when it becomes evident that the ministry has become a matter of bread and butter in the question of motives we all feel instinctively that something is wrong.

Rightly interpreted, all proper vocations are callings, and every life is a sacrament. But there is a latitude in ordinary vocations that does not apply to the minister. When the farmer turns to merchandise we may question his judgment, but we do not cast doubt upon his motives. But when the preacher turns to life insurance or real estate we charge him with coming down from his great task to something like its shadow and limping substitute.

Going back to the cross roads, we do not challenge the young man who chooses banking as a means of making money or politics as a road to fame or farming as the way to independence. But we expect the preacher to take up his work as a means for saving souls, and we can tolerate no other motive as either a substitute or a supplement—it must be that and nothing else. This, in substance, is what we mean when we distinguish the ministry as a calling and leave other work in the common class of vocations or professions.

And yet there are professional aspects to the work of the minister. A call to this work is a call to prepare for it, and preparation for the ministry is both general and specific, and specific education means a profession. There is a technique in the minister's work—there are approved methods of pastoral visitation and pulpit exercise, and technique means profession. And the farther along the preacher goes the better he is prepared for his specific work and the less he is prepared for the other occupations in which men commonly engage.

This is a rather lengthy approach, but the purpose is the setting forth of two things: (1) the seriousness of entering this calling, and (2) the seriousness of playing fast and loose with it after one has entered it. On the first point little enlargement is required. No man should take this office upon himself with anything less than a clear conviction that it is God's will for him. If there is doubt, have patience to fulfill a more extended time of apprenticeship. Be a local preacher and yet keep on with your usual occupation. If God does not push you out, serve in the capacity of a lay preacher to the end of the way. Do not rush to ordination. Take time to test the evidences and to make sure you have the gifts as well as the graces required of a minister. God will bear with you or else He will hasten the means for your assurance.

But the second point is the one that concerns us most. In the early days when the preacher is conscious of nothing much except that he is dedicated to the noblest calling given to mortal men he will rise above the hurdles that block his way by the sheer force of his spiritual vision and vitality. Later, as the professional phases loom brighter the dangers are greater. There is the danger of becoming professional in spirit by the loss of true apostolic burden, by the assuaging of the spirit of sympathy, by the unconscious feeling that you "have arrived" and can do your work well, and finally by the growing conviction that you have merited standing and support by what you have already done.

There comes a time when the preacher awakens to the fact that he has passed the last side road and that he cannot now ever make a success of any other vocation. He may rejoice in this as a sort of sealing of his love service or he may grow restive under it and flounder and "invest," and tiddle with secularism. There is no safe age in any life, much less in the life of a preacher. Living is a dangerous business at best, and no life is finished until the liver is dead.

If only one can keep the freshness and vision of youth when he comes to the maturity and experience of age! If only one can apply the vigor of the morning to the sharp tools in hand at eventide! If one can but join birth and death with a chain of welded links, each link a year in a life unmarred by insincerity or vacillation! Surely no ideal can be higher!

# Thoughts on Holiness from the Old Writers

Olive M. Winchester

## Longsuffering as a Fruit of the Spirit

*Now the fruit of the Spirit is . . . longsuffering Gal. 5:22).*

WE have followed the first triad of Christian graces springing forth from the presence of the Spirit in the heart, graces which are potential with the fullness of the Spirit bestowed in the experience of entire sanctification and which grow and develop with the maturing of the experience. Love, joy and peace, the triad we have considered, have been regarded by one writer as Christian habits of the mind in the more general aspect, stated in an ascending scale, with love as the foundation, joy the superstructure and peace as the crown of all.

We now turn to the second triad. While the former triad was subjective in its nature, this second one is objective, it has to do more particularly with our relationship with our neighbors. First among these graces is longsuffering.

### THE NATURE OF LONGSUFFERING

It is necessary to get a definite concept of the term itself. Many words we use with somewhat of a hazy idea of their meaning, but when it comes to translating them into a definite specific concept, differentiating from other similar words, we find ourselves somewhat at a loss. Thus it may be with this term. We turn therefore to some of the definitions given us. This is what we find. One writer gives two senses in which the word is used, first, "to persevere patiently and bravely in enduring misfortunes and troubles" (Heb. 6:15; James 5:8) and second, "to be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others; to be mild and slow in avenging; to be longsuffering, slow to anger, slow to punish." Then the same writer continues to define by contrast with an allied term, that is, endurance, stating that while endurance is the temper which does not easily succumb under suffering, longsuffering is the self-restraint which does not hastily retaliate a wrong. The one is opposed to cowardice or despondency, the other to wrath or revenge. A note is added saying that while this distinction applies in general, it is not true without exception.

Seeking further for definitions of the term we read that longsuffering is "a long holding out of the mind before it gives room to action or passion—generally to passion: 'forbearing one another in love,' as St. Paul (Eph. 4:2) beautifully expounds the meaning which he attaches to the word. Anger usually, but not universally, is the passion thus long held aloof; the longsuffering one being one 'slow to anger.'" One more definition may be added which states, "It has always the same general meaning, the which its etymology suggests, that is, 'steadfastness of soul under provocation to change,' the specific meaning differing according as that which is endured is thought of impersonally, and the word signifies simply 'en-

durance,' 'steadfastness' or personally, so longsuffering includes forbearance, endurance of wrong or exasperating conduct without anger or taking vengeance."

From the above we conclude that the heart and core of the word longsuffering is the bearing with provocative circumstances with calmness and without revenge or passion given in return. Truly this can come only as a fruit of the Spirit in the life, it is not born as a natural impulse.

### SCRIPTURE EMPHASIS ON THE THOUGHT

Turning to the Scripture we note the prominence of this thought, expressed sometimes by other terms, but ever the same injunction. In the Book of Proverbs we read the following, "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression" (19:11), and "By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone" (25:15).

Coming to the New Testament we have longsuffering set forth as one of the qualities of love in the thirteenth of 1 Corinthians, and in the second epistle written to the same group it is one of the factors by which we are to approve ourselves as the ministers of God (2 Cor. 6:6). Moreover it appears in other Pauline epistles for in Ephesians (4:1, 2) we find the apostle urging that they walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, "with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." Then in Col. 3:12, 13, comes the word of admonition, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

Writing to young Timothy, Paul calls attention to the fact that this young disciple of his had known and witnessed that he himself had manifested this grace in his life, and moreover he exhorts the young minister, "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 3:10; 4:2).

Thus this grace of the Spirit was a very prominent one in the writings of the great apostle. He felt that it must characterize Christian living, and be practiced by Christian preachers. Only in this way could they fully glorify God and honor His name.

### IN DOCTRINAL EXPOSITION

In dealing with the fruit of the Spirit William McDonald, an outstanding holiness minister of the last century, gives about as full an exposition as anyone in his book, "Another Comforter." He approaches the subject by asking questions and the first question is "What is longsuffering?" This he answers very much along the line that we have discussed, so we do not need to quote him. The next

question is "But what is the limit of our forbearance?" His answer in this case is interesting. "The limit of God's longsuffering with us." Then he continues with a further exposition which we feel is worthy of our consideration. "Longsuffering," he says, "is not stoical insensibility to wrong, nor constitutional fortitude; but a temper of soul which is the fruit of the Comforter. We are tried on every hand. Some try us by their folly, some by their ignorance, some by their malice, and some by their jealousies and envyings. We are very susceptible of irritation. Anger is eloquent, and revenge is sweet: but to stand calm and collected; to suspend the blow which passion was urgent to strike; to drive the reasons of clemency as far as they will go; to bring forward fairly in view the circumstances of mitigation; to distinguish between surprise and deliberation, infirmity and crime, or, if need be, to leave God to be both the judge and the executioner, this is Christian patience!"

Then again he comments, "We commend to our readers the language of St. Basil: 'Has anyone made use of injurious expressions respecting you? Reply to him in blessings. Does he treat you ill? Be patient. Does he reproach you? Is the reproach just? If it be, condemn yourself; if not, it is but a breath of air. Flattery could not really impart a merit to you if you have it not, nor calumny give you faults that you do not actually possess. Does he tax you with ignorance? In showing yourself angry, you justify the charge. Does he persecute you? Think of Jesus Christ. Can you ever suffer as He suffered?'"

Longsuffering then as set before us in the Scripture is one of the Christian graces. It does not shine forth in spectacular glamor but is like the adornment of a meek and quiet spirit, not obtrusive, but is distinctly characteristic of a true Christian and marks the perfect man. May we not have more of this grace?

## Some of the Essentials for a Constructive Pastorate\*

J. E. Redmon

### I.

#### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ESSENTIALS FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE PASTORATE?

**F**IRST, the pastor must be God's man, in God's place.

*Second*, the pastor must build around the Lord Jesus Christ, and not around himself, impressing the members that he is as a bird of passage and may be moved at any time as God elects.

*Third*, the membership committee should always be recognized when receiving members into the church, the candidates should be fully acquainted with the general and special rules of our Manual, pledging themselves to comply therewith, they should be in the experience of justification and fully believing in and seeking after the experience of entire sanctification. The pastor's anxiety for members should never induce the lowering of standards or rounding the corners, we must have members who love our church and are anxious to comply with our Manual. We should be very careful in receiving members from other denominations ascertaining the fact that they really desire to be Nazarenes, and are anxious to comply with the polity of our church and her doctrines. While the church is described as a workshop, and has the unfinished as well as the finished products, yet all must love God and the salvation of souls, being impressed that this is our objective. All must be employed and kept busy, realizing that the work of the church is the greatest and most important work in the world.

*Fourth*, the church services should be spiritual, and love the predominating factor; such a church will grow spiritually, financially, and numerically.

### II.

#### WHEN NECESSARY TO MOVE?

A pastor should think more of the *will of God* concerning himself than of place or position. A pastor should be close enough to God to know the leadings of the Spirit and know when to leave a church from that standpoint. Next, when his usefulness begins to wane, his members cease to boost for him, and he has opposition in his recall vote. A pastor should never contend to remain with a church when there is opposition, for in so doing he will divide or split the church, and will eventually have to leave anyway; seldom or never does a pastor repair a church which he has divided or split. God pity the pastor who has no place to go because of the reputation which he has builded for himself. The world is our parish, the fields are white unto harvest, lift up your eyes and look, we have no time for contentions, there are hundreds of vacant churches and many open doors; be a man and move out into the great harvest field. Have the District Superintendent put you in a home mission campaign and dig out and pastor a church—you probably need that experience to help you succeed more fully in a pastorate.

### III.

#### HOW CAN A PASTOR LEAVE A CHURCH IN THE BEST POSSIBLE CONDITION FOR HIS SUCCESSOR?

*First*, by giving an honest report at the District Assembly of his finances and membership. In so doing he is protecting the church and his own reputation; camouflage may help to succeed in a carnal warfare but never in a spiritual.

*Second*, leave the church in the same condition you would wish to find the one to which you anticipate going, that is doing unto others as you wish to be done by.

\* Paper read at District Convention by pastor at St. Petersburg, Florida.

*Third*, when a pastor leaves a church, he should leave, bag and baggage, moving out of reach of the membership; never carry on a regular correspondence with any of the members of the church. Also refuse to receive tithe money or offerings from them, for in so doing he is robbing the local, District and General Budget of that church. Our conscience should forbid us doing such a thing. Boost for the new pastor, encourage the church that God will take care of you—begging for sympathy will never get you anywhere in the grace of God. Confide in your District Superintendent; he knows the churches on the district and will be glad to help you. Get the church in the very best condition you possibly can when necessary to leave, and leave like a man.

*Fourth*, a pastor should never attempt to have anything to do with the securing of a pastor to follow him; leave that to the church board and the District Superintendent. The Superintendent is acquainted with the need of his churches, also the

available preachers; let them ask for his advice when needed.

*Fifth*, young pastors should appreciate the advice of older and more experienced pastors who have been *successful*. You may reject this advice and learn by experience, but many times it is extremely costly.

*Sixth*, there is always an open door and many calls for the services of a successful pastor or evangelist. Study your own case, be a success. We are already overloaded with those who are failures; keep out of that class.

*Seventh*, an independent nonco-operative preacher is soon banished to *nonentity* without a trial or legal action being taken.

*Eighth*, I hope that the members of the St. Petersburg church here present will copy this and read same to the membership of the entire church on their return.

## Conserving Results Through Teaching\*

A. Elwood Sanner

THE MAJOR question which this paper seeks to answer is, "How may we conserve to a place of permanent usefulness those individuals who are now under the teaching influence of the church." This will include all persons in every department of the local church, whether they are converted or not.

Let us now understand the implications of the word *teaching*. The Church of the Nazarene is developing the conviction that teaching is not something apart from the church, but that the church, through its various departments, is a teaching agency. This means that not only the Sunday school, but also the Young People's Society, the Hi-N.Y., the Junior Society, the Missionary Societies, the Boys' and Girls' Clubs and even the regular services are engaged in the fulfillment of Christ's great command, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Our problem, stated in one sentence, is: we have, in the various departments of our churches, boys and girls, young men and young women and adults whom we wish to conserve to a place of permanent usefulness; how may we, through the teaching agency of the church, accomplish this end?

### I. THE OBVIOUS CONSERVATION VALUE OF TEACHING

Several Sunday mornings ago, before the Sunday school hour, I was walking down one of the streets of our city in the immediate vicinity of the Roman Catholic Church. At that particular moment, one of the burdens of my own heart was how to increase the

attendance of our own Sunday school and church. As I came in sight of the church of Rome, I observed the number of cars parked on the streets near the church. Many of the cars were recent models and comparatively expensive; moreover, the number was enviably large. Of course my own spirits burned with a desire to see such a sight on the streets near the Church of the Nazarene. I was forced to remark to myself that the Roman Catholic Church is doing the job more successfully than we are. At the same time I remembered some startling statistics to the effect that the Roman Catholic Church has established in the United States more than 6,500 elementary schools and more than 1,500 high schools; besides this, the church maintains many universities, colleges and hospitals. Please remember that I am linking the excellent attendance at the Roman Catholic Church with the extensive system of education that church maintains. Despite the fact that none of us could recommend the doctrines and beliefs of the Church of Rome, we must admit, that the church is certainly producing Catholics on a large and effective scale. How are they doing this—chiefly through the tremendous emphasis they place upon the teaching and education of the church.

We cannot honestly deny that the church, through its teaching agencies, has the ability to conserve persons to Christ and itself.

### II. THE INESTIMABLE VALUE OF CRISES EXPERIENCES

At this particular juncture we must unhesitatingly stress the incalculable value of definite experiences of grace in the conservation of persons to the church. At the same time that we recognize the importance of education through teaching, we must note that

\*Paper prepared for the Midyear Convention of the Northern California District, by pastor of Chico church.

religion, in the strictest sense, can never be taught; religion, regarded as the unspeakable gift of salvation wrought by God in His blessed Son, must be received from the Holy Spirit.

It is at this point where the current movement of religious education has definitely gone awry. The basis for the entire movement of modern religious education, as presented in the majority of churches and university centers, is this conviction: "It is not only possible, but entirely natural for the child to grow gradually, through nurture and training, into a consciously rich religious experience; just as it is possible for him, by the same method, to grow into a scientific or literary experience." Again, "It is beyond question true that a full, vital, rich religious consciousness can be developed by a process of normal growth without the necessity of conversion or any emotional upheaval." I have quoted directly to you from a recent book, famous in the field of religious education. (George Herbert Betts & Marion O. Hawthorne, *Method in Teaching Religion*, Chapter 1. Abingdon Press.)

In a very large sense, the current movement of religious education has fallen prey to an ancient heresy known in the fifth century as Pelagianism. This condemned doctrine taught that we are born not with a carnal, sinful nature, but with a nature susceptible alike to good or evil; that the soul is, at birth, in a sort of moral equilibrium. Hence, according to this belief, the church should teach a child never to be other than a Christian, thus rendering conversion unnecessary. The early church, under the inspired direction of St. Augustine, fought and condemned this doctrine as blasphemous to the Holy Word of God. Yet the modern church has returned to the grave of this ancient error, resurrected it, dressed it in more respectable clothing and presented it to a gullible religious world.

This especially concerns us, for we, too, wish to place the correct emphasis upon the value of teaching and training; but, also, we must determinedly refuse to allow mere teaching or training to usurp the rightful place of crises experiences in religion.

To be sure, a child's acceptance of Christ may not bring the great outward changes that the conversion of an iniquitous worldling will bring, but we must recall that *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*; hence, he who would enter the kingdom of heaven, no matter what age he may be, *must be born again*.

### III. A PROPER CORRELATION OF TEACHING AND EVANGELISM IS NEEDED

All of this demands that we relate properly the respective fields of teaching and evangelism. As it is true that the development of Christian character demands something more than the altar, it is also true that we should shudder to think of dispensing with the altar. The modern church, in many instances, has forgotten the altar in favor of education; and, on the other hand, we have often neglected to place the correct emphasis upon teaching and training in the development of adequate Christian character. Can we get these together? Let us try. May we not

say that teaching should be the handmaiden of evangelism? Is it not true that teaching should point the way to the cross, seek a decision for Christ, and aid in the permanent maintenance of life upon that new level?

### IV. WHAT TEACHING TO CONSERVE MUST INVOLVE

During the remainder of this paper, as we think of teaching, let us think of it in these terms—*teaching to conserve*. Let us now seek to discover what teaching to conserve demands of the teacher.

Teaching to conserve demands of the teacher:

#### 1. *A Vital Relationship with Christ.*

No person should be entrusted to mold the religious conceptions of a child or older person who does not possess a clear experience of grace. All of the Christian graces so necessary to effective teaching are born of this experience; if this is absent, there will be no passion for souls, no fervent loyalty to the whole church, no true understanding of the task, no passionate determination to labor with patience against discouraging obstacles. Unless a person knows positively that God for Christ's sake has forgiven his sins and that he is walking in all of the light, he has no place in the teaching program of the Church of the Nazarene.

Teaching to conserve demands of the teacher:

#### 2. *A Sworn Allegiance to the Whole Church Program.*

Nothing arouses greater discouragement in the heart of a pastor than for one of his assistants to be interested only in the particular part of the church in which he has a little responsibility. That person who is solely concerned over his Sunday school class, or who is solely concerned over his Young People's Society, or who is solely concerned over her Missionary Society has a narrow viewpoint and is unfit for a place of responsibility in the teaching program of the church. You have met that Sunday school teacher who sought to make a little church of his class; you have met that leader of another auxiliary organization who considered his department to be of such importance that he found it impossible to co-operate with the whole church program. That person is unworthy of the responsibility with which he is entrusted. Even though a person of that type may seem to exercise influence, or may seem to be a diligent worker, he is entirely out of place in a position of responsibility, for his work is destined to fall. Any work that is built around a personality is assured of an early death, for it has no force other than its leader to carry it on indefinitely. A teacher should be interested in the whole program of the church in order that his work may be conserved for permanent value. For instance, I know personally of a teenage class that at one time boasted of thirty-five active, regular members; the teacher of that class, despite all of his apparent spirituality and diligent labors, built the class not around the church but around himself. As a consequence, now, not more than one person of that original class can even be found in the Sunday school. Teaching to conserve demands of the teacher a sincere desire to co-operate with the whole church program.

Teaching to conserve demands of the teacher:

3. *A Gripping Passion for Souls.*

This is born of one force: a living relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. If this concern over persons is absent, nothing of value will ever be accomplished. A teacher without a passion for souls will insist that his task is impossible and prove it to be so; a teacher *with* a passion for souls will insist that the same task is a glorious opportunity and prove it to be so.

Teaching to conserve demands of the teacher:

4. *An Incisive Understanding of the Goal of His Work.*

Surely the greatest hope we could have for a person is that, first, he should understandingly accept Christ as Savior and Sanctifier; second, that he should find a place of permanent, valuable service in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Surely teaching to conserve could have no more worthy goal; and, with this goal in view, correct teaching can find in the life of anyone a place to minister.

Teaching to conserve demands of the teacher:

5. *An Intelligent Comprehension of the Nature and Basic Laws of Teaching.*

If one is interested in teaching to conserve, he must realize that teaching is not such unless learning ensues. The task of teaching is not complete until the pupil has learned. No matter how well one prepares what bit of truth he may have to present; no matter how eloquently that person may present his message, he has not been teaching unless someone has been learning. No method of teaching is of value unless it causes the pupil to learn.

Obviously it would be impossible in this paper to present all of the intricacies of the laws of pedagogy, even if the author were acquainted with them. However let us sketch a few of the broad, basic principles without which teaching cannot succeed.

The following principles are taken from Luther A. Weigle's text entitled, *The Pupil and the Teacher, An Abridgment, Part Two—Teacher*, pp. 89, 90.

(1) The principle of self-activity. "Not what you tell a pupil, but what he thinks as a result of your words; not what you do for him, but what he does for himself; not the impression, but his reaction upon it—determine his development. You cannot put ideas into his head; your words are but symbols of the ideas that are within your own. He must interpret the symbols and from them construct his own ideas. Teaching succeeds only in so far as it enlists the activity of the pupil."

(2) The principle of apperception. This simply means that a person never forms an idea out of entirely new material; he relates the new with the old to construct the new idea. In other words, a teacher must present his thoughts to the pupils not in terms of his own words and habits of thought, but in terms of the words and habits of thought of his pupils. For example, when Christ was teaching the multitudes, He spoke in terms of those things with which they

were most familiar—the lily, the mustard seed, the sower in the field; when He called Andrew and Peter, he did not speak to them in the terms common to Matthew, the tax collector; he spoke to them in their own words—"I will make you fishers of men." Christ did not stop with their ideas; He used them to present a deeper thought. This is the principle of apperception, the relating the new with the old.

(3) The principle of adaptation. This is closely allied to the preceding principle. The teacher who heeds the worth of this principle notes that a child or youth is growing and developing; that at one age a child is interested in those things that would not interest him at a later age. Thus, the Beginners department can use physical activity to advantage; the Primary department, stories; the Juniors, handwork; older persons, assigned work.

As meagerly as these principles may be stated, they represent basic laws a teacher must recognize and obey. Each situation will demand a different application of the principles, but the laws remain fundamentally the same.

Teaching to conserve demands of the teacher:

6. *The Will to Live in the Realm of Practical Reality.*

In many instances it has been true that persons have been interested in Teacher Training work only to the extent of obtaining the seals; they have failed to apply worth while theories in the realm of exacting reality. These persons have divorced theory from reality and have been blissfully satisfied with dreaming about the work from the pages of a book.

Teaching to conserve will recognize, first, that one may learn worth while suggestions from study; second, that theories in the book are of no value unless they work; third, that worth while, practical suggestions must be put into successful practice or they are valueless.

Hervey Allen, in his ponderous work, *Anthony Adverse*, makes Napoleon Bonaparte say this: "The greatest fault of humanity is its failure to make *I think* or *I plan* become *I do*. We human beings have a perverse affection for theory divorced from reality. The reason why so many men of hard practicality have little use for people who have 'read it all in a book' is that many times those persons know nothing about putting their theories into actuality. Here is where the Sunday school teacher must tighten up the belt of his will and purpose to put into actuality the goals he sees before him. We know where we are going; we know at least some of the ways we should take to get there, so let us not dream about it—let us go there!"

The best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness; to your opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to your father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity.—SELECTED.



## A Ministerial Necessity

PAUL S. HILL

A MINISTER must get along with people. The reason is obvious: if he cannot get along with them he cannot help them. Regardless of how much theology he knows, or how well he can sing, or how loyal he is to his denominational program, his ministry will be a tragic failure if he just cannot get along with the people.

And the minister must get along with people and stay with them and among them instead of withdrawing himself from them and living by himself. Another person who does not like the people of his neighborhood can, in a measure, withdraw from them and become seclusive. If the people around his part of the country do not suit him for his friends he can make friends some other place. The world is wide and he can find more congenial people some other place. But not the minister. He must meet and mingle with all the kinds there are in his community and get along with them all, and not only get along with them but be friendly to all and look for them to be friendly in return.

To get along with people is a ministerial duty and achievement. About everybody will tell the minister the faults and failures of about everybody else and it really is a ministerial conquest and heroic warfare to hear everybody's faults, frequently enlarged, and still have faith in them and for them. Indeed blessed is that minister who can have everybody's faults told him and still believe that there is a beautiful and friendly humanity around him that will respond to the preaching of the gospel. A minister needs almost to have two pair of eyes, one pair to see small on faults and the other pair to see big on virtues.

The minister's position is different from that of other professional men. The doctor meets people and treats their diseases. The lawyer meets them and takes their side in litigation, but the minister meets them sick and well, in the law courts and out of them, meets them all just as they are, and has to protect both them and himself against what he has been told about them. We mean he must protect himself and them against the influences that are at work that would tend to make it impossible for him to deal with them as a Christian minister should and of course hinder the response from them that the ministry should receive. To get along with people as a minister should, it means to meet them when about everything bad has been told about them and not be ministerially influenced by the slanderous gossip. The people must feel that the minister believes that there is something to them, and about them, that is worth cultivating, and which the grace of God can bless and develop.

To listen too seriously to what is told him about the faults of people is a step toward ministerial failure so far as getting along with them is concerned. To come to an understanding that he will have to get along with all sorts of faulty people is a step toward good ministerial success. Any minister who tries to correct the faults of people by what other

people have told him will likely result in more snakes than he can kill. What faults cannot be corrected under Christian teaching and the nurture of grace can hardly be corrected any other way.

## Woe Is Me, for I Cannot Sleep!

PASTORS, entertainment committees, hosts and hostesses please take notice: Please, please, for sake of that revival, and in the name of humanity, give your evangelist a bed fit for a human being to sleep upon.

I am an evangelist—just now it is near midnight—tomorrow is Sunday, and I have a full, hard day ahead of me, and I need rest to be at my best for the revival, but instead of sleeping, I am sitting up on the edge of what *some* people might call a bed but what is only a nightmare to me. It has no head, no foot and no springs! Hard ridges run from end to end of this abomination which my well-meaning hosts have wished off on me.

Traveling from meeting to meeting, I sleep (or try to) in a different bed each place. Some have no springs. Some have hills and valleys. Some have gone stylish, and boast of permanent waves, while others are just plain hard. It may be that there are straws that break the proverbial camel's back, but it is often lack of them that breaks mine. Woe is me! And so I roll and toss—groan and sigh, and threaten to return to the pastorate. In the dark, still hours of the night when all is quiet, except my creaking bed, and all asleep except me, I rise betimes (as I am doing now), take my pen in hand and try to solace my aching nerves and outraged bones, my breaking back and sore ribs, by writing, studying, or just vainly sighing for the good old days when I could sleep.

Why is it that so many good people are careless about the evangelist's bed? They stuff him with rich food—feed him on the best in the land—praise him, and extol his merits, and then, after a hard service, when his nerves are strung up like taut wires, send him away to a cold, cheerless room to try to get some much needed rest by *lying*, not sleeping, upon a bed that an angel would weep over.

A grumbling, complaining evangelist is a burden, and no one wants him to ever return, so he must take his medicine, and through sleepless nights and restless days head onward toward a nervous breakdown and an early retirement from the ministry.

Have mercy! Have mercy, pastors, and do unto others as you would be done by! See that your evangelist has a good and a comfortable bed, and he will be able to give you better service.

And all the evangelists said, "Amen."

A LONG-SUFFERING EVANGELIST.

"God is the Ever-near."

"Nearer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."—TENNYSON.



# GENERAL CHURCH PROGRAM

## CHURCH SCHOOLS

Orval J. Nease

### *A Training Program*

R. R. HODGES

THE need of trained leaders is becoming more and more recognized. Workers in each division of the church are meeting conditions that demand keen thinking and a clear understanding of the underlying causes. Young people who for five days each week are under the tutorage of skilled teachers demand a comparable understanding of their needs by their leaders on the Sabbath day. These same young people are meeting delicate problems of life such as the previous generation never met. To help them meet these conditions demands leaders who can sense the need, discover the remedy and apply it properly. The need of trained leaders is appalling.

While all agree on the need of trained leaders, the manner of getting these leaders is quite a different matter. If we could get a few talented and trained leaders to "join" our church, that would be fine. If our colleges could "turn out" enough qualified leaders and "hand them down" to us, we would rejoice. But many have not yet come to recognize the fact that if we are to have an adequately trained lay leadership it must be developed in our local church. New needs are constantly arising and our present staff of leaders is changing. These demand new recruits from time to time and call for a consistent training program year by year.

To properly meet the need, a training program should be a part of each year's regular program. Just as we plan for evangelistic campaigns for each year or twice a year, so we should plan some definite time during the year to be given to training our leaders. Shipshod planning here will not produce any better results than it will in promoting any other agency of the church. In the yearly calendar of special events and activities adequate time should be allowed for the training work.

The extent of this yearly program of training will depend largely on local needs and situations. In the past we have thought largely or exclusively of training for the Sunday school teachers and officers. A larger conception is beginning to break upon us. We are coming to recognize that leaders in every department of the church need training. The Young People's Society has recognized this need and is promoting a Study Course for its membership. Perhaps if some members of the church board had studied church finances a little their churches would make better progress. A study of the principles of ushering might help some churches to achieve a better standing in

the community. Personal evangelism and visitation is an important adjunct to the successful church, if properly done. In churches where all the nice rooms are given to adults and the children pushed off into the corner or to the basement it is apparent someone has not learned to apply Jesus' standard of values. The outstanding doctrines of our church and the meaning of church membership should be studied by every Nazarene whether he is a teacher or officer or not in the Sunday school or in any other organization of the church. The adequate local program is one that is *planned* to fill *discovered* needs in the local church.

Confining our thinking to the Sunday school, the first step in providing an adequate training program is the scheduling of regular workers' conferences. These should include all the teachers and officers of the school. In the departmentalized school the department workers should meet monthly and the entire group of workers meet, perhaps, every three months. The successful workers' conference calls for careful planning. Time for discussion should be given to the problems of the entire school. Attention should also be given to the personal problems of each teacher and class.

A second step in providing adequate training is a working library of books. A teacher who is reading good books is one who is learning to do a better job in his class. One pastor has provided a rotating list of books. At his workers' conference each teacher receives a book which he is expected to read within one month. At the next conference he returns this book and receives another. The books are selected carefully, a devotional book alternating with a methods book. Not only is the school increasing in efficiency, but the attendance has grown beyond the capacity of their building to accommodate. A chart shows one class making rapid strides numerically where the teacher decided to organize his class after reading a book discussing this topic. A reading teacher is a developing teacher.

Leadership training classes have an important part in any carefully planned program. The wide variety of units offered permits a selection to fill the local needs. Every church should have at least one leadership training class each year. More classes are better. Some schools now have a regular program of four or five classes each year. In the larger schools several classes may be conducted simultaneously with one or more schools being held regularly each year. Schools should be planned well in advance of the time of meeting and announcement made so that people can adjust their social life and business appointments to the time selected. Observation indicates that the more intensive type of class meeting is better. Classes can be held six nights a week for one week, three nights a week for two

weeks, two nights a week for three weeks or one night a week for six weeks. If local conditions warrant the class may meet for a shorter period for one night a week for twelve weeks. The two or the three weeks' plan appears from the results reported to be the best plan. But whatever the local conditions are, no church can afford to fail in holding at least one class each year. Every class pays big dividends.

The *pastor* is responsible for initiating plans for this training program. Some pastors think they are too busy to carry on this work. If they could just realize that they would be increasing themselves several fold in training others they would see it as a wise investment of time. Some pastors are working themselves to death trying to do everything and their members are starving to death for something to do. Every time a pastor can get a layman or woman to do a task he accomplishes two things. He relieves himself of the responsibility of doing that task and also helps the lay person to develop Christian character.

But the layman feels the need of knowing "how" before he tackles a job. It is not always a lack of interest when a layman neglects to do a task he is asked to do. He may feel incompetent. His pastor owes him the confidence that comes from training. Pastors have been seen who not only neglect to plan a program but actually hindered its development when proposed by the chairman of the church school board or the Sunday school superintendent. The period of usefulness of those pastors is limited by their own lack of foresight. Athearn, a noted religious educator, is quoted as saying that a pastor who could not train his leaders is not prepared for his task. If an adequate training program has not been made for your church, have a meeting of the church school board at once and plan it. Then execute it like your very life depended upon it. If the Department of Church Schools can assist you in any way, a request addressed to them will bring an early reply.

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## Promoting Our Church Paper

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BESIDES the thirty single subscriptions, our church receives a bundle of one hundred each week which a *Herald of Holiness* carrier distributes to one hundred homes each week and to another set of one hundred homes the next week just like a newspaper boy runs his regular route. There are two hundred homes that get the *Herald of Holiness* every other week.

To distribute them, we roll within our church bulletin and with a small rubber band around them they may be easily thrown and will keep in good condition to read.

The *Herald of Holiness* newsboy is distributing the *Herald of Holiness* each week to a list furnished by the pastor. For this service he will receive a trip to the N.Y.P.S. Camp and Institute, expenses all to be paid by the church.

The value received is reflected in the fact that a

few have been directly won to God as a result; others are welcoming us into their homes and a foundation is being laid in their minds and hearts for future reaping. Our Sunday school has grown from an average of seventy-five to an average for the first four Sundays in January of 123.

If one-third of our churches would carry on an advertising program of this kind, it would put our *Herald of Holiness* subscription list over the 100,000 mark.

MARK F. SMITH, *Pastor*,  
Grace Church of the Nazarene,  
Kansas City, Missouri.

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## Valuation of Church Property

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LEEWIN B. WILLIAMS

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NO doubt the tendency of ministers and church officials in making up the statistical reports for our District Assemblies is to overestimate the value of church property. We have no committee with authority to scrutinize these reports; and, consequently, our property statistics are considerably "padded," not purposely, of course, but from lack of experience in making estimates. A young church finds an abandoned church that can be bought at a "bargain." Probably the church originally cost \$50,000, or more; but the community has changed, the congregation wants a larger church, or a different location; an undesirable element may have moved in, or the church may have failed. We step in and purchase the church at a low price. About all the competition one has in buying such property are the gas stations. If the neighbors object to a gas station, then the congregation has a hard time finding a buyer. In making up the annual report, what value should be placed on such property? It will be argued all around that it is worth more than was paid for it, and an estimate is usually placed on the property above the purchase price.

Again, a church may stand in the path of business. The building may be old and greatly depreciated, yet the land has become valuable for business purposes. Many churches in downtown areas have been sold at prices that enabled the congregation to build a modern edifice in a location where real estate values were not high. It is not a simple matter to determine what value should be placed on such property.

### VALUATION METHODS

In estimating the value of property, three methods are recognized. The government (for tax purposes) requires that the lowest estimate must be used. These methods are as follows:

1. Cost,
2. Market value,
3. Replacement value.

The first methods, cost, means exactly what was paid for the property, no matter how big a "bargain" the church thought it got. This is the method gen-

erally used, particularly with small buildings. In the erection of church buildings frequently much labor, material and supplies are donated. As the amount of loans and insurance a building will carry depends on its cost, it is quite proper that all such donations of real value—such as were needed and would have cost the church money—should be added to the cost.

The second method, market value, means the price the property would bring on the market between a willing buyer and a willing seller; that is, when there is no forced sale. A sale at auction frequently does not represent the true market value.

The replacement value means exactly what the term implies. A building may have cost much more when it was erected than it will cost to put up a similar building today, or vice versa. This method, of course, is not practicable for church property.

If the cost or market value of property, after making due allowance for depreciation and obsolescence, is not known, then an appraisal should be made. An appraisal is based upon experience, therefore, it is necessary to have men who are experts in such matters to make an estimate. Men who deal in real estate are frequently called upon for this purpose. As repairs, depreciation and obsolescence have much to do with the value of property these subjects will be treated in a subsequent article.

If you are interested in securing a used set of The Pulpit Commentary (51 volumes), which the owner states is in fairly good condition, for thirty dollars cash, plus transportation charges, address Nazarene Publishing House, 2923 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### Carelessness Concerning the Souls of Men

When I was pastor of First Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, one day I walked into Brother G. E. Johnson's grocery store. At this time he was a beautifully converted and sanctified man, had a good Christian wife and two lovely saved girls. Brother Johnson was born in Sweden, and he came from military stock, but in his early manhood he left home and came to America. He plunged deeply into sin and drank the dregs of human woe. For more than twenty years he gambled, smoked, drank intoxicating liquor and indulged in all the grosser forms of sin. He lived in the dens of Chicago. Cigarettes, dope and liquor sapped his physical strength. He did not draw a sober breath for twenty years. He was so far gone physically at the time of conversion that he could not retain in his stomach a tablespoonful of milk. Dead drunk on Washington Avenue, Minneapolis, he stood in the street meeting and talked back to the mission workers as they testified and sang gospel songs. Someone spoke kindly to him, took him into the mission, stayed with him until four o'clock in the morning, and about daybreak the light of heaven broke into his soul and the burden of sin rolled away. He was later gloriously sanctified and joined the Church of the Nazarene. I had the privilege of receiving him and his entire family into First Church, Minneapolis.

The call to the ministry was upon him. He obeyed. After a while he was ushered by the Spirit into the evangelistic field. He and his daughters and his good wife went over the nation and won multiplied thousands of souls to Christ and he died suddenly in the midst of a great revival and went to his reward, but hear now these sad words, "Brother Wordsworth, I could have been won to God twenty years sooner if someone had spoken to me about my soul." I shall never forget these words as long as I live. And I recall that David said, "No man cared for my soul." Finney said, "Millions of souls will be in hell because of the carelessness of the church." Lord, have mercy on us!—Submitted by E. E. WORDSWORTH.

### Love Covers a Multitude of Sins

Who ever heard of an affectionate mother going around among all the neighbors saying, "Did you know that my daughter has fallen? She has lost her virtue and is morally depraved? Did you know that my son was arrested for being drunk? Did you know he was so drunk he tried to kill a man the other night? And did you hear about him beating up his good wife and children and he would not let them come in the house on that awful cold night? And, Mrs. Neighbor, I have come over to show you all the birthmarks and scars on my child. She also has many mental defects; in fact she is almost idiotic." Is this what a true mother does? No! the mother covers a multitude of blemishes, shortcomings and weaknesses of the child because of her love. She would let her blood freeze in her veins rather than expose her child.—Submitted by E. E. WORDSWORTH.

### Love Never Faileth

Sam Hadley, who had been saved from a terrible life of sin and degradation, later became a mission worker in the Bowery, New York. During the time that Hadley had charge of the mission an unvirtuous and sin-besmirched woman known to mission workers as the "old hag" would come to the mission for food and money. Other mission workers laughed at Sam's "freshness." They told him he would soon learn better. She "worked" all the missions like that and thus got her living. Sam always replied, "There are no hopeless cases with God." And his Bible said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Sam quoted to them this passage and kept on feeding the "old hag" and giving her money. This continued for many months. But Sam also tactfully talked to her about salvation, prayed for her, but received nothing but abuse. But one night the "old hag" fell on her knees and confessed her sins and was gloriously converted. She asked Hadley's forgiveness. She later became a very efficient worker in the mission. "Love never faileth."—Submitted by E. E. WORDSWORTH.

### Unbelief: Often Due to Unrepentance

Charles Spurgeon tells of the minister who was walking in the woods of North Canada one summer evening in meditation, when he missed the trail and wandered farther than he had expected to. Presently he came upon a large clearing where a young infidel was making a lecture against the fact of God. There was a large congregation gathered to hear him and at the conclusion of his address they applauded loudly. The young man, waxing bold, then asked if anyone could answer his arguments. For a moment there was silence, then an old woodsman arose and related the story of how just yesterday he had heard as he walked along the bank of a certain river the screams for help from one whose boat had capsized in the stream. He went on to tell how the drowning man had prayed for God to have mercy upon him and save his poor soul. As the old woodsman sat down he said, "And that, ladies and gentleman, is the young

man who has just addressed you and whom only yesterday I saved from drowning."

Too many so-called unbelievers lose all their boasting and unbelief when they face some real crisis where they need God.—*Submitted by R. E. PRICE.*

### Standing the Test

It is said that Napoleon once ordered a coat of mail. When the artisan completed it, he delivered it to the emperor, who ordered him to put it on himself. Then Napoleon, taking a pistol, fired shot after shot at the man in armor. It stood this severe test, and the emperor bestowed upon the maker a large reward. We are reminded of the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the Ephesians and said, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). The panoply which is mentioned here refers to the armor of the heavy troops among the Greeks; those who were to sustain the strongest attacks, who were to undermine the foundations of walls, storm the cities and bare the breast to the foe. The Christian's armor as found in Ephesians, chapter 6, will stand the test. It is both offensive and defensive.—*Submitted by E. E. WORDSWORTH.*

### Ramblings from the Roving Correspondent

No one thing in the entire gamut of church activities gives me as much concern as the altar service. I sometimes think that we are less efficient there than anywhere else. And it is here as everyone will admit, that we need to be particularly effective. The increasing emphasis placed upon the necessity of trained Sunday school workers is encouraging but our altar services, which are certainly far more vital, are conducted with no plan, no organization, no training, and no required qualifications. What can be done about it? I don't know. I wish someone would give me the solution. I do think that some simple improvements could be effected without making them too revolutionary.

I knew a pastor, wise and courageous both was he, who selected from his membership certain men and women to work with seekers at the altar. I don't remember that he experienced any unpleasant reaction because of this plan. Men and women are selected as Sunday school teachers. A few men are picked to serve as ushers. Why should any individual, especially a saved and sanctified man or woman, fuss because he or she is not included in a selected list of workers? Such a picked group could be given a short course in personal work. They could be instructed in the proper use of the Bible in dealing with penitents. And that is important! No seeker should be permitted to leave an altar without having some Scripture read to him. I have frequently quailed at the absence of instruction, at the seemingly haphazard and free-for-all methods at our altars. Something should be done about it!

### Conscience

On my way to preach in a revival meeting at Carrington, N. D., I noticed a group of cars near a strawstack in a field some little distance from the highway. Advancing among the silent, gazing men I there saw lightly covered with straw, just as they had been sleeping, two men cold in death. Their heads were crushed. They had been murdered in their sleep. The guilty person had left no clew as to his identity. Months later in a distant city, a transient applied for a bed at the police station. He was given a room near the night office. Policemen heard him pacing the floor restlessly in the night. Martinson, chief of police and an old Salvation Army worker, understood the working of a guilty conscience, suspected the transient and held him for questioning. He confessed that in a threshing crew two men had pestered him, hounded him, tormented him till he hated them with murderous hatred. He heard that they were sleeping at the strawstack, sneaked up on them in the darkness and with a broken pump handle killed both before either awakened from sleep. Memory, a guilty conscience, remorse drove sleep from the guilty man's eyes. He was glad to confess.—*Submitted by IRA E. HAMMER.*

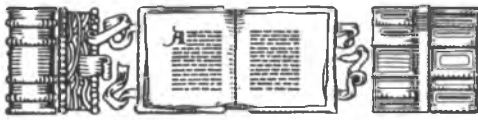
My father died leaving my mother with six of us children to provide for. One day one of my brothers had to have a pair of shoes. Mother told me to see what the price would be; and I told her \$2.50. She took her Bible and went to the barn. After praying for some time I heard her coming to the house singing. I went to meet her, and she said, "You can get the shoes tomorrow for God gave me the witness we would have the money then." Just as she was telling me that, our dog chased a rabbit past us and it ran into a hole. I set a trap in the hole and next morning I had a skunk in the trap. My cousin came over and gave us \$2.50 for it just as it was in the trap. Mother said, "Praise the Lord, there's the money for the shoes."—*Submitted by LOY SNOW.*

### Divine Healing

We were a group of preachers homeward bound from a District Assembly. While on the way one of the men became very sick and was suffering intensely. All were sympathetic, but that did not seem to help much. Suddenly the driver of the car said, "Brethren, the thing we ought to do is to stop here on the road, lay hands on this man, and pray the prayer of faith for his healing." The car was stopped just off the highway on the open prairie. They had a great time in prayer around that preacher. The glory came down with assurance that God had answered, and that assurance was so clear and definite that the prayer broke up with a time of shouting and rejoicing. However the pain did not cease. The rest of the day and the following night suffering continued. But the preacher's faith never wavered; he was still believing God for his healing. Suddenly the next day, while still traveling, he was a well man. Divine healing is not always instantaneous at the time of prayer. It is no less the work of God and the result of the prayer of faith if it be delayed or is gradual.—*Submitted by IRA E. HAMMER.*

I awoke one morning in a mood not at all pleasant because the dust was blowing ferociously and everything was dark. I got up, turned on the light, but there was no light. I called the light plant, but found everything to be all right there. We looked at our meter and found that some dirt had gotten behind the fuse. How many times we are in darkness because the storm of life has caused something to get between our heart and God. Yet the power is still there as it was in the light plant, but we cannot reach it because of the dark spot in our heart.—*Submitted by ZITA MAE HOLMES,*

## BOOK CHAT



P. H. Lunn

**T**HAT prolific writer and compiler of books for ministers—William H. Leach—has added another volume to his list. This one is *THE MAKING OF A MINISTER* (Cokesbury—\$1.50). It is not a book of pastoral theology as the title might suggest but rather one that deals with the practical problems which confront a wide-awake minister in any one of his 365 busy days. Here is a definitely worth while book that deserves a place in any denomination's course of study for undergraduate ministers. And there probably is no minister, no matter what his record of service but who could profit considerably from the suggestions found in it. Each one of the fourteen chapters deals with one particular field of ministerial preparation or activity. Chapter one, logically enough, discusses the minister's background. Then follows (2) The Minister's Background, (3) The First Years of Disillusionment, (4) The Minister's Economic Security, and what tragic smash-ups could have been avoided by many good men had they followed advice given here, (5) The Productive Years, (6) The Ethics of the Parsonage, (7) The Minister in His Community, (8) The Leader in His Church, (9) The Minister as a Pastor, (10) The Minister's Personal Evangelism, (11) The Minister in His Pulpit, (12) Ministerial Ethics (sound advice and invaluable counsel here); (13) The Destruction that Wasteth at Noonday; (14) The Recessional, (in which retirement and its adjustments are discussed). In the Book Man's judgment this book merits A1 rating.

Sir Charles Maston whose earlier book, "New Bible Evidence," has had an enviable circulation is the author of another book on the same theme, *THE BIBLE COMES ALIVE* (Revell—\$2.00). Students of archeology will welcome this new volume covering the latest discoveries in archeological research. The book needs no commendation. The author's name is sufficient. Neither does a book of this kind lend itself to a brief review. We merely announce it for the benefit of those of our readers who are interested in this subject.

## Obey—It Is God's Plan for You

E. G. SLEMMER

*So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Dib-laim (Hosea 1:3).*

**H**OSEA obeyed God. Throughout his life and ministry he seems to have been singularly devoted and true. Why God should thus condemn his servant to a life of sorrow may seem strange to us, but an intimate study of Hosea's career will reveal many things of value to all.

Hosea obeyed implicitly God's command of verse 2 even though it seems obviously to have been against all reason and righteousness; and for most of his life he knew sorrow and anguish because of Gomer's unfaithfulness. See, then, how God has prepared him to see as He sees and to speak as from the heart of God while pleading with that wicked

and adulterous nation. His very suffering made him the more powerful pleader for Israel to return to her first love—to God who had wooed her from the land of bondage and the desert of suffering. How tender must have been his cry when, speaking for Jehovah while his heart thrills with anguish for Gomer the unfaithful, he exclaims, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel?"

How necessary it is that a true prophet must understand the heart of God. The minister of righteousness today is but a dismal failure whose eyes are not opened to see as God sees, to feel as God feels, and to love good and hate evil even as jealously as does Jehovah himself. His way with mankind now may not be the same as He used with Hosea, but the man of God who is not especially prepared, by some method, to think, feel and act as God thinks, feels and acts as deceiving himself when he thinks the hand of God is upon him for service.

Can you see sin as God sees it—"a monster of such hideous mien" that a holy God cannot look upon it with any degree of compassion? Can you see a line of demarcation between a sinner and his sin? And, while you see sin in all its hideous loathsomeness and hate it as God hates it, can you still love the sinner to such a degree that you will agonize before God for his deliverance; really suffering as Hosea did—as Jesus did—that you may stand between him and death for his salvation?

When you are able to do this, you are indeed a man of God. When you are willing and ready to do this, you are a child of God. When you do this, you stand as a prophet of God and will accomplish the salvation of some for whom Christ died. Until you are able and willing and ready to do this, though you profess to be a man of God, you will be but a pitiful failure and your ministry will be a byword even in the mouths of sinners.

If God has called you, let Him prepare you. Your Gomer may not be of flesh and blood, but if given of God it will prepare you for successful ministry.

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12).

## Valuable Help for Stewardship Committees

The Layman Company, which co-operates with all denominations, will send for one dollar, to any committee or individual, on approval a package containing over 500 pages of pamphlets, bulletins and tabloids, including three playlets, "The Scriptural Basis for the Tithe," and an account book; also a proposal for a Ten Weeks of Tithe Education at so low a price that distribution to an entire church through ten weeks costs only three and a half cents a family.

When you write please mention the *PREACHER'S MAGAZINE*; also give your denomination.

THE LAYMAN COMPANY, 730 Rush Street, Chicago.

## THE PREACHER'S WORKSHOP

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

Roy E. Swim

### Keeping Out of the Rut

There is always the peril threatening the preacher that by following his particular interest he will find himself in a rut in his preaching. It is comparatively easy to fall for the temptation to become a specialist on an interesting theme, such as prophecy, divine healing, or the divinely ordained destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race. But interesting and even important themes do not constitute a well balanced or all time spiritual diet. The great themes of the gospel that relate vitally to the interests of time and eternity need to be stressed recurrently. The *Free Methodist* suggests a list of some such central themes which must constitute the main track of preaching. A preaching plan which makes large place for these great themes will do much to save us from the rut.

The Existence of God.  
The Inspiration of the Scriptures.  
The Humanity of Christ.  
The Deity of Christ.  
Christ in Prophecy.  
The Birth of Christ.  
Christ as Our Example.  
The Teachings of Christ.  
The Atonement.  
The Resurrection.  
The Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit.  
The Work of the Holy Spirit.  
The Depravity of Man.  
The Judgment.  
Immortality.  
Future Rewards.  
Future Punishments.  
Repentance.  
The First Experience in Grace.  
The Second Experience in Grace.  
The Witness of the Spirit.  
Growth in Grace.  
The Love of God.  
The Fatherhood of God.  
Satan.  
The Lord's Supper.  
Baptism.  
The Sabbath.  
Light.  
Faith.  
Delusions.  
Prayer.  
Worship.  
Holiness.  
Christian Standards.  
Christian Living.  
Evil Speaking.  
Stewardship.  
Death.

Grace.

The Church of Christ.

The Early Christian Church.

The Second Coming of Christ.

And, the editor suggests, there are fifty more of great importance.

### The Fire of the Holy Ghost

It is fire that prevails. For fifty days the facts of the gospel were complete, but no conversions were recorded. Pentecost registered three thousand souls. It is the cause that sets men ablaze which wins converts. Gladstone's fiery passion routed parliaments and slew the giants of oppression. Wesley, Whitefield and General Booth wrought wonders by the fire kindled of the Holy Ghost. Men ablaze are invincible, hell trembles when men kindle. Sin, worldliness, unbelief, hell, are proof against everything but fire. The Church is powerless without the fire of the Holy Ghost. Destitute of fire, nothing else really matters. The one vital need is fire. How we may receive it, where we may find it, by what means we may retain it, are the most vital and urgent questions of our time. One thing we know, it comes only with the presence of the Spirit of God, himself the Spirit of Fire. God alone can send the fire. It is His pentecostal gift.—SAMUEL CHADWICK.

### When the Holy Spirit Fills

(John 14:16-20, 26; 15:16; 16:13)

When the Holy Spirit fills: He imparts knowledge, of Christ's relation to the Father and of the believer's relation to God through Christ; He fills the mind by bringing to it the sayings of Christ; He determines utterance—"Ye shall bear witness"; He strengthens with might the inner man and works within complete cleansing from inward sin; He guides the soul into truth in all its fullness.—J. R. PITT in *The Wesleyan Methodist*.

### Titles of Deity in the Old Testament

These various titles suggest different aspects of God's character in relation to His creatures. They do not represent different gods or tribal "deities" as higher critics assert.

1. Elohim, translated "God"—used of God as Creator.
2. Jehovah, translated "Lord"—God in relation to man, the Unchangeable One (Gen. 21:3).
3. El—God, the Omnipotent.

4. Eloah—God who is to be worshiped (Deut. 32:15, 17).

5. Elyon—the Most High God (Gen. 14:18).

6. Shaddai—the All Bountiful One (Gen. 17:1).

7. Adon, translated "Lord"—meaning Master or Ruler.

There are various combinations of the above, bearing their special significance in every place.

"Jehovah" or "Lord" is Deity, especially as the Friend and Companion of man. The name of Jehovah is combined with ten other words, forming the "Jehovah titles."

1. Jehovah Jireh (Gen. 22:14).—"The Lord will provide."

2. Jehovah Ropheka (Ex. 15:26).—"The Lord that healeth."

3. Jehovah Nissi (Ex. 17:15).—"The Lord my banner."

4. Jehovah M'Kaddishken (Ezek. 20:12).—"The Lord who sanctifies."

5. Jehovah Shalom (Judges 6:24).—"The Lord my peace."

6. Jehovah Ze Baath (1 Sam. 1:3).—"The Lord of Hosts."

7. Jehovah Zidkenu (Jer. 23:6).—"The Lord our righteousness."

8. Jehovah Shamma (Ezek. 48:35).—"The Lord is there."

9. Jehovah Elyon (Psalm 7:17).—"The Lord Most High."

10. Jehovah Roi (Psalm 23:1).—"The Lord my Shepherd."—*The Methodist*.

### Six Points on the Christian Tongue

In a document recently discovered, written in John Wesley's own hand the following set of principles governing the speech life was drawn up and agreed to by a group of Wesley's preachers.

1. That we will not listen to, or willingly inquire after, any ill concerning each other.

2. That if we do hear any ill of each other we will not be forward to believe it.

3. That as soon as possible we will communicate what we hear, by speaking or writing to the person concerned.

4. That till we have done this, we will not write or speak a syllable of it to any other person whatever.

5. That neither will we mention it, after we have done this, to any other person whatever.

6. That we will not make any exception to these rules, unless we think ourselves obligated in conscience to do so.

(Signed) John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Lumbath, Jonathan Reves, Joseph Connelly, Thomas Maxwell, John Haines.—*Christian Advocate*.

### Presentee Evangelism

The supreme business of every Christian layman is finding the unsaved and telling them the good news of salvation. Let every Christian be in his pew. No absentee can be an evangelist.—*Bulletin*, First Church, Detroit.

### Prophecies Fulfilling

It would seem that the scenery of the world stage, on which world events are to be enacted, is being set by invisible forces for some great drama; and the various nations, or characters, are moving to their positions, all according to the plan—the plan outlined in prophecies that are thousands of years old.—SIR CHARLES MARSTON.

Before the hills in order stood,  
Or earth received her fame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.

### The New Roman Empire

Standing in Rome in the spring of this year I realized how the history of mankind is viewed and judged in intervals that are too short and therefore inadequate. The history of a millennium comprised only a few successions of generations. What becomes exhausted in the present can rise up again in the same time. The Italy and Germany of today are proof of this. They are rejuvenated nations that one may describe as new in this sense.

But this youth does not rest on new soil, but on old historic soil. The Roman empire begins to breathe again; however, though historically and infinitely younger, it is likewise no new creation in its national new form.

\* \* \* \*

The new Italian Roman empire and the German empire are in all truth very old creations. People do not need to love them, but no power in the world can any more remove them.

—ADOLPH HITLER at Nuremberg, September 12, 1938.

### Anti-Christ Propaganda?

A dispatch by Religious News Service from London lists twenty-two points from an anti-Catholic, anti-Christian, atheistic leaflet circulated among Hitler youth in Austria. Among the propositions laid down were these:

Christianity is a religion for slaves and fools. For example it says, "The last shall be first" and "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

Christianity is equivalent with communism.

Christianity puts Niggers on an equality with Germans.

The church is international.

German culture was on a high level before Christianity and has been annihilated by it.

Christianity was always heterogeneous and hostile to the German people and their unification.

There is no Christian culture.

Christianity was nowhere desired, but pushed itself in everywhere.

Christianity has corrupted Germans, acquainting them with conceptions, such

as theft and adultery, which were previously unknown to them.

Christianity is an alternative to Judaism and also made by Jews.

Jesus was a Jew.

How did Christ die? Whimpering on the cross. And how did Planetta (the murderer of Dollfuss) die? He cried out, "Heil Hitler! Long live Germany."

The Ten Commandments are the expression of the lowest human instincts.

A good people does not need a Savior; only a bad people.

Nero was quite right to persecute the Christians.

—*The Christian Evangelist.*

### The Word Endures

And the grand old Book still stands;

And the old earth,

The more its leaves are turned and pondered,

The more will it

Sustain and illustrate the sacred word.

—DANA.

### Futility

There is nothing so characteristic of our age as the sense of futility that has taken hold of many minds. We have had our way and now we find we don't want our way. We have practiced self-expression and have come to the conclusion that we do not like the self which we are trying to express. For many life turns gray and meaningless.—E. STANLEY JONES.

### A Preacher Needs—

The preacher of today needs the courage of a Luther, the compassionate spirit of a Phillips Brooks, the tireless industry of a John Wesley, the missionary passion of an Adoniram Judson, the force and fire of a Savonarola. And there can be no fire in the pulpit unless the preacher starts it and is willing to be consumed by the conflagration.—EDGAR D. JONES in *Exchange*.

### For Thee

FRANCIS R. HAVERGAL

I spent long years for thee,

In weariness and woe,

That an eternity of joy

Thou mightest know!

I spent long years for thee,

What hast thou spent for me?

And I have brought to thee,

Down from my home above,

Salvation full and free,

My pardon and my love.

Great gifts I brought to thee,

What hast thou brought to me?

Oh, let thy life be given,

Thy years for Him be spent;

World-fetters all be riven,

And joy with suffering blent;

I gave myself for thee.

Give thou thyself for me.

## For Your Bulletin

### Little Things

Little self-denials, little honesties, little passing words of sympathy, little nameless acts of kindness, little silent victories over favorite temptations—these are the silent threads of gold, which, when woven together, gleam out so brightly in the pattern of life that God approves.—CANON FARRAR.

### Is There a Difference?

A small boy, who was a member of a mission band, confessed with shame that a quarter for peanuts looked as big as a pinhead, and a quarter for missions as big as a cart wheel! Have you grown up?—*Kansas City District Voice.*

### Where Come Missions?

Did you know that in Canada the ratio of expenditure for cosmetics as against missions is three to one? Missions occupy about the same position in national expenditure as dog licenses. What about the good old U. S. A.?

### Unappreciated Advice

Advice is offensive, not because it convicts us of any fault which has escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes the superiority which we are not willing to grant him.—JOHNSON.

### The Eloquence that Counts

"Don't say things. What you are stands over you the while and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary."—EMERSON.

### Temptation

Temptation is a fearful word. It indicates the beginning of a possible series of infinite evils. It is the ringing of an alarm bell, whose melancholy sounds may reverberate through eternity. Like the sudden, sharp cry of "Fire!" under our windows in the night, it should rouse us to instantaneous action, and brace every moral muscle to its highest tension.—HORACE MANN.

### Fortune

Fortune came and loudly knocked

At my door, with cheery hail;

But alas, for Fortune's labors

I was over at my neighbor's

Pouring out a hard luck tale.

—ANONYMOUS.

### Be Constructive

A good thing to remember

And a better thing to do,

Is to work with the construction gang

And not the wrecking crew.

—SELECTED.



# HOMILETICAL

Beginning with this issue "The Preaching Program," providing sermon suggestions for each Sunday service of the year, will be contributed by Rev. J. Glenn Gould, pastor of First Church, Cleveland, Ohio. He has been requested to prepare these suggestions in more detailed form than a mere skeleton—more in the nature of a "sermon heart." This he has done admirably in the material submitted for this issue. The entire year's sermon suggestions will cover a variety of themes, it will be a pattern for the average pastor to follow in his preaching program. Rev. Gould has been raised in the Church of the Nazarene, is the son of a Nazarene minister, and has had outstanding success as a pastor and preacher. We are sure our subscribers will be pleased with the material presented.—MANAGING EDITOR.

## A PREACHING PROGRAM FOR JANUARY

J. GLENN GOULD

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 1939

MORNING SERVICE

THE INTEGRATED LIFE

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Psalm 27:1-6; Phil. 3:7-14.

TEXT—*One thing have I desired of the Lord* (Psalm 27:4).

*One thing I know* (John 9:25). *This one thing I do* (Phil. 3:13).

I. We use the word "integrity" so frequently in its secondary meaning that its basic significance is not often brought home to us. Analysis of its root meaning reveals the fact that it is derived from the word "integer"; which means "a complete entity; a whole number in contradistinction to a fraction or a mixed number." Therefore, the word "integrity," in its fundamental meaning, denotes the "state or quality of being complete, undivided, or unbroken." In consequence, the integrated life is a life that is well-rounded, complete, undivided; one that is organized around a fixed and dominating principle.

1. There is nothing more tragic than a life in which this necessary quality is missing; a life that has been and now is a continual process of disintegration. Everywhere are men who have never found their proper place in the economic life of the world, and as a result are shiftless and thriftless. They have never found the occupation for which they were best suited, with tragic results. Others there are whose social and marital lives have been disorganized and demoralized by this same fateful omission. They have never acknowledged any high and noble principle by which they dare to live, and the results have been woefully tragic. Still others have never found their way in spiritual and eternal matters; and their religious experience has been a prolonged series of meaningless and fruitless floundering. And all of these deplorable failures in the fine art of noble living have been due to the lack of co-ordinating and controlling principles around which life could be integrated.

2. On the other hand, what rare and heavenly beauty there is in a life that has a high and holy objective, a clear sense of direction, and a loyalty to the noblest principles of worth while living. Perhaps the finest example of that sort of living is the life of our Lord. At twelve years of age he was conscious of a divine commission. His temptation experience in the wilderness demonstrated that He would not be turned aside from the task the Father had committed to

His hand. With utmost devotion He held Himself to the Father's will; and when it became clear that He must die on a cross, He set His face resolutely toward Jerusalem. What a nobly beautiful life our Lord lived, integrated around the principle of unswerving loyalty to the will of God!

3. We all envy such a life as that, and wish it were possible for us to imitate the sort of integrity that filled the mind and soul of Jesus. We all acknowledge that life's only comfort, peace and joy are found in the integration of our lives around those same high and holy principles that proved to be so compelling in the life of Jesus. But so frequently we dismiss the matter there, overlooking completely that God has not only made such integration possible to us by His grace, but actually requires that we shall live in our sphere as loyally and devotedly as Jesus did in His.

Now, it is such a unifying of life that is set forth in these texts, so widely separated in the Scriptures, but so strikingly related in principle. "One thing have I desired," declares the psalmist. "One thing I know," testifies that man born blind. "This one thing I do," asserts St. Paul. Standing here on the very threshold of a new year, it will profit us to investigate this glorious possibility in the realm of noble Christian living, and adopt it as our objective during the twelve months before us.

### II. "One thing have I desired of the Lord."

1. It is certain that this is not a natural state either with David or with me. By nature we are in that wilful state described by St. Paul when he said, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did . . ." It is not native to the soul that a man accept one supreme hunger as the one to which he will pay heed, and that a hunger for God.

2. There is a process of conviction by which the claims of God and eternal things lay hold on the soul of man. Awakened by the Holy Spirit, brought by the Spirit's gracious ministry to the place where one sees his need of God, one comes to the moment when his soul cries out its consent to God's will and God's way; and the distracting and conflicting claims that are natural to the soul give way before a new integration around the blessed will of God.

3. And you will note that that new integrating principle in the life of the psalmist centered in God. He had one supreme desire, and only one, and while he expressed his desire in threefold form, it can be seen easily to center in God. It was (1) that he might dwell in God's presence—"that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life"; (2) that he might see God's face, "to behold the beauty of the Lord"; and (3) that he might hear God's voice, "to enquire in his temple." Such was the dominating principle around which his life was integrated.

### III. "One thing I know."

1. Let us now make a mental leap over into one of the most fascinating scenes in our Lord's ministry. Christ and His disciples had come upon a man who had been blind from birth; and the compassionate Savior showed him mercy forthwith. He put clay upon his eyes and instructed him to go to the pool of Siloam and wash. And the Word says, in its forthright fashion, "He went . . . and washed and came seeing."

At once the news of this remarkable healing was broadcast. His neighbors and friends rejoiced in his good fortune. Even the Pharisees might have found something to commend in this astonishing deliverance if only someone other than Jesus had wrought it. As it was, they had only one thought—to discredit the episode as far as possible. And since the healing itself could not be gainsaid, it was the Healer against whom their malignity was directed. All this occurred on the Sabbath; and to heal thus on that holy day in the eyes of the Pharisees was a mortal sin. Prompted by the deep-rooted depravity of their evil hearts, they endeavored by every

cunning device to break down the testimony of the man born blind; but to no avail. To the suggestion that Christ was a sinner, he gave this ringing testimony, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

2. God has no argument more completely unanswerable than the man with an experience. The enemies of Christ may attack our doctrines and seem to demolish our reasoning. By cunning and chicanery they may seem to answer all our labored arguments. But the man who can cry, "One thing I know!" is bound to have the final word. Christian experience is the court of last appeal.

3. And it is certainty that Christ is able to give to men. In fact He alone is able to give it. The world is seeking it elsewhere in vain. The man who has met Christ has had a soul-transforming experience; and from that hour possesses a quietness and confidence that can withstand all the buffeting of time and circumstance. Christian experience gives one a fixed principle around which life and character can be integrated.

#### IV. "This one thing I do."

1. This is the testimony of the aged imprisoned Paul. He is nearing the close of a life of marvelous integrity. When we first see him, all his interests revolve around self as a center. But in one glorious moment with Christ all that is changed. The center of his life shifted then and there from self to Christ. And from the moment of that initial revelation down to his latest breath loyalty to Jesus was the integrating principle in his personality.

2. Here, nearing life's end, he is still facing a most enticing future, and declares his solemn determination, "This one thing I do." What was that purpose?

(1) To forget the past, in the proper sense. One must forget its sins, once they are covered by the blood. One must forget its failures, lest they destroy faith for success today. And one must forget its successes, lest they promote a feeling of overconfidence in self and underconfidence in God.

(2) To reach forth toward the things that were ahead. The apostle was always looking toward tomorrow. And if it so happened that tomorrow meant eternity, there would be even more cause for rejoicing.

(3) And, finally, he determined he would achieve his goal at any cost. There must be no failure. "I press toward the mark for the prize." Almost ready for his laurel crown was the aged saint. And so down to the end he was a man of rare and holy integrity.

V. Here, then, is the perfectly integrated life, the picture of what God wills you and I should be in 1939. One thing I desire, and that is the smile and favor of God, who loves me better than I know. One thing I know; that, whatever goes or comes, I am Christ's and He is mine. This one thing I do; forgetting the past, with all its defeats and victories, I face the untried possibilities of this new year and solemnly purpose to live it for Christ.

### EVENING SERVICE ONE MORE YEAR

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Luke 12:49—13:9.

TEXT—*Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down* (Luke 13:8, 9).

I. This parable of our Lord occurs in a chapter laden with words of the gravest warning, and follows after one of the most faithful admonitions Jesus ever spoke. There prevailed in the first century, as also in our day, the misconception that misfortune is a sure mark of the displeasure of God. The evil suffer, while the good are exempt. And, so it was believed, the mere fact of suffering was sufficient evidence that the sufferer was of some "lesser breed, without the law," to use Kipling's phrase. This mistaken notion wrought its most serious harm in the minds of these religious fellows who were

constantly opposing our Lord. They reasoned, very directly and simply, that since misfortune had not visited them, they were therefore enjoying God's smile and favor.

1. It was against this smug and ill-founded complacency that Jesus directed His word of warning. Just who those slaughtered Galileans were, we do not know. And no clue is given as to the identity of the unfortunates upon whom the tower of Siloam fell. But Jesus' warning cannot be misunderstood. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

2. The Master then turned directly from that repeated warning to the parable that is before us tonight. It was a familiar and graphic picture He drew. His hearers had seen more than one situation like it in real life. The owner of the vineyard looked in vain for figs on his fig tree; and finally, in a gesture fully justified, he orders that it be cut down. But then the dresser of the vineyard puts in the plea of our text. An eloquent, moving plea it was, and it gained for the fruitless fig tree one year more.

The meaning of the parable was clear enough. That fig tree was the Jewish nation. The vineyard was God's peculiar dealings with Israel. In the very center of His favor they had lived for centuries, but were fruitless. And the owner of the vineyard, God himself, had ordered that they be cut off. But Christ, the vinedresser, pleads for them. And as a result, God in infinite mercy, had granted them one year more.

Of course, as history makes abundantly clear, the respite was in vain. The additional year did not change the situation materially, and in time the judgments of God broke upon them.

#### II. But there are some eternal principles involved in this situation that we would do well to hear and heed.

1. *One of them is this: That to whom much is given, of him much shall be required.*

(1) Certainly God had been liberal in His mercies to Israel. Theirs were the patriarchs and the fathers, the priests and the prophets. The Scriptures had made them rich above all other peoples. The benefits of the Lord had rained upon them without measure; and even God's judgments had been a mark of His love for them and His favor to them. And, finally, He had given them His Son, only to have Him rejected and crucified.

(2) But God has given infinitely more to us than He gave to Israel. We have an open Bible; not simply the law and the prophets, but the Gospels as well. Moreover, we live on this side of a finished atonement. Jesus has died once for all for our sins, and we are the direct beneficiaries of His suffering. But, in addition to Christ's redemptive work, He is at the father's right hand today making intercession for us. And finally, as a token of God's peculiar mercy to us, we have the Holy Spirit to plead with us and to bring to bear upon us influences that are calculated to bring us to salvation.

This being our situation, some measure of our responsibility to God can easily be seen.

2. *Another eternal principle involved in this parable is this: That we cannot receive God's benefits and be exempt from His judgments.*

(1) The owner of the vineyard expected fruit of his tree. His expectation was reasonable and well-founded. It was the nature of the fig tree to bear figs, and the bearing time was now three years overdue. He was certainly not asking too much of his tree, and his impatience was fully justified.

(2) God expected of Israel an ear attentive to His message and a heart to obey His voice. He had cared for them as a nursing father and comforted them with all the tender compassion of a mother. He had committed unto them the oracles of God, all of them designed to pave the way for the Messiah's coming. And He had every reason to expect that they would receive His Son.

(3) But God expects of us a yielding to Christ; a walking in the light He has given us; a disposition to obey His will.

After the ransom price He paid for us on Calvary, He has a valid claim on the love and loyalty of us all. To deny Him this is to mark us as ingrates of darkest hue.

3. *The third eternal principle is this: That a sentence of judgment impends at this very moment.*

Men without Christ are lost men, and are lost here and now. God is justly angry for the sins of men, and has spoken in judgment against them.

(1) "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" What a biting condemnation that is, as directed against Christ-rejecters! Cumberers of the ground! And yet, in view of His past mercies, and His infinite patience and love, that bitter sentence is entirely justified. When God looks at our sins, He has a perfect right in justice to say, "Cut him down."

(2) But here is another pleading voice, saying repeatedly and insistently, "One year more." It is the voice of Christ who so pleads. He is the minister of God's mercy, by whose pleadings the just wrath of a righteous God is held in check. And He pleads, "Let it alone this year also." Give that sinning soul another chance to repent and turn to God.

(3) But, faithful though Jesus is as an intercessor, it is clear that His pleadings can secure only a reprieve, and not a pardon. He can delay the execution of the sentence God has spoken, but He cannot of Himself set it aside. And many times even the reprieves that God gives us, for Jesus' sake, are made the occasion for new offenses. As the preacher declared, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11).

(4) Thank God, there is pardon for past sins and present deliverance from the power of sin. But if we ever enjoy it, it will be because the pleadings of Christ on our behalf are supplemented by confession and repentance on our part. Only by submission to the will and way of Christ can pardon and deliverance be ours.

### III. One year more!

1. God, in mercy has given us one more year. We have just completed it. Many had only a part of it, or scarcely any of it. But we have had it all. Moreover, we have entered upon still another year, with all of its uncertainty and untried possibilities. We have been receiving additional mercy; and these gracious boons are with us still. And as our privileges increase, our responsibility increases in proportion. More and more it becomes apparent that there is only one way through for us—the way of yielding to Jesus Christ as Lord and Master.

2. And having had another year, what use have we made of it? And granting we shall finish the year we are now beginning, what do we propose to do about our obligations to God? God grant that at next year's end the searching eye of God will find in our lives the fruit He seeks! Then shall the Savior see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 1939

### MORNING SERVICE

#### OUR LORD'S DEDICATION

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 17.

TEXT—*For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth* (John 17:19).

1. Our modern age has lost sight, in the main, of the supreme purpose of God in the gift of our Lord to earth.

1. Christ did not come to our earth to be, primarily, the outstanding exemplar of holy living and dying. It is true He did exemplify in His earthly career those virtues of holiness, courage, loyalty and fortitude that make His life, as someone has said, "the richest, fullest life our earth has ever known." It was not, however, that He might thus afford an unparalleled example of noble living, and merely this, that our Lord dwelt among men.

Nor did Jesus live on the earth simply for the purpose of providing a moral idealism that would challenge the heroic in

us. There are those who look at the cross of Jesus and can see in it no religious value other than a stimulus to a similar courageous and devoted self-sacrifice. An interpretation of the career of Jesus that ends here falls woefully short of an adequate understanding of the depth of our human need and the infinitely glorious provision God has made to meet that need.

2. For the purpose of God in the gift of His Son to earth was a *redemptive purpose*, first, last and always. God gave His Son that men might be reached in their sin and shame and be lifted out of the depths of despair. Moreover, our Lord's life and death were redemptive in the sense that they make possible to mankind a complete recovery of the moral image of God, lost through sin. To put it tersely, the coming of Jesus provides pardon from our outward transgressions and cleansing from our inward corruption.

II. In this hallowed prayer Christ gives supremely significant expression to this divine purpose in His petition, "Sanctify them." In other words, "Make them holy. Recover them completely from every trace of selfishness and sin. Make them to be one with me in heart and purpose."

1. This expression is significant because it is expressed in the language of supplication. Jesus is addressing Himself to the Father. This is one of the very few instances in the Gospels where the content of Jesus' prayer is given us. We often see Him at prayer, but we do not often overhear Him as He prays. We bow reverently in the presence of a praying man, and pay earnest heed to his petition. How much more, then, should we attach the greatest importance and the deepest solemnity to this prayer of our interceding Savior?

2. It is equally significant—this prayer of our Lord—because it has for its beneficiaries "them whom thou hast given me." It is a petition in behalf of these men who have believed in Christ and have become His earnest followers. They had left much behind them to adhere to the cause of the Master. But they had received into their darkened hearts a light that "had never shone on land or sea." New men in Christ they had become. But now the Master addresses Himself to a deeper need in their hearts—a need for inward purity—of which they were becoming more and more conscious.

Yet not alone for that first generation of Christians did Jesus pray, but also for them "which shall believe on me through their word." Thus it is for us He prays—for us in this faraway time.

3. The Master's prayer is significant, furthermore, because of the burden of its request. "Sanctify them through thy truth." There are many for whom the term "sanctification" denotes so exalted a grace that they have dismissed the matter abruptly as irrelevant to our daily, earthly living. Nevertheless, Jesus is praying here that we might be sanctified. And I cannot find it in my heart to believe that He was trifling.

4. Moreover there is a tone of immediacy about the Master's petition that gives one the feeling that the hour of answer is at hand. This does not seem to be some "far-off divine event toward which the whole creation moves": but rather a glorious dispensation of gospel grace that is even now available to hungry-hearted men.

III. Now, as though to validate this petition, our Lord moves on to a declaration of His own dedication: "For their sakes I sanctify myself."

What is our Lord's sanctification? And in what respects does it differ from our sanctification, for which He prays?

(1) There is a sense in which Jesus' incarnation was a dedication. To assume human form and thus identify Himself with sinful man involved the deepest humiliation. St Paul has expressed it in classic form in Phil. 2:5-8 (I give it in the Weymouth version): "Let the same disposition be in you which was in Christ Jesus. Although from the beginning He had the nature of God, He did not reckon His equality with God a treasure to be tightly grasped. Nay, He stripped

Himself of His glory, and took on Him the nature of a bond servant by becoming a man like other men. And being recognized as truly human, He humbled Himself and even stooped to die; yes, to die on a cross." Could any dedication be more radical and far-reaching than this?

(2) Jesus' attitude toward that Nazareth home was a dedication. It was a humble home, poorer indeed than most homes of the day. Yet there He lived and labored; assisting Joseph, the village carpenter, and in all probability, after Joseph's untimely death, serving as the village craftsman Himself. We are told that He was obedient to His parents, even with the consciousness upon Him that a great work was His—a work that was wanting impatiently to be done.

(3) Moreover, His total ministry was a dedication. It was not easy to deal with stubborn and oftentimes stupid men and make of them saints and apostles. It was not easy to be hounded day and night by critical and hypocritical enemies thirsting for His blood. It was not easy to be drained constantly of His resources of compassion and healing virtues by the stricken who thronged Him. Yet He did it without repining because He was wholly and forever devoted to the Father's will.

(4) But supremely was His death a dedication. Indeed it was this that stood foremost in Jesus' mind when He prayed. The grim shadow of tomorrow's cross lay even now across His path. Time was carrying Him relentlessly on toward that fearful hour when, to be faithful to the Father's will, He must die and die horribly. Yet looking steadfastly at that cross, and with full consciousness of its implications, Jesus says, "I sanctify myself."

2. And to what purpose is it all? "That they also might be sanctified through the truth."

(1) Our sanctification differs fundamentally from His. He had no inbred corruption which required the fires of Pentecost to purge away, while we are unclean within. He had no lack of the indwelling Spirit, while we must be filled with the Holy Ghost. Our Lord's sanctification was a sacrificial and redemptional devotedness of Himself to the incarnation and the cross, in order that we might be fully recovered in heart and life from the fearful pollution of sin.

(2) Consequently our sanctification could not be if His had never been. As really as ever was pardon the purchase of the blood of Jesus, so really is heart cleansing—sanctification—the purchase of that blood. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it."

3. Here, then, is an ocean of divine provision, offered freely to all who will accept its benefits. Everything it is possible to do God has done in Christ to effect our complete restoration to His favor and His image.

**IV. And now, this personal question: Have we entered into this glorious deliverance? Or have we nullified the cross of Jesus Christ our Lord?**

1. God's holy purpose can be vetoed by the human will. Despite a perfectly adequate provision in the cross of Christ, it requires the consent of the individual to make that provision effective in terms of Christian experience. The merit of Christ and the atoning blood of the Lamb can be rejected, and God's redemptive purpose as completely thwarted as though there had been no cross.

2. God has opened up before us this glorious vista of Christian possibility. He has provided a complete deliverance from sin through the suffering and death of His only begotten Son. He has promised us that we may be delivered from every hateful poison that pollutes the stream of our lives. We dare not draw back. Dr. E. Stanley Jones tells of a missionary in India who looked upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a somewhat unimportant matter. One day while preaching in a bazar he was interrupted by a courteous Brahmin who held a New Testament in his hand. "May I ask you a question?" the Brahmin inquired. "Of course you may," was the missionary's reply. "I read in your New Testament,"

continued the Brahmin, "of a remarkable baptism of power which the disciples of Jesus received following their Master's ascension. My question is this: Have you received this baptism?" The missionary was overwhelmed with confusion and retired from the marketplace in chagrin. Straight to his compound he went, and into the privacy of his room, there to remain until this baptism was his. Hours later he emerged with a new light in his eyes and a new radiance in his soul. The prayer of Jesus had at last been answered in his life. Has it been answered for you?

## \_\_\_\_\_ **EVENING SERVICE**

### **A RELIGION MORE THAN HUMAN**

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—2 Timothy 3.

TEXT—*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof* (2 Tim. 3:5).

I. There is a note of solemn warning in these familiar words which we would do well to take seriously to heart. They set forth a tendency present among men in every age, and of which each of us at times is conscious: a tendency to allow religion to degenerate into a thing of creed to be believed and forms to be observed, but with no living spirit and saving energy whatsoever in it.

1. This tendency is quite obvious in the history of Israel. The revelation which God gave His people by His servant Moses possessed a priceless value. Its forms and ceremonies, administered by an anointed priesthood, were beautiful to behold and possessed a rich and lovely symbolism. But in time these ceremonies came to be meaningless forms and the priests themselves came to be godless men. It became necessary for God to establish an order of prophets in order that His mind might be interpreted to Israel. And in Jesus' time the law and the prophets had become so devoid of meaning that men could profess sincere regard for them and yet live selfishly and hypocritically.

2. There can be no doubt that this tendency was evident in the first century church. Otherwise the warning St. Paul gives here could have no meaning. Within fifty years of the cross of Christ this glorious faith was undergoing the same inevitable process of decay and had begun to lose, in some lives at least, the mighty dynamic force it once possessed.

3. We are all witnesses to the fact that this devastating tendency is still at work in the life of the modern church. A Methodist bishop recently declared that it would be a beneficial thing if, once every hundred years, our denominational divisions were completely wiped out. For, he declared, the first generation or so of any movement adheres tenaciously to the ideals of the founders; the next generation forgets those ideals; and by the end of a century the church division is utterly without meaning. There is a measure of truth in his observation; and in so far as it is true, it is evidence of this fateful tendency set forth so forcefully in our text.

**II. It should be clearly grasped, however, that form and power are not natural enemies; they are not mutually exclusive.**

1. In fact the form of godliness is a thing of great importance. It is to religious faith what the skeleton is to the body; that is, it gives religion shape and semblance, and saves it from the aspect of a jelly-fish. The form of godliness expresses itself in the orderly and reasoned statements of our faith that we call creeds. It takes the form of good works and seeks to inculcate those gracious deeds of mercy and kindness by which religion becomes practical. The form of godliness gives reverent guidance to our practice of worship, and seeks to induce in the religious person that sense of awe and wonder that makes him tread softly in the presence of God.

2. All this is good and in its proper place is vitally important. But there must be joined to it the power of godliness if it is to have real meaning. Form and power are re-

lated as body and spirit. Body without spirit is dead; and spirit without body is shadowy and inconsequential. And so is it with form and power. Form without power is dead; and power without form is dangerous. It requires the proper conjunction of the two if religion is to have meaning and saving grace.

3. And what an empty husk remains when the power is gone! The form of godliness, minus the power, may become a cloak for such a fearful catalog of sins as that contained in this context. Moreover there is a fatal tendency toward self-deception in such a state of heart. James has given us ringing warning: "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, *deceiving your own selves.*" How easily the heart can be deceived! And with what a sense of false and carnal security one lives who is satisfied to merely hear and not do! Remember Jesus' words, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

What is more, God's Word makes it clear that this subtle self-deception may persist until the judgment day itself; for many will stand before the judgment bar on that fearful day and be disposed to argue the matter with the judge on the throne.

### III. However, there is a power of godliness that is literally a transforming thing.

It is this that makes religion a thing "more than human," in Mr. Wesley's meaningful phrase. Religion that begins and ends in mere orthodoxy is not of God. One may be ever so fundamental in his religious opinions; but if the matter ends there, he is undone. For a fundamentalism that has in it no saving faith by which the life is transformed is no better actually than the sheerest modernism. While our sympathies in the conflict between the historic orthodoxy and modernism are always on the side of the former, we must insist that doctrinal correctness is not the thing that saves from the bondage and power of sin.

1. But, thanks be to God, there is transforming power in our holy faith. It resides fundamentally in the person of our risen, glorified Christ. Alive again from the dead, Jesus declared, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." The day of His seeming weakness, His apparent helplessness, is now a thing of the past. He could not save Himself because He would not. And since He did not save Himself, He is mightily able to save me.

2. The wonder of wonders in all this is that the "all power" of Christ is to usward who believe. For after making this forthright assertion that all power is His, He declares, "Lo, I am with you always." The Christ in whom is resident all of the power and grace and glory of the Father promises to stand by my side and deliver me.

(1) Because He is possessed of all power, He is able to "break the power of cancelled sin and set the prisoner free." St. Paul asserts this same truth in these words: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Here are riven fetters and an open prison house, a jailer defeated in his purpose, and the law of sin and death suspended. It is indeed an uttermost salvation; and the man who receives it is a new creature in Jesus Christ. Before his conversion St. Augustine lived an outrageously sinful life, but was marvelously delivered in answer to the prayers of his saintly mother, Monica. One day after months of Christian living, Augustine met in the marketplace a woman who had been his mistress in the days of his shame. Instantly he turned and fled from her. But she pursued him, crying, "Augustine, Augustine, it is I, it is I!" Whereupon the fleeing man shouted back over his shoulder, "I am running because it is not I, it is not I!" So great is the transformation wrought in the heart by the power of godliness.

(2) But the power of godliness is capable of a deeper and more thorough work in the heart even than this. For the defiling taint of carnality, from which the stream of our

Christian living has been so frequently polluted, must yield before this power. Christ is able, wondrously able, to cleanse and sanctify the soul of one who yields wholly to Him.

### IV. Now, granting all this is true, how may one deny this power?

1. There is only one real way by which it can be denied; and that is to consent to live without it. One need not deny it with his lips, nor speak out blasphemously against holy things, to be guilty of this offense. All that is necessary is that one be satisfied to observe the outward forms of religion without the saving power of religion.

2. I exhort to a religion of power. Do not be content with mere orthodoxy, and with the external ceremonies of Christian faith. Remember that the rites of the church can never save. All these are the shadow, of which power is the substance. Insist on a religion of form that is vitalized, energized and impassioned by the power of God.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 1939

### MORNING SERVICE

#### THE INFINITE MYSTERY

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—1 Corinthians 2.

TEXT—*But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit* (1 Cor. 2:9, 10).

1. The apostle uses an expression in this connection which opens a secret door into the treasure house of God's grace. It is the term "mystery." "We speak," he declares, "the wisdom of God in a mystery."

1. Every Corinthian knew exactly the allusion contained in that term. For those were the days of the mystery religions. The classic paganism of ancient Greece had broken down completely before the shattering criticisms of Plato and Socrates; and in its place there had arisen numerous mystery cults. Each of them was supposed to have some peculiar and sacred grain of truth which could be revealed only to those who had been initiated into the secret of that particular cult. No doubt many of these Corinthian Christians had been initiated into those mysteries, and had been recovered from their delusion only by the mighty hand of God.

2. But now, asserts St. Paul, in Christ alone is the true mystery. It is a mystery that is completely hidden from the eyes of those who know not Christ. It can never be discovered by the unaided human intelligence. No amount of study and reading and research can ever open the eyes of the mind and the soul to this precious mystery. The princes of this world have never understood it; otherwise, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Moreover, if this mystery is ever grasped, it must be revealed. But the wonder of it all is that it has been revealed "unto us by (God's) Spirit." We who have obeyed the gospel of Christ have had this hidden mystery unveiled before our minds and hearts. Thank God, the priceless treasure is ours.

3. It is most interesting to note the series of contrasts by which the apostle develops the thought of this text. In verse 1 he contrasts "excellency of speech and wisdom" on the one hand with the simple "testimony of God" on the other. In verse 4 he places "enticing words of man's wisdom" in contrast with "the demonstration of the Spirit"; demonstration in this instance meaning convincing evidence. In verse 5 he places side by side the "wisdom of man" and the "power of God." And in verses 6 and 7 it is the "wisdom of the world" and the "wisdom of God" that are contrasted. Thus he comes to the apex of his thought, that what is non-existent to the natural man becomes the very fountain of life to the spiritual man. "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

## II. Now, there are some limitations which the natural man cannot transcend.

1. The quotation in verse 9 is from Isaiah 64:4. As Paul gives it, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." The natural man gathers his knowledge of the world by means of his sense of perceptions. There are five approaches by which the world enters into communication with him. As Bunyan describes them, they are Eye-gate, Ear-gate, Nose-gate and Feel-gate. Anything that can be apprehended by any of these sense organs becomes part of the natural man's experience.

But there is much in our physical world that eludes even the most delicate of our unaided sense organs. There are sounds too high in tone for our rather clumsy ear-gate to let into our consciousness. There are light rays that we cannot see; as, for instance, the ultra-violet and infra-red rays, to say nothing of X-rays. Radio is another illustration. The waves of electrical energy are cutting constantly through our homes and through our bodies. But they require a rather delicate instrument by which they may be transposed into audible sound.

Now, declares the apostle, even more transcendent are the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. They are all around us in lavish abundance; but for the natural man they do not exist. We are only now discovering what a different looking world polarized light can give us. And even more startling would be one's reactions if the eyes of his understanding could be opened to see as God sees.

2. Moreover, declares St. Paul, the imagination of man has never successfully invaded this field. "Neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared." The human imagination is marvelous; but even the wildest imagination fails to keep up with man, to say nothing of keeping pace with God. Jules Verne wrote a book entitled, "Around the World in Eighty Days." But recently a man made that trip in less than a week. Now Mr. H. G. Wells has conceived a terrible "War of the Worlds." But even Mr. Wells has never dreamed of the things God hath prepared for them that love Him.

## III. "But," declared the writer, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

1. Indeed they must be revealed. They can never be found out by searching any more than leviathan can be drawn out with a hook. Research and investigation have accomplished wonders in solving such problems as the constitution of matter, the chemistry of food, the causes and cures of the diseases that curse our race. But research and investigation can accomplish nothing in this field. The grace of God can never be placed on a laboratory table under a powerful microscope, that its constitution may be determined. It is in the realm of the imponderables and must be revealed to the hearts of men.

2. And what is more, only God can reveal this mystery by His Spirit. One man who knows the blessed secret can never successfully convey it to another man. There is no magic password which one might whisper to his friend and gain him entrance into the mystery. Every man who gets this revelation will receive it directly from God by His Spirit.

3. When you think of this, friends, what a marvel it is that this glorious mystery should be revealed to us! "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints," was Paul's way of describing his sense of wonder that God hath dealt thus with him. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," he declares again. But the wonder here is that *we have it*; it is ours, this infinite revelation.

## IV. But, finally, what are these things that are prepared for us?

1. It is not the wonder of heaven to which the apostle refers. I read this passage for a number of years before I realized that the things God hath prepared for us are not alone in heaven. There is much in the promise of heaven to make our hearts glad; and no doubt we will be discovering

new wonders as the years of eternity roll on. But it is not heaven to which this passage refers.

2. On the contrary, the subject of the Spirit's revelation is expressly declared to be "the deep things of God." There can be no doubt that this refers, first of all, to the wonder of redemption. We have not begun to grasp the magnitude of the privileges that are ours because of the fact that Jesus died an atoning death. We are the beneficiaries of the most amazing sacrifice the universe has ever seen.

These "deep things" refer, furthermore, to the glories of salvation. It is not merely privilege, but privilege into which I have entered with my whole heart. It is not only a marvelous provision of mercy and grace, but a provision which I have utilized to the full and by which I have become a new creature in Christ Jesus.

But to be properly converted, to be scripturally sanctified is only the beginning of a glorious matter. It then becomes our privilege to live a life of constant and holy fellowship with Jesus Christ. St. John puts it in this way, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another [that is, we with God and He with us] and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." That is not simply a promise by which an unsanctified heart obtains cleansing; it is equally one which the cleansed heart maintains fellowship. And the one condition is that one must "walk in the light." We quote that so often and so easily that we lose much of the vision of glorious fellowship envisaged by it. Certainly it is a part of the "deep things of God."

Here, then, is the infinite mystery. If you will open your heart to the fullness of Christ, this glorious revelation will be yours.

## EVENING SERVICE

### THE MARKS OF THE NEW BIRTH

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 3:1-17.

TEXT—*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3).*

I. There is no more familiar expression in the New Testament Scriptures than these words. They form a part of the religious speech of widely diverse branches of the Christian Church, and are designed by their users to convey a variety of meanings. Despite the differing and oftentimes conflicting use that is made of them, the very fact that their use is so general is proof of the amazing power of suggestion in the analogy Jesus drew.

1. There is a certain disarming simplicity about the expression, "The new birth," that makes it secure in our thinking. Physical birth is so common a thing in this world that we seem to feel there is no mystery whatever about it. And if one enters the kingdom of God as naturally as he enters the physical world, the way to heaven becomes plain enough.

2. But the analogy Jesus used here is not so simple as it at first appears. In fact there is an astounding mystery here. For life is a highly mysterious thing. What it is in its very essence, and by what technique life begets life, there is no man wise enough to tell. There is an even greater mystery in this miracle of life through Christ Jesus. It is not at all strange that Nicodemus was incredulous. The probability is that, had we stood in his place, we would have been more unbelieving than he. Jesus frankly admitted that it was something that would resist explanation. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," he reminded Nicodemus, "and thou canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every-one that is born of the Spirit."

3. But, be it simple or complex, this is the only way into the kingdom. We have Christ's own word for it. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."



## II. But why should so radical and difficult an approach to the kingdom be necessary?

1. The reason is to be found in the fact that men by nature are dead toward God. Henry Drummond says that life is correspondence with one's environment; while death is the lack of that correspondence. If that be a sound definition, the man who is out of correspondence with his spiritual environment—God—can only be said to be dead. This is precisely what God's Word declares, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." No classification could be more clear-cut than that. St. Paul offers this word of explanation; "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

2. It is only by the miracle of the new birth that such can be made alive. And life can come only by the quickening power of antecedent life. There is no such thing as spontaneous generation in the realm, either of nature or grace. Neither wishful thinking nor pious resolution can give the vitalizing touch. That requires the finger of God.

## III. Now, for the soul made alive there are certain distinctive and inevitable marks of the new life. What are they?

1. The first of them, without question, is the inner witness. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." There is an inner consciousness, wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, that tells me I am born of God. It is the privilege of every seeker after the smile and favor of God to have wrought within him this assurance.

2. But there are other evidences set forth in the Scriptures as marks of the new life.

(1) One of them is an unswerving faith in Jesus as the Son of God. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5:1). Our only hope is in coming to Jesus as Lord and Savior and putting our destiny in His hands. And as this faith leads to experience, so surely does experience react upon and strengthen faith. I have never known a really converted person who had the least shadow of doubt about the lordship of Jesus. A heart experience of saving grace anchors one forever on the side of orthodoxy.

(2) A second mark of the life of God in the soul of man is a daily life that is clean and sinless. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not" (John 5:18). It is very easy and glib to say that we all sin every day in word, thought and deed. But one cannot say that and still be scriptural. It is possible by the grace of God, to do daily the things that one knows will please God and to shun daily the things that one knows will grieve Him. This is what it means to live without sin, in the New Testament sense; and nothing less than this will satisfy God. The man who is born of God, therefore, is done with the business of habitual sin.

(3) Moreover, the new birth involves a complete transformation of heart and life. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). St. Paul puts this in the very strongest of terms; and in order that no one should misunderstand his meaning, he adds, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Radical though that may sound, it is verified by universal Christian experience. It is simply a fact, attested by many infallible proofs, that a man in Christ has been remade. God's creative labor did not end on the sixth day of the Genesis record, but is going on today. But instead of beginning with a chaotic universe, He begins with a chaotic life, and redeems and transforms and makes it anew.

(4) Still another evidence of the new life is a life of victory over the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4). The term "world" has a number of meanings, as employed in God's Word; but here it

means that unholy, God-forgetting spirit of the times. How many of our fellowmen are led about in continual bondage to this spirit! They dare not think their own thoughts or make their own decisions. Their first question and their final consideration have to do with what the people about them, or the folks in their social set, will think. It is a most galling and mortifying slavery. But in Christ is deliverance from it and victory over it.

(5) Finally, the new life of God in the soul will be attested by a love for godly associations. "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). There is a rare and precious fellowship among men of kindred faith. Every Christian can testify that the blood of Jesus brings about a closer kinship among men than earthly ties. And a sure mark of this gracious inner transformation is a love not only for God, but also for God's people.

## IV. And now, this very personal question: Have you been born again?

1. Has there come into your life a glorious hour of crisis when you know that you passed from death to life? Can you recall a definite time when you ceased to live for self and sin and began to live for Jesus Christ?

2. As you analyze your heart's experience, are these marks of regenerating grace present in your life? Is Jesus Christ Lord of all in your heart, and has He delivered you from habits of sinful living? Are you a new creature, living in a new environment? Is yours a life of victory over the world, and is there a consuming love within you for the people of God and the things of God? These are identifying marks of divine grace in the heart, and the absence of any one of them is occasion for misgiving.

3. If it is not clear to you that you are indeed born of God, I exhort that you make this gracious experience your own. Forget to stumble at the promise. Acknowledge freely the miracle of it. Submit yourself unto God.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 1939

### MORNING SERVICE

#### THE THRONE OF GRACE

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Hebrews 4.

**TEXT**—*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need* (Heb. 4:16).

1. This priceless jewel of promise and exhortation stands in a most strategic place in this remarkable epistle. The thought the writer is driving home is that of the high priesthood of Jesus.

1. He calls our attention to this consideration as early as Hebrews 3:1, with the words, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus"; reminding us later (in Heb. 4:14) that "we have a great high priest." He then proceeds to make four very distinct claims for the superiority of our Priest.

(1) First of all, He is "passed into the heavens," and thus stands closer to the fountain head of grace and mercy than any earthly priest ever could. Not in some sanctuary made with hands, which at best could be only a pale copy of some glorious original; but into heaven itself He has passed, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

(2) He is not One "which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and so is not subject to the hampering limitations that hinder the efficiency of an earthly priest. Our High Priest possesses a boundless capacity for sympathy and compassion. He is keenly conscious of our infirmities and is deeply touched by them.

(3) Now, the reason for our Lord's capacity for mercy lies in the fact that He was "in all points tempted like as we are." He had an experience of temptation in the wilderness



more severe than we shall ever know, however hard-pressed we may feel ourselves to be. But that was not the end of His temptation. The Word says that the devil "leaveth him for a season." It was only for a season, however. Every step toward Calvary was taken in defiance of Satan's opposition. Yes, Jesus was indeed tempted.

(4) The most wonderful and heartening thing he says of our High Priest is that He was a victor. He was tempted, "yet without sin." By His victory He has demonstrated that Satan can be withstood; and He has blazed a trail to victory over which we may pass. With deep and rich meaning, therefore, the writer can say, "We have such an High Priest."

2. In view of all this, "let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace." With an Advocate such as Christ Jesus to represent us before the throne, let us put aside our fear and approach God courageously and expectantly.

### II. Now, we are told that in coming, our attitude should be one of "boldness."

1. "Boldness" is not an altogether fortunate translation of this word. There is just a hint of presumption in our English word "boldness" that does not appear at all in the original.

2. It might be better to render it, "Let us therefore come with frank confidence." An exact rendering would be "speaking everything." Now, that means simply this, that we have a right now to come to God and reveal everything that is in our hearts. We have acquaintances in whose presence we are reluctant to speak all that is in our hearts. Then we have friends who know the worst and the best about us, because we can trust them. God is such a friend; and in His presence we can truly unburden our hearts.

This suggests that about the throne of grace there is an atmosphere of friendship and understanding. Here a man can feel as much at home as he does by his own fireside.

But it must be a reverent approach. Reverence and confidence are not incompatible. One can come to God speaking everything, and yet tread softly as on holy ground. Confidence, you know, is a mutual quality. It can be only as persons trust each other. It is not only necessary that we have confidence in God: it is equally important that He have confidence in us.

### III. In coming to God, our glorious objective is "the throne of grace."

1. The fact that it is a throne to which we come suggests power, majesty, sovereignty. All of those terms have a forbidding sound, as descriptive of a presence into which the ordinary man dare not enter.

(2) But the outstanding characteristic of this throne is "grace." It is safe to say that the Old Testament conception of God's throne gave little promise of hope to man. God was the infinite One who inhabited eternity. No one could look upon His face and live. It was a throne of dazzling glory; of infinite holiness; of eternal righteousness; of terrible judgment. But it was not regarded pre-eminently as a throne of grace.

But since Calvary all this is changed, and at that eternal throne grace is sought and found. I say, since Calvary things are different in the divine economy. Because of the suffering of Christ, a changed attitude toward men is possible on the part of God. In Christ He is reconciled, and justification is now our privilege.

### IV. Our blessed purpose in coming is that we may "obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

1. How great is the mercy of God! No man can ever fathom its depths or scale its heights. It is inexhaustible. We receive it in forgiveness, when God, for Christ's sake, blots out our transgressions and promises that He will remember them against us no more forever. However indelible the defiling stain, however mountain-high our guilt may seem to be, however crushing our load of unforgiven sin, the mercy of God is equal to every demand. He forgives it all and puts it forever behind His back.

We receive God's mercy more abundantly in cleansing. For it is a part of the measure of God's compassion that He can reach to the very springs of our personality and cleanse from our hearts every evil affection, every ungodly temper, everything unlike Christ himself.

But it should be noted that no man ever gets beyond the need for God's mercy. The holiest man who has ever lived needs it constantly. For the best service we can render God, even prompted by perfect love for Him, must seem to Him to be hopelessly defective. Judged by the perfect law, when we have rendered God our very best, it must require a blanket of mercy to make it fully acceptable in His sight. We are conscious of some of our shortcomings; but we have many of which we are not at all aware. However, God receives all that we bring Him of love and willing service, and counts it acceptable in His sight. Herein lies the necessity for the continual intercession of Christ on our behalf, and the constant cleansing of the precious blood.

2. And how glorious is His grace! There is a wealth of meaning in the language used in this connection. Our Authorized Version gives it as "grace to help in time of need." Our most common experience is that of a need for grace. We are constantly meeting experiences that are too great for our resources. Left to our own devices, we must surely fail. But there is grace to help. Every experienced Christian knows the joy and comfort and sense of security he feels in drawing on his reservoir of grace.

But there is this further thought in the language of this assurance; that grace stands "ready to run at the cry of need." It is as though God had an emergency squad hard by the throne, ready to be sent forth at the first cry of need. Whenever one is hard pressed by the adversary, whenever he feels his strength ebbing, he can get instant help from heaven if he will cry.

There is this further implication in the language of this assurance: that grace is sure to help "in the nick of time." God is never too late with His reinforcements. He may not be one moment too early; but He is sure to be not too late. It may serve as a severe test of faith that God's assisting grace does not arrive until it is absolutely needed. But it is heartening to know that the gracious God's time schedule never breaks down.

Here is our most marvelous Christian privilege: that of turning instantly to the throne of grace, and thus obtaining mercy and finding grace to help in time of need.

## EVENING SERVICE

### THE TEARS OF JESUS

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Luke 19:28-44.

TEXT—*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it (Luke 19:41).*

1. Tears are so out of fashion in modern times that it is a bit difficult for the average man to appreciate this display of emotion on the part of Christ. Tears are supposed to be feminine, a sign of weakness, and are regarded as having no place in the emotional constitution of a manly man. A well-known preacher, referring to the theory concerning two Isaiah's, remarked rather facetiously that, "no matter how many Isaiah's there were, he was thankful that there was only one Jeremiah." For Jeremiah was the weeping prophet; the man who longed to weep day and night for the slain of God's people.

Yet we are told that Jesus reminded men of Jeremiah. There was a seriousness and solemnity about the career of our Lord that our age is poorly prepared to understand. His heart was filled with a compassion that made Him feel the sorrows and ills of all men, and suffer with them. It is very evident that Jesus felt there were some things in life serious enough to weep over.

1. Our Lord's compassion can best be understood if one remembers the age in which He lived on earth. It was, to say the least, an age of inhumanity. There were no hospitals, no orphanages, no asylums. The insane were forced to live in the waste places, like the beasts. The sufferers lay by the wayside, begging. The homeless orphans presented a most pitiful aspect. There was little indeed of the "milk of human kindness" in Shakespeare's fine phrase. Everywhere man's inhumanity to man was glaringly evident.

What must the sympathy of Jesus have brought to such a world! The first kind word many a sufferer had ever heard was spoken by our Lord. And many a heart felt its first tenderness in His presence. He gave of Himself without measure and with no thought of recompense. But such compassion must have drained His reserves of physical and nervous energy until at times He felt Himself utterly spent.

## II. Despite the grief and burden that filled Jesus' life, it is recorded only twice that He wept.

1. One of these occasions was at the grave of Lazarus. In the presence of the heart-broken family and the grieving friends, standing at the tomb of His dear friend, it is said that "Jesus wept." It was a tenderly human situation, similar to many we have seen in our lives; and Jesus felt most keenly the sorrow of His friends and sympathized with them in their great grief.

2. The other occasion is that recorded in this nineteenth chapter of Luke. It is the day of our Lord's triumphal entry. As Jesus rode along the way that led from Bethany to Jerusalem, he came around the shoulder of the Mount of Olives and there, spread out like a panorama before Him, lay the city of Jerusalem. He knew full well that the plaudits He was about to receive would soon be turned to maledictions, and that before the week was done His enemies would take His life. Jerusalem's hardness of heart, and her consistent rejection of the prophets of God, came over Him suddenly with overwhelming force; and the Word says that the Master burst into tears.

3. It is a notable thing, however, that there are two different words used by the evangelists to describe these two displays of emotion. At the grave of Lazarus the original says that "tears fell from his eyes." But in the presence of the rebellious city of Jerusalem, Luke declares that Jesus "wept and sobbed convulsively." The one word would indicate tears of sympathy, while the other denotes tears of anguish.

## III. But why this heart-broken attitude on the part of Christ?

1. It is because of the helplessness of God. Christ could die to redeem men, but He could not compel their allegiance. God could give His only Son in the most awful sacrifice that this world has ever seen; but it is still possible for men to spurn the appeal of the cross. Death is a thing to shed tears over; but the stubbornness and rebellion of the human heart is the most deplorable thing in God's universe, and calls for tears of anguish.

2. How sadly inadequate is the average man's view of sin! Men are greatly exercised over everything but the thing that really matters. Have you ever noticed the things that most men consider are the greatest evils in our modern world? Ignorance is one. We have a notion that if our people were all educated, if our schools and colleges could only be made more efficient, all of our woes would disappear. Poverty is another. If the time will only come when there will be jobs and a reasonable competence for everyone, when old age will have a fair degree of security, all will be well with the world. Still another is suffering. Huge fortunes are being spent in an effort to wipe out disease and suffering. The medical profession, by its constant research, is discovering more and more of the causes and cures of disease. Bigger and better hospitals are being built constantly, all dedicated to the relief of suffering. Still others believe that death is the most terrible

thing that can overtake men. Every agency that will prolong human life is looked upon as a benefactor indeed. These are the views of our modern world.

But in God's sight it is sin that curses our race; not ignorance, poverty, disease and death, but sin. We are so inclined to "condemn suffering and condone sin." You will remember how David wept over Absalom's death; but there is no indication that he ever shed any tears over Absalom's waywardness and sin. Not so Christ. It was not human suffering, but human sin, that nailed Him to the cross. It is high time we recovered our perspective and began to look at this thing as God looks at it.

3. The thing that moved Jesus to such a moving display of emotion was this: That He could foresee Jerusalem's rejection of Him and His redeeming ministry; knew full well that they would have none of Him; realized fully that His enemies were even then plotting against His life. He knew all of this, and He knew also the fateful consequences this decision would have for His people. Yet He was utterly helpless to do anything about it. "How oft would I have gathered you," He cried, "but ye would not."

This is what I mean by the helplessness of God. And He is still helpless in this respect. There is an area in our personalities that He can never enter without our consent. To this extent we are the captains of our souls, the masters of our fate.

## IV. But Jesus is still moved by the spectacle of the world's sin.

He died to recover men from the power of sin. He is not unconcerned about these other humanitarian interests in our world. But He recognizes that the underlying and basic evil in our world is sin.

Moreover He is pleading with the Father above even now, our Advocate before the throne. And while He pleads with the Father in our behalf, the Holy Spirit pleads with us in the Father's behalf. What a glorious, twofold intercession this is!

Yes, Jesus is yearning over us today, even as He yearned over Jerusalem in the first century. He has died for us, even as He died for them. And now he pleads with us tenderly, saying, "How oft would I have gathered thee!" What shall our answer be?

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 1939  
MORNING SERVICE

### THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Romans 8:1-17.

TEXT—*The Spirit itself [himself, R.V.] beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God* (Romans 8:16).

INTRODUCTORY—There is no more precious truth in the realm of Christian experience than that of the witness of the Spirit. That men can be born of God and have within them a divinely wrought assurance that this is so; that men can be sanctified, and possess an inward assurance equally clear; this is indeed one of the most precious ministries of the grace of God in their lives.

Yet, vital and priceless though it is, there have been periods in the history of Christianity when this truth has been almost completely obscured. Those were indeed the dark ages of the Church. It is significant, however, that every revival of our Christian faith has been marked by a renewed emphasis upon this important truth. And we today, in the midst of this modern apostasy, need to proclaim it anew.

Every sincere seeker has a hunger for assurance. The eternal well-being of one's immortal spirit is too important to leave in the realm of conjecture. When eternal destiny is at stake, as well as the highest and holiest relationship one can know in this present life, one quite properly wishes to be sure that his standing with God is secure.

Now the Word of God promises us that we shall know when we are born of God. If there were no other text in the Scriptures than the one that is before us this morning, one could find in this word alone all the assurance his soul craves. When we place beside it this other and equally definite statement of St. Paul's in Gal. 4:6, we discover that our assurance is made doubly sure. For there the inspired apostle declares, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

**I. But this priceless truth has been as much a snare to some as it has been a release to others.**

1. One reason for this lies in the fact that so many have preconceptions of the inner witness that lead them to dictate to God what that witness shall be. Unless certain phenomena accompany the Spirit's witness, they will not accept it as from God. It must be accompanied, they insist, by an audible voice, or a visible angelic presence, or some peculiar feeling, or some ecstatic utterance. And unless these preconceived earmarks of the Spirit's witness are in evidence, they refuse to acknowledge the Spirit's gracious witnessing ministry in their hearts. They must learn that God will not be dictated to by those who seek His grace and favor. He will never come to us on our terms, but only on His own. Beware how you rashly dictate to the Almighty; for you will most certainly discover that before you find God you will have to do in utmost humility the very thing you have so rashly vowed you would never do. This is true, not because God is stubborn, but rather because He is determined that we shall not be stubborn.

Another consideration which has made this truth a snare rather than a deliverance is that so many of us are in bondage to the experience of others, and frequently to our own past experiences. We have before our mind someone who has enjoyed what we conceive to be an ideal Christian experience. The witness of the Spirit has come to them attended by the very demonstrations that we believe would be most convincing to us; and so we have come to say to God that only an experience like theirs will be acceptable to us. We forget completely that God is no copyist and in this holy business He never repeats Himself. There are many who at one time enjoyed a very gracious assurance of the grace of God in their lives. But after having broken with God, they return in time to Him; and many times they are apt to insist that God must evidence His grace in their hearts in a manner identical with their earlier experience. All such attempts to force the gracious God into our preconceived molds must of necessity meet with failure. Thus many a soul is not enjoying a clear inner witness which could easily be theirs if they would cease their attempts to dictate to God.

**II. Now, what is the witness of the Spirit?**

1. First of all, it should be said, that its detailed manifestations can never be classified or predicted. There is no way by which one can determine whether that witness will bathe the soul with an uncontrollable joy, or whether it will express itself in a new inner quietness and confidence; whether it will express itself in shouts of praise, or tears of joy, or a quiet radiance of soul and countenance. All of these details must be allowed to remain in God's hands, for Him to determine.

2. To come now to this question as to what constitutes the witness of the Spirit, it should be said that the Spirit's witness is threefold.

(1) The first phase of the witness may be described as the witness of one's own heart, and is that inward certainty that one has reached the point where he has done the last thing that is humanly possible to do to meet God's requirements. The sinner, seeking pardon and regeneration, must confess his sins, and must humble himself in a complete surrender to Jesus Christ. His confession of sin may be disposed of in a summary fashion, or it may require time and inner struggle. But when the last item of one's confession has been reached, it will not require the ministry of angels to inform that heart

that full confession has been made. In that instant the seeker will have the witness of his own heart that everything it is humanly possible for him to do has been done. The Christian, seeking the gracious experience of entire sanctification is faced with the necessity of making a complete consecration to the will of God. It is rather easy to yield those items in the outer fringe of our lives; but as one approaches more closely to the seat of his self-life, he discovers an increasing resistance. And usually it is only by dint of struggle, strong crying and tears, that one comes to the place where the last "Amen" is said to the will of God. When that final detail of the consecration is on the altar, however, there is born in the heart in that instant the assurance of one's own heart that everything it is humanly possible to do has been done. This experience—the witness of one's own heart—is not the witness of the Spirit in its fullness, but it is the first phase of that witness.

(2) The second phase of the Spirit's witness is the witness of God's Word. Now everything that one receives from God, whether pardon or purity, is received by faith in God's promises. Faith in God really means an acceptance of the promises of God. When one has reached in his seeking the point where he has the witness of his own heart, he must then step out on the promise of God. It may be the promise that God "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9); or the promise that "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). In either case one must leap out desperately into the middle of God's promise; not simply rise to a point of faith for an instant, only to fall back to a dull, dead level of unbelief; but to move onto the promise, determined to live and die there. Once the soul dares take God at His word, that instant he receives the grace he seeks, whether any particular emotional manifestation accompanies its reception or not. And when one takes God at His Word, he finds that the Word never will fail. This, then, is the second phase of the Spirit's witness: that God has promised His saving and sanctifying grace upon very definite conditions and I have met those conditions. The witness of God's Word is mine.

(3) The third and final phase of the witness is the inner manifestation. It is not necessarily simultaneous with these other phases, though it may be. But though it may please God for the inner manifestation to tarry, the soul who waits for it obediently and believingly will surely receive it. It may be that God will put your sincerity and your consecration to some test before He grants this manifestation. Or again He may prove the fiber of your faith by delaying its coming. But the soul that refuses to draw back will surely receive the manifestation. It is this manifestation that we usually hold to be the witness of the Spirit; but here it is seen to be the consummation of a three-fold process by which the Spirit brings His assurance to our hearts.

3. Moreover a proper exegesis of this text brings out this hidden: that "the Spirit Himself beareth witness (along) with our spirit." It is not simply the witness of the Spirit *to* my spirit, but rather the Spirit's witness *along with* my spirit. God's Spirit corroborates the witness of my own heart.

Furthermore, as Galatians 4:6 brings out clearly, the Spirit's witness is to a work already accomplished in the heart. "Because ye are sons [already], God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts."

**III. Finally, are all these phases of the witness always present in the day-by-day experience of the child of God?**

1. What a fertile source of misunderstanding this is! Because feelings subside and at times disappear, so many conclude that the witness has been lost. In heaviness through temptation, in sorrow, sickness and depression, the soul is laid open to Satan's attack at this very point.

2. The three phases of the Spirit's witness are not always present to the same degree.

(1) The inner illumination may not be a continuous experience. It may come and go, depending on the state of one's health and emotions.

(2) But the witness of heart and Word are fixed and constant, waiting only to be invoked by the trusting soul. Feelings wax and wane, but God's Word remains settled and sure. And while one may not always be conscious of the Spirit's presence, he can be confident of that presence, and thus enjoy a walk of unbroken fellowship with Christ.

## EVENING SERVICE

### SUBURBS OF THE KINGDOM

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSON—Mark 12:28-34.

TEXT—*Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.*

I. It is somewhat refreshing, amid the hypocrisies that poisoned the speech of so many of Jesus' contemporaries, to find a man who is so evidently sincere as was this scribe.

1. The men of Jesus' day sought after Him from a variety of motives. Nicodemus sought Him most earnestly because he sincerely believed that God was with him. Something of the Master's freshness of spirit and nearness to God had gripped the heart of the man and he wanted to know Him better. Simon the Pharisee, sought Him in order to feast Him, but with no thought of ever bowing to Him; and he found in Jesus One who was courageous enough to rebuke his pride and haughtiness even while He was a guest in Simon's house. There were some who sought after the Lord in an attempt to justify themselves, as did the man for whose benefit Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan. Still others followed after Him and engaged Him in conversation in the hope that some word might be uttered that would give them cause against Him.

2. There is every mark of forthright honesty about this scribe, however. His attitude toward the Master was one of the most respectful attention. It was Christ's deportment when under the fire of His enemies that aroused the scribe's interest. It is true the question he raised was one of the mooted points in the current rabbinical theological discussions, a question worn threadbare by constant repetition. And the answer of Jesus was the same answer He had given repeatedly. The striking point in the conversation, the thing that lifts the scribe above the commonplace, is found in his comment on the Master's reply, "Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

3. To have the insight to recognize that the outward forms of religion meant nothing if love for God and neighbor were not supreme in the heart—this marked him as a man of unusual spiritual perception. When Jesus heard his discreet reply, He said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

### II. How typical is this scribe of literally thousands of our fellowmen today!

They live on the border line of the kingdom, but not inside. They are in full sympathy with the objectives of the kingdom and may, indeed, have accepted many of the ideals and practices of the kingdom as their own. But they have never consciously moved across the boundaries of the kingdom and given their hearts' allegiance to the Lord of the kingdom. They are in "the suburbs of the kingdom," as Dr. Ralph Washington Sockman expresses it, but are not actually citizens of the realm of God.

1. The merely moral man is a striking example of this very thing. He is clean, upright and honest in his dealings, and maintains a wholesome attitude toward his fellowmen. He is on the right side of every moral question; and his word is as good as his bond. Yet a man may have all this said

about him truthfully, and at the same time be outside the bounds of the kingdom. The young man who came running to Jesus with the question on his lips, "What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" was this sort of man. He had been a keeper of the commandments from his youth, but was unwilling to pay the price of discipleship, and went away sorrowful. He was literally dying of respectability, outside the kingdom.

2. Then there are multitudes of people who are converted in head, but not in heart. They assent to the truth with their minds, and have adopted kingdom practices in their lives. They attend the means of grace and subscribe to the doctrines of the Christian faith. We have them in all our churches; always hearing the word but never doing it. They talk the language of the kingdom, and assume the attire of the kingdom, but are not in the kingdom. The scribe of this incident is a case in point; near the kingdom, but still outside.

3. Still others there are who know the truth full well and acknowledge its validity, yet steadfastly refuse to obey it. Such a man was Pontius Pilate. There is no doubt that Pilate was fully convinced of the innocence of our Lord. He could not stand before this unusual prisoner and believe the tissue of lies fabricated against Him. And in that hour Pilate stood close to the kingdom. If he had had the rare courage to come boldly out on the side of truth and justice, it is conceivable that his might have been an exalted name in the annals of the Christian faith rather than a byword and a hissing. But knowing the truth, he lacked the courage to do it. He was near the kingdom, but never stepped over the border line.

### III. But where is the border line of the kingdom? And when does a man cease to be outside, and enter in?

1. It hardly need be said that it is not a matter of geographical location, or church connection. The dwellers in one nation do not have any advantage here over the citizens of other nations. Men with white skins are no more entitled to place in the kingdom than men with black skins. The members of one church have neither advantage nor disadvantage over the members of other churches when it comes to kingdom citizenship. There are people in all churches who are in the kingdom, and there are others in all the churches that are outside.

2. Moreover, there can be no compromise in this question of kingdom citizenship. There is no possible way that the boundaries of the kingdom can be moved out to include people who live on territory adjacent thereto. Germany may infringe in this manner on Czechoslovakia; but the boundaries of the kingdom will never prove thus elastic. There was a time in early New England Congregationalism when the younger generation in the church was found to be wanting in the experience of the grace of God by which men became "visible saints"; and a compromise, known as the "Half-way Covenant" was adopted, by which unconverted persons could be taken into fellowship. But no such compromise is possible in the kingdom of God. If a man ever gets in, he will move in deliberately; for the kingdom will never move out so as to include him.

3. But what must a man do to enter the kingdom? And by what process does citizenship become possible to him?

(1) He must subscribe from his heart to the ideals of the kingdom. The standards of kingdom living he must make his own. Every other standard—the false ideals of the present evil world—must be forever repudiated. The ideals of the kingdom of God, as expressed in the Sermon on the Mount and the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians he must accept as the ideals of his life. But this is not enough.

(2) He must, furthermore, accept from his heart the rule of the kingdom. Henceforth his acting and his thinking must be to the glory of God. His ambitions in life and the objectives toward which he strives, must be regulated and determined by the will of God. The law of God, the mind of

Christ, the control of the Spirit become the ideals by which he must live. But even this is not enough.

(3) It is necessary that one who would become a citizen of the kingdom yield forever to the Lord of the kingdom. Kingdom citizenship is a relation of personal friendship and fellowship with Jesus Christ. It is not mere devotion to an ideal to which we are called to dedicate ourselves; but, rather, loyalty to a Friend. He has loved us with an infinite love, and proposes to save us with an uttermost salvation. Though we deserve hell, He promises us heaven. It is to Him that we swear allegiance, and loyalty to Him must be the controlling principle of our lives. There must be within us, as St. Paul put it, "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." And thus it is that we move out of the suburbs into the city of God.

#### IV. What a tragedy that one can be so near and yet so far!

That one can live all his days close neighbors to the kingdom, but still outside! May be able, indeed, to see the towers and the palaces of the kingdom, but never enter. There are people who live within ten miles of Boston who have never seen Bunker Hill and Faneuil Hall. There are people who live within forty miles of Washington who have never seen the dome of the Capitol. And so many have been hard by the kingdom for a lifetime, but have never crossed its boundary and entered in. What a narrow chasm separates them from eternal hope! But is a chasm deep as hell. God grant you may consent to remain no longer merely a friendly and sympathetic neighbor to the kingdom of God, and become one of its citizens today.

## Sermon Suggestions and Outlines

### Christ, the Dayspring

R. R. AKIN

*The dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:78, 79).*

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Only place in the Bible where Christ is referred to in this term, "the dayspring."
2. It means "The first dawn of light."  
—WEBSTER.
3. Sinners are groping in total darkness.
4. Imagine yourself in a place of literal dense darkness.  
*Illustration*—A certain expedition of men to the North Pole nearly perished or became insane because of such.

#### I. THE DAYSPRING FROM ON HIGH HATH VISITED US

1. Notice the place from whence He came.
2. What a privilege to have Him as our guest.
3. Describe His condescension to live among men.
4. Note the Holy Ghost is in the world today.

#### II. THE PURPOSE OF HIS COMING

1. "To give light"—to whom?  
"To them that sit in darkness."  
"He came to seek and to save that which was lost."  
He suffered without the gate that we might be sanctified.  
"To them that are in the shadow of death."  
Bring hope to the perishing.  
Bring comfort to the bereaved.  
Notice the benefits of the gospel light. (Analogy of light.)

#### 2. "To guide our feet."

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Purpose of light:

- a. Benefits our health.
- b. A protection to us.
- c. Enables us to see how to work.  
"Into the way of peace." Peace with God (Rom. 5:1). Peace of God (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15).  
Into the way of holiness (Isa. 35:8).  
"Walk in the light as he is in the light."  
Follow the light, stay in the light.

#### III. WE MAY KNOW THE HEAVENLY DAYSPRING

1. Have you pulled back the curtains of your heart for Him to shine in? Like the sun in the early morning as it peeps over the eastern horizon and sends its rays through the window.
2. Blessed is the man that keeps the light of the Shekinah shining on his soul.

### A Citizen of the Kingdom

R. R. AKIN

*TEXTS*—Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God (Eph. 2:19). *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ* (Phil. 3:20).

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Roman citizenship was acquired in various ways:
  - a. By purchase
  - b. By military service
  - c. By favor
  - d. By manumission (free).
2. Right once obtained, descended to children.
3. Privileges of Roman citizenship:
  - a. Could not be bound, imprisoned or scourged without a formal trial.
  - b. Right to appeal to the emperor or king at Rome.

4. Become an American citizen by birth or naturalization. Now what about becoming a citizen of the kingdom of God?

#### I. WHO IS A CITIZEN?

Definition—"An inhabitant of a state or place and one who enjoys its privileges; also one who owes allegiance to its government or supreme power in authority."—WEBSTER.

1. Our original home was Canaan or holiness.
2. We wandered away from home and in the fall became aliens.
3. A plan had to be set up to make possible our naturalization.  
Song, "Naturalized for Heaven."
4. The great scheme of redemption through the atoning blood of Jesus.
5. We can now live as a real citizen of the kingdom of God.

#### II. HOW DO YOU BECOME A CITIZEN?

1. Paying the price of repentance and restitution.  
Finding divine favor in Justification and Regeneration.
2. Final seal of God by the baptism with the Holy Ghost (Eph. 1:13).
3. Being adopted into the family of God, become full citizens.
4. We are subjects to the King of kings. A friend not a despot.

#### III. WHAT ARE THE PRIVILEGES OF A HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP?

1. Pure and clean heart and abiding presence of Holy Spirit.
2. Right to appeal to Jesus, our Advocate, in time of need.
3. Fellowship with Jesus and with the saints.
4. Living in a realm of joy, peace, contentment and satisfaction.
5. Blessed hope of His coming to take us home with Him in the skies.
6. The assurance of the eternal mansion in heaven.  
"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,  
O what a foretaste of glory divine."

## Expository Outlines for January

Lewis T. Corlett

### Divine Love

(1 Cor. 13)

#### I. GOD WANTS ALL OF HIS CHILDREN TO BE PERFECTED IN LOVE

1. For it satisfies the inner nature.
2. Makes them fit for the Master's use.
3. The lesson gives a picture of divine love.

#### II. THE SUPERIORITY OF LOVE

1. To oratorical ability (v. 1).
  - a. Even of angels.
  - b. Love deals primarily with the heart nature.
  - c. Love provides the inner light and dynamics.
2. To the understanding of Scripture (v. 2).
  - a. To the gift of forth-telling.
  - b. The intellectual comprehension of biblical knowledge.
  - c. Love grasps the spirit besides taking the letter of the law.
3. To working faith (v. 2).
  - a. Wonder working is not the greatest in God's sight.
  - b. Achieving faith is not foremost with God.
  - c. God asks for a heart filled with His love.
4. To benevolence and philanthropy (v. 3).
  - a. Looking after the welfare of others.
  - b. Self-denial and sacrifice.
  - c. Even martyrdom.
  - d. Love goes deeper and beyond all of these.

#### III. CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE

1. Kindness in longsuffering (v. 4).
2. Love is comely and refined.
  - a. "Vaunteth not itself."
  - b. Does not overrate itself. "Is not puffed up."
  - c. "Doth not behave itself unseemly."
3. Love is unselfish.
  - a. "Seeketh not her own."
  - b. Places the interests of God first.
  - c. Keeps the concern of the kingdom of God above the interests of self.
4. Lives in the realm of truth (v. 6).
5. Love endures. "Beareth all things," "Endureth all things."
6. Love is optimistic. "Hopeth all things."

#### IV. THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE. "CHARITY NEVER FAILETH"

1. Prophecies, tongues and knowledge are for a time (v. 8).
2. Man lives in the realm of partial knowledge (v. 9).
3. Man's vision may change but love remains (v. 10).

4. Love is more permanent than any other (v. 13).

#### V. ALL CHRISTIANS SHOULD HAVE THE LOVE OF GOD PERFECTED IN THEIR HEARTS.

### Gladness

(Joel 2:21-27)

#### I. ALL MEN ARE SEARCHING FOR THAT WHICH WILL BRING GLADNESS TO THEIR HEARTS AND LIVES

1. The inner nature of man craves happiness and joy.
2. The heart of man cannot reach its point of development and efficiency without it.
3. Man is handicapped in service by a lack of gladness.

#### II. THE LORD IS THE SOURCE OF GLADNESS

1. In His character. Rejoice in the Lord your God (vs. 23, 27).
  - a. The greatest joy of all comes through the conscious knowledge of God.
  - b. The abiding presence of God makes joy and gladness constant in the heart.
  - c. Fellowship and communion with God produce an abundance of gladness.
2. Because of His personal interest in His children (v. 23).
  - a. "He hath given you the former and the latter rain" (v. 23).
  - b. God is in the midst to watch after the interests of the people (v. 27).
  - c. God promises a program of restoration (v. 23).
3. Because of His deeds.
  - a. "The Lord will do great things" (v. 21).
  - b. He helped in material problems (v. 23).
  - c. He helped to solve their problems.
  - d. He promises to give future help and deliverance (vs. 25, 26).

#### III. MAN OPENS THE DOOR TO GLADNESS BY REJOICING (v. 21).

1. Opposite to fear.
2. The absence of doubt.
3. Man's attitude limits or assists God.
4. Trust in God releases divine power.
5. Gladness of spirit generates praise and thanksgiving which in turn open the door for God to bless.

#### IV. GOD WANTS TO HELP ALL MEN TO BE GLAD

### The Assurance of Knowledge

(Hosea 6:3)

#### I. THE SECRET OF KNOWING

1. Through the path of obedience. "If we follow on."

2. Through desire to know God. "To know the Lord."
3. Real knowledge comes through experiential relationship with God.
4. The reality of spiritual values becomes a certainty.

#### II. THE LORD PLANS TO GIVE THIS ASSURANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

1. He works according to law. "His going forth is prepared."
  - a. All the promises of God are conditional.
  - b. Man must follow God's directions to get God's blessings.
2. His dealings are always stimulating. "Prepared as the morning."
  - a. Fresh as the morning dew.
  - b. A new day with a new beginning.
  - c. Light breaking upon the darkness.
  - d. Sunshine of hope bursting forth.
3. His dealings are inspirational. "He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth."
  - a. Refreshing the dry and thirsty land.
  - b. Stimulating in producing germination.
  - c. Moisture to bring to maturity.
  - d. God's dealings are invigorating and beneficial.

#### III. MAN'S PURPOSE AND DESIRE WILL REGULATE HIS KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

1. Possible to all men. Thou shalt know, if . . ."
2. Man's knowledge is conditioned on his determination.
3. God is anxious to give assurance and certainty in all spiritual realities.

### Christ's Desire for His Children

(John 17)

"Great truths are lost to the Church by lower spirituality as well as by higher criticism."

#### I. CHRIST IS INTERESTED IN HAVING HIS FOLLOWERS PRESERVE THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF SPIRITUALITY

1. This is brought out in this, a portion of His last message.
2. A desire for them to have the best.
3. Christians can be useful only as they walk in the paths of obedience.
4. This desire is in the form of a prayer to the Father.

#### II. THE DESIRE IS A UNITY, YET THREE-FOLD

1. Prayer that His followers should be kept (v. 11).
  - a. Christ desires the continuation of each in grace.
  - b. Victorious living brings greater glory to God than starting.
  - c. Each child of God should desire the same thing as Christ did.

2. Also a desire for unity (v. 21).
  - a. The greatest agency of power in the group.
  - b. Unity with each other.
    - (1) One in purpose
    - (2) One in service.
    - (3) One in love.
  - c. Unity with God, perfected in the bond of love.
3. Bring them unto glory (v. 24).
  - a. Means of fulfilling John 14:1-3.
  - b. Complete fellowship. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."
  - c. Enjoyment of heaven.

### III. THE METHOD AND MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS DESIRE

1. Through sanctification (v. 17).
2. Purifying of the heart.
3. Having the moral nature made holy.
4. Being perfected in love.

### IV. FOR ALL OF THE CHRISTIANS

1. Not only for their generation.
2. For obedient children of all generations.
3. For those who desire the best that God has to offer.

## Suggestions for Prayermeetings

H. O. Fanning

### Prayer in Our Homes

Few things will be more helpful to us than that of encouraging our people to cultivate and develop an atmosphere of prayer in our homes. By this we will instil into the hearts and minds of our people, the benefits of seeing and considering the things of life in terms of prayer; and as subjects of prayer. This will tend to establish us in habits of prayer; in belief in the efficacy of prayer; and assurance of our heavenly Father's interest in all that pertains to our lives and living. An atmosphere of prayer is one of the home's strongest safeguards. No home is complete without it. Increasingly the home must be made the place of the salvation of its inmates, of their sanctification; the place of their establishment in grace, and in habits of holy living. The God who has ordained what the home should be, is able to make it so with our co-operation. God would have us make this beginning of the new year the beginning of the best year of our lives.

*Begin each day with prayer to God,  
Live in accordance with His Word;  
Beneath His kindly chastening rod,  
Acknowledge Him thy gracious Lord.*

*Bring everything to God in prayer,  
However great, however small;  
Bring all things to the loving care,  
Of Him who notes the sparrow's fall.*

### The Joy of the Lord

*The joy of the Lord is your strength  
(Nehemiah 8:10).*

There are few things that we, as the people of God need more than we need instruction in the Word of God. We need to have it read to us, and its meaning explained to us. We cannot live better than we know how to live. We can intelligently obey the Word of God only as we know and understand it. These people of Ezra's day needed instruction in the Word of God, and so do we need it in our day. We do well to remember

our Lord's commission to His disciples: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20). Instruction in the Word of God is one of the outstanding functions of the church and of the ministry. God's Word is a Book of instruction, telling us how to be saved, how to be sanctified and how to live after we are saved and sanctified. Instruction in how to live is as important in its place as is instruction in how to be saved in its place.

I. God reveals to us our condition that He may remedy it. Our sins that He may save us from them; our need of sanctification, that He may sanctify us; our weakness that He may strengthen us; how He would have us live that He may enable us to so live. The tendency of these revelations is to bring sorrow. And if there had been no remedy provided for our needs, nothing but sorrow. But He would have us see beyond these revelations to the purpose for which they are made. Rightly understood, we would welcome these revelations, and rejoice that the divine purpose is not to condemn us, but to save us.

II. While sorrow has its place in our lives and experiences, the divine purpose is sorrow that leads to salvation; destructive things in our living that leads to wholesome things in our living. We are beginners in life and living, and have the things that pertain to wholesome living to learn. And wholesome living is joyful living. We are made in the image of God, and for Him, and find our joy in Him, and in likeness to Him. The religion of Jesus Christ is the religion of joy. His coming is good tidings of great joy. Sin has made this world a vale of tears, a place of sorrow. Salvation brings joy, joy in earth, joy in heaven.

III. One of the reasons we do not enjoy our religion more, is that we do not understand it better. It is through right understanding of the Word of God that we come to right understanding of the divine purposes in our salvation. As we come to understand these purposes, our joy in the Lord is increased.

IV. Another reason that we do not enjoy our religion more is that we do not appreciate it as we should. Here again our help is in a better understanding of the Word of God. We will come into a better appreciation of saving grace as we come into a better understanding of Him who is the source of this grace. And this better understanding will come through a fuller knowledge, and better understanding of the Word of God.

V. The better things of the Christian experience and life are not back of us, but before us. They are not in the world, but in Christ. They are not in lax conformity to the Word of God, but in close conformity to it. Whatever our condition we should not shrink from revelations of our needs. These revelations are made that our needs may be supplied.

VI. The joy of the Lord comes with imitation of Him in whom it is found. It is increased as our knowledge of Him is increased, and His will is accomplished in and through us.

VII. The joy of the Lord is to be shared with others. Kept to ourselves, it fails in the accomplishment of the divine purposes in its giving. It is for God's glory, the good of His people, and the advancement of His cause (Nehemiah 8:10-12).

### Progress in Grace

*For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness (Colossians 1:9-11).*

In His Word God tells us how to be saved and how to live after we are saved. In both these particulars we need information. Rightly we consider the revelation of saving grace as most precious. Without it we would have been hopelessly lost. With it, all things are made possible to us. But the revelation of how to live the sanctified life is as precious in its place as is the revelation of how to obtain the sanctified experience in its place. God would have us know the importance of right living, as well as the importance of right experience. Progress in sanctifying grace takes four major directions. Progress in our knowledge and understanding of our sanctified experience. Progress and improvement and



development of ourselves in the experience of sanctification. Progress in the realization of the possibilities of this great and glorious experience. Progress in our knowledge and understanding of Him who is the Giver of this grace, and in the accomplishment of His purposes in its giving. All progress in sanctifying grace must be subsequent to our obtaining the experience.

I. The experience of entire sanctification is one to which the Spirit bears witness. It is an experience we may know we have, and do know we have. Knowing we have the experience is one thing. Knowing and understanding the magnitude of the experience is another matter. Knowing we have the experience comes with the receiving of it. Knowing the greatness and significance of the experience is the result of revelation long continued.

II. Having the experience of entire sanctification is in the nature of a preparation for what God designs the having of it to mean to us. The purifying of our hearts and the infilling of the Spirit are preparatory to the further work of the Spirit which is gradual and progressive in its nature. He comes to teach us all things; to guide us into all truth; to take the things of Christ and show them unto us, to glorify Him; to do all that pertains to our living sanctified lives and rendering sanctified service.

III. Revelations of the possibilities of the sanctified experience, come to us, not in our receiving this grace, but subsequent to our receiving it. The revelation of them is one thing. The realization of them is another. In our text Paul is giving something of this revelation to the believers at Colosse. Also to us.

IV. Entire sanctification is a fitting preparation ever increasing revelations of God; ever enlarging vision of Him; and of His purposes for us whom He has sanctified wholly; filled with His Spirit. God's purposes for us, for time and eternity should be matters of surpassing interest to us. Opportunities for knowing them should be joyfully embraced, and prayerfully improved. Not only may we spend eternity in ever increasing revelations of God, but in ever increasing experiences of His grace and power, in the working out of the possibilities of the sanctified experience. Forever there will be room for progress in grace.

V. That we may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, is one of our outstanding needs, and one Paul includes in his prayer. This can come as our capacities for receiving it are developed.

VI. Three things Paul emphasizes concerning our walk. (1) That we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. (2) That we may be fruitful in ev-

ery good work. (3) Increasing in the knowledge of God.

VII. He prays that we may be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness. The work of our redemption is so tremendous, and its possibilities so great, that eternity alone will be sufficient for their realization. We are beginners in the enjoyment of the greatest work undertaken by God. Progress in grace will be our portion forever.

### Rich: But Not Toward God

*God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God (Luke 12:16-21).*

One of the follies of mankind, is that of supposing that material gain is the chief end of life, and that success in the accumulation of this world's goods is significant of a well-spent life. Jesus had been speaking of the things that enter into the making of normal human life. Of man's need of God; of his value to Him; of the importance of confessing Him in the presence of men, and of being confessed by Him in the presence of the angels of God. Of the seriousness of denying Him before men, and of being denied by Him in the presence of the angels of God. Of the danger of going so far in these things as to blaspheme the Holy Spirit; that sin for which there is no forgiveness. In answer to a man who had asked Him to intervene for him with his brother in the matter of the division of an inheritance, Jesus had said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the things which he possesseth." Life is vastly more than earthly possessions. To emphasize this, He uttered the parable of the farmer who was rich in earthly things; but not toward God, emphasizing the utter insufficiency of such a preparation for life, and the folly of making such use of life.

I. This man committed the folly of supposing that he had need of no more than material things as a preparation for life; and that the accumulation of such things was a worthy end in life. He knew he had a body and bodily needs. Seemingly he had no consciousness of having a soul, or of having soul needs. He needed God only to furnish him with ground, and give him health and intelligence to make a success in his farming operations. He may not have been conscious of this need.

II. He seems to have been unconscious of any need of satisfactory relationships with God. He gives no evidence of seeing any needs beyond this life. This man's views of human life were fragmentary. He was one world, time mind-

ed. His vision embraced no more than these. He knew nothing of full-orbed life. What he thought of these things had no power to change them. He needed God and right relationships with Him. There was another world and he was bound for it.

III. "What shall I do?" His barns were overflowing with plenty. His granaries were groaning under their fullness of golden grain. He acknowledged nothing of life as a stewardship; of responsibility to God, to his fellowmen. He might have used his possessions for the glory of God and for the good of his fellowmen; thus laying up treasures in heaven and becoming rich toward God. He might have given himself and his all to God, entered into the enjoyment of His saving grace, been sanctified wholly and prepared for time and eternity.

IV. This man sees but one need. Bigger barns, more capacious granaries. He answers his own question. "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods." Treasures on earth. But no treasures in heaven. Riches here, but none hereafter. Material wealth, spiritual poverty.

V. But what of his life? "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Having accomplished his purpose in life, he is ready to retire. He has nothing more to do than enjoy the fruits of his labor. To him life means nothing to anyone but himself. He has isolated himself from all else. He has lived to himself, until he has nothing left but himself. He has missed everything that gives character and value to life; everything that enriches, ennobles and glorifies it. He has achieved only for himself.

VI. But God said unto him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided?" All for which he had lived swept away in a moment. The ease and enjoyment to which he had looked forward gone forever. Nothing left for time or eternity. He might have had heaven with all of its bliss, but he ignored it. He might have had God, but he ignored Him. This man has done as he pleased. He has chosen the path that led to this goal. He has sealed his own doom. He now hears the God he has ignored pronounce it. This covetous man must meet God, and give an account of his stewardship. This he must do, and suffer the torments he has brought upon himself.

VII. This man was a fool, not because he had an unsound mind, but because he made an unsound use of his sound mind. The trouble was not with the mind, but with the man who had the mind, and the use he made of it. He was a fool in supposing he could ignore God and

His laws with impunity. He was a fool in that he supposed he could refuse to regard life as a stewardship, for the use of which he would be required to give an account. He was a fool in supposing himself to be a creature of but one world; in ignoring spiritual values and eternal verities; in all that is vitally connected with life and living. "So is he that layeth up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God."

### Playing the Fool

*Behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly* (1 Samuel 26:21).

In uttering these words, Saul told the story of the sad side of his reign as king over Israel. God had chosen him as the most likely man for the position, of his day. He was blessed with many kingly qualities and abilities, and might have become one of the truly great men of history. He had in him the making of an excellent man, and a noble king. But he ruined all by playing the fool toward himself, his family, his kingdom, his posterity, his fellowmen, toward Samuel, toward God. Playing the fool is not an uncommon thing among men. Seeing it, and acknowledging it, is. Quitting it is even more uncommon. Saul had put himself in the way of this sort of thing, and had continued in it so long that there was little hope that he would ever forsake it. The power of habit is cumulative. And this is desirable in the matter of good habits. It is a menace in that of bad ones.

I. Saul had played the fool in his impatience at the delay of Samuel, and offering a burnt offering (1 Samuel 13:8-14). He usurped the office of a priest.

II. He played the fool in forbidding the eating of food by the people, when the Lord wrought for the people a great victory over the Philistines through Jonathan and endangered the life of his son (1 Samuel 14).

III. He played the fool in his failure to destroy the Amalekites at the command of God (1 Samuel 15:1-35). "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

IV. He played the fool until the Spirit of the Lord departed from him and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him (1 Samuel 16:14-23).

V. He played the fool in his envy and jealousy of David in the matter of his slaying the giant Goliath of Gath (1 Samuel, chapters 17, 18). Envy and jealousy are so deadly in their effects, that their cost is prohibitive with all who consider them seriously. David was the most valuable man in the kingdom of Israel, and Saul's envy of him was a reflection of his own character, not that of David's.

VI. He played the fool in thinking that all the men of his kingdom were disloyal to him. Disloyal to all, he imag-

ined all were disloyal to him (1 Samuel 22).

VII. He played the fool in going to the witch of Endor, to consult with her when the Lord was departed from him and answered him no more. He learned there of his own doom and the end of his misspent life. Not through the ministrations of the woman, but by the mercy of God. The way of repentance and faith would have brought him back to God. He continued in his misguided way to the end, and died by his own hand (1 Samuel 31; 1 Chron. 10:1-14). Playing the fool made Saul a miserable man when he might have been happy; a failure when he might have been a success; useless when he might have been useful; contemptible, when he might have been illustrious.

### Paul's Charge to Timothy

*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season* (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

With the executioner's block in view, Paul delivers this rousing charge; this stirring challenge; these encouraging words to his spiritual son Timothy. They are the final words of a warrior at the point of laying down his armor; challenging his successors to follow in his footsteps in fighting the good fight, finishing the course, keeping the faith. He would have Timothy know that:

I. Life is a stewardship for which one must give an account. It is something in which God has a purpose. We are here to fulfill that purpose. Judgment is coming. Rewards are certain to

the faithful. The glory of God and the destiny of souls are at stake.

II. Preach the Word. This is the world's need, and the preacher's business. It is the will of God for His servants.

III. Be instant in season, out of season. Be always at it. Expect results. The Word of God is quick and powerful.

IV. Reprove. Convict of sin. Rebuke; the message needed by the convicted sinner. Exhort; win to Christ, with all longsuffering and doctrine.

V. Perilous times are coming, when men will not hear sound doctrine; heap to themselves teachers; turn from the truth to fables. What then? Preach the Word.

VI. Watch in all things; endure afflictions. He is not pointing Timothy to an easy pathway, a lightsome task. Watchfulness will be necessary; afflictions may be many and severe. What then? Preach the Word. Conditions may change; men will come, and men will go, but the work of God must go on.

VII. Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. The servants of God are not to be discouraged by conditions. Out of the densest spiritual darkness, have come some of the most glorious revivals. In the days of Luther, light broke in upon what had been a thousand years of darkness. In the days of Wesley, when spiritual darkness overspread the earth, God made bare His arm and gave revivals whose force is not yet fully spent. In the past century God has blessed the world with sweeping revivals. In times of great discouragement there have been men who refused to be discouraged. They have honored God and He has honored them, and used them.

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