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Editor

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The Imperialism of the Preacher

The Editor

IN THE beginning God gave man "dominion" over the creatures of earth beneath him, and made him "king" of the world. And although the fullness of this sovereignty passed away with the first choice of sin, like every inherent faculty and possession it still stands either in shadow or in perverted form. Misdirected imperialism has been the cause of practically all the wars of history, and in private life injustice in business and dishonesty and theft and even murder and impurity are largely chargeable to the innate and perverted desire of men to rule over something or somebody.

But there are forms of imperialism that are commendable. When a young man determines to "rule your own kingdom of mind and call no man your master" he is actuated by very high ideals. To meet these ideals he must awaken from intellectual sleep, break away from slothfulness and apply himself to the best available means for education and moral and spiritual development. Of a man like this Solomon said, "Better is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city."

The scientific farmer, the skilled laborer, the office specialist, and the organizer of business or finance are all sovereigns in empires that may as well be "holy empires" as otherwise. Their subjects are largely inanimate things, and animate creatures of orders lower than man, but these need man's headship even as did their brothers before sin came. When a man can make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before he should know the joy of being king in a good and righteous sense. When a man can do a piece of work better than he used to do it, even better than many another can do it, he is a sovereign in his own right, and a true son of Adam, the first king among men. In the office there is room for imperialism over the typewriter, the filing case, and the ledger. In business and finance benign sovereignty becomes the highest dignity and philanthropy. Every man is by right a king.

In the professions empire is on a more subtle plane. The lawyer fights

crime, the physician disease, and the teacher ignorance. Each has the joy of sovereignty, and this is what makes him speak of his work as a "calling," and what makes him stick to his task even when there are many high bids for changing to something else. This does not mean that they are bent to outdo their fellow workers, but that they find joy in exceeding themselves and in seeing somewhat of their purpose realized. To relieve a pain, to save someone from the tyranny of superstition or to help encourage righteousness in the relationship of men is to know the joy of being an emperor.

But the empire of the preacher is, it seems to me, the broadest of them all, because it has to do with the fundamental problem of man's estate—the problem of sin. There are reformers who are not preachers, but all good preachers are reformers. If the object is to "make this a better world in which to live," then the preacher has the very best chance there is to do that. And those who would challenge the preacher to become a social reformer, rather than a preacher of the gospel, are shallow in their analysis of what is wrong and needs to be remedied. The preacher is a teacher of the most essential truth—the truth which makes men free, and a worker in the highest art—the art of good living. More than all these, the preacher is a "Vicar of Christ" in a sense more full of meaning than that with which the term is applied to the Catholic pope; for he speaks directly to the consciences of men when he preaches the gospel "in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

Our object in writing all this is to exhort to stronger attachment to the real empire of mind and heart which is our heritage. We never get ahead by appealing to brute force or by attempting to dictate beyond our ability to enlighten. Things are not true because we say them. We say them because they are true. Ours is

not the task of compelling men to do good against their wills, but to make them willing to do good. When we have outwitted someone and compelled him to bow to righteousness, we have done what Jesus refused to do when it was suggested that He rule over the nations of the earth without going through the long and painful process of enlightening and transforming them. We cannot save men by disciplining them from the outside. We must have patience to transform them from within by bringing them into touch with divine grace. We cannot rule our subjects by the use of authority, we must win their devotion by wise and gentle leadership. We cannot compel allegiance by hiding behind the "cloth" of our calling; we must inspire respect and confidence by conduct that is exposed to the light of day. To our office belongs no mysterious emblems and robes of camouflage; we must be kingly if we would be kings. Our empire cannot be described in terms of palaces or thrones or gold and silver; for ours is an empire in which willing obeisance is based upon qualities possessed, rather than upon characters assumed. "He is a princely preacher" means that he is in heart and conduct an ensample of the manhood he extols. If he preaches high and lives low, men have another name for him.

The imperialism of the preacher is a glorious one because it compels him to be a king—not simply to pose as one. It is glorious also because no mutiny can dethrone him, so long as he deserves to be king. It is glorious because its law is love, its dignity is righteousness, its subjects are willing and its end is altruistic and not egoistic. And on the background of such essentials, I pray, brethren, that ye may reign as kings (1 Cor. 4:8).

Only what coronation is in an earthly way, baptism is in a heavenly way; God's authoritative declaration in material form of a spiritual reality.—F. W. ROBERTSON.

EXPOSITORY

Expository Messages on Christian Purity

Olive M. Winchester

THE HERITAGE OF PEACE

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (John 14:27).

THERE have been many strange bequests given by man unto men in the history of wills and testaments; there have been many that have had great value, but none in the history of the world have been fraught with greater value than the one we have presented to us in the text. We see a company of eager, fearful disciples gathered about the Master. No doubt some of the lurking presentiment and fear that came upon them as they were following on the way to Jerusalem was present now. There was deepening mystery beclouding the whole situation; they felt that some dread catastrophe lay out ahead, but they could not tell exactly what it might be. The master was telling them that He was going away, and they were troubled; He was speaking words of comfort, but their minds were dazed and groping for understanding. In this state of mental confusion, they were asking questions as they flashed across their minds, and Jesus was answering, but all seemed enigmatical to them. As words of consolation the message of the text was given, a bequest of peace, a heritage of value, far surpassing the computation in measurement of any human values.

"NOT AS THE WORLD GIVETH"

This peace bequeathed to the disciples was not such as the world gives. When we search to find what may be the peace that the world gives, if indeed it can be considered peace, we note in the first place that it is very dependent upon external circumstances. For a nation to

have peace it must needs be that other nations have ceased from hostilities, and for an individual to have peace, there must be harmony with those with whom he lives and with those with whom he is associated.

With all of the maladjustments in this crooked world of ours, with the ever surging emotions of jealousy, envy and hatred in the hearts of unregenerate men, and the perverted understanding oftentimes in those who have grace in their hearts, there are more occasions where peace fails to reign in personal relationships, it would seem, than where it does. Thus it comes to pass that peace that is dependent upon external circumstances is precarious. It can have no permanent or abiding qualities; it is subject to the ever changing and turbulent sea of human emotion as stirred by reactions and adjustments of person and person.

Again the peace that the world giveth is that which comes with gratified desire. Here again the vision is illusory. It is something like hunting for the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow. So often desires cannot be gratified. Eliminating all wrong desires, there are many good desires that cannot be gratified; some ambitious young person may desire an education but because of circumstances not be able to obtain it, so it is with many of the other legitimate desires.

But again when desire is gratified it does not seem to cease its surging; its gratification would appear only to enlarge its capacity and having for a moment been filled to satiety, it reaches out for more. When it has conquered one sphere, it reaches out for more worlds to conquer. Thus any peace that may arise from gratified desire is for the moment only.

As we view the peace that the world giveth we find that it cannot satisfy the heart of man;

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it is not based upon a sure foundation. It must needs arise from circumstances that cannot be in this present evil world; therefore we listen with comfort that the heritage of peace promised by the Savior is "not as the world giveth."

"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU"

While the peace of the world is dependent upon externals, the peace of Christ stands in direct opposite in this respect. In the life of Christ the world around about Him seemed ever to be one of turbulence. From the beginning of His ministry there was the hostility of the scribes and Pharisees, and they ever pursued Him with relentless hatred throughout the entire three years culminating in their leading Him to death by crucifixion. Then within His own home there was strife. His mother, loving and tender, failed to understand Him, and His brothers were restive that He should make His claims open and public; if He were the Messiah they did not believe on Him until after His resurrection. Coming to the band of disciples, with their loyalty and sacrifice for the Master, there was on their part blindness and misunderstanding as to the true nature of Christ's mission. In the inner circle of three one only seemed to approach close to the heart of the Master.

Leaving these various groups and turning to the multitudes around about we find a seething company of people. They crowd about the door of the house where He has returned from a mission tour through Galilee, no doubt for a little rest. They gather around about as He travels through the country until they run the number into thousands, and He must feed them or send them away hungry: they would acclaim Him king at one time and then turn from Him in scorn another time.

There was no peace for the Master in the world around about, and Jesus did not promise to the disciples that they would have peace externally either, yea on the other hand He said unto them, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Thus it could not be that it was peace of this nature that He be-

queathed to His disciples of that age and of ages to come.

When we seek to understand the nature of this peace from the positive aspect, we would suggest first that it is the peace that results from conquest. We find Jesus saying to His disciples further on in this farewell discourse, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." The world is not essentially an object, that is, when it pertains to spiritual issues; it is a spirit, an attitude, a certain set of mind of thought, that centers upon satisfying the spirit nature of mind with things of time and sense instead of with that which relates unto God, the Father of all mankind. Christ had the peace which comes with the stilling of all these desires. They had surged around Him with all the might and power that Satanic power could muster; there are the three major temptations recorded for us in the Gospels, and no doubt others of which no account has been given but as a mighty conqueror Jesus stands forth triumphant. He was "tempted in all points like as we are, apart from sin."

The peace then bequeathed unto us would be that peace that comes through the conquest of sin in the heart and life; there can be no true peace that is permanent and abiding within until this great crisis has taken place in the heart. It is true that "being justified by faith we have peace with God," but this refers to peace in relationship rather the fullness of peace in the nature. Before we had been enemies, but becoming reconciled we have peace. It is true also that peace in relationship brings also a sense of peace within, but experience has found that this peace has not been complete and full, and thus it is that the apostle prays, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." We know that he prays thus that the work of entire sanctification may be wrought in the heart, but he may use this special designation for God the Father, God of peace, because only in this wondrous work in the soul does peace enter full and complete.

PREACHER'S MAGAZINE BOUND!

If you want your copies of THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE bound, neatly and durably, send in your copies at once. The cost will be \$1.25 which includes return postage for the bound volume. We shall wait until March 15 to send all this work to our bindery. After that date the price will be \$2.00 a copy, plus return postage.

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Not only must there be the conquest of sin in the heart and life, but there must be the subordination of all the natural tendencies which in themselves are right, but when they dominate become wrong, these, we say, must be subordinated to one great goal which has for its center one consuming ambition and that is to do the will of God. A great goal brings unification to life and satisfaction which results in peace, the more so is this true when this goal is to do the will of God. Jesus said, "Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will O God." As He gave Himself for us and learned obedience by the things that He suffered, so must we give ourselves in obedience and in doing so we will find silently, yet with comfort and assurance, peace stealing into our souls, and we will find this heritage an ever-abiding experience.

BANISHING FEAR

In speaking of the peace that He was leaving unto His disciples, the last thought that the Master presents in our text is that because of it they should not be troubled nor should they be afraid. There are two emotions in life which exceed all others in their dominance, one is love and the other is fear. Fear eats as does a canker.

There are many phases of fear. There is fear that exists in the secret chambers of the soul which has as its concomitant guilt. It acts as a haunting specter ever coming at unwonted moments to disturb the serenity of life. It often drives men to seek propitiation by one means or another to assuage the wrath of an angry God. It brings restlessness and discontent, all because a man cannot be pure with his Maker, that is, without grace in the heart. This fear the power of Christ is sufficient to conquer, and in its place to bring peace and rest. Where once there was fear, the glad evangel will ring, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

Then there are fear and trouble of heart that arise from forebodings in life. That fear that looks out into the future and wonders what may come, that sees stalking across life's pathway many dark shadows, that has lost the fullness of trust, or never has found it. This may be a general characteristic of a life, and then it may be evidenced on particular occasions in greater strength. This seemed to be the state and condition of the disciples as Jesus talked to them giving them His farewell words. They were in deep perplexity. They had left all to follow the Master because they thought it would be "He who would redeem Israel." While there was an underlying motive stirred by ambition which sprang forth at times, yet we believe that other motives more righteous and more loyal

than this dominated them. But whatever the motive that actuated them, now they were troubled, for their Master spoke of going away, and this cast a blight over all their expectations, good or evil. They had not firm faith and trust to throw across this chasm of perplexity and bitterness of disappointment. This then brought from the lips of Christ those comforting words, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The heritage of peace banishes fear from the heart; the two cannot exist together. Fear disturbs the flow of peace and creates restlessness and distrust. Our spiritual state may be tested by the presence or nonpresence of these contrasting emotions in our heart. While there are other tests to be applied also, this one is vital, especially in the emotional realm. Some would hold a state of ecstasy as the supreme emotional test, but not so the Scripture; if we follow through its teaching we find that the experience of grace ever has as its outstanding emotional concomitant peace; this many passages attest.

A priceless heritage is ours! Peace that comes from the Master himself, the author of true peace, not dependent upon the fleeting changes of this world with its pleasures that last but for a day and then pass away. Peace that is abiding as long as we keep our hearts in tune with the eternal and ultimate values of life and being.

"Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin? The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

"Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed? To do the will of Jesus—this is rest.

"Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown? Jesus we know, and He is on the throne."

Worldly and Expensive Dress

1. Engenders and increases pride.
2. Breeds and encourages vanity.
3. Begets envy and jealousy.
4. Leads to extravagance.
5. Inflames the hearts of men.
6. Leads to debt.
7. Crowds out better thoughts and feelings.
8. Wastes time and money.
9. Is often detrimental to health.
10. Influences others to dress in a worldly way.
11. Excites vain admiration.
12. Robs God.
13. Robs the cause of foreign missions.

We want more sermons in shoes, men and women going up and down the roads of life preaching Christianity by their imitation of Christ.—CUYLER.

HOMILETICAL

A Preaching Program

Orval J. Nease

March 7—Morning

THE POWER OF A DIVINE IMPERATIVE (Missionary)

TEXT—*I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work* (John 9:4).

SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 9.

INTRODUCTION (Luke 10:30-37).

1. The loose way in which we regard our Christian obligations.
 - a. True of personal religious experience.
 - b. True of our sense of obligation to the church.
 - c. True of our feeling of responsibility regarding the salvation of others, at home and abroad.
2. This is a day of Christian liberty, "gone to seed."
 - a. We talk of a "whosoever" gospel. This is too often an alibi for our lack of concern for others and we would shift responsibility.
 - b. Religious liberty may easily be prostituted to mere license and be an excuse for spiritual laxity and lawlessness.
3. Christ is our example.
 - a. Christ's attitude toward the unsaved should determine our attitude.
 - b. Christ was impelled by a threefold imperative.
 - b. The appeal of human guilt. "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

3. The ability to see human need and the will to relieve is God-given.
 - a. Too many pass by on the other side. The story of the good Samaritan.
 - b. Christ was committed to human need. "For this cause came I into the world."
 - c. We may minister to the need of men.

Illustration—Philip and the Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40).

"Give ye them to eat" (Matt. 14:16).
 "Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17).

II. THE "MUST" OF PERSONAL OPPORTUNITY

I. THE "MUST" OF THE WORLD'S NEED

"As he passed by he saw" (v. 1).

1. The undefinable "ought."
 - a. One of the strongest words in the language.
 - b. Not law, command or coercion.
 - c. But an inner urge. "He must needs go through Samaria."
2. Christ's sense of world need.
 - a. The appeal of human suffering. The cry of a blind man, Bartimeus. The appeal of little children, "Suffer them to come." The broken heart of the widow of Nain induced Christ to halt a funeral procession.

1. "Opportunity" means "before the gate."
 - a. Something placed immediately at your door.
 - b. Or, The open door leads direct to service.
 - c. Opportunity means responsibility. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Illustration—Rev. McAlpine, pastor of one of our Phoenix, Ariz., churches, went by a small house tent pitched in a back yard. He had often passed. Something impelled him to stop. He did. He found a man dying of T. B. When he saw Brother McAlpine he said, "I am a sick man. I want to find God. I have been praying for God to send me a preacher who can pray for me." He was saved. Think of it! Praying for a preacher in America!

Illustration—Said a business man, "No one has spoken to me about my soul or invited me to church since I have been in this city." Opportunity means "at the gate."

Illustration—A lady testifying in Detroit First Church said, "I would have been saved years before if someone had only spoken to me about my soul."

2. How easy to shift responsibility.
 - a. "I am not gifted along that line."
 - b. "Such work belongs to the pastor," etc.
 - c. "Some other occasion will be more appropriate."
 - d. We ought rather to feel—
"If it ought to be done, then I must do it."
3. Longing for opportunities that will never return.
 - a. Regrets will never recall yesterday's opportunity.
 - b. Delayed obedience makes impossible full obedience.
 - c. Men are in eternity without God today because some well-intending Christians failed in their duty.
 - d. "This is the only generation we can reach."

III. THE "MUST" OF GOD'S COMMAND

"The works of him that sent me."

1. Jesus was sent of God.
 - a. Christ sensed the Father's urge.
"I must be about my Father's business"
(Luke 2:49).
"I must preach the kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent" (Luke 4:43).
 - b. A "thus saith the Lord" upon men.
 - (1) God sent forth the prophets of old. Isaiah, "Here am I; send me."
Jeremiah, "Say not, I am a child."
 - (2) So God sends forth men upon His errands today.
2. Every Christian called and sent of God.
 - a. General commission, not to ministers alone.
"Go ye into all the world."
"It is the whole task of the whole church to preach the whole gospel to the whole world."—DR. H. F. REYNOLDS.
 - b. The laity as responsible for the propagation of the gospel as the clergy.
 - c. God does not single out a man or a group of men and excuse all others. Snug complacency of some who say,
"We are not called."

Illustration—When Dr. Myrl Smith was taking an offering for missions in Pasadena First M. E. Church one man made the remark at the table that day to the maid who served his lunch, "Let the missionaries sacrifice. That is what they are called to do. It is not my fault that God called them." This is nausea to God!

- d. Examples:

Peter was sent to Cornelius (Acts 10:19-21).

Paul was sent to Macedonia (Acts 16:9, 10).

The church "went everywhere preaching the Word" (Acts 8:4).
"There was a man sent from God" (John 1:6).
"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42).
3. It is Obedience or Condemnation.
 - a. Obedience dependent upon ability and opportunity, but obedience is required.
 - b. You do the church no favor by obeying. The church does the individual a favor by giving a place in which to invest his abilities.
 - c. Local churches are too often waterlogged by men who have refused a post of duty at home or abroad.
 - (1) These become a "drag on the local market."
 - (2) In this circle church difficulties are generated.
 - d. Condemnation follows procrastination and disobedience. This includes ministers. N.Y.P.S., S.S., W.F.M.S., etc.

CONCLUSION

1. The text.
2. The caution.
"While it is day!"
"The night cometh!"
"No man can work!"

Illustration—My conception of a saint is not a man with white robes and upstretched arms but a man with calloused hands, stooped shoulders, busy at the task of the Master.

March 7—Evening

THE KING'S RANSOM—I

"Sold Under Sin"

TEXT—*The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin* (1 John 1:7).

INTRODUCTION:

- The modern mind and the fact of atonement.
- a. Modern mind denies the need of a Savior.
 - (1) Sense of human self-sufficiency.
 - (2) Sin's maladjustments can be cured by education.
 - (3) Environment and psychotherapy cures for sin.
 - b. Blood atonement repulsive to modern mind.

- (1) Want to talk of redemption without sacrifice.
- (2) Blasphemously talk of sacrifices of tabernacle and temple and cross as the "gory religion."

I. THE MEANING OF ATONEMENT

1. Two streams of theology since Cain and Abel.
 - a. Abel insists upon the sacrifice with blood.
 - b. Cain offers the fruit of the soil, bloodless, and the work of his hand.
2. Salvation without atonement.
 - a. That God as Sovereign can forgive at will.
 - b. That repentance is a sufficient ground for forgiveness.
 - c. Must be remembered that God is a Moral Ruler as well as a Father.

Illustration—"The head of a university," says Dr. Hills, "can deal with an erring son in the privacy of the home as he could not deal with the same son who became an open rebel among two thousand students. A king or governor can deal with his son in the home as he cannot deal with that same son as a determined criminal in a great commonwealth. The economy of the family will not answer for the government of the state." God is the Moral Ruler of the universe and sin is rebellion against the authority and government of this universe. God is dealing with sin in His universe.

- a. The atonement is the manner in which God forgives repentant sinners through Christ who voluntarily suffered for us and thus protects and preserves the integrity of God as a Moral Ruler. Pardon is thus offered to all who believe on Jesus Christ.
- e. "To atone" means to make reparation, compensation, or amends for an offense or crime.

II. THE FACT OF SIN, OR ATONEMENT NEEDED

1. Sin deniers.
 - a. Unreality of sin.

Sin is simply error due to the lack of knowledge, ability and opportunity, and cannot be chargeable.
 - b. All men sin but it is a part of man's experience and development and in fact is not as serious as some would have us to believe.
 - c. Sin is moral sickness due to wrong environment and can be cured by change and education.

2. What is sin?
 - a. Sin is the wilful transgression of the known law of God.
 - b. Sin is guilty sickness, a wilful missing of the mark, *harmatia* (Gr.).

"To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin."
 - c. Sin is a bent or proneness or taint in the nature which causes all men to desire and to commit sin and thus become sinners.
 - d. All sin, in the last analysis, is against God.

God the Moral Ruler who has willed men to be righteous.
3. There is a universal consciousness of sin.
 - a. Men everywhere realize that they are sinners.

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."
 - b. There is a universal guilt for sin.

"Guilt is the personal blameworthiness that follows the commission of sin."

Guilt is necessarily personal, the sinner's own.
 - c. Liability to punishment is a consequence of guilt.

"This is the teaching of Scripture, the voice of reason, and the verdict of conscience."

"The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20).
4. What is to be done about sin?

All men seek for deliverance from guilt and pollution.

From the heathen in his superstition to the most enlightened.

III. THE FACT OF ATONEMENT—THE ATONEMENT PROVIDED

1. Human efforts for atonement.
 - a. Human philosophies.

But all the theories of men will not remove guilt or heal the soul.
 - b. Nonchristian and heathen religion.

These leave men with no power to release themselves from guilt and practice.

"Without the shedding of blood is no remission of sin" (Heb. 9:22).
2. All human efforts at sacrifice are unworthy.
 - a. For all have sinned. No sacrifice of men who have sinned could atone for themselves much less for others.
 - b. A sinless sacrifice is necessary.

CONCLUSION

1. All sin is against God.

"Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned and done this evil."—DAVID.

2. All sin brings confusion of conscience.
3. Conscience is the foreshadowing of God's judgment bar.

March 14—Morning

CHRIST'S DEATH-WATCH: OR, THE CHRIST UPON HIS KNEES

TEXT—*What, could ye not watch with me one hour?* (Matt. 26:40).

SCRIPTURE READING—Matt. 26:36-40, or Mark 14:32-42, or Luke 22:39-46.

INTRODUCTION:

1. "The Mount of Olives" (v. 30).
So named from the olive groves which covered its slopes.
2. "A place called Gethsemane" (v. 36).
A small grove of olive trees beyond Kedron. A stony plot of ground containing eight olive trees of great antiquity, enclosed by a low wall still marks the spot.
A place well-known and oft resorted to.
3. "And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee" (v. 37).
Sympathy and privacy are both desirable in sorrow.
Not all men are equally compatible, capacitated or appreciative in another's suffering.
"Oh, sacred scene sublime, the Christ upon His knees."

I. THE CHRIST UPON HIS KNEES

1. The significance to Christ of Gethsemane.
 - a. Possible for finite minds to understand but little of what this meant for Christ.
 - b. It did mean the climax of incarnation.
In a very true sense, "all incarnation was atonement."
Cannot separate the life and ministry of atonement from the crucifixion (Phil. 2:7, 8).
That He cried "It is finished" upon the cross signifies it had been a prolonged task.
 - c. It did mean the acceptance of the cross.
It was acceptance of the world's sin.
Illustration—Fulfillment of the type—"the scape-goat."
 - d. It was a measure of God's love for men.
"God SO loved the world."
Illustration—Little girl tries to tell her father how much she loved him, could find no unit by which to measure it, and feelingly said, with her hand upon her heart, "Daddy, I love you so!"
2. The agony of Gethsemane.
 - a. Agony of a pure soul;
Who senses the defilement of sin,

Who knows the offense to God of sin,
Who realizes the consequences of sin.

b. This was soul anguish.

(1) Physical suffering.

Every nerve center throbbled, blood pounded through every artery.

"And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44).

(2) Mental distress.

Mental suffering more keen than physical. Yet neither physical nor mental suffering can measure the agony of Christ.

(3) "My soul is exceeding sorrowful."

Incarnation is more than God in man.

Incarnation is Deity and humanity united.

But as the soul of man is the center of all consciousness, so when sorrow lay upon the soul of Christ it had reached the citadel of Deity.

"The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

Physical and mental suffering must of necessity accompany soul distress.

Note—Christ no doubt would have died here if an angel from heaven had not strengthened Him (Luke 22:43).

5. The Cries of Gethsemane.

a. "Watch with me" (v. 38).

The desire for companionship in sorrow.

The indication that Christ's disciples have a measure of Christ's suffering to bear.

"Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of" (Mark 10:39). See 1 Peter 2:21.

b. "O my Father" (v. 39).

The soul can pray only as he realizes that God is Father.

Such realization opens a freedom and assurance in prayer.

Freedom to express fears.

Assurance that help can be given.

c. "If it be possible let this cup pass from me" (vs. 39, 42).

Some have thought that Christ was tempted to shrink from the cup, or that "His hand trembled as He reached for it."

Such cannot be the case for to this hour He had looked from the beginning, "For this cause came I into the world."

Rather may it be thought that He feared His sufferings would take His life in the garden and would preclude His going to the cross.

- d. "Thy will be done" (vs. 39, 42).
The acceptance of the Father's will.

II. THE CHURCH UPON ITS KNEES

1. The Church sharing with Christ.
 - a. The Church's willingness to share Transfiguration.

A participation in Christ's glory.
 - b. The Church too often shrinks from that which means toil, suffering or sacrifice.
 - c. It is bearing the burden for others.
 - d. "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1:24).
2. The Church in Gethsemane.
 - a. "Watch."
 - (1) For ourselves.

That we do not fall prey to dangers of human weakness.
That we fall not into temptation (v. 41).
 - (2) For others.

As a physician over sick.
As a watchman on city wall.
As a mother over her child.
 - b. "Pray."
 - (1) With an earnestness that takes hold of the soul.
 - (2) With a feeling for others akin to what Christ had.
 - c. "With me." Watch and pray with Christ.
 - (1) Suffering not for suffering's sake, but suffering that comes as a result of sensing another's hurt until it becomes our own.
 - (2) That it is *with* and *for* Christ makes it take on new meaning.
We shall need Him in our Gethsemane.
3. Sidelights from a soul's Gethsemane.
 - a. Gethsemane may be long foreseen; it was so with Christ.
 - b. In a very true sense you must ever go to Gethsemane alone, no human can accompany.
 - c. Do not expect too much from your friends in these hours.
"The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
 - d. All the soul can do in Gethsemane is pray.
 - e. Prayers in Gethsemane are always broken, bleeding prayers

- f. Those who pray in Gethsemane know the blessedness of prayer.
- g. Gethsemane prayers are ever submissive to the Father's will.
- h. The Gethsemane prayer always receives strength.

III. SHRINKING THE GARDEN

1. Christ did not shrink from Gethsemane.
2. The Church's loss by refusing Gethsemane.
 - a. A loss in the spirit of the Church.
 - (1) Individually as well as the group.
 - (2) Loss of mellowing richness that only suffering will bring.
 - (3) Loss of strengthening to meet temptation.
 - (4) Loss of the companionship of Christ. He is found in the garden.
 - b. Loss in the achievement of the Church.
 - (1) Loss in fruit-bearing.
"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).
 - (2) Loss in soul-winning.
"When Zion travaills."
Illustration—The loneliness of the home that is childless.
 - (3) Loss of the right to reign with Christ.
See Rom. 8:17 and 2 Tim. 2:12.
3. The Church's failure in the garden. Is a disappointment to Christ.
 - a. "What? could ye not watch with me one hour?" (v. 40).
 - b. "Sleep on now take your rest . . . the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners" (v. 45).

CONCLUSION

1. The most sublime and sacred contemplation. The Son of God upon His knees.
"The Second Adam Regained in a Garden, what the first Adam lost in a garden."
2. The greatest terror to hell is the Church upon its knees.

March 14—Evening

THE KING'S RANSOM—II

The Ransom Provided

TEXT—*The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin* (1 John 1:7).

INTRODUCTION:

Brief review of the previous Sunday night's message will carry through the continuity of thought.

1. The reality of sin.
2. The failure of human efforts to remedy sin.

I. A DIVINE ATONEMENT

1. The scarlet thread of atonement.

- a. Runs through nature.
Dying to live.
- b. Permeates history.
Founding empires and sacrifice for liberty.
- c. The whole Jewish Scriptures.
The law, prophecies and ceremonies full of the idea of atonement.
- d. The New Testament holds up Christ as the fulfillment of all law, the realization of all prophecy and the explanation of all sacrifices.
- e. Scripture: "Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; . . . yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:10-12).

"Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28).

"This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28).

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:14, 15).

"Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold . . . but with precious blood, as the blood of a lamb without spot, even the blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

See also: Rom. 3:24-26; Heb. 9:14, 23; 1 Peter 2:24.

II. IT IS A SUFFICIENT ATONEMENT

1. It answers all the type of the Old Testament ordinances.
 - a. Spotless sacrifice.
"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - b. A sacrifice of blood.
Cain was rejected while Abel was accepted.
2. It was a voluntary sacrifice.
 - a. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16).
 - b. God gave His Son to be true to the demands of His own nature—love.

Illustration—Absalom has broken his father's heart and deserves death. But David would die for him as he weeps for him. The agony of God over human sin is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

3. An eternal sacrifice.
 - a. "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
The atonement is not an afterthought nor an emergency measure.
 - b. Historic sin is overmatched by historic redemption.
"Eternal reality becomes temporal fact."
4. A universal atonement.
 - a. No magnitude of sin too great.
 - b. No depth of sin too appalling.
 - c. No multitude of sinners too large.
"And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

III. THE FACT OF CLEANSING, THE CLEANSING PRODUCED

1. New Testament pictures of cleansing.
 - a. By water, as the means of cleansing.
See Titus 3:5; Matt. 3:11.
 - b. By word, as a standard of acceptance.
"Clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).
 - c. By fire, as to thoroughness of purging.
See Matt. 3:11, 12.
 - d. By blood, as to authority.
Supreme in meaning because supreme in worth.
2. The cross is God's authority for forgiveness and cleansing.
 - a. Pardon boards usurp and presume until the law has been satisfied and a justifiable means of pardon has been established.
 - b. Christ is God's authority.
"That he might himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:24-26).
3. How does the blood of atonement cleanse?
 - a. By a removal of the sense of guilt.
 - (1) There is a difference between the memory of sin and the guilt of sin.
 - (2) Sin no longer belongs to the sinner.
 - b. By producing an inner recoil from sin.
 - c. By a moral crisis that annuls the habits and desires to sin.
 - d. By a sense of acceptance with God.
 - e. By awakening a desire to holy living.
 - f. By a growing love toward God.

CONCLUSION

1. The miracle touch of transforming grace.
2. By faith in Jesus Christ as a personal Savior.
3. This cleansing is not only an act but a continued act of complete deliverance.
Note—The aorist tense in Greek in which from the word "cleanses" as found in our text indicates a continued and complete act. Not only cleanses now but keeps on cleansing "from all sin."

March 21—Morning**THE KING'S WELCOME**

TEXT—*Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven and glory in the highest* (Luke 19:38).

SCRIPTURE LESSON—Matt. 21:1-9, or Mark 11:1-11, or Luke 19:28-40.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Three ways from Bethany to Jerusalem.
 - a. Long, circuitous way over the northern shoulder of Olivet.
 - b. A steep footpath over the summit of Olivet.
 - c. The natural road by which mounted travelers entered Jerusalem, over the southern shoulder of Olivet.
2. The Prepassover period of purification, the six days before the Passover celebration.
 - a. Two vast crowds of people.
 - (1) Those journeying with Jesus toward Jerusalem.
 - (2) Those within and coming from Jerusalem who had been attracted by the shouting of hosannas upon the part of those with Jesus and were coming out to inquire regarding the shouting.
 - b. The rebuke of the Pharisees.

"Master, rebuke thy disciples" (Luke 19:39).

Jesus' answer (Luke 19:40).

The Pharisees recognized that the disciples were identifying Jesus as the fulfillment of the promised Messiah (Mark 11:10).

Jesus accepts the plaudits and thus recognizes His fulfillment of the promise.
 - c. Can this be the same group that a little later will cry "Crucify him"?

I. THE HISTORICAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

1. The journey was toward Jerusalem.
 - a. Jesus and His disciples had come.

Preaching and teaching.

Blessing of little children.

Healing of blind Bartimæus.

Conversion of Zacchæus.
 - b. In Jerusalem was celebrated the Passover.
 - c. All true Jews, who were able, journeyed toward Jerusalem for this occasion.
2. Jesus was the central figure.
 - a. "Who is this?" (Matt. 21:10).
 - (1) The throngs in the city who heard the shouting inquire.
 - (2) The answer comes from the disciples like the peals from an echo organ or the response from an antiphonal choir.

- b. The crowds showed Him kingly reverence.

(1) Long had Israel looked for a king, and strong within the hearts of the people was the spirit of expectancy.

(2) The means used were after employed to welcome a king.

The colt of an ass, the spreading of garments, the waving of palm branches (See 2 Kings 9:12).

(3) The shout of the people indicated their hopes.

"Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Luke 19:38).

"Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Mark 11:10).

3. The crowds that thronged.
 - a. It is estimated that thousands attended these holy festive occasions.
 - b. Pharisees, who represented the religionists, were there. They found place to criticize religious emotion. Or was it that they saw the tendency to recognize Jesus as Messiah?
 - c. The common people.

These ever thronged the ministry of Jesus.
4. The part Christ played.
 - a. Gave simple directions.
 - b. Modestly and passively accepted the homage of people.
 - c. Rebuked the critics.
 - d. Wept over Jerusalem.
 - e. Cleansed the temple.

II. THE EXPERIENTIAL ENTRY INTO THE HEART

1. The journey of Jesus into the heart.
 - a. The heart is the citadel of all true religion.
 - (1) No outward acts of service or ministries of grace will substitute.
 - (2) The Sermon on the Mount places emphasis upon heart religion.
 - b. Jesus directs Himself toward the heart.
 - (1) In the heart would Christ be declared King.
 - (2) Passover commemorated deliverance from Egypt.

Within the heart Christ would celebrate our deliverance.
 - (3) The Pauline insistence is, "Christ in you the hope of glory."
2. Christ must be the central figure.
 - a. "Who is this?" the world asks.
 - (1) Our testimonies should declare Him.
 - (2) Our lives should demonstrate Him as the delivering Passover Christ.

- b. Our voice and life.
 - (1) Must proclaim Him King of kings.
 - (2) Must exalt Him as Christ of God.
 - (3) "Praise is comely."
- 3. Our praise and recognition of Christ will confound the critics.
 - a. Life and shouting must harmonize.
 - b. The place of emotion in worship and religion.
- 4. Christ's entry will be marked.
 - a. He received the welcome of the common people.
However lowly, He will come.
 - b. Christ's coming will be marked by obedience upon the part of those who receive Him. "The Master hath need of him."
 - c. Christ will cleanse the temple.

III. THE PROPHETIC ENTRY OF CHRIST INTO THE NEW JERUSALEM

1. It will be the fulfillment of prophecy.
 - a. Christ's entry into Jerusalem was foretold by Zechariah (Matt. 21:4, 5).
"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, the King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9).
 - b. Christ's second coming and entry into the New Jerusalem is foretold repeatedly by both New and Old Testament writers.
 - (1) Note—In the Old Testament. "By far the greater part of the predictions concerning Christ in the Old Testament are connected, not with His first coming to die as an atoning Savior, but with His second coming to rule as King."
In the New Testament the coming again of Jesus in glorious triumph "occupies one of in every 25 verses from Matthew to the Revelation."—DR. R. A. TORREY.
 - (2) Every writer in Old and New Testament makes reference to the second coming of Jesus directly or indirectly.

2. It will be a day of glorious triumph for the King.
 - a. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."
At the cross the heel of the seed of the woman was bruised.
At the second coming the head of the serpent shall be bruised.

- b. Christ will be proclaimed King indeed!
 - (1) Antiphonal choirs of heaven will sing.
"Who is the King of glory?"
"The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle."
"Who is this King of glory?"
"The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory" (Psalm 24).
 - (2) Psalm 24 gives a prophetic song.
- c. Religious emotion will be at its highest.
"And I expect to help them make the courts of heaven ring."
- 3. It will be a day of joy for the Christian.
 - a. High or low; rich or poor; all will participate.
 - b. The Passover deliverance from Egyptian bonds of sin will be celebrated.
 - c. Significant contrasts.
First Entry, there were Pharisaical criticisms.
Then, joyous accord.
First Entry, Jesus must weep over Jerusalem.
Then, all tears will be wiped from the eyes.
First Entry, the temple must be cleansed.
Then, written over the gate, "No sin may enter here."
First Entry, some of those who cried "Hosanna" would soon cry "Crucify."
Then, it is Hosanna, Allelujah unbroken eternally.

CONCLUSION

Christ crowned within the heart now will be the credential that will admit one to the Coronation at His final crowning.

March 21—Evening

CROSSES OF DESTINY

TEXT—*And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left (Luke 23:33).*

INTRODUCTION:

1. Musicians and artists as well as preachers and teachers have made valuable contributions to the picturing of truth. Graphically have artists painted their conception of Bible incidents making more real and vital the truths they present.
2. Herbert Schmalz has a masterpiece which he has called, "The Return from the Cross." In the foreground is Mary the mother of

Jesus being led homeward leaning heavily upon the shoulder of John, Mary Magdalene assisting. Across the valley lies a dark cloud beneath which the city of Jerusalem is faintly outlined. A rift in the clouds reveals on the brow of a distant rugged hill, three crosses silhouetted against the darkening sky. These tell their own story.

3. These three crosses represent a world's tragedy and a world's redemption.

I. THE MYSTERY OF THE CROSS

1. Man set up the cross.
 - a. If the cross was there by divine appointment then why should men be guilty of the death of Jesus?
 - (1) Did Judas just fulfill the decrees of the Almighty?
 - (2) Did Pilate simply carry out the fate of Jehovah?
 - b. The cross was of man's making.
 - (1) The dull thud of the hammer's blow was man's own doing.
 - (2) It was man's sin that brought about conditions that crucified the good, the pure, the holy.
2. What sent Christ to the cross?
 - a. So far as Pilate was concerned it was for the same reasons as condemned the thieves.
 - (1) Cross purposes with the state.
 - (2) Influence was damaging to customs and institutions.
 - b. Thieves were blatant, bold, rebellious, etc. Jesus was none of these but more dangerous to the state for Jesus was holy, true and good, and taught men so. This disturbed the state and church and brought moral revolution.
 - c. Pilate gave Jesus to the same death as he gave the two thieves and for the same reason.
3. The efficacy of Calvary.
 - a. Is not in the cross.
 - (1) We have gilded it with too much gold.
 - (2) We have enshrined it with too much ecclesiastical millinery.
 - (3) The cross is rugged, and stark and cruel.
 - b. It is the Christ of the cross.
 - (1) The cross did not make Christ, Christ made the cross. Thousands had met death on the cross before this and thousands after, but all are forgotten but Christ.
 - (2) "The old rugged cross" can be overdone unless this be remembered.

- c. God can save only by suffering.
 - (1) Incredible to men that Son of God should so suffer.
 - (2) God's great truth for this age.
 - (3) God saves through suffering. Bearing the burdens of men. Being in the afflictions of men himself afflicted.

II. GOD IS IDENTIFIED WITH MEN THROUGH THE CROSS

1. Jesus did not seek the cross, but He accepted it.
 - a. He sought the will of God.
 - b. No special merit accrued from the method of His death.
 - c. Death on a gallows would have been meritorious, for God transformed the cross.
2. Jesus in the midst of malefactors.
 - a. Jewish religious leaders were ever criticizing Him for this, "He receiveth sinners and eateth with them" (Luke 15:2).
 - b. The crosses of man's folly, sorrows, unbelief, sin.
 - c. God identifies Himself with man in his crosses. This is the kind of God man's heart yearns for.
 - d. Jesus takes one of these crosses and makes it a thing of glory and love.
3. "Save thyself and us."
 - a. The cry of the multitude.
 - (1) Hissed out in bitter hatred by the high priests.
 - (2) Laughed out in scorn by the soldiers.
 - (3) Mocked out in derision by the rabble.
 - (4) Whispered out in pity and disappointment by the disciples.
 - b. Nobody is concerned about the thieves.
 - (1) Whether they come down from the cross or not.
 - (2) All eyes were on Jesus.
 - (3) These two crosses of the thieves were two reasons why Jesus could not save Himself.
 - c. Would you have Christ descend?
 - (1) Leaving the thieves upon their crosses?
 - (2) Or bring down the bitter impenitent one as well as the broken penitent one?
 - (3) The only salvation possible for any one was for Christ to endure to the end.

III. THE THREE CROSSES WERE NOT THE SAME

1. The cross of reconciliation.
 - a. The central cross was made luminous with God.
 - b. The central cross was magnetic.

To attract the world.
To hold the world.
To save the world.

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."
 - c. The cross ever the stumbling block.

Rugged? Let it be rugged!
Bloodstained? Let it be bloodstained!
Scorned? Let it be scorned!
Spittle? Let there be spittle!
 - d. He has made all the cross means glorious because of what He is!
 - e. I know He is the Son of God or He could not have been man as I am and taken my cross and me to make glorious in Himself.
2. The Cross of the Reconciled.
 - a. The penitent thief.
 - (1) Rebukes the scoffer (Luke 23:40).
 - (2) Acknowledges Christ (Luke 23:41).
 - (3) Sues for pardon (Luke 23:41).
 - (4) Confesses his sin (Luke 23:41).

"Nothing in my hands I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling."
 - b. The assurance of forgiveness (Luke 23:43).

"This day thou shalt be with me in paradise."
 - c. The middle cross of reconciliation had worked its miracle.
3. The Cross of the unreconciled.
 - a. The unrepentant thief.
 - (1) The presence of death did not soften him.
 - (2) Even the presence of Christ did not reach him.
 - (3) The rebuke of his fellow did not deter him.
 - b. Cross signifies cross purposes with life.
 - (1) Something within the nature that refused to parallel itself with God.
 - (2) This cross within the natures of men.

Places men at right angles with each other.
At right angles with God.
 - c. The cross of Christ failed because of His attitude.

CONCLUSION

1. Christ is the bond between an offended God and an offending world.
2. Our message is, "Be ye reconciled to God." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:18, 19).

March 28—Morning

RESURRECTION REVELATIONS

(Easter Message)

TEXT—*Mary Magdalene cometh early when it was yet dark into the sepulcher and seeth the stone taken away* (John 20:1).

SCRIPTURE LESSON—John 20:1-18.

INTRODUCTION:

Several years ago while pastor in Boston I had occasion to visit an aged Baptist minister. He told us he had just returned from the funeral of his only brother, whose sudden death was the result of an accident. He told us how enwrapped his life had been with the life of his brother. "This is Easter time," said he, "but how can I get good out of Easter when such clouds of sorrow are upon me?" The aged minister dropped his head for a moment as though in prayerful meditation and as he raised it I noticed a changed look in his face and this time he said, "Brethren. I remember that Mary of old came to the tomb 'when it was yet dark' and that coming, she received revelations of the risen Lord that brought great comfort to her heart. I too will trust through shadows."

1. The story that surrounds the text.

I. THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF CHRIST'S TOMB

1. The tomb was a repulsive place to come.
 - a. It is not recorded that the high priest or his subordinates came.
 - b. The soldiers remained out of military duty.
 - c. The apostles wrapped in disappointment had sought their fishing nets, etc., that their sorrow might be forgotten.
 - d. The tomb of Jesus and all that it represents is the stumbling block to modernistic believers and critics.
2. The tomb had an attraction for some.
 - a. Mary awakened early and went to the tomb with embalming spices.
 - (1) Love's drawing power.
 - (2) "When it was yet dark."

Disappointment and unbelief had cast its shadow.
 - b. Heaven was interested in that tomb and had sent an angel representative to bring the first Easter message.
3. The empty tomb near Jerusalem today.
 - a. Tombs of the great today are visited because of those whose dust they contain.

Mohammed's tomb.
Westminster Abbey.
Grave of the Unknown Soldier.
 - b. The tomb of the Christ has more visitors than others.

Its attraction lies in the miraculous fact that *it is empty*.

II. THE REVELATIONS OF THE TOMB OF CHRIST

1. Revelations of unbelief.

a. It is the testing hour which reveals faith or the lack of it.

b. The unbelief of the apostles revealed (Mark 16:9-14).

"And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not" (v. 11).

"And they went and told it unto the residue; neither believed they them" (v. 13).

"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat and upbraided them because of their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (v. 14).

"But Thomas said unto them, Except I shall see the prints of the nails . . . I will not believe" (John 20:1-29).

"And when they saw him they worshiped him: but some doubted" (Matt. 28:17).

c. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is today and has been through the centuries the focal point of the attack of unbelief.

2. Revelations of Enduring Faith.

a. Faith shines brightest when contrasted on a background of dark unbelief.

"When it was yet dark."

(1) John, "Which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed" (John 20:8).

(2) "Mary believed" (John 20:18).

3. Revelations of Personal Enrichment.

a. The believer is always rewarded.

(1) Angels appeared (v. 12).

(2) Comfort of assurance (Mark 16:5, 6; Matt. 28:5, 6).

(3) The joy of victory, "He Is Risen."

III. THE MESSAGE OF THE TOMB

1. The living Christ. "He is risen."

a. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. 15:14). "And ye are yet in your sins" (v. 17).

b. "I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold I am alive forever more" (Rev. 1:18).

c. "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen" (Luke 24:5, 6).

2. The Commissioning Christ.

a. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. . . and saith unto them,

Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:21, 22).

b. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

c. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

3. The accompanying Christ.

a. "Lo I am with you alway" (Matt. 28:20).

b. "They preached everywhere, the Lord working with them" (Mark 16:20).

4. The Death Conquering Christ.

a. "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again" (John 10:18).

b. "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19).

c. "I have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18).

CONCLUSION

Christ is the divine Columbus who has explored the uncharted seas of death and has returned to tell us of a new world.

It is the Christian's faith alone that can pierce the shadows of the tomb and find the Christ of Easter.

March 28—Evening

THE LAST WORD

TEXT—*I will see you again* (John 16:22).

This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1:11).

INTRODUCTION:

1. Jesus had often foretold His death to His apostles but they had failed to understand.

a. Their minds were so set on his setting up a temporal kingdom immediately that they had ears for naught else.

2. Events have moved swiftly during the closing days of His earthly ministry.

a. His crucifixion had dashed their hopes to broken fragments.

b. His resurrection had revived these hopes and made them to glow with a new meaning.

c. He is leaving them again, His earthly mission completed and their minds are bewildered with conflicting emotions.

3. His promise revived to come again.

a. They see His former utterances in a new light.

b. The last word given to them as they view His ascension is the promise to return.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS COMING

1. The importance the Bible places upon it.

a. Oft promised.

(1) Old Testament.

More said in the Old Testament about Christ's second coming in glorious majesty to rule than about His first coming to suffer.

(2) New Testament.

In the New Testament the second coming is referred to 318 times in 260 chapters.

b. Source of comfort to those who face death.

"Comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

(1) Paul addresses the church.

"These words" have entirely to do with the Second Coming.

"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep; that ye sorrow not as others" (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

(2) Isaiah comforts Israel.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God" (Isa. 40:1, 9, 10).

c. It is the believer's "blessed hope."

"Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

2. A Strong Incentive for Holy Living.

a. "Be ye also ready" (Matt. 24:44).

(1) Not for death as is often argued.

(2) But for His coming.

"The Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).

b. Faithfulness in service.

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing" (Matt. 24:45, 46).

c. Shun the sins of the generation.

"Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day shall come upon you suddenly as a snare" (Luke 21:34-36).

(1) That we be unashamed.

"Now, little children, abide in him; that, if he shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed at his coming" (1 John 2:28).

The great reason for being true to Christ is that we may be ready when He returns.

3. A blessing pronounced upon those who look for Him.

a. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching" (Luke 12:37).

b. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28).

II. THE CERTAINTY OF HIS COMING

1. The Bible is explicit at this point.

a. The word of the Christ himself on the night of His crucifixion was, "*I come again* and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3).

b. Paul adds his testimony.

"*The Lord himself shall descend* from heaven, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

Again, "Our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20, 21).

c. Peter states it clearly.

"Repent ye, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come refreshing from the presence of the Lord; that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus" (Acts 3:19-21, R.V.).

2. Some say these passages do not refer to a distinct second coming.

a. But that they refer to Christ's coming at the death of the believer. This cannot be true, for at the death of the believer Christ does not come "with a shout," nor with "the voice of the archangel," nor "with the trump of God."

b. Some have said the coming of the Holy Spirit is the second coming of Christ.

(1) Christ does come in a very real sense in the coming of the Holy Spirit.

(2) But the coming of Jesus referred to in these passages is spoken of largely after the Holy Ghost had been given. Then again, Jesus at the coming of the Holy Spirit, does not "receive us unto himself," neither is there "the trump of the archangel," no shout, no resurrection, no rapture in the clouds, etc.

c. Some have said the coming of Christ refers to the destruction of Jerusalem.

(1) The destruction of Jerusalem was a type of the judgment of this age and in Matt. 24 and Mark 13 the two events are described in the same passages.

(2) But at the destruction of Jerusalem those who slept in Jesus were not raised, living believers were not caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and bodies of believers were not transformed.

(3) Years after the destruction of Jerusalem we still find John looking for Christ's second coming (Rev. 22:20). Jesus' coming is certain, and it is definitely an event not yet taken place.

III. THE TIME OF OUR LORD'S RETURN

1. The exact time of His return is a divine secret.

a. Jesus says, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. 24:36, also Mark 13:32).

"Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matt. 24:42).

b. Calculations from Daniel were never intended to fix the exact date of our Lord's return.

The prophecies of Daniel were read by the people at the time Jesus uttered the words found in Matt. 24 and Mark 13).

Jesus knew Daniel but declared He did not know the time of the second coming.

c. Calculations from the Great Pyramid of Egypt fall under the same unreliability.

d. "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority" (Acts 1:6, 7, R.V.). Jesus replied to the disciples when they asked, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?"

2. Hints concerning the period of His coming.

a. When His disciples think not. "Therefore be ye also ready; for *in such an hour as ye think not* the Son of man cometh."

b. When the world is absorbed in its usual occupations.

"As it came to pass in the days of Noah, even so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in mar-

age, until the day that Noah entered the ark" (Luke 17:26-30, R.V.).

c. The day of the Lord will not come until after the revelation of the man of sin and the falling away.

"Let no man beguile you in any wise; for it will not be except the falling away came first, and the man of sin be revealed" (2 Thess. 2:2-4, R.V.).

"But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1). See also 2 Tim. 3:1-3.

d. These indications are the mutterings before the storm.

"When these things begin to come to pass," we should "look up and lift up our heads for our redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

3. The return of our Lord may occur at any time.

a. While we are not authorized to set dates, yet we dare not say He will not come today!

b. We are exhorted to be watching and ready ever.

c. Bible pictures of the near approach.

(1) "It is as when a man sojourning in a far country, having left his house, and given authority told his servants to watch lest coming he find them sleeping" (Mark 13:34-36).

(2) "Let your loins be girded up, and your lamps burning; and be ye yourselves like unto men looking for their Lord, when he shall return from the marriage feast; that when he cometh and knocketh they may straightway open unto him" (Luke 12:35, 36).

(3) "He may return as a thief in the night" (Matt. 24:42-44).

CONCLUSION

1. "Hear the parable of the fig tree" (Matt. 24:32, 33).

"When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door."

2. "And they that were ready went in with him to the marriage" (Matt. 25:10).

Be such a man, live such a life, that if every man were such a man as you, and every life a life like yours, this earth would be God's paradise.—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Prayermeeting Suggestions for March

Lewis T. Corlett

A Successful Revival

(Psalm 85:6)

I. PSALMIST WAS A LITTLE UNCERTAIN AS TO WHETHER GOD WOULD DO IT

1. Lack of knowledge hinders God (Hosea 4:6).
2. Covered sin and unconfessed sin hinder God (Psa. 66:18).
3. Lack of spiritual fervor limits God (Amos 6:1).

II. PEOPLE OF GOD WILL REJOICE WHEN THE REVIVAL COMES

1. Fresh appreciation for God.
2. Union of the saints.

III. PRAYER WILL BRING THE DESIRED RESULTS

The Riches of His Inheritance

(Ephesians 1:17-19; 3:16-19)

I. SPEAKS OF TWO INHERITANCES

1. "Our inheritance" (v. 14).
2. "His inheritance" (v. 18).

II. THE THINGS THAT GOD EXPECTS TO SEE COME OUT OF HIS INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS

1. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened."
 - a. By the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.
 - b. An increase in spiritual perception.
 - c. The vision to be intensified.
2. The strengthening of the inner man.
 - a. Building of Christian character.
 - b. The soul life to be built up.
 - c. Motives to be clearer, conscience to be keener, the outflowing of spiritual values more prominent.
 - d. Manner of this development.
 1. By His Spirit.
 2. Rooted and grounded in love.
 3. Christ dwelling in the heart by faith.

III. ALL OF THIS TO BRING A CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE

1. The hope of our calling.
2. To comprehend the breadth and length, depth and height of the love of Christ.
3. To know the greatness of His power to us-ward.

The Making of a Christian

1. His birth (John 3:7).
2. His name (Acts 11:26).
3. His food (Matt. 4:4).

4. His growth (2 Peter 3:18).
5. His dress (Rom. 13:14).
6. His speech (Matt. 26:73).
7. His character (Matt. 5:3-11).
8. His influence—his standards (Col. 3:2).

—SELECTED.

Jacob Wrestling

He prayed:

1. Privately—"Jacob was left alone."
2. Purposefully—"I will not let thee go except thou bless me."
3. Persistently—"And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."
4. Passionately—"And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him."
5. Regally—"For as a prince hast thou power with God and hast prevailed."

—SELECTED.

The Seven Things for Which Christ Said He Came

1. To bring heavenly light (John 12:46).
2. To judge wilful blindness (John 9:39).
3. To enkindle conflagrations upon earth (Luke 12:49).
4. To cause divisions (Luke 12:51).
5. To enthrone truth (John 18:37).
6. To replenish life (John 10:10).
7. To seek and save the lost mankind (Luke 19:10).

—SELECTED.

A Sermon Series

The following were used by a pastor as subjects for a seven-week series of messages:

1. Letter of Christ to an Average Church (Rev. 2:1-7).
2. Letter of Christ to a Struggling Church (Rev. 2:8-11).
3. Letter of Christ to a Testifying Church (Rev. 2:12-17).
4. Letter of Christ to a Progressive Church (Rev. 2:18-29).
5. Letter of Christ to an Unspiritual Church (Rev. 3:1-6).
6. Letter of Christ to an Evangelistic Church (Rev. 3:7-13).
7. Letter of Christ to a Worldly-minded Church (Rev. 3:14-21).

—SELECTED.

The Christian's Daily Dozen

The motto is taken from 1 Tim. 4:7—"Exercise thyself unto godliness." The outline follows:

1. A little patience—once a day.
2. A bit of self-control—somewhere.
3. A minute of unselfishness.
4. A flash of generosity.
5. One kind word—possibly two.
6. A word of appreciation to somebody.
7. An eager excuse—for someone else.
8. One good deed—not left undone.
9. A noble thought—perhaps a text.
10. A little prayer—for a friend in need.
11. A sudden smile—where it can do some good.
12. A snatch of song—or hum a tune.

—SELECTED.

The Sovereign Lord

- "Who convicteth me of sin?" (John 8:46).
 "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).
 "I am the door" (John 10:9).
 "I am the way" (John 14:6).
 "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:14).
 "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).
 "I am the vine" (John 15:5).
 "I am the Son of God" (John 10:36b).
 "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25).
 "I am alive forevermore" (Rev. 1:18).

—SELECTED.

God's Presence

(Isaiah 58:11, 12)

- I. PROPHET'S MESSAGE TO ENCOURAGE SPIRITUALITY
1. Humanity tends to substitute form for godliness.
 2. People sometimes depend on past blessings.
- II. GOD'S PRESENCE
1. Conditions that bring the Divine Presence.
 - a. A self-sacrificing interest in God's work and in humanity.
 - b. Helpfulness to others.
 2. Characteristics of the Divine Presence.
 - a. Light shall break forth, as the morning.
 - b. Thine health shall spring forth speedily.
 - c. Thy righteousness shall go before thee.
 - d. Divine guidance.
 3. Results of God's Presence.
 - a. Build up the waste places.
 - b. Repairing of the breach.
 - c. Restorer of the paths to walk in.
 - d. Laying the foundations for future generations.
- IV. EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD YEARN TO LIVE CONTINUALLY IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Five Great Questions on Life

(From Romans 12)

1. How shall I pay what I owe to God? (Rom. 12:1).
 2. How shall I deal with the world? (Rom. 12:2).
 3. How shall I measure myself? (Rom. 12:3).
 4. How shall I get along with other people? (Rom. 12:4-20).
 5. How shall I conquer evil? (Rom. 12:21).
- SELECTED.

Our Spiritual Inventory

(From Four Parables in Matthew 24:45—25:46)

1. Spiritual Trustworthiness. Parable of the Stewards (Matt. 24:45-51).
2. Spiritual Thrift. Parable of the Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13).
3. Spiritual investments. Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30).
4. Spiritual Dividends. Parable of the Sheep and Goats (Matt. 25:31-46). —SELECTED.

The Thoughts that Moved Jesus

Are they the thoughts that move us?

1. He thought of God as His Father (Luke 15:11-22).
 2. He thought of men as His brothers (Matt. 28:1-10 (especially 10)).
 3. He thought of life as a service (Mark 10:35-45).
 4. He thought of a life beyond (Luke 20:27-40).
- SELECTED.

Winning Souls

MELZA H. BROWN

- I. SOUL WINNING IS OUR WORK
1. Matt. 4:19. Fishers of men.
 2. 28:19, 20. Go ye—I am with you.
 3. 22:37. First commandment.
 4. 39. Second commandment.
 5. 20:6. Why stand ye here idle?
- II. IMPORTANCE
1. Mark 8:36, 37. The value of a soul.
 2. Jude 23. Save souls from fire.
 3. Jas. 5:20. Save a soul from death.
 4. Prov. 11:30. This is wisdom.
 5. Dan. 12:3. Soul winners shall shine.
- III. HOW?
1. Acts 1:8. First be endued with power.
 2. Matt. 22:9. Go ye.
 3. 1 Cor. 9:22. Adjust yourself to the situation.
 4. 1 Cor. 1:21. By preaching the gospel.
 5. 1 Cor. 2:4. The kind of preaching needed.
 6. 1 Tim. 2:1. First of all praying.
 7. Rom. 10:1. A heart desire.
 8. Ex. 33:12-23. Moses' desire and prayer.
 9. God's way, God's presence, God's glory.

"Is It I?"

MARVIN P. MCCOY

TEXT—Master, is it I? (Matt. 26:25).

INTRODUCTION—Visualize Jesus and the twelve disciples sitting down to the Last Supper. Then look upon Jesus and visualize His life from His entry to His departure. Show what he did. (Then say He whom we have been speaking of is playing the last act in the drama of life.)

Every step He took He intended for you and me to take cognizance of. Every word He spoke He intended for us to remember. He was up early to pray, visited the sick, dispensed charity, etc.

We are here on this occasion to eat supper with the Master (morning or evening worship) the same thing is taking place, and Jesus is saying the same thing. One of you who dips sop with me shall betray me or has betrayed me. You say, "Is it I?" and you answer the question.

I. DO YOU HAVE FAMILY PRAYER? Do you teach your children to pray and love Jesus? If it was important for the Son of God to pray, it is much more important for you to pray. We older ones are going to pass off of the stage of action; unless we train and teach our little ones to carry on the work, we have betrayed the Master. "Is it I?"

II. DO YOU GO TO SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CHURCH REGULARLY? PRAYERMEETINGS? Your indifference will cause others to be indifferent. Your indifference may cause someone to lose his soul. "Is it I?" If you are not interested why should a sinner be? They see you at home when you should be at God's house. "Is it I?"

III. DO YOU PAY TITHE OR GIVE OFFERINGS INTO THE STOREHOUSE OF GOD?

1. *Your failure means*—souls being lost; schools being closed; missionaries recalled from fields; home missionary work neglected; charity neglected; pastors prevented from doing pastoral work as they should. Imagine what this means by reason of your failure to pay tithes: "Is it I?" Charity should be dispersed by Christians and in the name of God, as it is, God never gets the glory. Those who are helped praise the organization who gives, and God is left out. "Is it I?"

2. *Your failure deprives of you a great victory.* That victory would have wonderful effect upon others. "Is it I?"

IV. DO YOU SAY, "EXCUSE ME," WHEN CALLED UPON TO PRAY, TESTIFY, ETC.?

You can't pray? If you thought you were going to die, you could pray. Your failure to pray or testify, reflects against the cause. Many people have been converted through prayers and testimonies. "Is it I?"

V. DO YOU LIVE A CHRISTIAN LIFE AT HOME AND LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE?

Do we lift Christ by our living; if we fail, we betray the Master. People read our lives as

well as the Bible? Do our children have confidence in our religion? If not, "Is it I?" that has betrayed the Master. Are we ashamed to speak to our children who are unsaved? Suppose they are lost? "Is it I?"

VI. DO WE ACCEPT CHRIST AND NEVER SEEK ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION?

"Is it I?"

VII. REVIVALS ARE ON—PASTOR AND EVANGELIST PLEAD FOR HELP

Do you stand like an iceberg, and never speak to anyone? Suppose they are lost? "Is it I?"

VIII. DO YOU VISIT THE SICK? Jesus did. His fame spread. Your failure may be the cause of a soul being lost? "Is it I?"

Close by giving Lot's life in brief, and show how he lost by betraying God.

"God Hath Spoken"**An Outline Study of the Book of Hebrews**

PAUL S. HILL

AFTER this rather lengthy introduction to the study of His humanity, we can look at verses 5 and 6, of chapter 2. We cite these two verses because they are an abrupt statement, introduced from the Old Testament, to the effect that "the world to come" is not under the subjection of angels, but under the subjection of man. Man. Not angels but *man*. Having gotten to this point we can pass on through the rest of the chapter. Here is certainly a discussion of the humanity of Jesus. What a contrast to the Son of God revealed in chapter one, and yet it is the same Christ. Here it is "humanity," "humility," "suffering," "death." There it is "eternity," "unchangeableness," "imperishability," "majestic glory."

In this chapter we are face to face with the mystery of the Incarnation. We read here the processes and accomplishments of the incarnation of the Son of God. Here is God, joined to the race of men, with all the characteristics of the race, human nature, feeling, struggle, companionship, temptation, understanding, death. But be careful. Do not read so much humanity into this chapter that you will fail to see the Son of God of chapter one. Look carefully and you will see the Mighty Son incarnated in a human body and a human nature, accomplishing the redemption of a race sunk in sin, and bringing to that race a great salvation, an actual deliverance of those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Before we go any farther let us go back and look at verse 5. "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." What is "the world to come" of

which He speaks? And what is the "subjection" of that world? And what are the characteristics of its substance, and the scope of its boundary. What are the contents of "the world to come" of which the writer to the Hebrews was speaking?

Before we discuss this "world to come," let us clear the field by eliminating those things that the epistle considers as transitory, and therefore not suitable objects for conquest. If a transitory world is conquered the victory is small for the kingdom soon shall pass away. On this line of reasoning we can eliminate the elaborate system of religion, built up with types, ceremonies, washings and sacrifices contained in the Old Testament. That is, we can eliminate them as being the subject of subjection, or characteristic of the world to come. The fact of the New Testament, when the voice of God has spoken again by His Son, stops for all time a further development of the Old Testament system of types, etc.

It also eliminates the strictly material kingdom of this world. There is a teaching of Christ on a throne in the present Jerusalem, in a reign of universal world peace. We do not wish to discuss that here, only to say that that idea is not what is included in the "world to come, of which we speak," for in chapter one is the plain declaration that the heavens and the earth are things of time as compared with eternity, and that they were both made by the Son of God, and that He shall fold them up as a garment. But He shall remain. And the world to come shall remain, and the things that remain after the material earth and heaven are folded up, these things are the things that are put in subjection to man.

This "world to come" is more durable than time. Its scope is broader than the border of the material world. It overreaches the fullest history of the earth and its denizens. It is not measured by earthly achievements. The rise and fall of all earth's empires are nought compared with it. Such things as a material world afford, things which must pass with the world itself, these are too fleeting, too cheap, for such conquest as is depicted in this second chapter, where we see the Son of God, joining Himself to the race of men, that He might put in subjection the world to come.

The whole subject of man's dominion harks back to the creation. When God created man He gave him dominion. The realm of his dominion is clearly stated in God's first commission to him, and includes all vegetable and animal life. It would not appear that man's dominion was broader than the things of the material world, or that it was more enduring than the limit of man's lifetime, unless we discover that humanity has a nature that is not satisfied with such limited

dominion, and that such dominion as full control of things earthly are a mockery to him, if through the processes of such dominion he himself is brought into a deep and lasting bondage to such things as sin, guilt, fear and death. In the first chapter of Genesis the dominion given is that of an earthly career, but the facts of intelligence, will power, affections, all shaped after the "image of God" give the stamp of other-worldness to humanity which no dominion of a passing earth, grasped for a minute of quicker passing lifetime, can satisfy. Man is bigger, in the "image of God," than can be satisfied with a passing world of material things. Every fiber of humanity points to a "world to come." And in this world to come man is to be more than a slave. God did not design a being in "his own image" so that ultimately he would be in bondage to sin, fear and death but rather that a victor, having subjected those things which make war against his holy character and thus destroy his happiness and bring him into bondage. There is a place here where we could inject a study of the processes and objects of "probation," but time and space should not be yielded for this purpose. What we are studying is the second chapter of Hebrews, and here we are face to face with a race of men less than conquerors, actually in bondage, because through sin they have forfeited their right to everything which offers them lasting happiness. The "other-world" capacities and characteristics, are prostituted to a broken program of "this world," and even in the ambitions for this world they are defeated and discouraged. Humanity has traded its position as conqueror in the world to come for a disgusting bit of wreckage of earthly fame, and the trade has brought them into bondage to sin, guilt, fear, death and eternal loss of fellowship with God.

In chapter two we see Christ, the Son of God, the Christ of chapter one, the Christ with limitless abilities and absolute perfections, we see Him joined to the defeated human race, a race under bondage to sin, fear, and death, joined to this race by way of the incarnation, and joined to the race in order that He might become the "Captain of their salvation, and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." That He may be their Savior, and bring them victoriously into their proper position in the world to come, where there is no longer anything to make them afraid. This is the teaching of this chapter, and the conquest is far greater than can be measured with a material yardstick. It includes a conquest in the realm of sin, guilt, fear, death, suffering, and unto a victorious holiness; and its time duration is more lasting than the earth and heavens which shall perish, and be folded up, it continues even

to all eternity. In that world to come may we be conquerors!

Our study of the first two chapters of this epistle has led us into the mystery of the incarnation, or rather into what the theologians call "the unique personality of Christ." We have glimpsed Him in the splendor of His deity, and we have seen Him in His humanity. We will not discuss the "unique" personality of Christ here. We refer our readers to any good theology where the matter is ably presented. The only things we insist on are these: Christ was divine, Christ was human, Christ was not two but one. Not God unmixed with humanity, not humanity unmixed with God. Not man some time and God some other time, but one personality, God-Man. No man, however endowed with gifts and graces of the Spirit, can fill the gap of meditation. Nor does it seem that there was any other way to save the race without the incarnation of the Son. We have the incarnation, the process of which is the blending of the human nature and divine personality into one personality, and the purpose of which is deliverance of the race from bondage that they may fill their proper place as conquerors, and not slaves in the world to come.

The teaching of chapter two is to the effect that the incarnation is complete. It is complete in the sense that the entirety of God is in it. It is complete in the sense that all humanity is in it. God did not merely touch humanity at its highest points, He entered into its lowest places. He took on humanity's every human characteristic. What an incarnation there is in this chapter! This is not a dainty handling of a putrid situation. It is the actual clothing of the Divine with a humanity "lower than the angels," and "subject to bondage," and gripped and hopeless in the hand of death and sin.

We wish we could get this picture, of the completeness of the incarnation, more clearly into view. Who can describe what happened when the Christ of chapter one brought all of God to humanity? "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Who can describe what happened when the Christ of chapter two brought all of humanity to God? All of God mixed with all of humanity in the incarnation, and, through the process of the death of Christ for every man, redeemed the whole race from bondage, and back to God. Not only *from* bondage, but *back* to God.

The incarnation furnished the world's Redeemer. Through that event God placed all His power beside all human weakness, and offered to help. He placed His holiness against our sin, His eternity against our time, His obedience against our disobedience, His love against our rebellion,

His courage beside our fear, His guiltlessness against our guilt, His infiniteness beside our finiteness, His purity beside our impurity, His peace beside our unrest, His wisdom beside our foolishness, His triumph beside our defeat, His merit beside our demerit, Himself, all that He is, beside us, all that we are. Here is the world's Redeemer, Jesus Christ the Son of God, taking on Himself humanity's flesh and blood, "that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

The Christ of the New Testament is the one who puts into subjection "the world to come," and the extent of His kingdom is not only time but also eternity; and the realm of His conquest is not only the material universe, but also the realm of faith, fear, hope, sin, love, the soul: that unseen, yet real, realm of values important with the importance of eternity, and man will be successful in his conquest for his own best interests in this world, and "the world to come," only as he is attached to Jesus Christ his Savior and Mediator, the incarnate Son of God.

It is possible from the second chapter to compile a list of terms and phrases that refer to the humanity of Christ. Beginning with the 9th verse we present such a list. "Lower than the angels," "for the suffering of death," "taste death for every man," "perfect through suffering," "he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one," "he is not ashamed to call them brethren," "my brethren," "in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee," "I will put my trust in him," "I and the children which God hath given me," "children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same," "he took on him the seed of Abraham," "made like unto his brethren," "he himself hath suffered," "being tempted." The reader is asked to look up these expressions in the second chapter, and note that they all refer to the humanity of Jesus. There are other expressions which show the object of His humanity, such as "That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest," "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people," "able to succor them that are tempted," and others.

Before we pass to a further study of this epistle, let us apply our three tests to the two chapters that we have passed through. (1) Does the teaching of these chapters agree with the teaching of the Old Testament? (2) Does the Christ pictured here agree with the historical Christ of the New Testament? (3) Does faith in this Christ as the Savior bring a satisfactory experience of religion to the soul? The answer to all three is affirmative.

PRACTICAL

Why I Share the Christian Hope

C. B. Strang

I SHARE the Christian hope because I believe it is consistent with a normal expectation of what God ought to do for us. I believe the present Christian life ought to be one of service and progress, and a life of joy. One could not be a Christian without living a life in service of others, if by Christian we mean that we pattern our lives after Christ's life. No one would be satisfied, who is normal, to stand still in any line of endeavor, so we naturally expect the Christian to have some progression in his life. Joyfulness should characterize the life of any real Christian who is making some progress toward his objective. If these are values that may be realized here, it seems only natural to expect that they shall not discontinue with death. If there is no life after death, God is only mocking the human race, and especially is He mocking those who call themselves Christians, as there is a distinct craving in their hearts for immortality. When we attempt to tell ourselves that death ends all there is immediately an inner protest from the depth of our being.

Then, again, the very nature of the Christian's God warrants his belief in immortality. The God of the Christian has ever been pictured as one who "is from everlasting to everlasting." In addition we believe Him to be a personal God. Our personality is of necessity somewhat like His because He is our Creator. If, then, He is to live on, we have the hope of eternal life also. We believe that life hereafter depends entirely upon His divine will. We

cannot conceive of this God whom we worship allowing us to perish in death.

I share the Christian hope of immortality because of the teaching of Jesus. He plainly taught that men should live after death. He predicted His own resurrection, and if we believe in that, and I do, then it gives us hope of being resurrected and of having immortality. The Bible says that "He became the firstfruits of them that slept." If we interpret this correctly it means He became the first of His kind, but it gives us hope of being next in order and of sharing immortality with Him.

Dying men, by the thousands, have testified to dying grace and a brighter hope of immortality as the hour of death approached. These testimonies cannot be discounted.

I do not believe that my service shall end with death. I believe that in the future life I shall be better equipped to serve than I have been here. I believe that after we lay aside the body of flesh, that sometimes encumbers us so greatly, we will be better fitted to serve.

I believe that just as we have made progress here we should expect to make it in the future life. I believe in the future life because it suggests a larger universe in which to make progress. The universe from which man came was a small one. He came forth from the womb, from a life of necessarily small proportions, into a universe of larger possibilities, and I believe that the step into the next life will be a step into a still larger universe.

Then, too, I believe that the joy we share here in a small way, is a token of the greater joys we shall share in eternity. It seems only fitting that there should be a reward for faithfulness. It seems only natural that a transcendent joy should lie ahead of us. I believe that God guarantees a future life to the Christian by the very nature of His own life; through the life of His Son; and

through the Scriptures. No one has ever returned to tell us about it, but through faith I believe in it.

Again, this hope is not the hope of only a few scattered people, but wherever we find Christians they are characterized by this hope for blessings on this earth, and for future blessings in eternity.

Plain Words to Preachers

John W. Goodwin

THE PREACHER AND HIS SERMON

THE pulpit is the preacher's throne. Here is where he reigns. Here he should be at his best. This is the place where he should shine. Here is where people judge him as a preacher. He should never enter the pulpit in a careless manner. He should have something to say, say it, and then quit. A preacher in taking a text should seek never to wrest the Scriptures. His text should be the foundation of his sermon. What about a startling or unique text? Sometimes it might be done with good results, but as a rule he should stay by the fundamentals. There is no excuse for poor sermons. Our doctrine is well defined and God has promised the help of the Holy Ghost.

The sermon is a Christian effort. It differs from common oratory from the fact that it is based upon the Word of God. Its aim is salvation. Christian preaching is the voice of a living speaker. The history of sermon making will show us that in the apostles' time preaching was explaining the Scriptures and teaching the people. In Augustine's time we have the first real sermon making. In Luther's time we have the first modern sermon making. There are three great laws fundamental to sermon making. First, there must be a basis, a foundation, a text. Second, the natural divisions should clarify the text. Third, there should be unity as to purpose.

What is a good sermon? It must be well studied and well thought through. A good sermon will have some of the following properties. First, it should be evangelical. A message from God to human hearts is evangelical. Second, it should be instructive. Third, it should be inspiring, and give a lofty vision of Jesus Christ. Fourth, it should be full of freshness, both of thought and spirit. Fifth, it must be edifying. Sixth, it should be of moderate length. An ordinary sermon in the pastorate ought to be from thirty

to forty minutes in length, and never over fifty. It would be well for young preachers not to preach more than twenty minutes the first year or two in the beginning of their ministry.

Should sermons be repeated? Some of them never! I have preached some sermons for the first and last time. But why not repeat a good sermon? It is said that George Whitefield could preach an impressive sermon better after he had preached it forty times. Good sermons may be repeated, but there are several rules to follow. New circumstances should be injected. A sermon may be repeated to the same congregation upon request. For it is line upon line and precept upon precept. The thing that impresses the people is something they already knew. A wise preacher may bring out of the storehouse both new and old. If a pastor goes to a new charge and preaches his old sermons they should be worked over, new things injected and new outlines written.

Should many sermons be repeated from one text? This would require research and strong gifts. Young preachers should not preach too many sermons on the same text. In pastoral work a preacher should be well prepared with a well rounded sermon on Sunday morning. The evening service may be devoted to exhortation, but the evening service should be filled with intensity and evangelism.

There are four different kinds of preaching, Textual, topical, expository, and contextual, which grows out of expository. Textual preaching might be described as taking a text and developing a sermon from it. This is one of the best methods. Topical preaching is taking a topic and limiting the thought to one subject. A topical index in the Bible is helpful. Topical preaching would seem the more difficult method, but is often needful and helpful. Expository preaching is also a difficult method of preaching

and recommended by some to be reserved for mature years. Taking a passage and expounding it would seem to require the confidence of years. But exhortation should be interwoven through all kinds of preaching. Contextual preaching might be described as taking a text and developing it from the context. It has the elements of both textual and expository. It is thought by many to be one of the most helpful methods.

We might suggest a simple outline from an old text, for example, 1 Peter 1:15, 16, God's command to holiness. The introduction ought not to be too lengthy and possibly might consist of a correction of ideas as to holiness or what it is not. On the positive side, it might be well to show that the command is based, first, on the holiness of God. Second, upon His dealings with His people, in the Old Testament times in the requirement of the law. Third, holiness is based on the original plan of God—He has chosen us to holiness before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). Fourth, it is based upon the providences of God and His corrective discipline (Heb. 12:11). Fifth, it is based upon the atonement of Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:12). In conclusion it could be grounded on the eternal abode of God's people, heaven as a holy place. We should never try to preach everything that could be said in one sermon. When you make your propositions back them up by Scripture.

The method of contextual preaching may be illustrated by a text found in Isaiah 44:3, "For I will pour water on him that is thirsty and floods on the dry ground."

Introduction—To whom the promise is given, "O Jacob my servant and Israel whom I have chosen." Twice repeated.

I. The grounds for the promise. The "dry ground" an indication in: *first*, an absence of a devotional spirit; second, an absence of a burden for souls; third, human effort to bring in substitutes, false gods and idols, good works.

II. The nature of the promise, the gift of the Holy Ghost, typified by the symbol water, "I will pour water." Water is a symbol of the Holy Ghost in that: *first*, it is universally needed; *second*, it is a necessity to life; *third*, it has cleansing power; *fourth*, there is potential power locked up in it; *fifth*, a natural right attaches to all water supply.

III. The generosity of the promise. "I will pour floods," is seen in that: first, floods are overflowing; second, they are all satisfying; third, irresistible; fourth, enriching.

IV. The results of the promise; *first*, blessed assurance. "I am the Lord's"; *second*, firmness and fixedness of purpose, "willows by the water-courses"; *third*, perfect submission to all the will of God, "another shall subscribe with his

own hand unto the Lord"; *fourth*, fruitfulness, "they shall spring up among the grasses."

Conclusion—We may receive this blessing: "The thirsty." Thirst is the realization of need. Thirst, when protracted, means pain. Thirst knows no cost to gain satisfaction. God's promise is "I will open the windows of heaven."

A great preacher was asked how he could preach such wonderful sermons; he replied, "I mix them well with brain and sweat." It is never advisable to enter the pulpit, making excuses, hoping to get sympathy from the people. Better say nothing and do your best. If unprepared, then go before the Lord and make excuses to Him, He is the one who called you to preach. It is useless to excuse yourself to the people, for this might produce criticism and destroy appreciation on the part of some who otherwise might never know the difference. If the preacher can have God's smile, he needs only to do his best.

The pastorate affords a great opportunity for study and biblical research. The people have a right to expect good sermons.

The natural conversational tone of voice is restful to the hearers and much appreciated by good listeners. A strained pitch of voice and poor articulation have destroyed many a good sermon. Good sermons are generally born by inspiration—the heart must be moved in the desire to help someone, and not pumped up from a sense of duty to fill up the time.

Sermon making is a great art, but much like trying to make a man with only bones, a mere skeleton without the living spirit. The breath of life must be breathed into our sermon outlines, or they will become frightful skeletons in the pulpit. I trust not snowmen, for many churches are cold enough already. I would prefer a fireplace sermon, even if much of the heat was lost up the chimney. But the breath of life from above will make dry bones live. Let us then study to put more life into our efforts, it may be they will become attractive.

Good illustrations will often make even a poor sermon sparkle, which otherwise might be very commonplace. Stock illustrations are sometimes good, but those fresh from experience are generally more effective. Such good illustrations are often hard to get. Some preachers are often tempted to manufacture by their own imagination stories in which they take a part. It would be far better to follow the example of the Lord in illustrations by parables. A parable is a short, fictitious narrative of a possible event in life or nature from which a moral is drawn. It is not always necessary to state that the illustration is a parable. It may be introduced as a day-

dream, or one might state, "In my imagination I saw this man," or again one could say, "Allow me to picture," and then describe a possible event. In telling stories one should be careful not to overstate facts, or to relate as true events in the lives of people which never did occur. In telling experiences of healing one should be careful to relate established facts. Ethan Allen of Springfield, Mass., was one of the most remarkable men of faith I have known, and had hundreds of genuine incidents of healing recorded, but he told me he never recorded a case of healing until one year had passed, and the healing could be established by fact.

In relating illustrations it is better to bring in the incident or fact directly, without any elaborate announcement. An incident or some historical fact of the Bible beautifully told carries great force in illustrating truth.

It is a source of great strength to be able to correctly quote Scripture, and use the Bible as the foundation of expressed thought. I have studied the sermons of John Wesley to discover, if possible, his strength. Wesley did not seem to use what critics would call eloquence or beau-

tiful rhetoric, or even lofty expressions. But he had one of the most remarkable rhetorical arts of using the very words of scriptural expressions to make clear his thought. One can find all through his sermons statements, expressions, clauses, taken from the Scriptures to enforce or conclude his thought. It is evident that Wesley was a great Bible reader until the Word of God became so familiar to him he was able to express his thought in the language of Holy Writ.

I believe truth can be more forcefully preached by the use of Bible quotations. The preacher who can well quote the Holy Word will enrich his own soul, and at the same time feed his people on the richest kind of food for the intellect as well as the soul. Those who claim that the Bible teaches holiness should become great Bible preachers, and able to unfold its truths. Sermons filled with Scripture will be effective, for God has said, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of thy mouth, it shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Lights and Shadows of a Preacher's Life

General Superintendent Emeritus H. F. Reynolds

PART FIVE—THE PREACHER AND DIVINE HEALING

THE Bible, which is God's Word as revealed to man, contains much about the healing of the body, without, as well as with, remedies.

The Church of the Nazarene has in its Manual of 1932, in its Articles of Faith, Paragraph 15, Page 31, the following statement on Divine Healing:

"We believe in the Bible doctrine of divine healing and urge our people to seek to offer the prayer of faith for the healing of the sick. Providential means and agencies when deemed necessary should not be refused."

It is recorded in 1 Kings 17:17-23, "The Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived"—evidently without remedies. However when King Hezekiah was sick, and was told that he would die, he wept sore and prayed, and the Lord said to him, "Behold I will heal thee." And Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered." This indicates that God healed with a remedy (2 Kings 20:1-7).

As Jesus entered into a certain village in Samaria, there met him ten men that were lepers . . . and lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us . . . and as they went they were cleansed (Luke 17:11-19). Again we find recorded another remarkable case where Jesus healed a man sick of the palsy, and as his friends could not get the sick man in at the door of the house where Jesus was, they let him down through the roof of the dwelling, on his cot, and Jesus said unto the sick man, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk . . . And immediately he arose and took up the bed and went forth" (Mark 2:1-12). In these accounts no mention of remedies is made. But if we will read John 9:1-38, the account of the healing of a man who was blind from his birth, that Jesus spat on the ground and made (ointment) clay of the spittle and anointed the eyes of the blind man with clay, and said unto him, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam." . . . He went his way therefore and washed and came seeing. . . this caused much discussion . . . but in the twenty-fifth verse we read of the testimony of the man, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." Evidently Jesus healed without remedies, and also with remedies.

A few days after Pentecost Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer . . . "A certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; who seeing Peter and John go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter said, Silver and gold have I none: but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple walking and leaping, and praising God."

In Acts 4:22 Peter declares that it was through "faith in Jesus' name" that the man had received "perfect soundness," and it is worthy of note that it was without remedy. Also in Acts five is a statement that would indicate that the Christian Church might expect bodily healing, as well as the salvation of the soul; for, by the hands of the apostles, were many signs and wonders wrought among the people, and believers were the more added to the Lord. Multitudes both of men and women, and "they brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. Then came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one." Here we have the true objective which causes us as a denomination to stress medical missions, namely, that we may be able to save souls, as well as to heal bodies. The nearest we come to the use of remedy in this case is the shadow of Peter.

It would seem quite clear that the gift of healing was extended to the Christian Church, as it continued to increase. In Acts 19:11 it was recorded that "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." In this case the nearest to any remedy was the garment, or a handkerchief, that Paul had sent from his hands. However, we should not, and cannot, jump to the conclusion that Paul did not believe in physicians; for it is quite evident that he esteemed the body very highly. In 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, he says, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." From various state-

ments in Paul's writings we have reason to believe that in some of his evangelistic efforts he had Luke, whom he calls the beloved physician, travel with him. He also states in 2 Timothy 4:11, "Only Luke is with me," and further gives evidence of his high value of the body, not only by having Dr. Luke with him, but he asks Timothy that "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus when thou comest, bring with thee," giving evidence that he believed that we must, as far as possible, take care of the body, even exhorting Timothy, who at that time had the heavy work of looking after the churches, not only to keep himself pure, but do what he could to keep well, or to get well, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." Using "wine" as a remedy or medicine for his bodily ailments.

Much more might be quoted from both the Old and New Testaments which would substantiate the position that we as a denomination are in the *middle of the way*, on the teaching of divine healing.

One of the churches where we were stationed was located in a village which was reported to have been at one time the pastorate of a Universalist preacher by the name of Rev. Hosea Beloo, of whom it is stated that he advocated, and strenuously taught universal salvation, that all men at death went to heaven, no matter as to the kind of lives they had lived or what they believed. The Methodist Church and the Universalist Church were the only denominations represented in the village.

About a mile and a half from the village on the road leading north to the railroad station was a mill used for grinding feed for the farmers' stock, doing some sawing of small orders of lumber, making cider, etc. The young man who owned and operated the mill had a wife and a small girl. The young man at the time of which I am writing was superintendent of the Universalist Sunday school. This young man, from the account he gave me (later), had been taught by his father to hate all persons that were not of the Universalist belief. And, as he stated to me, used to be set on the top of a post and to curse the Christian believers as they passed by his father's mill.

We had not been at our station very many months when we learned from our neighbors, who were also members of the Universalist Church, that the little girl of the home of the man who owned the mill was very sick. As we inquired from day to day of our neighbors, they reported that the child was not showing signs of being any better, although having medical attention. After several days and learning that the girl was not any better, I suggested to my

wife that we call on the Sunday school superintendent. On arriving at the home, Mrs. Reynolds went into the house, and as soon as I hitched my horse I went over to where the man was standing by his mill. After a brief but forced conversation with the broken-hearted man, I asked him if it would be agreeable to him if we went into the house. To this he readily consented by a bow of his head, indicating something of the sorrow of his heart. Finding my wife beside the bed where she and the mother of the very sick child were, after a very few moments I asked the man if it would be agreeable if I offered a brief prayer, to which both the man and the wife bowed their heads, being too full of grief to speak. The Holy Spirit surely helped me to pray short and to the point, during which, I said, "O Lord, our heavenly Father, we believe that if Thou wilt heal this precious little girl her parents will give their hearts to Thee. Please heal the precious girl, for Jesus' sake, Amen." We drove back to our parsonage, praising God for sending us to the home of the sick girl, and for the kind reception received, and for answering prayer. For we believed God had heard prayer for the sick girl. The next day some of the neighbors said they had heard that the little girl had a turn for the better. In a short time the child fully recovered, and sure enough the parents began to come to our church. Not long afterward both mother and father were gloriously saved and united with our church, and later he became a member of the official board. The remarkable healing of the child became the talk of the town and for miles around about.

Many years later, when I was holding a District Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene during the day, and an evangelist of wide reputation was holding revival meetings at night, one night in the early part of the series, a middle-aged woman, whose bearings strongly indicated that she was well educated and moved among a good class of the citizens of the city where the assembly and revival were being held, came to the altar. As the workers at the altar sought to help her they learned from her own lips that she was seeking prayers that she might be delivered from a demon which she said had been possessing her for some time. The helper told her to pray and she responded by saying, "Every time I try to pray the demon begins to put words into my mouth that I do not understand, which is more of a jabber." The woman continued to attend the revival services, and also continued to come to the altar for prayers. But none of the altar workers went near her. As I noticed the woman continued to be a seeker at the altar, and no worker went near her, I began to say to myself, "Why don't some of these altar workers, or the

evangelist, come and cast out the demon?" And a responsive voice said, "Why don't you cast out the demon yourself?" I at once said, "I do not claim to heal in the sense some of these altar workers claim to heal the sick and afflicted." But the voice said, "Cast out the devil yourself." I at once began to inquire of the woman what she really wanted God to do for her. And she frankly said, "I want the evil spirit cast out of me." Then I said to the seeking woman, "Let us pray." With my hands placed upon her head I said, "O Lord Jesus Christ, cast out this demon and this woman will serve Thee." And immediately the woman became quiet, perfectly calm, for Jesus had cast out the demon. I said to the woman, "You pray," and she proceeded to pray, thanking Jesus for delivering her from the power of the devil. When the seekers and finders at the altar were asked to testify as to what Jesus had done for them, with the other victorious seekers, the woman testified that Jesus had healed her, yes, Jesus had cast out the devil, and each succeeding night, as an opportunity was given, she would testify that Jesus had cast out the devil and sanctified her wholly. Thus we find that God does heal the bodies and the souls of honest seekers who, by faith, trust Him with or without remedies. Praise His precious name!

Read James 5:14-16.

The Pastor's Scrap Book

I. L. FLYNN

Bishop Joyce once said, "The blessed, old-fashioned gospel under the blessing of the Holy Spirit does produce old-fashioned revivals, old-fashioned conversions, and old-fashioned victories. I have learned the secret of absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit."

"If Christ could have His way with men, there would be no industrial oppression, no hopeless little children, no cheerless old age, no grinding poverty, no fattening of the few on the toil of the many, no racial hatred, no armaments, no false standards of judgments as between man and man."

Begin at home! Let self die! Get all ablaze with perfect love! The flame will leap! Sinners will weep! (When we go deep!) A universal revival must first be a personal revival! It will pay to pay the price.—E. E. SHELHAMER.

The Man Who Explored Hell

E. Wayne Stahl

A rendering of Dante's "Inferno" to which is added some of the poet's experience after he emerged from the regions of the lost.

CANTO VI

(a) My consciousness, which had ebbed because of compassion for the afflicted spirits whose pitiful story I had heard, flowed back again. Then the agonies of other souls in torment met my sight; on every hand around me, no matter in what direction I looked, there were scenes of woe. I had arrived in the third circle.

(b) Here is damnation's everlasting rain, with no ceasing of its heaviness and chill. Hail immense, dark water, gusts of snow, fill the somber, nocturnal air. The soil which received the beating of this storm gave forth an odor horrible.

(c) A most cruel creature, Cerberus, a monstrous, three-headed dog, savage and prodigious, roars through his three throats at the crowd in the flood below. His fierce eyes glitter bloodily; the greasy hair about his mouth is sooty. He has an enormous belly; his hands are furnished with claws with which he rips the wicked dead, tears away their skin and pulls off their arms and legs. Scattered about under the pouring rain they make a shrieking like the howling of dogs. They seek to protect themselves on one side; continually these depraved, tormented ones are turning themselves about.

(d) When infuriated Cerberus, horrible as a gigantic serpent, saw us, he distended his jaws, his awful teeth were seen; all his body shook with rage. My leader stooped down and scooping up some of the soil flung it into his all-engulfing throats. As a dog who howls from hunger and is quieted when he receives his food, and greedily devours it, so closed the detestable mouths of that infernal monster, who roars so dreadfully at the spirits that they long, in vain, to lose their power to hear.

(e) We walked on them as they lay extended, face down, upon the earth, thrown down by the violent rain. All remained prostrate but one, who came to a sitting position as soon as he saw us near. He said to me:

(f) "You who are conducted through hell's shadows, can you remember me? You were born before I died."

(g) My answer was, "Your suffering, it seems, has so changed your appearance that I am unable to recognize you. But make yourself known to me, you who dwell in such a place of sorrow,

and know such anguish which may be greater than other torment, but which cannot be more loathsome."

(h) He replied, "In a happier time I lived in that city which runs over with envy. Gluttony, that cursed sin, brought me here, where that rain beats upon me and sorely wearies me. I am not the only one being punished for gluttony in this place. All these others were guilty of this vice and suffer as do I."

(i) Then I spoke these words to him, "Your woe causes me weeping, but inform me what shall happen to the men of my Florence, the city of faction and discord."

(j) He answered me, "Before three years have been completed the two factions will come to war; one will be defeated and driven out of the city with much damage. In that city are only two righteous men, and they are not esteemed by the other citizens. In their hearts covetousness, jealousy and haughtiness have lighted the fires of death."

(k) He ceased and I spoke again, "There are certain ones I knew in the life above whose present fate I eagerly seek to learn, whether they taste celestial sweetness or partake of the infernal poison."

(l) He replied, "They inhabit a darker region. A variety of transgression puts them far down in the black gulf. If to such a depth you go, you may discern them there. When you are on the delightful earth once more I beg of you to speak of me to its people. My speech is done."

(m) He looked at me obliquely for a moment, with his staring eye; bowed his head, and then fell down among his unseeing associates.

(n) My director said to me, "There will he lie unto the last blast of the angelic trumpeting. Then their adversary shall appear in glorious array. All of these spirits will immediately go to the graves where their bodies are buried, and be united to them again. Then their sentence of eternal punishment shall with thunder divide the skies.

(o) Slowly we traversed the filthy fen, composed of souls and rain, conversing briefly on the life beyond the present. I questioned my guide:

(p) "After the mighty judgment day shall the agonies which these suffer be greater than, less than, or of the same severity as they are now?"

(q) "Consider," he replied, "your reason makes you know that as a thing develops toward perfectness, it grows in the power to rejoice or suffer. Though these damned ones can never know real perfection in woe, yet they shall draw closer to it than they are now."

(r) Talking together we passed the circumference of the circle, and came where we descended to the lower circuit; there we encountered the great hater of mankind, Plutus, deity of wealth.

CANTO VII

(a) In his astonishment Plutus called out in a rough voice the name of Satan, and my all-knowing teacher cheered me with these words:

(b) "Do not yield to injurious terror. He has no power to prevent your going with safety down this rocky steep." Then turning to that puffy mouth he said, "Silence, condemned wolfish one. Let your wrath rage within yourself, and burn you up. There is a reason for this man exploring the black depths. Such is the command from above, where Michael was the minister of punishment on proud, lewd Lucifer."

(c) As sails wind-filled and distended fall limp together, at the shattering of the mast, so the ferocious demon collapsed to the earth.

(d) We went down to the fourth circle and advanced on the sad shore which encloses the woe of all the world. Alas! Divine vengeance which piles high the added punishments and torments which then met my sight!

(e) Does sin incur such destruction? How grievous is this dancing of the damned! They were more in number here than any multitude I had met before. With yells of pain they were pushing enormous weights with their chests. Then they beat one another, and afterward turned and forced the weights back over the road over which they had come, at the same time shouting reproaches to each other. So they moved on around the fearful circular region, still shrieking their accusing chorus.

(f) Having come to the point farthest from where they had started they retraced their steps, and with mutual contention slashed continually.

(g) Smarting with grief I said to my guide, "Who are these? Were those on our left hand dedicated to a religious service?"

(h) He answered me, "In their life that was, their intellects were so askew that they failed to distribute their riches as they should have done. You can perfectly understand that this was so, from the sentences which they roar out,

as they arrive at the most distant point of the circle. Popes and cardinals are here, destroyed by covetousness."

(i) "My teacher, surely among these I ought to know some, who were guilty of this sin." He said, "Your thinking is to no purpose. Their life above which was so base has made them unrecognizable here. They encounter in fierce contending forevermore. Because of their wickedness they shall never see again the fair world above, and are perpetually in this conflict. You can see how fleet are those possessions bestowed by fortune, for which mankind struggles with such tumult. All the treasure of all the world, from the beginning of time, will not buy comfort for one of these."

j) Then I asked my Master to explain to me about this Fortune who confers desirable things of life. In well-chosen words he made the matter clear to me, and then he addressed me thus, "Now we go down to weightier sorrow. We must not tarry here."

(k) We journeyed across the circle and found ourselves at a huge spring, from which the water furiously rises and flows away in a ditch that leads from the horrid well. Black was the stream; and on the bank we accompanied its somber waters as they rolled along in their course.

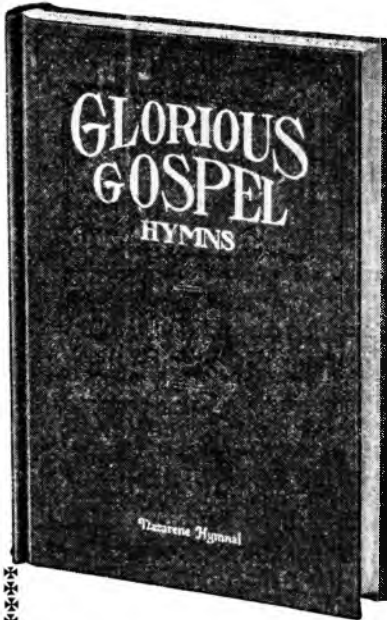
(l) That melancholy stream, when it had come to the foot of the hateful, cheerless shore, forms the Stygian fen. In the inky lake I saw, as I stood attentively, people covered with mire; no clothes they wore. Rage was in their looks. They assaulted one another and not only with their hands; they butted each other, they struck with the chest, they kicked. They bit each other into pieces.

(m) My conductor said, "Here are those who were conquered by anger. And under the water are the people whose sighs make it bubble everywhere on its surface. Imbedded in the mud they confess:

(n) "On the earth made cheerful by the splendor of the sun we were despondent, cherishing in our souls the thick and filthy fume. And now we are despondent in this dirty swamp.' Such a sad wailing comes from their throats with gurgling sound, for they cannot speak with clearness."

So we walked beside that putrid marsh for a considerable distance, between the dry ledge and the foul waters. We kept our gaze fastened on those people who feed on slime. Finally we reached the foot of the tower.

(To be continued)



The Nazarene Hymnal

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