

Living Water

"Call unto me and I will answer Thee and shew Thee great and mighty things, which Thou knowest not." Jer. 33:3

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The Fire of the Holy Ghost

BY S. CHADWICK.

WHAT is this Fire? The scriptures evidently regard it as the supreme need of the Church and the final gift of God. The prophets associated it with the Messiah, and promised it as the unique triumph of his coming. It marked the difference between the Old Dispensation and the New. John's ministry shook the nation, but was only preparatory. "I indeed baptise with water: . . . He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire." Our Lord spoke of the coming of Fire as the one purpose of his mission, and the fruit of his sufferings and death. "I came," He says, "to cast Fire on the earth." The supreme need of the Church is Fire. The one persistent prayer of them that "sigh and cry" is for the fiery baptism of Pentecost. What do we mean by Fire? When Jesus promised the gift of Fire, what did He mean them to expect? In our impassioned pleading for the descent of Fire, what is it we want? For what does this elect symbol stand? Our God is a consuming Fire; the gift of the Holy Ghost is a baptism of Fire; Christianity is a religion of Fire; we are saved by Fire. If Fire is so vital and comprehensive, it is important its meaning should be clearly understood.

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL PASSION.

Whatever this Fire may be, it is identified with the Person of the Holy Ghost. The baptism of the Spirit is the baptism of Fire. Our Lord's straitening for the baptism of blood was followed by the fullness of Pentecost, in the gift of the Spirit of Fire. Its power was moral and spiritual. Men's souls were charged, saturated, enveloped, in the Spirit of God. The Divine life entered into them. The passion of God possessed them with the intensity of fire. His love was shed abroad in their hearts, and his holiness became the master-passion of their souls. The spirit of cold obedience was kindled into an enthusiasm for righteousness, and the slavish sense of duty burst into a flame of eager devotion. It is the Spirit of the Christ imparted to the believer. The self-same Spirit the Son received of the Father without measure, the Son gives to us in fulness and power. Jesus Christ duplicates, perpetuates, propagates Himself in the gift of his Spirit. That is the miracle of Pentecost. It kindles the fires of Christ's soul in the souls of men. They receive, realize, and reproduce his mind, his heart, his life. His zeal becomes the all-pervasive character of their lives. They manifest his fervent devotion to the will of the Father, his holy passion for reality and righteousness, his consuming zeal for the salvation of the lost. It is religion at fire-heat.

THE OFFENCE OF FIRE IN RELIGION.

Fire in religion awakens a peculiar sense of distrust in the modern mind. There is no objection to it anywhere else. Enthusiasm in politics and recreation, fervor in reform and business, intensity in work and friendship, are among the most coveted qualities of modern life. In religion

they are bad form. Enthusiasts in piety are suspected. Christians full of zeal are tolerated where they are not despised. They are regarded as intellectually inferior; the "babes and sucklings" to whom God has a way of revealing things precious to the soul. Their conception of religion is narrow and antiquated, and their experience of it too emotional and fervid. It is sometimes said they are defective in ethical balance and moral stamina, and they lack the charity which appreciates other types of goodness. Judged in the lump, the saints of the Fire-heart are condemned as unlovely, undesirable, and unreasonable. For things not fire-proof burning is not a pleasant sensation; but then, only that which can "dwell in everlasting burning" can be saved. We are saved by Fire. Light is not enough, and water is not enough. Knowledge does not save, neither is cleanliness the equivalent of grace. Salvation is of the heart. External conventionality and correct observance may make a Pharisee, but never a Christian. It is by a holy passion kindled in the soul we live the life of God. Dr. Maclaren says: "For a Christian to be cold is sin." Certainly! "The wages of sin is death," and a corpse cannot be kept warm.

THE POWER OF FIRE.

The penalty of intensity may be narrowness, but its reward is power. It submits all things to a severe test, and what will not assimilate it mercilessly assails. Fire cannot compromise. The logic of passion is direct, simple, relentless. Cool calculation is impossible to men ablaze. Inspiration despises dissimulation. Issues are simple when the heart is intense. The pure flame of a holy enthusiasm is a safer guide than the dry light of cold reason. The soul's safety is in its heat. Fire is the best defence against corruption. If we would be safe we must be clothed with zeal as with a garment. Our religion is only secure when it is guarded by "a wall of Fire round about."

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

Consecration of the Thoughts

BY F. F. BOSWORTH.

I DO not believe there is anything more pleasing to me in all my Christian experience than the consecration of the thoughts. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." There is only one door through which the devil can find an entrance, and that is through our thoughts, and we have the power to close that door. Many times since I have been in this work as I have gone into places where the work was new, and, in fact, never had been started, and naturally difficult, humanly speaking, to get it started, having to do so much praying to get the work established, I have found the enemy there telling me I would not get through and trying to put discouraging thoughts in my mind. But as soon as I found myself entertaining such thoughts, by an act of my own I would take my mind off all discouragement and put it on God's faithfulness, and in a moment I would be lifted out of a dejected state and become enthused over the very thing Satan was trying to make me doubt. In one place we prayed for five months in the midst of adverse circumstances, but by meditating on God's faithfulness and many answers to prayer He gave us victory. In Romans 12 the apostle exhorts us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, and that we shall be transformed by the renewing of our minds that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. The Christian who has not learned to renew his mind as soon as he sees that it is pulling him back, never can prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. "Transformed by the renewing of your mind" is simply taking your mind off earthly things and putting it on heavenly. When a man takes his thoughts off temporal things and puts them on God, his majesty, his power and his glory, it will not be long until the transforming power of God will begin to work. Every Christian knows that when you have a great uplift and the real transforming power is operated upon you it has always been at a time when you have had your mind on the Lord, and if we can have the transforming touch from God once a year, or once a month, then we can have it all the time if we keep our minds stayed on Him.

I once read a little book, "The Practice of the Presence of God," which told how Brother Lawrence, who lived two or three hundred years ago, was transformed by meditating on God. He was riding along one day in mid-winter and saw an ugly old tree; he started to meditate, and his meditations worked wonderful things for him. He thought of that tree and what a wonderful transformation would come to it with the breaking of spring. He was a wicked sinner at this time, but he thought of the power back of that tree that could change that ugly tree into a thing of beauty. Then he began to think along the line of God changing a man and transforming his life, and it wasn't long until he put himself eternally and forever in God's hands and God saved him. He went to work in the kitchen of a Catholic monastery, at a kind of work which was very distasteful to him, but he made up his mind from the time he gave himself to God, he would receive as an eternal truth the statement, "Lo, I am with you always," and act every hour as if he could see Him. He would practice his presence all the time and act as if God were really with him in visible form, and live only for Him. Everything he did was for the Lord. He constantly renewed his mind; no matter how often it would revert to other things he would deliberately put it back on God and do everything he did for God

alone, and that is scripture. After awhile God made Himself so intensely real to Brother Lawrence that for thirty-six years he lived a life of eternal joy. Even at the noon hour with everybody waiting for his meal, you would think he would be greatly diverted, yet he would possess his soul with as much tranquility as when he was preparing a sermon. He realized it took a little more grace at that time, and therefore appropriated it more than if he had been off by himself. God was so wonderfully real to him he didn't care about going out. His soul was sometimes so flooded at the noon hour, when the greatest bustle was on, he had to use means to moderate his joy. Oh, that many people could so fix their minds on God and grow in grace! "Oh," says one, "I am a carpenter and I cannot think of God like another person." I want to read you just a word on that point from Ephesians 6:5, 6: "Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord and not to men." Some people say, "I do not like my job." Oh, friends, suppose I was a carpenter and gave myself to God, and Jesus said to me, "You come out here, I want you to build a fence for Me. I will be with you all the time, stand with you and watch you nail all the slats on," don't you suppose while you were working you would do it as unto Him? The very work that otherwise would detract your attention from God, would help you to keep it on Him because you realized He was right by your side and you were doing it for Him. Brother Lawrence found that the thing that detracted most people helped him to keep his mind on God.

In Philippians 4:8, we read, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." This is a command of Scripture. The same Bible that says, "Thou shalt not kill," tells us to think of these good things and nothing else, and we can do that. Suppose you find yourself meditating on God, seeking your salvation, or baptism, and the enemy comes along and says, "You won't get it tonight;" your faith goes, your praise goes. The Bible says, "If there be any virtue," if it is helping you, then think on it, if not, then put your mind back on God and think his thoughts. All through the Christian life when the enemy presents a thought to us that will in any way discourage us we can deliberately slam the door in his face; he cannot get in any other way but through our thoughts. You can watch a thousand other ways and have trouble all the time, but if a man will let his mind be brought into captivity to Christ he shuts the door against the enemy. He cannot get at us except in that line. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." In Isaiah 55:7 God says, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts." A sinner cannot come to God until he begins to forsake his thoughts, and as he begins to think Godward the transforming power of God begins to work. After people get saved they imagine they can think to suit themselves, but they cannot. God has a right to judge our thoughts. We consecrate our money, why not our thoughts, which are the more important. If we consecrate our

thoughts that includes everything. The door is then shut against the enemy.

In 1 Peter, first chapter, we read that because of the wonderful things in store for us, things which the Old Testament prophets sought and searched for diligently, and which angels desired to look into—because of the boundless scope of possibilities ahead of us, we are exhorted to gird up the loins of our minds. The man who will not consecrate his thoughts is going to lose that which God has for him in this dispensation. It is absolutely wonderful the transforming power of thinking the thoughts of God. Over in the next letter Peter wrote that he would not be negligent to put them in remembrance of these things as long as he lived, and even after he died he wanted them to think about the things he taught.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians in the second epistle, he said, "But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." If Satan can corrupt our minds he has us. The mind is where he works. I heard a returned missionary speak about twelve years ago, giving a talk on the consecration of the thoughts, that was a greater blessing to me than anything I ever learned. To defeat the devil we deliberately, by an act of our will have to put our mind on God and think of his power, his wonderful work, his goodness and his benefits, and quickly we will find the power of God will begin to transform us. That can be a continual experience. David said, "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation." He was just a little boy out on the hillside herding sheep, but he spent his time meditating on God and that transformed him and made him the great man he was. In the first Psalm he speaks about the righteous man meditating in the law of God day and night. My meditations are better after I go to sleep than before. Last night I had wonderful meditations. Listen to the result of meditating upon the things of God: This man "shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. His leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." If a man can lose all his own ambition and start in to do nothing but the will of God, he will prosper. It may be farming or some other line, but he can practice the presence of God by keeping everything before the Lord. "I will meditate on Thy precepts and have respect unto Thy way." Do you notice how David puts his will in, "I will meditate." There are hundreds of verses on the same order. God cannot do a thing with us if we don't will with Him.

It may be a little hard at first to think the thoughts of God, but if we keep at it they become very precious. You learn a thing by repetition. A child when it begins to walk has to have its mind on his steps, but as it keeps repeating its steps after awhile he can walk all over. When I was teaching music the principle I worked on was repetition. I put the cornetist on the scales and saw that he played it correctly, no matter how slowly, and then repeated it over and over again, the first note and then the second, paying particular attention about the fingering, etc., but after he had played it hundreds of times he never once thought about his fingers; they worked involuntarily, just from habit. So it is on every line, and if a Christian will start in, and every time the enemy diverts his mind to things that do not edify, deliberately put it back on those that do, it will soon become a fixed habit with him, and he will be able to say like David, "How precious are Thy thoughts." It is wonderful how you can learn a thing by habit so that it requires

no effort. Just like Brother Lawrence. At first it was a great effort for him to keep his mind on God, but after awhile it became natural; a fixed habit. God gave him unbroken joy for thirty-six years and oftentimes he had to use means to moderate his joy. What he did, we can do. It is for every person, and God will keep the transforming power working in us all the time, "I hate vain thoughts, but Thy law do I love." He would reject vain thoughts whenever he found himself entertaining them. Some places he was hedged about on every side, but he kept on meditating. "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips: when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches." The soul that will keep thinking God's thoughts and meditating his way, will begin to grow fat. One place it says that he will be kept in perfect peace. Friends, you can be a bookkeeper and do your work as unto the Lord; you can work for Marshall Field and serve the Lord, and if you do your work as though He were your Foreman you can do it as well and better than anyone else, and have your mind on God all the time. All kinds of work done for the Lord are joyful. That is the teaching of God's Word. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." The man who keeps his mind on God is the man who can trust God. If you keep thinking God's thoughts faith will come into your heart in spite of yourself, and you will find yourself trusting in God without any effort whatever. In 1 Cor. 13 we read, "Love thinketh no evil," none at all, and so if divine love is to be a continuous experience it never can be in connection with evil thoughts. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exaleth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

In Job 42:2 we read: "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee." There is coming a time when the thoughts must be revealed. I would hate to have had all my thoughts revealed before I gave myself to God. They are all to be revealed unless forgiven and washed away by the blood. If we think on the "whatsoevers" of Philippians 4:8, we shall not be ashamed to have them laid bare. Let us put this test to them: "If there be any virtue, think on these things."

If those who are saved will learn this one lesson in starting out in their Christian life, to be willing to give up every vain thought as quickly as it comes to them, and persistently meditate on God and keep their thoughts in the supernatural realm, they will have wonderful progress. It will have a marvellous transforming power.

The trouble with many, they have been meditating on modern Christianity and not on God's thoughts. In the churches of today the old-fashioned Gospel is done away with; God doesn't work miracles. The gifts are done away with. Paul says, "I preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ." Some are preaching poverty. They do away with everything that has the supernatural in it. "Lift up your hand and join the church," but they are not regenerated. It takes divine power, supernatural power to transform a sinner into a Christian.

Let us meditate on the Word of God; think like we pray, and while we are thinking on holy things the transforming power is going on within us, unconsciously to ourselves. We partake of the divine nature as our thoughts dwell on God and the attributes that belong to Him.— Sel.

Preacher and Prayer*

E. M. BOUNDS.

I ought to pray before seeing anyone. Often when I sleep long, or meet with others early, it is eleven or twelve o'clock before I begin secret prayer. This is a wretched system. It is unscriptural. Christ arose before day and went into a solitary place. David says: "Early will I seek thee;" "Thou shalt early hear my voice." Family prayer loses much of its power and sweetness, and I can do no good to those who come to seek from me. The conscience feels guilty, the soul unfed, the lamp not trimmed. Then when in secret prayer the soul is often out of tune. I feel it is far better to begin with God—to seek his face first, to get my soul near Him before it is near another.—Robert Murray McCheyne.

THE men who have done the most for God in this world have been early on their knees. He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God, will make poor headway seeking him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts and efforts in the morning, He will be in the last place the remainder of the day.

Behind this early rising and early praying is the ardent desire which presses us into this pursuit after God. Morning listlessness is the index to a listless heart. The heart which is behindhand in seeking God in the morning has lost its relish for God. David's heart was ardent after God. He hungered and thirsted after God, and so he sought God early, before daylight. The bed and sleep could not chain his soul in its eagerness after God. Christ longed for communion with God; and so, rising a great while before day, He would go out into the mountain to pray. The disciples, when fully awake and ashamed of their indulgence, would know where to find him. We might go through the list of men who have mightily impressed the world for God, and we would find them early after God.

A desire for God which cannot break the chains of sleep is a weak thing, and will do but little good for God after it has indulged itself fully. The desire for God that keeps so far behind the devil and the world at the beginning of the day will never catch up.

It is not simply the getting up that puts men to the front and makes them captain generals in God's hosts, but it is the ardent desire which stirs and breaks all self-indulgent chains. But the getting up gives vent, increase, and strength to the desire. If they had lain in bed and indulged themselves, the desire would have been quenched. The desire aroused them and put them on the stretch for God, and this heeding and acting on the call gave their faith its grasp on God and gave to their hearts the sweetest and fullest revelation of God, and this strength of faith and fulness of revelation made them saints by eminence, and the halo of their sainthood has come down to us, and we have entered on the enjoyment of their conquests. But we take our fill in enjoyment, and not in productions. We build their tombs and write their epitaphs, but are careful not to follow their examples.

We need a generation of preachers who seek God and seek him early, who give the freshness and dew of effort to God, and secure in return the freshness and fulness of his power that He may be as the dew to them, full of gladness and strength, through all the heat and labor of the day. Our laziness after God is our crying sin. The children of this world are far wiser than we. They are at it early and

late. We do not seek God with ardor and diligence. No man gets God who does not follow hard after him, and no soul follows hard after God who is not after him in early morn.

Study not to be a fine preacher. Jerichos are blown down with rams' horns. Look simply unto Jesus for preaching food; and what is wanted will be given, and what is given will be blessed, whether it be a barley grain or a wheaten loaf, a crust or a crumb. Your mouth will be a flowing stream or a fountain sealed, according as your heart is. Avoid all controversy in preaching, talking, or writing; preach nothing down but the devil, and nothing up but Jesus Christ.—Berridge.

The heart is the savior of the world. Heads do not save. Genius, brains, brilliancy, strength, natural gifts do not save. The gospel flows through the hearts. All the mightiest forces are heart forces. All the sweetest and loveliest graces are heart graces. Great hearts make great characters; great hearts make divine characters. God is love. There is nothing greater than love, nothing greater than God. Hearts make heaven; heaven is love. There is nothing higher, nothing sweeter, than heaven. It is the heart and not the head which makes God's great preachers. The heart counts much every way in religion. The heart must speak from the pulpit. The heart must hear in the pew. In fact, we serve God with our hearts. Head homage does not pass current in heaven.

We believe that one of the serious and most popular errors of the modern pulpit is the putting of more thought in prayer, of more head than of heart, in its sermons. Big hearts make big preachers; good hearts make good preachers. A theological school to enlarge and cultivate the heart is the golden desideratum of the gospel. The pastor binds his people to him and rules his people by his heart. They may admire his gifts, they may be proud of his ability, they may be affected for the time by his sermons; but the stronghold of his power is his heart. His scepter is love. The throne of his power is his heart.

The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. Heads never make martyrs. It is the heart which surrenders the life to love and fidelity. It takes great courage to be a faithful pastor, but the heart alone can supply this courage. Gifts and genius may be brave, but it is the gifts and genius of the heart and not of the head.

It is easier to fill the head than it is to prepare the heart. It is easier to make a brain sermon than a heart sermon. It was heart that drew the Son of God from heaven. It is heart that will draw men to heaven. Men of heart is what the world needs to sympathize with its woe, to kiss away its sorrow, to compassionate its pain. Christ was eminently the man of sorrows, because He was pre-eminently the man of heart.

"Give me thy heart," is God's requisition of men. "Give me thy heart!" is man's demand of man.

A professional ministry is a heartless ministry. When salary plays a great part in the ministry, the heart plays little part. We may make preaching our business, and not put our hearts in the business. He who puts self to the front in his preaching puts heart to the rear. He who does not sow with his heart in his study will never reap a harvest for God. The closet is the heart's study. We will learn more about how to preach and what to preach there than we can learn in our libraries. "Jesus wept" is the shortest and

*From "Preach and Prayer," by E. M. Bounds, order of this office.

biggest verse in the Bible. It is he who goes forth *weeping* (not preaching great sermons), bearing precious seed, who shall come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Praying gives sense, brings wisdom, broadens and strengthens the mind. The closet is a perfect school teacher and schoolhouse for the preacher. Thought is not only

brightened and clarified in prayer, but thought is born in prayer. We can learn more in an hour praying, when praying indeed, than from many hours in the study. Books are in the closet which can be found and read nowhere else. Revelations are made in the closet which are made nowhere else.

Automatic Work

A. B. SIMPSON.

"This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6).

THE book of Zechariah has always been a great comfort to the struggling servants of the Lord in days of trial, opposition, conflict, and limited resources. He begins with a message fitted to comfort the dejected and depressed. It is the vision of a man in the valley of the myrtle trees. And to this man who represents the depression of God's people and cause, there comes this message of cheer, "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts . . . my cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem."

The second message to this struggling people is another beautiful vision of four horns that are ravaging the cause of the Lord, and over against these horns the prophet sees four carpenters who go forth with their weapons to fray these horns to dull their sharpened points so that they have no power to harm. When adversaries and difficulties arise, the Lord has a carpenter for every horn, and the devil is a sorry-looking sight after the Lord has shaved him down.

The third of these visions is meant to comfort them in view of their fewness and weakness. They are a little handful, and they feel discouraged. But a man comes forth with a measuring line, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breath thereof, and what is the length thereof . . . Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men . . . For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her." This is our encouragement when our constituency is limited and when we have no power to reach the multitudes. God always delights to begin with a little handful. How small a company that gathered around the Master! But the millions that cover the earth today. How few the little handful that began a quarter of a century ago—I see them now, seven of us altogether, sitting around a stove in an old dance hall, poor, despised, of no account, and yet today, thank God, how He has multiplied. And then I remember how we waited for our first baptism. How we longed to hear that one had followed Jesus! Thank God we have now six or seven thousand, and last year nearly a thousand were added to their ranks. And these are but the pioneers. These are but the seed sowings of great multitudes. Let us claim the vision. God is able to multiply our littleness. God is able to give us the people, and to make them fly as doves to our windows.

The fourth of these messages of comfort is for those that are discouraged by their own unworthiness. Joshua, the high priest, representing the nation, was clothed with filthy garments, and he felt ashamed because of his unworthiness. The Lord sent an angel to take the filthy garments from him and clothe him with fair, white robes, and put a mitre upon his brow, and present him as faultless and accepted in his grace. How comforting it is to us, beloved, in our conscious unworthiness to have the precious Blood and the all sufficiency of Jesus Christ.

Finally, we come to the vision of our chapter, this beautiful fourth chapter of Zechariah, this symbol which I think is unsurpassed in all the dramatic symbolism of the Bible. It is a great self-moving picture. First, the seven lamps represent the cause of God burning and shining. But these lamps are not kept burning by ministering hands. There is no machinery there. There are no oil cans there, no ministering priests, no second causes; nobody is snuffing the lamps or filling the bowls, but automatically, spontaneously two great living trees, standing on either side of the lamps, are pouring oil through golden pipes. As it ripens in the olive berries, the oil is pressed out and flows down spontaneously through these golden pipes and feeds the lamps, and keeps them burning and shining by night and by day without the touch of human hand. And as the prophet gazes spellbound on the beautiful vision, the answer comes, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The most perfect things in nature are the least complex and the most simple. Man builds a house by hammer, saw, and plane. God builds a tree by roots, the sap, and the simple forces of nature without the touch of a tool. When the astronomer wants to give an object lesson of the solar system he makes what he calls a model of the sun, the moon, and the stars, and it is all worked by machinery; but when God wants to make sun, moon, and stars, He just starts a simple law of gravitation, and it all moves automatically without an effort. Man grinds a piece of glass till he gets a lens. God puts a little crystalline fluid in your eye, and you have a human telescope. Man governs by law, but God governs by love. God makes a family, and that family is held together not by penalties, but by the cords of affection. And so it goes up in the higher world of spiritual things. God wants to work out this principle from start to finish. Moses began his first mistake by calling around him the Sanhedrim of seventy elders, because he felt he must have a little more organization. But these men were the men that baffled him—all his days, and at last it was the Sanhedrim that Moses created that crucified the Son of God. We find as we turn to the New Testament, that Jesus just gave simple principles, the law of faith, the law of life, the law of love, the law of power, and these working out from the heart bring forth the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace—all perfectly spontaneous and second nature. Saul was Israel's human king, because they wanted to be like the other nations, and the end was the captivity of Judah and Israel and the rejection of Jesus Christ. And now in our day, the most perfect machine on earth is the Roman Catholic Church, and the most corrupt. It seems to me the danger of Protestantism is its attempt to be strong by human methods, the institutional church, the missionary banquet, the overdone machinery of all kinds of religious work. How the noise of cogs and wheels tires us, and we long for the simple power of the Holy Ghost! Beloved, our work was born in that native air, and I do not believe we can ever get away from it; and while I pray that we may have wise business methods in our conferences, I long as

never before that all our business may be submerged in a mighty tidal wave of the Holy Ghost until we shall be lost in God.

I think it is Dean Stanley that tells us that when the first great Christian Council met at Nice, there gathered from all the world bishops, presbyters, and men that were almost martyrs after the awful persecutions of the previous centuries. When they knew that the Emperor was to preside and that at last the world was Christian, it is said they brought a thousand petitions, and memorials, and papers full of grievances and little troubles to be settled. After they had tried a little while to deal with all these prolix and

difficult matters, some one proposed that they should kindle a great fire in the middle of the Council chamber and that they should bring all these papers, heap them on the fire, and burn them to ashes. The smoke went up, but the Fire came down, and the Council was baptized with the Holy Ghost and there went on record this glorious testimony to the deity of Jesus Christ and the noble beginning which ought never to have been spoiled by the spirit of the world coming in. O beloved, may God make more real to you and to me than our poor words can express those solemn words of the prophet in the struggling days of old Jerusalem, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The Price of Christian Service

TO meet the immediate conditions of His day, our Lord appointed the Twelve Apostles from among the larger group of interested followers who had followed Him "up into the mountain" (Mark 3:13-15). Then, as now, the condition was one of tremendous need—physical, moral, spiritual. "Plagues" and "sickness" were rife; "unclean spirits" and "demons" abounded, satellites of "that Wicked One" himself. Then, as now, the men chosen were of varying characteristics and dispositions. These were already His disciples, and His call to them was not for their salvation, but to His service. One distinction, however, must be made; to them, Calvary lay in the future; to us, it is an accomplished fact. Only in the light of His atoning work can we successfully meet the world's great need, by placing the Gospel message in the forefront, and keeping material philanthropy in its secondary place. *The right men must be imbued with the right spirit—the exaltation of Christ as Redeemer first of all.*

Jesus chose, as He still chooses, His helpers with three purposes in view; and these are fundamental in Christian life and service.

I.—COMMUNION.

"That they might be with Him."—Intimate relationship with Him is the first qualification for effective spiritual work. What marvellous condescension that the Lord of glory should desire our poor companionship at all! Its wonder is only surpassed by our unwillingness for His! We look forward, when earth is past, to be "with Christ, which is far better;" yet how reluctant we are to cultivate the sense of being "with Him" here and now, lest perchance it should involve more than we are prepared to yield. For such companionship entails agreement with His will (Amos 3:3); and that means going where He would go, and not going where He would not go; doing what He would do, and not doing what He would not do; speaking what He would speak, and not speaking what He would not speak—and all this is very far-reaching. We like the work well enough, but the call to worship sometimes finds us unsympathetic or unprepared. Yet it is vital. Are we willing to pay the price?

Communion with our unseen Lord is regarded too often as a habit of the pietist, the mystic, the unpractical. Yet if it means what we have indicated above, it is the most practical habit in the world. Clearly Jesus considered it so, when He laid it upon the Twelve as the first essential for effective work.

II.—COMPASSION.

"To preach . . . to heal . . ."—Such a ministry must needs make large draught upon their compassion for the souls and the bodies of those afflicted by sin and suf-

fering. This inevitably follows upon communion; for to know Him intimately is to drink of His tender and loving spirit. Without compassion, service for Christ is but perfunctory; with it, the work grows joyous. To Mary it is a delight, to Martha a burden—willingly borne, may be, but a burden still.

We read that "Jesus was moved with compassion when He saw the multitudes as sheep not having a shepherd." Picture such a pleasure-ground as Hampstead Heath on a Bank Holiday. There is the multitude, buoyant, free, irresponsible; the majority doing no harm, but just engaged in what passes for the keen enjoyment of the hour. How well the phrase "sheep not having a shepherd" seems to fit their mood; and the comparison becomes all the more apt, at the same place in the early hours of a Sunday morning, when flocks of sheep are turned loose upon the Heath. Just towards evening the shepherds appear, and, not without some difficulty, the sheep are collected and brought under the discipline of control.

Are we not apt, so long as men, or sheep, are enjoying themselves, to view them with unconcern, and say: "It is their affair, not ours?" Jesus, on the other hand, was "moved with compassion," and it was that spirit that He would instill into His disciples. Sheep can do without a shepherd in the daytime; it is towards the evening they need him most, when, weary of freedom, they appreciate the blessings of the fold. So with the multitude as Christ saw them. Weary as a Bank Holiday crowd at the close of day, with little ones to be carried and home many miles away, and some having missed their road, they welcome the direction of any who can point them to the nearest railway-station; and some need ever the help of the ambulance-men.

So is it also with the spiritual wanderers to whom Christ would send us forth in the spirit of His Divine compassion. Many are heedless, feeling not their need, until the pleasures of life are on the wane and its evening shadows fall. Then comes the sense of lack; then the sin-diseased cry out for healing, and the fevered soul craves for the Great Physician's cooling Hand. To whatever sphere He may call us, we are sure to need compassion, the second great essential which transforms our work into a labour of love.

III.—COMPULSION.

"To have authority" (R.V.) *over the powers of evil.*—Here is a sterner note; not the wooing tone of love, but the sterner voice of condemnation against the inward cause of outward sin. There have been striking instances in which He has used His servants to "command the evil spirit that he come out of the man." But, without penetrating too deeply into the mystery of evil and the malignant master-

mind of Satan that inspires it, we may read in the Saviour's commission to the disciples the duty, while loving the sinner, of boldly denouncing the "unclean spirit" of which sin is the manifestation. But, as Peter and John were at such pains to make clear (Acts 3:11-16), this is done by Divine, not human, power.

In some sense, therefore, the true servant of Christ is invested with the mysterious right to rebuke sin; and this right, or authority, is a part of his Divine equipment. We need not, for our present purpose, go further than to insist that such authority can only be effectively used by those whose habit is that of constant communion with their Lord, and who drink deeply of His compassion. These are its safeguard, for without them such authority would be perilous indeed.

Thus the ideal of Christian service is a combined tenderness and strength, born from above, and carried into effect as the result of habitual and living fellowship with the Unseen. To be WITH HIM, in daily soul-companionship—to fail there is to fail everywhere. But with this assured, He can choose, and use, us today as He did the disciples in the olden time. The question is: Are we willing to PAY THE PRICE, we who are saved to serve?—*The Christian*.

THE WILL OF GOD.

Col. 4:12.

D. Y. SCHULTZ.

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."

I. A GENERAL WILL OF GOD.

1. Regeneration. Jno. 1:13; Jas. 1:18; II Pet. 3:9.
2. Sanctification. I Thess. 4:3; Heb. 10:10; Jno. 17:17-19.
3. Suffering. I Pet. 2:15; 3:17.
4. Thanksgiving. I Thess. 5:18.
5. Glorification. Eph. 1:9-12; Rom. 8:28-30.

II. THE PARTICULAR WILL OF GOD FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL.

Our text is used in this sense.

1. There is a divine will for each individual.
 - a. Christ. Jno. 4:34; 5:30; Acts 2:32-36.
 - b. David. Ps. 40:8; 139, down sitting, uprising, all my ways, esp. v. 10.
 - c. Paul. I Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Acts 9:15, 16. See Moses, Jeremiah, Joseph, John Baptist, etc. Note keeping of fort, going out, coming in, forever, in Psalm 121.

All this is implied in the relations figuratively expressed in shepherd, master, father.

Carefully observe particular things God directed certain individuals to do: Ananias, Acts 9:10-16; Philip, Acts 8:26, 29; Peter, Acts 10:19, 20.

2. There is a complete will for each individual.

This is becoming to the infinite love and wisdom of God. How could He provide parts only!

This is needful to the individual. Would not Satan take advantage of the unprovided part!

He that is the A is also the O; He that is the first is also the last. The path of the just is "complete" unto the end. "All the will" suggests that not one of the many parts is missing. See Rom. 12:2; Ps. 23:6; Phil. 1:6; "all things," Rom. 8:28.

3. God's will appears contrary to what man naturally expects.

The fall reversed original conditions. Man's mind is not only blinded but also distorted and set contrary to God's pleasure.

His will is high; ours low, Isa. 55:8, 9. Note the apparently strange things in the lives of Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, Jesus, Peter, Paul. But for God in their lives all this would have been different, the opposite.

4. His will for one differs from His will for another.

Peter's course is mapped out in John 21:18, 19; John's is indicated in the following verses, 21, 22. How different! A stronger contrast could not well be imagined for two who had been so long and closely associated. They were each satisfied. It is none of our business to question, "What shall this man do?"

5. God's will may be hindered by Satan. I Thess. 2:18.

As to Christ's life Satan continuously attempted it, e.g. Matt. 4:1-11, but utterly failed.

As to the Israelites there was a sad missing of God's purpose and only two of those delivered from Egypt entered Canaan. I Cor. 10:1-13.

As to John and Mark, was there not a coming short of God's best? See Acts 13:13; I Cor. 5:5; 11:30.

Two Great Needs: First, know his will in order to right prayer, I Jno. 5:14, and right living; and second, Prayer for self and others for standing complete in all his will. Note three great words in this connection: "laboring," "fervently," "always," and study Paul's prayer as given in Col. 1:9-11.

REASONS FOR NOT KNOWING HIS WILL.

1. Want of a single heart and purpose.
2. A disturbing anxiety to know his will and thus losing the Guide.
3. An indifference to know on the other hand, and not expecting divine light.
4. A lack of spiritual life and wide-awake consciousness and conscientiousness before God.
5. Being outside of God's will. It is the rod that speaks in thunderous tones rather than the still small voice of the Spirit.
6. A failing to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, enjoying real intimate fellowship and friendship with God, Ps. 25:14; Gen. 18:17; Jno. 15:15.

This is God's positive method of sanctification. It is not trying to sweep the darkness out of the room, but letting the light in, and the darkness will disappear, automatically. It is not laboriously struggling to cleanse the Augean stable of our heart, but letting the River of Life in to fill and flood us with His cleansing power. It is not painfully excavating the channel of the river to dig out the snags against which your little ship is striking, but it is deepening the waters so as to carry your ship far above the rocks and snags. It is not trying to keep a thousand complex precepts of the law, but it is letting "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus so control us that the law shall become our second nature, and the righteousness of the law shall be fulfilled in us as "we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Oh, the blessed simplicity of grace! We have not to do a thousand things, but one. Keep occupied with Christ, filled with the Spirit, and let Him live out His own life in all the complexities and details of our daily experience. One is reminded of the Mississippi pilot who applied for a job on a river steamer. The owner asked him if he knew all the snags along the river and could safely sail past them. "Well," said the skipper, "I can't say I know where all the snags are, but I reckon I know where the snags ain't, and that's where I expect to do my sailing." So let us follow the current, and the shallows on the shore will take care of themselves. Let us "Walk in the Spirit, and we shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh."—*Selected*.

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EDITORIAL

WEEKLY TEXT.

He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.
Rom. 4:20.

Absolutely tender!
Absolutely true!
Understanding all things,
Understanding you!
Infinitely loving—
Exquisitely near—
This is God our Father,
What have we to fear?—F. M. N.

TREVECCA COLLEGE.

Trevecca College opened September 15, with addresses by Senator Williams, Mr. J. T. Benson, President of the Board of Trustees, Rev. J. T. Butler, and others. A most blessed spirit prevailed in this service. The power of God was felt in a marked manner, and the joy of his presence caused the hearts of all to rejoice. The school work is moving along in a way that is a joy to those in charge. There is a most excellent student body and a very encouraging outlook for the coming session. We trust our friends will join us in prayer that this may be a good school year, that God may be honored in the work, and that He may have pre-eminence in the lives of students, teachers, and all in any way connected with the college.

MRS. S. M. HOLMAN HAS GONE TO HER REWARD.

Mrs. Silena M. Holman, who for fifteen years has been State President of the Tennessee W. C. T. U., has gone to be with the Lord. Her departure, which occurred at her home at Fayetteville, Tennessee, September 18, was a shock not only to her family and friends, but to W. C. T. U. workers throughout the State, and even the nation. She was a woman of marked executive ability and great force of character, and came to the great work in which she was engaged in answer to the call of God. Truly she hath wrought nobly and well, as the progress of the work throughout the State will indicate. She loved her work and her co-workers, and ever manifested an unusual poise of spirit in her deliberations, and in her contact with both friend and foe in the temperance work. She was conscious of the approaching end and met death with triumph and victory. In choosing the minister for the funeral she said, "I want him because he will not apologize for my work. I want no man to

apologize for my work." Another lover of humanity has gone from earth.

THE POVERTY OF INDIA.

Poverty of various kinds prevails in India. Of her 315,000,000 of people more than one-third never know what it is to have enough food for the physical man. They go to bed hungry every night. A larger per cent than this can neither read nor write. There is appalling poverty of knowledge—even sufficient learning to make the individual in any way free. Then there is the distressing poverty along spiritual lines. How the people are deprived of the Bread of Life. Their souls are hungering continually. Not having a knowledge of God they are not aware that it is for Him that their hearts long. They are ever seeking to satisfy this longing of the soul, but nothing except God can satisfy. Their hungry souls must be fed with the Bread of Heaven as truly as their bodies require the natural food. Lacking food for the natural man, for the intellectual, and for the spiritual results in poverty more far-reaching than we can comprehend. How pitiable is their condition. God never intended it so, but somehow his church has failed to get to the people of India the message of salvation—the life-giving message that liberates the soul, and in whose wake follows deliverance from ignorance and superstition; and even from physical hunger. How He would be honored to have his Church make an aggressive campaign for the liberation of these millions in India. They are the purchase of the blood of Jesus.

HOME-GOING OF REV. J. H. FLOWER.

Again we are chronicling the departure of a man who loved humanity, and who was ever on the alert for their uplifting—Rev. J. H. Flower, of St. Louis, Missouri. On Thursday, September 9, he laid down the armor, quit the field of battle, and went to lay his trophies at the feet of the Master in whose service he had been a valiant soldier, and for whose cause he spared not himself, but ever rendered a willing service of love. He was active and busy till the last. Just six days before his going he was elected president of the State Holiness Association of Missouri. The same night he preached at Hannibal, became ill, but returned to St. Louis. He seemed to be given a premonition of the approaching end, gave a blessed testimony of victory through grace, and sent beautiful messages of forgiveness to all who had in any way wronged him. For a number of years he has been at the head of the Light House Mission in St. Louis, and editor of the *Light House Messenger*. He has had a most effective ministry of evangelism in his own city and elsewhere. He has been a friend and helper to the fallen, and God has signally blessed his faithful labors in rescue work. He had a sympathy as broad as the needs of humanity and rejoiced to reach out a hand of love and helpfulness to all who had a need. The scope of his ministry was shown by the great funeral service. Long before the hour the auditorium was packed and hundreds stood in the aisles and on the street. The leader of the meeting asked all who had been saved under his ministry to raise their hands and immediately hundreds of hands were uplifted. How glorious to die like this man of God. How inestimable the value of a life thus invested for Christ and humanity. Who would want to fail to invest their lives in a cause like this and to serve a God who has never lost a battle nor allowed his trusting child to go down in defeat. Another lover of humanity has been taken in the prime of his career, but his work will be carried on by his co-laborers. We extend our sincere sympathy and prayers to our sister Flower and her helpers.

IF GOD BE FOR US.

Who can fully comprehend the full force of the words of the Apostle Paul, "If God be for us who can be against us?" If God be for us and we are fully yielded to Him, we have his promise that He will dwell in us; and if this be true we know that He is for us, and that puts all needed blessings within our reach. If he be for us there is grace for every temptation, there is victory over every onslaught of the enemy of the soul, there is keeping power for the testing time. If God is not sufficient to keep us calm and victorious when there comes the extra strain then He is not an all-sufficient Savior, but He is abundantly able. It is under the unusual pressure that He will show Himself indeed strong, and it is then that poise and victory impress the world with a deep sense of the reality of the religion that we profess, and of the grace that we so confidently recommend to others; and it is there that real victory comes into the life.

If God be for us we need not quail before the taunts of the scoffer, neither waver at the jeers of the ungodly. He is able to cause us to always exalt his Son, and to ever lift high the banner of righteousness. The God who is sufficient for every need of the Church is still on the throne, He is still on the giving hand, He still loves with the same infinite love that caused Him to give his life on Calvary, He still longs to bless his children and his Church. He is really for us, then we need never fear any opposing element. The poet has beautifully expressed this thought in the following:

"Is God for me? I fear not,
Though all against me rise;
When I call on Christ my Savior,
The host of evil flies;
My Friend the Lord Almighty,
And He who loves me, God,
What enemy shall harm me,
Though coming as a flood?
I know it—I believe it—
I say it fearlessly,—
That God, the Highest, Mightiest,
Forever loveth me,
At all times, in all places,
He standeth at my side;
He rules the battle's fury,
The tempest, and the tide."

THE LORD AND THE BODY.

P. R. NUGENT.

In I Cor. 6:13-15 we have the statement that the Lord is for the body and the body is for the Lord, bringing out very clearly the fact that the Lord thinks upon, and cares for, the body of man as well as his soul.

In this connection it is interesting to notice that in creating man God began with the body. He formed man out of the dust before He breathed into the nostrils the breath of life, and it was after this that we are told that man became a living soul (Gen. 2:7). So, in God's thought, the body is not an unimportant part of man. It was somewhat on the order of a foundation to a building, for the foundation comes first in time, and so it was with the body.

And notice how much God's arrangements have reference to the care of the body. Air, water, fuel, plants, trees, animals, birds and fishes—all contribute to man's bodily existence and welfare. Much of the business of the world has direct reference to the body. Clothiers and dry goods men, doctors, druggists, butchers, grocers, shoe and hat dealers, market men—all do business directly relating to the needs of the body. And even those whose business ministers in other lines of need, carry on their business, in part at least, in order that the needs of their own bodies may be met. So we might truly say that man's body occupies a very prominent place in God's earthly arrangements. He has in na-

ture, provided for its support, well being and, in considerable degree, for the correction of wrong bodily conditions. Even the natural life of the body tends to throw off disease apart from all medicinal agents—a fact that is suggestive, as W. C. Stevens well says, of God's willingness to heal the sick.

Our Lord's earthly ministry reveals the same care though it was exercised on a higher plane—the supernatural. He fed the multitudes in a miraculous way twice and healed people in a miraculous way very many times. He who had already done so much for the human body on the plane of nature showed both his willingness and ability to work for it on a higher and better plane—better because results in healing would come there that could not come on the natural plane, come more quickly, and glorify God more.

So, both on the plane of nature, and above it, the Lord is for the body. And in the days to come He will show this truth in a mightier way by raising from the dead, changing the mortal, corruptible, natural (or, "soulish") body into one that is immortal, incorruptible, undefiled, spiritual, glorious, and powerful (I Cor. 15:42-44; I Pet. 1:3, 4).

In view of this we need to realize and act upon the other truth associated with this, namely, the body is for the Lord. It is as truly a member of Christ as are the spirit and soul, and is the object of his sanctifying power (I Cor. 6:15; I Thes. 5:23). Even in this present life, then, we can have a measure of life from the risen Christ in our bodies as well as in our souls, for those who are truly branches of the Vine (Jno. 15:1-5) receive the same life that is in Him.

Since the body is thus included in Christ's redemptive work we are called upon to present it to Him as a "living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:2) upon the altar. He who has yielded himself (Rom. 6:13) is to definitely place his body upon God's altar and, through it, live out a life that shall be "holiness unto the Lord" in all things. Such a body is not given up to sin, nor to selfish, worldly purposes. It is held for God's use and for his glory.

And how naturally and confidently the possessor of such a body can, and should, look to God to provide for it food, clothing, water, shelter, healing when sick or, better still, teaching how to maintain health and preservation from sickness. In short, to provide for all its needs in the very best way and enables his child to meet his own responsibility in the matter.

"The body . . . is for the Lord"—not for sin in any form—and, "The Lord is for the body" in every respect—for sustenance, protection, preservation, healing, health. Hence the condition of the body often indicates what the condition of the soul is towards God (III Jno. 2). When regulating our relation to God we are in line with regulating our bodily condition for, since righteous tends to health (Prov. 3:7, 8), it follows that sin tends to sickness. In line with this is the statement of a present day scientist that when a person is under the power of evil dispositions the bodily secretions contain about a dozen poisonous elements. Under the influence of right dispositions the same secretions contain helpful elements and are free from the injurious ones.

And, finally, this truth concerning the relation between God and the body is ground on which there can rest a faith that frees from all anxiety about the supply of bodily needs. A large part of man's anxiety is on the questions: "What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (Mat. 6:31)—all questions about bodily needs. And He who is for the body "knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Mat. 6:32) and, as He has given us bodies, will surely care for them. For a child of God to be anxious and worry about such needs is a dishonor to God. Do you please Him in this respect by trusting Him?



Address all communications for this department to Mrs. John T. Benson,
Eastland Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee.

Dear Mrs. Benson: Enclosed you will find \$1.79 (one dollar seventy-nine cents), which was the offering our young people and children made at our children's day exercises at this place. It was given over to me and I was requested to send it to you to be used on any worthy cause you shall choose. We have many bright boys and girls here in this Sunday School and I ask your prayers in their behalf; also pray for us older ones that we may be enabled to teach them the true way. These are truly times of testing, but we are praying and trusting for victory over everything that might bring discord and hinder the work of our Master, for we know that "God is not the author of confusion." Remember us at God's throne of mercy that we may find "grace to help in time of need." Have been a constant reader of LIVING WATER for ten years, and your letters to the young people have many times been a blessing to me, and the Lord's blessing be upon this little offering as it was upon the loaves and fishes. Yours in God's love.
Charlotte, Tenn. (MISS) ANNIE B. TOLAR.

We want to thank the young people for sending us their collection. We believe we can use it for God's glory in the mission field. This cousin speaks of the times in which we are living. Stop and think about it, children, for this subject is not too deep for you. Let me remind you of this fact. A few years ago people were Christians, believing in Jesus, and trusting Him, or they were sinners, making no pretense of being religious. Now it is different. Large numbers of people claim to be religious, but it is with a religion of their own. They think just as they please about Christ, believe all sorts of things about Him, and say they do not need Him as a Savior. We are living in a day of many religions, and all sorts of beliefs. Old heathen religions, dressed in new clothes, and having new names, are flourishing in Christian lands, and have multitudes of devoted followers. When we study these beliefs we find that they all teach much of the same thing. They tell us that we can make ourselves pure, and good, and strong by thinking about such things. To think about being pure changes our brain cells, so that we cease being sinful and become what we are thinking about. Certainly we all know that our thoughts have much to do with our lives. But thoughts, however good, can never go deep enough to reach the root of sin in our hearts. Thoughts, with all their influence over us, haven't enough power to change man's sinful nature. Only God can do this work in his heart. Let me illustrate this for you. Suppose you discover a sore spot on your hand, and the physician tells you it is a cancer, and must be cut out before it spreads and takes deeper root. No, you answer, this is a small place, it doesn't look dangerous, and I think I can manage it myself. I will just put a clean bandage over it, and by keeping my hand washed and bandaged with fresh linen the trouble will soon disappear. Ah, you wouldn't be so foolish as this. You would know that a skillful surgeon, taking it in time, could cut out the very smallest root of that deadly trouble and then you would be right again. So with sin. We are all born with this cancer in our natures. We cannot think it away, or wash it off, or cover it with good deeds. Jesus, the Great Physician, must operate on us, and He knows how to cut it out, root and branches. Do you see the difference between Bible religion and modern religion? One is God-made, the other man-made. One says that all power belongs

to God, the other says it is lodged in man. One says that man's heart is wrong, deceitful, diseased, and that he will forever remain in that condition unless he looks to God for relief. The other says that man is all right, and can take out, by his own efforts, anything in his life which is not right. Now open your Bibles, and read the third chapter of II Timothy. Paul is writing about the "last days," which should be days of peril he says. Then he tells us some of the things which will come to pass in those days. As I read his words, it seems a wonderful description of the very days in which we are living. Paul says that men will have a form of godliness. A form, you know, is the outward shape of a thing. And it may be perfectly empty inside, and yet be the form. So, in the latter days men are to have the outer shape of religion, but it will be an empty thing, declares Paul, with no power in it. The reason there will be no power is that these same men deny that there is a power. Can you see how this describes the false religions of today? As I told you, they all teach that there is no need of a power from above to come down and raise man out of the gulf of sin into which he has fallen.

But this is not the only sad thing about the days in which we live. There are many people who believe that God alone has the power to save a man and make his heart right. The devil can't deceive them on this point. They have trusted the Lord, and know that He does do a work of real salvation in us. Therefore the enemy seeks other ways in which to mislead those who love God. If he cannot induce them to deny the great truths of salvation, he tries to lead them into fanaticism about those truths. The Bible tells us to be on our guard against the wiles, the snares and pitfalls of the devil. It also tells us we must not be ignorant of the plans he makes to injure us. There are warnings which good people should heed. Knowing that he is trying to lead us into error about the very things we hold most dear, we should be very prayerful, watchful, and go armed with the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. I believe that large numbers of God's children have been off their guard, and ignorant of the sly plans of the enemy to hurt them. And he has been able to draw them into things not of God and which led to real injury to themselves and to others. The land is full of all sorts of doctrines and teachings, each of which promises greater power and fulness to the Christian. And these doctrines are so mixed with truth that it isn't easy to detect the false part.

Do you remember, children, the Bible tells us that Satan will clothe himself like an angel of light and come to us to deceive us? That is why we are told to try the spirit which speaks to us. We cannot afford to believe everything we hear, however heavenly it may sound. It may be coming from what seems an angel of light, and yet may be the false doctrine of the devil who has thus clothed himself in order to deceive us. How can we try the spirits? By the word of God. In every respect the message must accord with the Bible as a whole. When it does not the spirit is not of God and we must not follow on. There is a beautiful verse in John which I love to say to myself. It is this. *My sheep know my voice.* Somehow, children, when I hear the many doctrines which are held out to Christians I don't seem to recognize the voice of my Shepherd. These voices sound strange to me, and I don't want to follow the voice of a stranger. It is dangerous for a poor, weak sheep to follow a strange voice. He may be led into a place of danger and death before he knows it. We need to keep close to Jesus these days. He is our Shepherd and can guard us if we press up close to Him.

Cousin Eva.

Timely Illustrations For Christian Workers

GUIDANCE.

If you ask me: "Is it an easy thing to get these communications from heaven, and to understand them?" I can give you the answer. It is easy for those who are in right fellowship with heaven and who understand the art of waiting upon God.

How often we ask: "How can a person know the will of God?" People want, when they are in perplexity, to pray very earnestly that God should answer them at once. But God can only reveal his will to a heart that is humble and tender and empty. God can only reveal his will in perplexities and special difficulties to a heart that has learned to obey and to honor Him loyally in little things and in daily life.—*Andrew Murray.*

THE ROOTS OF LIFE.

Once there was an oak tree that clung to a crag on a mountainside. The wind swept its crest and the snows and rains tore at its soil. Its roots ran along a pathway and were trampled by the feet of men. But the rains and snows ran down the mountain and it was dying of drouth. Patiently and persistently its underground tendrils had gone forth in every direction for relief. All its power was put into the quest by which it would save its life. And by and by it was successful. The roots reached the mountain spring and were bathed in the living waters. The faithful stream that touched the lips of man and beast ran up the trunk and laved the branches and gave new life to the utmost twig. The tree stood in the same place, it met the same storms, it was trodden by the same hurrying feet, but it was planted by the rivers of water and its leaf could not wither. Out into the same old life you must go to-day as ever, but down underneath where men cannot know, you can be nourished by the everlasting streams of God.—*Wellspring.*

GENEROUS OFFERINGS.

At Ikoko, Africa, a contribution was being taken to carry on the Lord's work and to build a chapel. One woman had a piece of cloth about two feet long and a string of beads. They were all she owned in the world, but she gave them for the work. At a village in India the Christians were having a donation to help build a chapel. The people gladly gave money, grain, vegetables and other things, and there was considerable excitement and real Christian exhilaration. An old woman sat a little way off and watched the offerings heaped on a large white cloth laid on the ground. Her eyes were bright but sad. At length she went away, but soon returned bringing a basket containing all her poor old body could carry, and poured out on one corner of the cloth about a peck of inferior sweet potatoes, and said: "I have no one to support me. A farmer gave me these potatoes to keep me alive for a few days. It's all I have in the world, but I will give them all to our great God." The effect on the meeting was instantaneous, and many eyes were filled with tears.—*Am. Messenger.*

A PEACEMAKER.

A story has been told of a little girl who said to her mother one evening: "I was a peacemaker today."

"How was that?" asked her mother.

"I knew something that I didn't tell," was the unexpected reply.

Do we not all of us have frequent opportunities to make

peace in this way? Perhaps we have thought of the work of the peacemakers as the stopping of quarrels rather than their prevention, but comparatively few of us will have occasion actively to separate those who are quarreling, and induce them to be friends, and how much better that they should not quarrel at all!

Let no one think that the negative virtue of a discreet silence is an easy matter. The bit of gossip that would fill an awkward pause in the conversation is on the tip of the tongue—the secret weighs heavily on our minds, and it would be a relief to talk it over with some one—but is it going to make trouble for anybody? Is it possible that the words that we speak could be misunderstood and distorted and repeated where they would rankle? "Blessed are the peacemakers," even those peacemakers who work only by refraining from doing harm with their tongues.

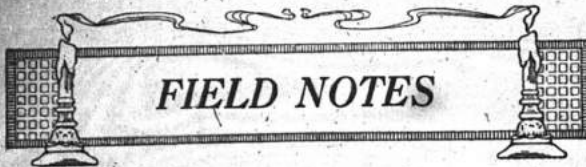
And what is this blessing that the peacemakers receive? "They shall be called sons of God." Yes, children of the great God, who knows and guards the secrets of all hearts—children who are like their Father.—*Selected.*

"BLIND LEADERS OF THE BLIND."

In an English exchange we find the following incident, a true occurrence:

I was going west one time during the winter. The train had two engines ploughing along. There was a woman, with a little babe in her arms, who wanted to leave the train at a certain little station, where they stop the train if you come from a certain distance. The brakeman came in and called the name of the station when we were getting near. The woman said, "Don't forget me," and he replied, "Sure." There was a man there who said, "Lady, I will see that the brakeman doesn't forget you—don't you worry." A while later he said, "Here's your station." She hopped out of the train—into the storm. . . . The train had gone on about three-quarters of an hour when the brakeman came in and said, "Where's that woman?" The traveling man said, "She got off." The brakeman said, "Then she's gone to her death; we only stopped the train yonder because there was something the matter with the engine." They called for volunteers and went back and looked for her. They searched for hours and finally found her out on the prairies, covered with a shroud of ice and snow woven about her by the pitiless storm, and with the little babe folded to her breast. She followed the man's directions, but they were wrong.

She followed the wrong directions and they led her to her death and the death of her little one. How great the responsibility of the man, who sent her into the night and the raging storm! Greater still is the responsibility of the men who stand up as preachers and teachers of Christianity and who give to lost men and women and to their children the wrong directions. Instead of sounding the alarm and warning to flee from the wrath to come, they preach that all is well. Instead of pointing out God's way of salvation by the blood, they obscure the cross, deny Christ's atoning work and send their hearers down the road which leads into eternal darkness and misery. How awful will be their remorse when they discover the work they have done by preaching the devil's lie, instead of God's eternal truth! Of such who give the wrong directions, who preach error and a delusion in the place of the Gospel, our Lord spoke in His severe denunciation of the scribes and the Pharisees. They are the blind guides and the hypocrites, who shut up the kingdom of heaven against men. (Matthew 23).—*Sel.*



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Rev. J. V. Reid is in a meeting at Barlow, Ky.

Mrs. Olive Rife is near Slayden, Tennessee, in evangelistic work.

Rev. E. O. Hobbs is conducting a tent campaign at Clarksville, Tennessee.

We will send LIVING WATER from now till January 1, 1916, for 25 cents.

Rev. J. A. Chenault spent last Sunday with the Nazarene Church at Dickson, Tenn.

Rev. John F. Owen is at Granville, Tenn., in a meeting and will remain till the 26th.

Rev. J. B. Miller is at Booker's Chapel, near Bon Aqua, Tennessee, in a revival meeting.

Rev. F. W. Johnson is holding revival services at Jason's Chapel, near Dickson, Tennessee.

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Rev. A. J. Moore is conducting a revival campaign in Americus, Ga., which began September 19, and will continue till October 10.

Mrs. M. V. Hall has just closed a most gracious revival at Florence, Alabama, where she is pastor of the Nazarene Church. There was a goodly number of professions, and large crowds attended the services.

Rev. W. F. Shannon and Miss Essie Morris held a meeting recently at Greenbrier, Tenn. They begin a meeting to-day near White House, Tenn. Rev. Shannon has been evangelizing most of the summer and the Lord has greatly blessed his ministry.

We just closed a two weeks meeting at Iron City, Tenn. The battle was a little hard but God met with us in the salvation of something like seventy souls. We scattered quite a bit of good holiness literature and was successful in securing twenty subscribers to *Living Water* in the last two meetings. God turned the light on people and Christian people moved up in their experiences. People all around felt the influence of the meeting. The red hot truth of God still has its effect. Our next meeting will be at Leoma, Tennessee. Pray for us. Yours in the battle,

J. A. COLLIER,
H. H. WISE.

Dear Living Water Friends: Won't you begin again to send me papers? I miss them so much, as everybody has gradually stopped sending, except a Mr. Spurlock and Miss Behrms, of the *Moody Herald* office. The latter sends me Sunday School papers, but I also greatly need such papers

as LIVING WATER, the *Christian Witness*, etc., as they are a great boon to the people, who, as I have often mentioned, have next to nothing to read. Also I often get a sermon from one of these for our catechist on such Sundays as my father is at his other church. The language is simple and suits the hearers, many of whom cannot even read. Our school masters (teachers of elementary schools for black children), intelligent and rather lonely men, are so thankful for the loan or gift of a religious paper. I would be grateful, too, for a few papers for children, for little "ragged" Sunday Schools in some of the districts; also for any temperance literature. Would be most thankful for some temperance songs.

Thanking you for past kindness in the matter, and with love in Christ Jesus. Your sister in Him, L. A. KING.
Luowdon Rectory, Newport, P. O., Jamaica, B. W. I.

We were invited to Kimberly, Alabama, by Brother and Sister Majors, two of God's saints. Eternity will be too short to erase the impression of love they have made on us while we were being so royally entertained in their home. We arrived here August 31st and began our meeting the next day. We soon found out that the old dragon and Satan, which is the devil, had the folks, with some of the preachers, captured, bound and lodged. When you find things in this condition and begin to preach clean living the devil is going to get stirred, but if God be for us who can be against us, says the old Book.

We have had several professions and on last Sunday God gave us a great day. There were two Baptist deacons saved, and the Methodist Sunday-school Superintendent and his wife were sanctified. Brother and Sister J. W. Simmons, the Methodist pastor and his wife, are sanctified and of course they swung right into line, which was a great help to the meeting. Brother Simmons says he is more determined to preach Holiness as a second, definite work of grace than ever before.

We go from here to Empire, Ala.

Yours for God and souls,

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"Nothing Between"

(A True Story.)

"Nothing between, Lord, nothing between!
Shine with unclouded ray,
Chasing each mist away;
O'er my whole heart bear sway—
Nothing between!"

IN the telegraph operating-room of a western city, a great variety of instruments of various shapes and sizes, according to the requirements of the different centers with which direct communication is effected, are in use for the transmission of messages, and there is no piece of mechanism there which plays a more important part than that called the "relay." True it is small in proportion to other parts of the apparatus, but it is more intricate, and the adjustment of the "tongue" or operating piece is so delicate that a hairbreadth turn of the adjustment screws will disorganize the whole arrangement.

It is of the "relay" that I wish to say a few words.

It was about 3 A. M., when I was on night duty, some time since, that London called up and said, "Attend on the News wire." I went to the circuit, but no current was received there—everything was as still as a grave. I tested the different parts of the apparatus, but still no sign of anyone working at the other end of the wire was visible. After doing all I could think of to gain the alleged "call," I sought the aid of the clerk in charge. He had not been at the instrument many minutes before his attention was fixed upon the relay. Without altering its adjustment he "blew" at the tongue, when, to my astonishment and satisfaction, the incoming electric current was immediately received in all its force and clearness.

What was it that stood in the way? Only a speck of dust! This speck—invisible to the naked eye—had settled between the points! And not only did it prevent the receipt of signals from London, but as it was the work of this relay to simultaneously transmit the same signals on to Devonshire and South Wales towns, the electricity was shut off also from the other offices.

What a spiritual lesson is here! Need it be explained? I think it will be manifest to all my readers, but, in order that its full significance may be understood, I would say that the important lesson I learned from this little incident, and

which has been riveted upon my mind, is this, that the presence of the slightest sign of anything that is at all contrary to the life of Jesus Christ, between the soul and God, is sufficient to completely cut off Divine communications, which would inevitably reach the soul were the obstruction removed. Does not the absence of the inflow and outflow of Christ's messages, and of the Christ-life through the heart and life, account for all the misery, the sadness, the crime, the dissatisfaction, the unrest, and the utter disregard of "the kingdom of God," which exist in so many lives today?

I do not hesitate to emphasize all. Prayer for blessing is abundant, but "if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Psalm 66:18). "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withheld good from you" (Jer. 5:25). Are you, my reader, allowing anything, no matter how apparently insignificant and innocent in itself it may seem, in your life—your social, domestic, business, or inner heart life—which is at all antagonistic to the holy will of "the only wise God," as revealed in His Word? As long as you do so, heaven cannot smile upon you, nay, you are under a curse. "God is angry with the wicked every day" (Psalm 7:11). "Let every one that nameth (note 'nameth') the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim. 2:19).

If the results ended in shutting out blessing from your own soul the loss would be incalculable, but, as long as the obstruction is allowed to remain, you, as a channel or relay through whom God is waiting to transmit his bounties to others, are blocking the way. Will you not, without a moment's hesitation, do what you can to remove all resistance, even though the process be as painful as the plucking out of an eye, or the cutting off of a foot? As you read these lines, repair to the life blood of God's Son, which "cleanseth from all sin" (1 John 1:7), "from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9), and to Him who has promised in Ezekiel 36 to do so much for you.

In less than one hundred years' time, how you and I will wish that we had lived all our days, and every moment of

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every day, with "Nothing Between" our soul and the full bright sunshine of His smile. Let each of us decide, irrespective of what friends or foes, demons or men, may think or say, by Thy grace and power I here and now determine henceforth to live for the purpose for which Thou didst make me and send me into this world, *i. e.*, for Thy glory (Isaiah 43:7), with "Nothing Between."

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THE SIN OF PRAYERLESSNESS.

"God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." I Samuel 12:23.

How few of us have placed prayerlessness among our possible sins! And how even fewer have placed the omission to pray for others in the blacklist of sins against the holy Lord! We have called it thoughtlessness, or negligence, or even apathy, but we have not called it sin. But how this word sin, as used in this unfamiliar relationship, broadens and deepens the ministry and obligation of prayer!

My needy brother has a right to my prayers. They are to be regarded as part of his capital strength. They constitute a part of the forces which were purposed to make him victorious in all the battle of life. My prayers for him are part of his army. I control some of his vital equipment. Without my co-operation in prayer he is weakened and maimed. If I refuse him my prayers I deprive him of so much of his heritage. I defraud him. I wrong him in a far more deadly manner than if I refused to pay a material debt. I disclaim my spiritual debts, and he is impoverished in the central resources of the soul. I help him into moral bankruptcy by depriving him of his sacred dues. Thus do I wrong my brother, and thus do I sin against God.

All this, I say, is a very lofty conception of the obligation of prayer. It is something we owe to others, and if we refuse to pay we leave them poor indeed. On the other hand, how uplifting is the conception that by my prayers I am increasing a man's moral capital! I am helping him to mobilize his spiritual forces. I am sending him army corps to enable him to meet his enemy at the gate and overthrow him. I may share in his warfare, and I may rejoice and glory in his triumph.—*Rev. J. H. Jowett, in "The British Weekly."*

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P. R. NUGENT, Richmond, Va.

LESSON FOR SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1915.

ELIJAH IN NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

I KINGS 21:11-20.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Be sure your sin will find you out."
Num. 32:23.

I. A COVETOUS KING.

Covetousness may be defined as a selfish longing, or desire, for what belongs to another; a longing for something for *its own sake* and not for the good it might bring to others. The thought is of self-gratification only. This was Ahab's trouble. The evidence of his selfishness is seen in his getting "heavy and displeased" when his request was refused. The request was against God's law. ("The land shall not be sold forever." Lev. 25:23. "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers." Num. 36:7), but Ahab either did not know, or did not care. He wanted his own way and was angry when he did not have it.

Covetousness is a much more grievous sin than people suppose. Its character may be seen from the following scriptures that deal with it. "Take heed, and beware of covetousness" (Lk. 12:15), Jesus said, and the psalmist prays that his heart may not be inclined that way (119:36). This shows that even a spiritual person is not beyond danger in that respect—either through not having had the heart cleansed (Mk. 7:21, 22), or on account of the temp-

tations that may come from evil spirits working on the heart to incline it to take in covetousness.

The covetous are abhorrent to God: ("The covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth," Ps. 10:3). They practice idolatry (for covetousness is idolatry, Col. 3:5), because they exalt God's gifts above God and seek for, in God's creation, what they ought to seek and find only in God Himself. People who covet fields, or houses, or fame, or money, have these things as their god. And is it not remarkable that men should have as gods part of God's creation that are on a lower plane than they are? It shows the blinding power of sin.

The sinfulness of covetousness is further seen by the nature of the sins with which it is classed: "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." I Cor. 5:11. This shows that covetousness is such a grievous sin that it calls for church discipline. A covetous person should not be allowed to continue in fellowship with God's children any more than a drunkard should, or a person who bows down to idols of wood and stone.

The same truth is brought out in I Cor. 6:9, 10: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." And Peter also (II Pet. 2:13-15) speaks in the same line of some who associated themselves with those to whom he wrote: "Spots they are and blemishes, eating themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with

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covetous practices; cursed children which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray." Of such he also says (v. 17), "To whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever," and (v. 19), "The servants of corruption."

Notice also in Heb. 13:5—"Let your conversation be without covetousness (A. R. V.—"Let your turn of mind be free from the love of money"), and in Eph. 5:3, "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints." So pure conversation is free from covetousness.

It is noticeable, too, that when our Lord had said (Lk. 16:13), "No servant can serve two masters. . . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon," the Pharisees "who were covetous ("lovers of silver"), heard all these things: and they derided Him." He replied: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

So we see that a covetous person is a servant of money and not of God, an abomination to God, is unworthy of church fellowship, cannot inherit God's kingdom, is classed with the most degraded sinners, is led to violence ("They covet fields and take them by violence"—Mic. 2:2), and greed (Isa. 5:8, 9), gets punishment from God ("For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him"—Isa. 57:17), and suffers loss. The latter may come in two ways: (1) He loses true riches:—"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" He loses also the opportunity to have something that will be his own:—"If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" (Lk. 16:11, 12). A covetous person is unfaithful in using God's earthly goods, that men regard as wealth, and thus loses on both the above lines. (2) He may also lose his earthly possessions in this present life through God's judgment (Jer. 8:10). If the truth were known we would doubtless see that some business losses are God's punishment on covetous ways.

And see what trouble has come to covetous people. Achan, his family, Balaam, Ananias and Sapphira (for covetousness was back of their lying)—all lost their lives through it. Judas betrayed Jesus because he was covetous, and the rich young ruler allowed riches to stand between him and eternal life. Ahab's covetousness led murder and judgment on his sons.

II. AN UNPRINCIPLED QUEEN.

Jezebel began by what was either a taunt, or flattery, or encouragement (v. 7). Her appeal to his governmental rule and right meant a misuse of that power for selfish, covetous gratification. Whatever regard Ahab had for the right was weakened, so far as a firm stand for it was concerned, by his desire to possess Naboth's vineyard. He may not have been strong enough in his wickedness to do what Jezebel did, but he was not strong enough in the right to rule out her activities in the line of murder and robbery. He became a responsible sinner by a passive consent to a course that he could, and should have stopped. Jezebel was "the power behind the throne" and the power seems to have been uniformly for evil. To her, idolatry and murder seemed quite natural and easy.

III. UNFAITHFUL ELDERS.

These elders may have been men devoid of principle and conscience, careless and indifferent to righteousness, willing tools of Jezebel and possibly glad of an opportunity to accommodate her and gain her favor, no matter how. Or they

may have been lacking in strength and courage to resist her iniquity, and so submitted to her plan rather than incur her displeasure. They had to be unfaithful to their office and become guilty of injustice, unfairness, deceit, falsehood, murder and a mock trial, by obeying Jezebel, but they made no objection. If they had any in their minds they refrained from mentioning it. "One sinner destroyeth much good," is a truth clearly illustrated in Jezebel. She swept the king and these elders into several sins, and deprived a man of both property and life.

IV. A RELIGIOUS VICTIM.

There is no true charge against Naboth's character given in the record. His refusal of Ahab's offer was really a righteous act, as it was according to the law for Israel. It doubtless took courage on his part to say no to the king, but he showed his courage by saying it. Judging by the fact that his refusal was summed up in one sentence, Ahab may have seen him to be a man of determination on whom arguments would be wasted, so he accepted the reply as final and went home to sulk and give his wife a chance to murder an innocent man because his right stand was in the way of Ahab's desire.

V. GOD'S MESSAGE BY ELIJAH.

Why Ahab should regard Elijah as his enemy is not plain except on the general principle that right is the enemy of wrong. Elijah's last recorded dealings with Ahab were friendly enough. Probably Ahab's greeting (v. 20) came from a guilty conscience. Elijah put the blame for murder on Ahab, for, though Jezebel, the elders and false witnesses were also guilty, Ahab, as king, was held especially responsible. Elijah is seen here with the courage that characterized him before his flight. He was back at the place from which he had fled and was strong to deliver God's message of condemnation to the king in person. Possibly Jezebel was there, too, to get her message directly from the prophet. Elijah, acting under orders from God, was fearless to deliver God's message.

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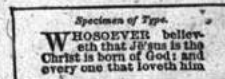
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