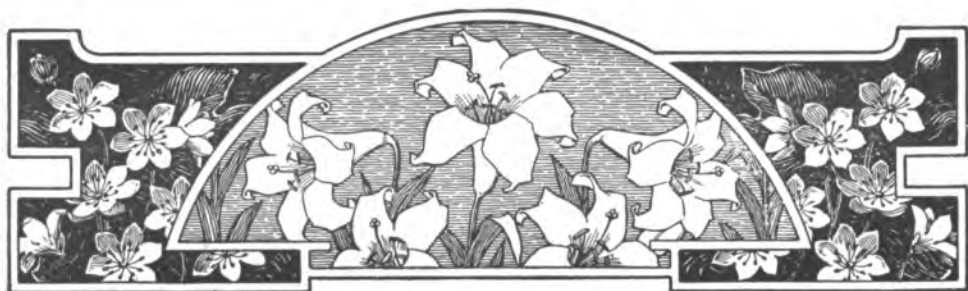


*The*

# PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

MARCH—APRIL, 1949

*" . . . . if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain . . . . But now is Christ risen from the dead, . . . . For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." — Bible.*



# The Preacher's Magazine

Volume 24

March-April, 1949

Number 2

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L. A. REED, D.D., Editor

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# Your Preaching

*L. A. Reed, Editor*

**I**F A sermon is not interesting, then it should not be preached.

There are many elements that enter into the creating of interest: the confidence produced by thorough preparation; the conviction of the preacher in regard to his message; personal interest of the preacher himself; the preacher's ability to make his illustrations "live"; the climactic element in his elaborations; the human-interest side of his sermon; and, most of all, the spirit which dominates his delivery. All of these unite to make a sermon interesting, and no one item suggested can stand alone in holding the attention of his audience.

Every preacher desires an attentive and responsive hearing. He faces certain obstacles in his presentation which must be overcome if he is to succeed in producing the results he expects from his sermonic discourse. Some people come to listen who for one reason or another are repugnant to religion. But on the contrary, this man himself will be compelled to admit that there is no subject that carries with it such an abiding interest as religion; and possibly that is the reason why he sits before you, because, even though he might find religion, as such, repulsive, yet he still is interested, and away down in his subconscious mind he finds himself being driven by a directive urge to the house of God. The very fact that he is present in the audience should be a challenge to the preacher to change that repugnance to a friendly interest.

Another obstacle which is especially faced in this day is inattention. And right at this point I will not blame the parishioner too much, for it is the task of the preacher to give God's message in such a manner that it will demand attention. I heard one hearer say, "That man compelled my attention." One time I noticed a certain man, who should have known better and who should have been more courteous, sitting on the back pew and reading a newspaper. This occurred not only once, but many times. Finally I went to my study and prayed about it and asked God so to help me that my sermons would draw his attention, challenge him, and bring about his salvation. The greatest thrill of my life was to observe this man finally drop his paper and listen attentively. Then he failed to bring the

paper to church. Finally he came to the altar and gave his heart to our Christ. He said that he had deliberately developed an inattention for fear that he would be involved in religion. But the prayerful effort of the preacher finally intrigued him, and God got to his heart.

Of course, it is a fact that the average congregation cannot think long on one subject, and the preacher should not make them do this. But he should make his message so climactic that he would carry his people with him through the various divisions of his message until he brought them to a peak of interest.

Then there is the personal interest of the preacher in his own message. If there is a lack of this, the congregation will be the first to notice it. Interest cannot be expected from the pew when it is lacking in the pulpit. Do you become so involved in your preparation that your message and sermon become a burning, challenging reality, until you can hardly muster the patience to wait until Sunday morning or evening to deliver the prophetic word? If the people need your message, then you know you are on the right track. If the Bible gives support through a proper text and context to that need, then that is further substantiation. If you feel that God, through your ministry, will supply that need, then you can fearlessly appear before your congregation, prepared to fill that need; and your congregation will be interested as they sense your interest and as they sense your prescription for their ills. If the preacher has conviction in regard to his message, it will strike home every time.

There is nothing quite so boring as an uninteresting storyteller. To give an illustration and not make it live is a travesty. It is even worse if it is not apropos. First, does the illustration illustrate? Does it let in light upon the thought which you are presenting? Is it true to life? Does it touch the heart and intellect of the common man? In other words, is it interesting?

When the writer considers this thought of interest, he is prone to think of the visitor who, after the pastor had announced that the church board would meet after the service, came into the session with the church board. When asked why he, a stranger,

was there, he answered that he thought all the church "bored" were to meet, and that took him in. The sermon evidently had not interested him.

However, real illustrations, interesting the people, will bring to focus the point involved; and many times the people will think of the illustration before they will think of the point. In fact, this is especially true of children, and adults are just grown-up children. We will not elaborate at this point, as in another editorial we wish to devote more time to the art of illustrating the sermon.

One is further moved to remark about the pastor's ability to elaborate climactically. Many sermons are built on one level, and just on that level is the interest located. But understand, the level of the sermon may remain the same, but the level of interest will not stand up with such a sermon; it will swerve on a descending arc. If a man has a three- or four-point message, then from the very announcement of his text, his sermon should be built on an ascending scale, bringing his climax and conclusion four levels higher in interest than his introduction. To this end, avoid using illustrations in the introduction, for fear you may not get higher than your first illustration.

Elaboration of Biblical material is always interesting, and it also should support the climactic elements of the sermon. If a text has three or four parts which would naturally furnish the outline, then it would be treated textually (and we would urge such consideration). But if the thoughts need to be rearranged, feel free to do so; for in many texts of the Bible the writer was not thinking of logical or psychological order. On the other hand, the preacher must think of such an order if he is to bring his congregation along with him as he proceeds.

One cannot allow this consideration to pass without urging the human interest side of the sermon. There is always a level of understanding which is appreciated by the average layman. That sermon which is of such human interest that it has a direct appeal as coming from the everyday life of the parishioner, will be the sermon which the man in the pew will remember the longest. Illustrations of and references to daily life will always have an appeal and create interest because they are the more readily understood. Items from mythology, fantasy, imagination, and unreality are not to

be compared to those items which a man contacts each day of his existence. This shows the man in the pew that the pastor is cognizant of what is going on and is interested in the things which baffle him as well as those which make for his welfare. We hear much today about human-interest appeal; no book sells unless it possesses it, and no sermon is interesting without it.

But the thing which will capture the interest of the listener is the spirit with which the sermon is delivered. If the layman is persuaded that the preacher means what he says, believes that God wants him to say it, then says it fearlessly yet lovingly, possessed with an unction which is unmistakable, then the layman will feel that it was profitable to wend his way to the place of worship. Then the pulpit echoes the voice of God and the church becomes the sanctuary of the Most High.

Do not let your undergraduate training cause you to think that a mere conversational tone ever will convince anyone, or that your speech lessons with their dramatics alone will be able to move people's hearts. It takes the Spirit of God, moving upon the spirit of the preacher, until he shall speak with lips touched by the coal of fire from God's altar, and his entire personality aflame with the Great Commission. Yes, I would rather take a chance on a poor sermon being set on fire by the Holy Spirit than to have a masterpiece presented from a frigid heart. Neither is necessary, as we can have our very best, anointed and enflamed by the Lord, which will grip any type of audience under any circumstance.

We are compelled to admit that generally a lack of interest is due to two things, namely, poor sermons and no enduement. A preacher must have both a good sermon—which will be the result of his honest effort—and the enduement of the Holy Spirit if he is constantly to have the interested attention of his congregations. Whether it be the country parish, rural church, or city congregation, the sermon must be interesting; anything else is hardly tolerable. We have too many weak efforts, and generally they are due to a lack of preparation in both study and prayer. Neither one will make up for the other; both are partners in the sermon process, and are indispensable to maintaining an interest which will change men's hearts and lives.

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Trouble and perplexity drive me to prayer, and prayer drives away perplexity and trouble.—*Selected.*

# THE COUNSELOR'S CORNER - - - -

*L. A. Reed*

PASTORAL counseling as a technique is a product of the twentieth century. It has involved a transition of attention from the masses to the individual. To a greater or less degree it is the aftermath of two world wars. The fact of death, broken marital relations, physical disabilities, mental shocks and derangements—all have contributed to a new pessimism in the world, which might lead to self-destruction unless a therapy can be found. It has been the thought of man that he could redeem himself by his own efforts, but his failures have disabused his mind of such conclusions. Many present conditions have developed the neurotic personality of our day. Sinister pessimism creates a despair, which in turn produces a feeling of futility. Because most of these ills are mental, they involve a necessity for psychotherapy. Pastoral counseling enters this field only to the extent that it makes psychology serve religion. The idea of counseling has always faced the pastor, but now he faces an era in which the possibilities of personal assistance are unlimited and the number of counselees has grown to gigantic proportions.

Heretofore, the clergyman has endeavored to meet the maladjustments of his flock by indoctrination from the pulpit. Many times his "theological helpings" have been so large that they were hardly digestible, and at times not even apropos to the facts of life, for many of his people were in the midst of situations which needed immediate attention and the pulpit was too far distant. The pulpit has its place and still has its influence, and the Wesleyans are not willing to sacrifice it for any other technique; but a further technique is needed which brings the pastor from the pulpit, face to face with the needy personality.

Further, it has been discovered that there is a definite association between mind and body. Both clergy and physician recognize that there is an affinity between their work which calls for co-operation. Both are dealing with personality, and must keep in mind the total man, or both will discover they are doing a "patchwork job on human beings." Hence the clergy recognizes the value of psychiatry and psychosomatics, while the physician realizes the psychotherapeutic value of religion. Hence the psychia-

trist and physician are sensing the value of religion in the rehabilitation of many of their patients, while the clergyman recognizes the place of psychiatry in the mental rehabilitation of some counselees.

At first many clergymen plunged recklessly into a program of counseling which took the form of an ill-timed and poorly prepared pastoral psychiatry. Much harm was done, most of it being unintentional, for the pastor was grasping for a therapy which would heal the mental ills of his parish. He was premature in his emphasis, and for the time being forgot that he had at his disposal the most effective therapy known to mankind. The medical profession, dealing only with the body, had failed in its practical application of psychology, while the clergy seemed to be influenced through the rationalizings of a skeptical age to consider as antiquated the idea of the religious experience. But men are beginning to note that the reality involved in the Christian experience has a moral and mental healing as well as reaching out into the realm of physical benefits. This close interrelationship between mind and body has a mutual status, wherein physical adjustments have been aided by mental release, and in many cases mental disorders, having been caused by physical disabilities, have been relieved by physical rehabilitation. But it has been discovered that, in either case, the use of religion as a therapy gives a practical assistance, the recognition of which is even yet grudgingly admitted.

C. G. Jung says: "Side by side with the decline of religious life, the neuroses grow noticeably more frequent." There is no doubt but that this is the difficulty with the neurotic personality of our day. Religion has increasingly taken a lesser place in the lives of our citizenry; accordingly, neuroses have increased. It would stand to reason that the acceptance of a Christian philosophy and all that it implies would eliminate man's greatest enemy to the peace of his mind, namely, "fear," which elimination would be very essential to the well-being of this generation.

Also, in considering that a Christocentric philosophy would also eliminate resentments, hatreds, jealousies, intolerance, and other undesirable elements of personality, is

it not time that the Church expressed itself as an agent of release? Here is the pastor's opportunity to touch the human spirit with a spiritual dynamic. Its beneficence is all too apparent to be passed by lightly. Christian psychology avoids the pitfalls of egocentricity, and experiences a freedom which emancipates one from "self." Hence, the Church of Jesus Christ can and ought to be the great therapeutic agent for the saving of men—saving them from themselves and for society.

These modern fears have not only impregnated individuals, but also they seem to have captured the imagination of the nation. Our fears seem to be contagious. We are reminded of the story of "The Little Barnyard Hen." Every time Henny Penny cried, "the sky is falling," he gained new recruits. We have fears produced by economic insecurity, new fears of atomic destruction, fears of a growing block of European and Asiatic ideologies, all of which have spread the contagion of fear until we have a neurotic population. Every radio commentator is portentous in his remarks, and spreads these fears into every household. Link all this with the postwar neuroses, and it would appear that the time has come for the Christian Church to point the way out of this mental chaos. It should be done from the pulpit through the practical, dynamic message of Christian faith, and through the counseling chamber in dealing with the individual and bringing to him a philosophy which can dispel fears and bring him peace.

In considering the background of pastoral counseling, one is compelled to recognize the value of the Catholic confessional. It has been important in the releasing of tensions of Catholic parishioners, although its value seems to be transitory and superficial. Father E. Boyd Barrett said he had "confessed his own sins a *thousand* times or more, and as a priest had heard the confessions of thousands of Catholics." Furthermore, he had been consulted, outside the confessional, by Catholics whose analysis disclosed the fact that their mental health had suffered as a consequence of confession. Relying on all this experience, Father Barrett dissents with the view that confession, as a general rule, affords a health-mode of self-revelation such as psychologists considerate. "It is," he says, "too fragmentary, too artificial, and too coercive to be a health-giving mode of release" (*Health for Mind and Spirit*, by Northridge, pages 174-175). There is no doubt that the confessional is a form of counseling. To make it a true men-

tal and religious healing agent, however, some changes would have to be made.

*First*, the confessional should not be coercive. Compulsion does not tend to freedom, and the counselee "covers up" rather than "unloads." Possibly he confesses with an attitude of resentment toward the compulsion, which attitude itself any pastoral counselor would endeavor to eliminate. Compelling such a practice also places one under the tension of habit. Merely to go to confession because it was customary and habitual would tend to make the confessional a series of reactions having little meaning.

*Second*, the confessional tends to cause a person to deceive himself. He chooses the items of confession, deeming himself a competent judge as to what is essential and non-essential. Hence he does not fully bring to the surface those things which have placed him in a rather neurotic condition. It is understood also that the Father Confessor in many instances directs the confession into those hidden areas which, unless voluntarily exposed, might shock the individual. If the individual is not guilty of the transgressions mentioned, then there is a mental shock to the suggestion; while if the person is guilty of these sins, and does not voluntarily bring them to the fore, then they frequently add another tension caused by prevarication, to that of a sense of guilt. There is always this possibility involved, which is detrimental to the counselee.

*Third*, in the confessional, the counselor, being the priest, in order to satisfy the dogmatic attitude of a church, must deal with the counselee on the basis that the priest is the mediator and can forgive sin and can mete out penalties. The latter is enough to cause the confessing one to withdraw into himself and hold mental reservations rather than suffer anticipated consequences.

*Fourth*, the Catholic confessional offers no means of permanently assisting the individual. The confessional is a treadmill; the confessing of the same sins over and over again. No doubt some are restrained through the authority of the church, but human nature is such that it needs the assistance of some power other than the will. Of course, varying strength of mental powers is such that this statement cannot be universally applied, but the history of human experience will substantiate such a claim. We are not claiming that there is no good in the confessional, for no doubt much good has been accomplished through the centuries of its practice. But we are inclined to believe that, in the light of the above considerations, if it were made voluntary

and a divine impetus substituted for the authority of the church, then positive good could be accomplished.

*Pastoral counseling is Protestantism's answer to the Catholic confessional.* It is not coercive; it is voluntary. There is no necessity for the counselee to deceive himself or the counselor. Desiring to relieve himself through confession, it is natural that in due time he will make his confession complete. In pastoral counseling, the counselee is not misguided by any theological opinion relative to the counselor. He recognizes him as a religious man, of course; but he comes for positive help and is not thinking of penalties, and generally approaches the counselor on the basis of confidence. Finally, through the therapy of the Christian experience, the counselor can gradually, and even at times instantaneously, bring a positive and final release from the tensions created by sin-guilt.

Not more than a decade ago, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick created quite a stir when, in addressing the Federation of Churches of New York, he suggested that he "had been conducting a confessional," although he was a Baptist. Of course he qualified the statement by adding that he had an office where he could "meet the spiritually sick and mentally disturbed" and assist them in solving their problems, which he did week after week. In the early days of Protestantism, John Wesley sensed the needs of the individual when he instituted the class meetings, at which people could "be advised, reproved, comforted or exhorted as the occasion may require . . . . It can scarce be conceived what advantages have been reaped from this little prudential regulation. Many now happily experience that Christian fellowship which they had not so much as had an idea of before. They began to 'bear one another's burdens' and naturally to 'care for each other'" (*The Letters of John Wesley*, by John Talford, pages 11, 227).

In considering the development of the confessional, it is interesting to note that at first the penitent confessed his sins to the company of believers. Later, the religious leaders acted as confessors. Toward the early part of the thirteenth century, secret confession was made a law of the church. Prior to the period of the Reformation, abuses of the confession, through the conduct and demeanor of many of the priests, and the purchasing for a financial consideration of forgiveness (indulgences), were the means of bringing about the reactions against the so-called established church. Luther

was not opposed to the confessional; but when the pendulum of reform swung, it moved to the opposite extreme, and we observe Protestantism minus the confessional.

However, the idea of confession never has been forsaken by Protestantism. Universally it accepts the fact of New Testament teaching in regard to the matter. Even relative to the idea of the confessing of person to person, the New Testament speaks very plainly, "Confess your faults one to another, . . . that ye may be healed" (James 5:16). And even the Old Testament has a positive word to say, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. 28:13).

But in the consideration of the therapy of the Christian experience, the New Testament sounds a very positive note relative to confession, as it relates man to God. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9-10). Also, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). Hence, the New Testament recognizes that confession plays an initial part in the relationship between individuals, as well as between individuals and God.

In recent years confession appeared in another dress. About 1935 a group of people organized themselves into what they termed the Oxford Movement. They recognized the necessity for the releasing of inner tensions and so established one practice which they called "sharing." They had four major tenets, one of which they termed "absolute honesty." This they practiced with one another, never hiding anything, sharing their past intimate experiences, doing this to such an extent that it became morbid. They made the mistake of misdirecting their confession. They thought that bringing their secrets into the open was sufficient; they left Christ, as man's Mediator, out of the picture. But the point which we involve is that they recognized the necessity for some sort of confession in order to possess even a degree of freedom.

There is a catharsis as well as comfort in confession. It constitutes the heart of the counseling process. The action of the counselee in "talking it out" will occupy the major part of the counseling period. But

confession is not the end in itself; it is just the revealing phase of the entire process, followed by the unraveling of the tangles of personality tensions. There can be no true counseling without it; for in order to have interpretation, one must first know the case, which knowledge is brought to light by confession. Through this purging, orderliness and a sense of control come out of the chaos. It gives relief to the inner strife. A man wants peace from the tortures of concealment; and because there is an increasing tension between what he really is, what he appears to be, and what he thinks he should be, he purges his mind of the discomforting past. A man can bury disappointed hopes and evil acts, but a funeral cannot be conducted "over a live body." These cry out under the added weight of a daily existence until they break the surface waters in either an emotional upset or a deliberate confession. The latter is cathartic while the former becomes merely a symptom of the presence of an inner conflict.

But as we have said, confession is not the end in itself. There must be a consciousness of an adequate relief, and a release from the probability of repetition. At this point again we refer to the religious experience. Just as a Father Confessor, supposedly the representative of God, grants pardon, so the pastoral counselor leads the counselee to God and a consciousness of divine pardon, through confession and prayer. But the full therapeutic value is in the additional functioning of the Holy Spirit of God through a religious experience which has a purging quality. "If we confess our sins [confession], he [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [sense of pardon], and to cleanse [to purge] us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

Herein lies the revelation of the psychiatric value of the religious experience as held by those of the Wesleyan persuasion. The theological term involved is designated as "sanctification," the root meaning of which is very revealing—*sanctos* meaning "holy"; *facere*, the verb, "to make"; and *tion*, "the act of." So the experience of which we are speaking makes holy, or purges the personality of those undesirable elements which so frequently produce a neurotic behavior. Not only does the counselee confess, but he also obtains a response from God which, in the second instance, gives permanency through purging. Some psychologists call the area in question "the unconscious mind"; E. Stanley Jones, the popular missionary and writer, calls it "the

cellar of the soul." In Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde it is called "the other self." Others are prone to recognize it as the "hidden part of our dual personality." We might add that Saint Paul calls it "the carnal mind." Through the cathartic influence of the Holy Spirit of God, this area is purged and placed in an orderly relationship with life. In other words, the personality now has an orderly relationship with other personalities as well as with God.

Hence the pastoral counselor of the Church of the Nazarene, or of any Wesleyan group, will value the Christian experience as a therapy for the neurotic personality, mainly as an integrating force which will orient the individual to God and give him a normal, free, and co-operating attitude toward society.

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Book Suggestion: *How You Can Help Other People* by Samuel M. Shoemaker, E. D. Dutton and Co., Inc., New York, 1946. (All books may be obtained through the Nazarene Publishing House.)

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## Faith Quickens the Conscience

A living faith based on the revealed Word of God and the life of Christ gives us a reference point for conscience. Life, to be safe, must have a sense of direction—a narrow, purposeful direction, as Jesus tells us. Many glibly say, "I'll let my conscience be my guide," which usually means, "I'll do as I please." But even at best, conscience needs another reference point to give it a clear direction. Any mathematician will tell us that it takes not one, but two points in order to draw a line with a definite direction. So with our spiritual directions. These subjective consciences and fallible human minds of ours must have the objective reference of the will of God as a second point to give life a direction. And a living faith gives us just that—it draws a straight line from God through our minds and consciences and on into whatever field of active service to which God may point us.

—United Presbyterian

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A church is nothing better than an ethical club if its sympathy for lost souls does not overflow, and if it does not go out to seek to point lost souls to the knowledge of Jesus.—TRUETT, *A Quest for Souls*.



# The Rev. John Wesley on

## The Great Fundamentals of the Faith

### *With a Few Added References by Dr. Peter Wiseman*

#### THE FALL OF MAN

**O**RIGINAL sin in the human family was the wilful deviation of the Federal head of mankind from the perfect law of his Creator who placed him on probation. Through this act of disobedience he fell from original righteousness and became dead in sin, depraved in mind and corrupt in heart.—JOHN WESLEY.

#### REPENTANCE

Repentance is a deep, godly sorrow produced in the heart of a sinful person by the Word and Spirit of God, whereby from a sense of sin as endangering to his own soul and displeasing to God, he with grief and hatred turns from all his known sins to God as his Lord and Saviour.—JOHN WESLEY.

#### SAVING FAITH

Faith is not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance upon the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of His life, death and resurrection; a recumbency upon Him as our atonement and our life, as given us and living in us. It is a sure confidence which a man hath in God that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven and he reconciled to the favor of God; and in consequence thereof, a closing with Him, and cleaving to Him, as our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption," or, in one word, our salvation. (Rom. 5:1; Acts 13:39; Eph. 2:8; Heb. 11:1; Rom. 1:17).—JOHN WESLEY.

#### JUSTIFICATION

Justification is that act of God the Father, whereby for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of His Son, He sheweth forth His Righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of sins that are past. (Rom. 2:6; Luke 18:14; Rom. 3:24).—JOHN WESLEY.

#### SANCTIFICATION

*What it is:* To be renewed in the image of God, "in righteousness and true holiness."

*When it begins:* in the moment a man is justified (yet sin remains in him, yea, the seed of all sin, till he is sanctified throughout). From that time a believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace.

By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favor of

God; by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God. All experience, as well as scripture, shows this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual. It begins the moment we are justified, in the holy, humble, gentle, patient love of God and man. It gradually increases from that moment, "as a grain of mustard seed, which, at first, is the least of all seeds," but afterwards puts forth large branches, and becomes a great tree; till, in another instant the heart is cleansed from all sin, and filled with the pure love to God and man. But even that love increases more and more, till we "grow up in all things into him that is our Head"; till we "attain the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

*Instantaneous:* A man may be dying for some time, yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant, he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant, he lives the full life of love. And as the change undergone, when the body dies, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any we had known before, yea, such as till then, it is impossible to conceive; so the change wrought, when the soul dies to sin, is of a different kind, and infinitely greater than any before, and than any can conceive, till he experiences it. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity.

*The Sanctified Need the Atonement:* In every state we need Christ in the following respects: (1) Whatever grace we receive, it is a free gift from Him. (2) We receive it as His purchase, merely in consideration of the price He paid. (3) We have this grace, not only from Christ, but in Him. For our perfection is not like that of a tree, which flourishes by the sap derived from its own root, but, as was said before, like that of a branch which, united to the vine, bears fruit; but, severed from it, is dried up and withered. (4) All our blessings, temporal, spiritual and eternal, depend on His intercession for us, which is one branch of His

priestly office, whereof therefore we have always equal need. (5) The best of men still need Christ in His priestly office, to atone for their omissions, their shortcomings (as some not improperly speak), their mistakes in judgment and practice, and their defects of various kinds. For these all are deviations from the perfect law, and consequently need an atonement. Yet that they are not properly sins, we apprehend may appear from the words of St. Paul, "He that loveth, hath fulfilled the law; for love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10). Now, mistakes, and whatever infirmities necessarily flow from the corruptible state of the body, are no way contrary to love; nor therefore, in the scripture sense, sin.—JOHN WESLEY.

#### THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The witness is direct and indirect. The first, "the testimony of the Spirit, is an inward impression on the soul whereby the spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ has loved me, and given himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God." (Rom. 8:16; I Cor. 2:12; Gal. 4:6; I John 3:24).

The second, the indirect. "This is properly the testimony of our own spirit; even the testimony of our conscience, that God hath given us to be holy of heart, and holy in outward conversation. It is the consciousness of our having received, in and by the spirit of adoption, the tempers mentioned in the Word of God as belonging to His adopted children; . . . a consciousness that we are inwardly conformed, by the Spirit of God, to the image of His Son, and that we walk before Him in justice, mercy, and truth, doing the things that are pleasing in His sight.—JOHN WESLEY.

#### HOW LONG MUST WE WAIT?

As to the time element between the experience of the new birth and sanctification, one cannot say. Light has much to do with it. Some have simple faith while others struggle. The Rev. J. A. Wood says: "There is no time stated in the scriptures which must elapse after the conversion before the soul of man can be entirely sanctified." Both the Rev. John Wesley and Dr. Adam Clarke testified to the fact that they had never known a person to receive both experiences at one and the same time.

To the question, "How are we to wait for this change?" that is, the change of heart purity, Rev. John Wesley's answer is illuminating: "Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the

commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, and a close attendance on all the ordinances of God. And if any man dream of attaining it any other way (yea, or of keeping it when it is attained, when he has received it even in the largest measure), he deceiveth his own soul. It is true, we receive it by simple faith; but God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, in the way which He hath ordained. This consideration may satisfy those who enquire why so few have received the blessing. Enquire how many are seeking it in this way; and you have a sufficient answer" (*Plain Account*, page 55).

#### HOLINESS

Holiness is that habitual disposition of the soul which directly implies the being cleansed from all sin; from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; and in consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were also in Jesus Christ, and being so renewed in the spirit of your minds as to be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect.—JOHN WESLEY.

#### CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

Christian perfection is not absolute perfection, for that belongs to God alone. It is not angelic, for they are not human, and they have a perfection peculiar to their being and service. It is not Adamic, for this extended to the whole of man—mentally, physically, and spiritually. It is not sinless. On this point, Rev. John Wesley said:

"I believe there is no such perfection in this life as excludes these involuntary transgressions (mistakes, errors, infirmities, etc.) which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality; therefore sinless perfection is a phrase I never use lest I should seem to contradict myself . . . I believe a person filled with the love of God is still liable to these involuntary transgressions. What is the judgment of all our brethren? Every one may make mistakes as long as he lives. A mistake in opinion may occasion a mistake in practice. Every such mistake is a transgression of the perfect law. Therefore every such mistake, were it not for the blood of atonement, would expose to eternal damnation. It follows that the most perfect have continual need of the merits of Christ, even for their brethren. 'Forgive us our trespasses.'"

"How shall we avoid setting perfection too high or too low?" asked Mr. Wesley.

"By keeping to the Bible and setting it just as high as the Scriptures do. It is nothing higher and nothing lower than this, the pure love of God and loving our neighbors as ourselves. It is love governed tempers, words, and actions."

The Rev. John Wesley submitted the following propositions:

1. "There is such a thing as perfection; for it is again and again mentioned in the scripture."

2. "It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to 'go on to perfection.'" (Heb. 6:1).

3. "It is not so late as death; for St. Paul speaks of living men that were perfect." (Phil. 3:15).

4. "It is not absolute. Absolute perfection belongs not to men, nor to angels, but to God alone."

5. "It does not make a man infallible while he remains in the body."

6. "Is it sinless? It is not worth while to contend for a term. It is salvation from sin."

7. "It is perfect love (I John 4:18). This is the essence of it; its properties, or inseparable fruits, are: rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, and in everything giving thanks" (I Thess. 5:16, etc.).

8. "It is improvable. It is so far from lying in an indivisible point, from being incapable of increase, that one perfected in love may grow in grace swifter than he did before."

9. "It is amissable, capable of being lost; of which we have numerous instances."

10. "It is constantly both preceded and followed by a gradual work."

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The firmament of the Bible blazes with answers to prayer, from the days when Elijah unlocked the heavens, on to the days when the petitions in the house of John Mark unlocked the dungeon and brought liberated Peter into their presence. The whole field of providential history is covered with answered prayers, as thickly as bright-eyed daisies cover our western prairies. Find thy happiness in pleasing God, and sooner or later He will surely grant thee the desire of thy heart.  
—T. L. CUYLER.

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"There is a difference between declaring our independence and making a display of our stubbornness."

## MUSINGS

### Of a Minister's Wife

I'VE BEEN musing about my responsibility to the community—outside of and beyond my work as a minister's wife. Some have shrugged their shoulders in disdain when I have mentioned this.

For instance, take the work of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. Do I have an influence upon my community through the work of this group? Generally speaking, the women of the W.C.T.U. are the most spiritual women of other churches in my community. Can I do them good?

In a recent pastorate, the labors of the W.C.T.U. were drawn to my attention. There was plenty to do as a minister's wife, but I wondered if there would be something beyond that that I could do; so I helped the W.C.T.U. One contact made was with a very lovely woman who had a grown daughter.

One day this young woman called me, and over the telephone sobbed out her disappointments in life, her selfish interest, and her failure to find peace of mind. I arranged a meeting time in our own home, and heard more of her story. She had accomplished the job of getting her own way all her life, and now she was dissatisfied with everything. Could I help her?

The Bible was handy, of course; so it was used to show her that she needed and could have the peace of God, but first she must have peace with God. Many of these things were not clear to her, so I explained them carefully. I gave her a copy of *The ABC's of Holiness* by D. Shelby Corlett. We studied parts of it together, then had prayer. She knew little about praying, but God knew her heart. The minister's wife prayed, and God came near. We wept together, and a young woman left the parsonage that day with a smile on her face where a cloud had hung before.

She came to see me many other times. We had prayer together again. She confided in me any difficulties that showed up. Her life showed that she was learning to know God, and find that He can answer prayer. She began finding things to do for others, and in doing so, she found joy.

Did this minister's wife take too much outside responsibility? Thus I muse on what is my responsibility to the community beyond being a minister's wife.—MRS. W. M. FRANKLIN.

# Definitive Statements Concerning Nine Philosophies of Religion

## Article One

Oscar F. Reed

THE indiscriminate habit of some ministers in using terms rather glibly without recourse to their meaning is the occasion for this article. Terminology is a symbolic avenue to interpretation; and, when certain terms are misrepresented, it may mean the loss of audience attention. This condition was first called to the writer's notice when an effective evangelist used a syllogism to prove his premise concerning a phase of the doctrine of holiness. The fallacy of his logic was quite apparent, and in a later conversation it was brought to his attention. He answered, "I know my logic was fallacious, but it sounded good, and drove my point home." Yes, it drove home a point, but it might have lost a convicted soul who was familiar with the principles of logic.

It is the purpose of this article to summarize briefly a number of philosophies of religion frequently misrepresented from the pulpit. The chief source for the definitive statements is Edwin A. Burt's comprehensive analysis, *Types of Religious Philosophy* (Harper and Bros., New York, 1939). All references, unless otherwise specified, find their source in this fine volume. Those who are familiar with Burt will observe that one philosophy of religion has been added to the author's list, since he does not attempt to divide Protestant Fundamentalism from the Wesleyan tradition within the area of Protestant orthodoxy.

### 1—Catholicism

The Catholic philosophy of religion in its present form is predominantly a result of the writings and teachings of Thomas Aquinas, who Aristotelianized Catholic theology and gave it its rational ground. His approach up to a defined point is empirical, but always finds authority in the mystical institution of the Church in the case of any disputed assumption. The majority of his arguments are found in Thomas' two greatest works, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, and *Summa Theologiae*.

The major disputed assumptions of Catholicism may be summarized as follows: (1) Man cannot attain the "highest good" (salvation) through his own resources. (2) Natural theology gives him partial cer-

tainty through the empirical method which is valid to a defined point. (3) The scholastic conception of causality and the teleological explanation in their relationship to proofs concerning the existence of God are valid. (4) Good is real and an effective cause, while evil is non-real and accidentally a cause. (5) Intelligence is independent of matter. (6) Supernatural revelation through divine intervention can transcend natural limitations and supplement empirical knowledge. (7) Miracles test true revelation from pseudo-revelation. (8) While a supernatural revelation was given to the prophets and apostles, the right of interpretation is reserved to the Catholic hierarchy through apostolic continuity, which places the authority of the Church prior to the authority of the Scriptures. (9) It is the Catholic layman's duty to submit in perfect acceptance. (136)

### 2—Protestant Fundamentalism

Protestant Fundamentalism is a heritage of the sixteenth century reform movement. Its original form has been overlaid with many accretions, but it is still similar to the groundwork initiated by Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, and the later writings of Roger Williams. Fundamentalism, as a term, was not widely known until the twentieth century, when it arose as a reaction against Modernism in theology and ethics. Since that time it has been so closely associated with extreme Calvinism that other Protestant orthodox groups have been hesitant in adopting the term. Modernism, rather than Catholicism, has been its chief enemy. J. G. Machen is its most important contemporary apologist.

*Divergences of Fundamentalism from Catholicism:* (1) The authority of the Church is replaced by the authority of the Bible interpreted by individual conscience. (2) A greater distrust of natural reason and an emphasis upon the consciousness of sin. (3) A denial of post-apostolic miracles. (4) A subordination of reason to will. (5) A reassertion of "prevenient grace." (6) The uncompromising belief in "double predestination." (7) The conscious knowledge and certainty of eternal salvation. (8) Justification through faith alone, and

the universal priesthood of believers. (139-153)

The major disputed assumptions of Protestant Fundamentalism may be summarized as follows: (1) Man in himself is totally impotent to gain release from sin. (2) Knowledge is secured through an authoritative lawgiver and attests the truth of the Bible. (3) It is partially accomplished through natural theology. (4) The scholastic conception of causality and the teleological explanation for the existence of God are valid. (5) Goodness (in God) is real and the sole ultimate cause, while evil is a real secondary cause in the form of rebellious will. (6) The Bible validates its claim as a supernatural revelation through the agency of miracles. (7) True revelation is tested by conscience and miracles. (8) A supernatural revelation was given to the prophets and apostles, but every Christian holds the freedom to interpret the revelation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. (165)

### 3—*The Religion of Science*

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a fundamental conflict appeared between assumptions of the new scientific thought and the traditional assumptions of Catholicism and Protestantism. This change, which brought suspect against the theologies of Aquinas and Calvin, produced repercussions in religious thought which are still contemporary in their import. The philosopher of religion was faced with the following alternatives: (1) To harmonize his religious belief with his scientific dogmatism, thus making a religion out of science; or (2) to retain the traditional theological assumptions and ask of them whether there was adequate evidence to assume their validity. The result of the first was scientism; that of the second was agnosticism or skepticism.

Spinoza's (1632-1677) philosophy of religion was the earliest of the mathematical rationalism in which "the intellectual love of God" was man's blessedness and salvation. Clear apprehension of this mathematical world-order was man's highest good. God, to human minds, was conceived in terms of mathematical determination, having the attributes of Thought and Extension. The end result of Spinoza's system was a practical pantheism.

With nineteenth century Modernism commanding the stage, and with later scientists looking upon the universe in dynamic terms rather than geometrical, modern Scientism has gone through significant modifications in which the dogmatism of an

earlier day has played "second fiddle" to a neo-scientific approach to religious problems. Later contributors to the movement include Haeckel, Lippmann, Eddington, Millikan, and many others who are giving philosophical and religious interpretation to the latest findings in astral physics. Not the least of their contributions is the significance of relativity to infinity and the recognition of "faith" as a foundation for scientific investigation.

The major disputed assumptions of the radical form of the Religion of Science may be summarized as follows: (1) Man can attain his "highest good" through his own reason. (2) Supernatural revelation is superfluous, since the "ultimate criterion of truth is the clarity of direct apprehension of the object's essence." (3) The universe is unconcerned for human welfare. (4) "Good and evil are relative to human desire." (5) Knowledge of the universe produces love for its object. (6) Such love brings harmony to personality. (167-196)

### 4—*Agnosticism*

The second choice in the alternative to the scientific movement was Agnosticism. Modern Empiricism reversed the logic of religion from the deductive to the inductive. The shift was significant to religious thought, for the new empiricism made sense perception the court of appeal rather than a subsidiary function in the technique of rational demonstration. Such a radical empiricism made all religious assumptions amenable to sense-perception.

Bacon, Newton, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume were the founders of British Empiricism, which later influenced Continental Rationalism, but at the time resulted in Agnosticism. David Hume's writings are representative of a movement which finally invalidated the notion of casual necessity, undercutting many of the traditional arguments for the existence of God, the reality of miracles, and the knowledge of the Real. Hume's challenge to his adversaries and the "seed-thought" of Agnosticism was: Produce the evidence! "If you cannot produce the adequate evidence you have no business to believe—although to be sure, you likewise have no business to deny that the belief may be true." (231) Nineteenth century empiricists included Mill, Stephen, Huxley, Clifford, and Spencer. F. R. Tennant, an English theologian, seems to be their modern counterpart, although he has taken advantage of the later Kantian developments, the pragmatism of William James, and contemporary scientific developments which are personalistic in their

metaphysical import. (Tennant's two volumes on *Philosophical Theology* have been called the most important additions to the field of theology since Calvin.)

The major disputed assumptions of Agnosticism and its corollaries are: (1) The criterion of truth of an idea is its correspondence with pertinent sense-perception. (2) Good and evil are dependent upon the experiences of pleasure and pain. (3) Since man is without certainty concerning his moral situation, probability is the guide of life. (4) Knowledge of the Real is not verifiable, skepticism being the only reasonable attitude in metaphysics. (5) Neither belief in supernatural beings nor denial of their existence is appropriate to human minds. (239)

### 5—Ethical Idealism

The interrelations of metaphysics, religion, and morals are found in the religious philosophy of Immanuel Kant and his followers, who rejected the assumption that religion depended upon certain metaphysical beliefs and disposed themselves to the assumption that the essence of religion was devotion to moral duty.

Ethical Idealism was and is a "daring assertion of man's moral competence." It claims the right to reinterpret the nature of God in terms of our own moral experience. In other words, God must be what man's morality claims that He is; otherwise, He is no God. (241)

Kant's main problem was to reconcile rationalism with empiricism, religion with science. It is important to understand his theory of knowledge and his ethical philosophy if one is to catch an insight into his system—a task impossible in this short statement. However, it is significant to observe that Kant looked upon the mind as a prepared instrument, a complex structure involving three distinct faculties imposing on experience their own contribution through a series of twelve categories.

While Kant agreed with Agnosticism that we cannot deny the possible existence of realities which are not relevant to experience, he goes on to observe three ideas which are regulative rather than determinative. These ideas of the Reason are (1) the world, (2) the soul, and (3) God. They point toward the unification of experience and indicate "certain comprehensive ultimates of which we should otherwise not be aware." They are also the basis for postulates of the Practical Reason founded in faith.

Ethically, Kant pointed the way to "rational action" as a resultant of the na-

ture of a rational being. Two features of such rational action in its relation to conduct are *universality* and *necessity*. Man must act, then, according to the "Categorical Imperative," which of itself is both universal and necessary. The result was Kant's famous maxim, "Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law." Conduct that is motivated by this law is morally good; conduct out of harmony with the law is morally wrong.

Ethical Idealism has influenced nearly every religious movement since the day of Kant. We find it in the theological reconstructions of Schleiermacher, Lotze, and Ritschl. Today, Modernism and Humanism owe a great deal to the essential suggestions of Kantian philosophy of religion.

The major disputed assumptions of Ethical Idealism may be summarized as follows: (1) Man is capable of attaining his needed certainty through a supreme principle of right which attaches inviolable worth to every human personality. (2) There is no valid metaphysical knowledge, but "spiritual reality may be validly postulated to account for moral experience." (3) Acceptance of these "moral postulates involves faith in moral freedom and in the ultimate preservation of all that is of moral worth in every man." (4) Each individual should act according to the Categorical Imperative. (5) Social institutions (including the family and the church) should be constructive instruments in the realization of this ideal. (284)

### 6—Modernism

Modernism is difficult to define since, in itself, the term does not represent a definable philosophy of religion, but rather a unified tendency in religious thought during the last century. Liberalism is often spoken of as synonymous with Modernism; but, since the latter has been used more specifically in relationship to religion and is less flexible in its varied meanings, we will adopt it for the present definitive statement.

Modernism has gradually and cautiously developed out of the Protestant tradition. A modernist will never admit that he has abandoned any principle essential to Christian belief, but rather has thrown off the embellishments of twenty centuries which have obscured apostolic Christianity (such is controversial). The modern tradition is saying, in effect, "The old foundations are no longer intellectually defensible and must therefore be abandoned, but no matter; what is really significant in religion is consistent with science and can be established on a

more enduring basis than ever if the full validity of science is recognized." (288)

Friedrich Schleiermacher, a younger contemporary of Kant, moved significantly in this direction. A great German preacher and patriot, he inquired into the empirical validity of Christian traditions and experience in his famous *Addresses on Religion*. His "historico-descriptive" analysis revolutionized German thought in regard to the importance of "religious experience."

The third influencing factor in the development of Modernism was the Darwinian theory of evolution, the specific consequence of which was to imply a naturalistic view of the origin of man. The acceptance of the Darwinian assumptions made impossible the traditional postulates concerning the Genesis account of creation, the favorable position of man in the divine creative scheme, and undercut the foundation of Protestant orthodoxy. (Since that time, evolutionary theories have been so modified and reconstructed that theistic evolution, rather than organic evolution, is indicative of the modern Protestant approach.) From the point of view of some Catholic philosophers, compromise was possible; but it raised a furor in the camp of Protestant orthodoxy which still reverberates with basic irreconcilability. (In all fairness to Darwin, one will have to admit that the philosophy of Darwinism is quite different from the original tentative position of the man from whom the name arose.)

The major disputed assumptions of Modernism may be summarized as follows: (1) Man desires a unified and coherent self-life, which religious experiences supply and exemplify. (2) The religious experience which is most representative of such an ideal is that which conforms to the life and teachings of Jesus. (3) The universe is dependable. (4) "Experience of growth toward a finer self-hood involves a relation of dependence upon some cosmic or environmental factor, which has been properly called God." (5) Faith in realization of higher values is valid. (6) "Present experience is the criterion of truth and the standard of value in religion." (7) The Bible is unique as the source of our knowledge about Jesus, but it is amenable to both historical and literary criticism; is without infallibility or supernatural authority. (8) All religious concepts must be reinterpreted in the light of this standard. (9) Religion is responsible to transform society into conformity with the ethics and spirit of Jesus. (349)

Some of the usual concomitants involve: repudiation of Biblical miracles, the virgin

birth, the "traditional view" of the divinity of Jesus, and a supernaturalism which minimizes the position of man in a dependable universe.

### 7—Humanism

Humanism represents a further advance in the evolutionary movement away from Protestant orthodoxy which Modernism cautiously and tentatively trusted. Thus, driving the principles of Modernism to their logical conclusions, theology to the humanist is grounded in psychology rather than in metaphysics or any *a priori* moral principle. The heart of religion is within rather than from without. It is obvious what such a guiding principle will do to any kind of supernaturalism, the appreciation of Jesus as a unique personality, and the idea of God.

American humanism has expressed itself in three different points of view. (1) Santayana's Poetic Humanism teaches that religion is the poetic expression of the moral aspirations of humanity and attributes of value to the "symbolic religious heritage" of the past. In his *Reason in Religion*, he views Christianity as a beautiful myth which stimulates and guides the moral aspirations of man, but should not be looked upon as literal truth. "The affirmations of religion are not false; they are valid interpretations of the moral life of humanity . . . . They take us into a different world from that of the meticulous, prosaic descriptions of objective facts—a world rich in moving imagery which clarifies our aspirations and directs our emotions" (387). The primary aspect of religion is *piety*, by which the humanist means a "reverent attachment to the sources of our being, and a steadying of our life by that attachment." (See *Reason in Religion*, chaps. I, V.) To be spiritual is to live in the presence of those ideals and live so that everything is done for the sake of those ideals and live so that everything done is done for the sake of a true and ultimate good.

(2) Realistic Humanism forsakes the poetic imagery of Santayana for an aggressive devotion to ideal ends which center on the transformation and reconstruction of society. In this, Realistic Humanism and Pragmatic Humanism are one. However, they differ in their concept of the relationship between human values and nonhuman nature. Realistic Humanism holds that human values have no essential connection with nature and cannot depend upon the universe for their development. It is essentially a vast materialism in which mechanism and mathematical equations are basic. Man is a strange by-product of the

machine. Religion, then, is concerned with adjustment to an uncompromising fact, and the progressive realization of human ideals in separation from nature. Man pursues the "higher values" of life in defiance of the blind activity of nature and is alone responsible for the "ideal world of his dreams." This moral dualism cannot excuse failure, however, since man must not allow such an invariable to weaken his devotion to the highest human ideals obtainable. Bertrand Russell's *A Free Man's Worship* is perhaps the most dramatic of the realists' statements. The following is a typical excerpt:

The life of man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, toward a goal that few can hope to reach, and none may tarry long. One by one, as they march, our comrades vanish from sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent death. Very brief is the time in which we can help them, in which their happiness or misery is decided. Be it ours to shed sunshine on their path, to lighten their sorrows by the balm of sympathy, to give them the pure joy of a never-tiring affection, to strengthen failing courage, to instill faith in hours of despair . . . let us remember that they are fellow-sufferers in the same darkness, actors in the same tragedy with ourselves . . ." (Selected Papers of Bertrand Russell, pp. 6, 13f, as quoted from Burtt)

Communism as a religion is a form of Realistic Humanism and its most enthusiastic and aggressive defender. The only cleavage is in the manner in which it attains its goals. However, it is one with Humanism in its materialistic conception of the physical world, adding to that a Marxian view of economic determinism. (Contemporary Realists are progressing in the direction of Pragmatic Humanism.)

(3) The name of John Dewey is almost synonymous with Pragmatic Humanism. This third type of Humanism finds no distressing gap between man and his universe. Nature is actively co-operating with man, and ideal ends are achieved through constant interaction with natural environment. "Thus a certain sense of moral harmony with the vast universe surrounding man is possible, and a satisfying pious dependence upon it" (399).

Some Pragmatic Humanists are willing to retain some of the traditional terms of religion as long as their definitions are accom-

modated to humanistic belief. John Dewey uses the term "God," but redefines it to mean "the two-fold interaction of man with his environing universe through which commanding ideals emerge and guide action toward their realization" (405).

Militant atheism is affected by lack of natural piety. The ties binding man to nature that poets have always celebrated are passed over lightly. The attitude taken is often that of a man living in an indifferent and hostile world and issuing blasts of defiance. A religious attitude, however, needs the sense of a connection of man, in the way of both dependence and support, with the enveloping world that the imagination feels is a universe. Use of the words "God" or "divine" to convey the union of actual with ideal may protect man from a sense of isolation and from consequent despair or defiance. (From *A Common Faith*, pp. 50 f.)

The major disputed assumptions of Humanism may be summarized as follows: (1) The relativity of human morality to changing experience. (2) "The sharable social values, however, maintain and enhance their excellence in the face of all doubt and criticism." (3) Man needs the attainment of an integrated personality. (4) This is achieved through devotion to the sharable social goods. (5) "Such devotion is the essence of religion." (6) Science can be the only dependable guide concerning truth about the universe. (7) The universe is objective, taking no account of man's needs, only in so far as man controls it to his own ends. (8) "There is no guarantee of the ultimate victory of the good, nor of the eternal preservation of human values." (9) Such a guarantee is not required by religion, but only the ultimate faith in the value of human good. (9) Scientific truth, artistic creation, and love are the most important human values. (10) "The joy of comradeship in the quest for these values is a more than adequate compensation for faith in a superhuman helper." (11) All social institutions must be transformed to conform with the highest aspirations of these human values. (407)

### 8—Neo-orthodoxy

The "new supernaturalism" is the product of a vigorous reaction against the dominant emphases of Modernism and Humanism. It finds a fundamental inadequacy in humanistic concepts and has reverted to a "surrender of the confidence in man." While the novel trend is akin to reformation ideals,



it in no way can be associated with present-day Fundamentalism, but stands as a compromise between the supernaturalism of the seventeenth century and the contemporary scientific approach to the problems of Biblical criticism and religious experience. Neo-orthodoxy is a movement rather than a philosophical or theological statement. Thus, while both Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr may be termed neo-orthodox, their particular expression of the movement is quite diverse.

This "dialectical theology" emerged as a reaction against liberalism in Denmark under the leadership of Kierkegaard in the nineteenth century. In similar social and political conditions of postwar Europe, Karl Barth elaborated the position and emerged as the chief apologist of "crisis theology." His theology was developed and modified by Emil Brunner in Europe and Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr in America.

Generally speaking, Neo-orthodoxy is concerned with the "human predicament" and the nature of eschatology, reaffirming the orthodoxy of the Pauline-Augustinian-Calvinistic tradition, but original at several important points. In its radical form, it insists upon: (1) The absolute transcendency of God independent of man, nature, and time. (2) The inherent sinfulness of man, he being without capacity to initiate or effect communication with the divine or "good" of any kind. [This position, as well as (3), (5), and (8), are modified in the writings of Brunner and Niebuhr.] (3) The

central fact of the "human predicament"—sin, inherited as "an inescapable part of man's estate." (4) The alogical and irrational nature of religious experience. (5) The incompetence of human intelligence to apprehend God beyond a stated limitation. (6) The validity of faith as the sole sufficiency beyond the "stated limitation" of reason. (7) The "human predicament" within the nature of man, making it impossible for him to solve certain fundamental problems of conflict. (8) The operation of grace as a function of the divine, solely dependent upon the arbitrary will of the divine. (9) The Bible, amenable to historical criticism, as the sole authority for religious truth; accessible only by faith. (10) The preoccupation with moments of "crisis" in the fulfillment of God's grace. (11) The idealization of Jesus as the "Divine Word" and the central key to divine revelation.

(Number 9, "Wesleyanism," concluded in next issue)

(See Karl Barth, *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God*, *Nein Emil Brunner*, etc.; Emil Brunner, *The Mediator*, *Man in Revolt*, *The Christian Understanding of Man*, etc.; Paul Tillich, *The Interpretation of History*; Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, *Reflections on the End of an Era*, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, etc.; William Clayton Bower, "A Critical Re-evaluation of the Biblical Outlook of Progressive Religious Education," *R.E.*, Vol. XXXVIII, Jan.-Feb., 1943, No. 1.) Permission received from Harper & Brothers for use of quotes.

## Misplaced Emphasis

*F. Lincicome*

IT IS where you put the emphasis that determines the character of your work.

There are those who have a *Ritualistic Emphasis*. This emphasis arises from the demand of men for an easy religion. It makes but a slight demand on the intellect. It is much easier to gaze than to think; to listen to concords of sweet sound than to reason and compare scripture with scripture. Your creed is ready for you, your prayers are ready for you; all you have to do is to keep your eye on the page and follow the crowd. This emphasis makes a slight demand on the moral nature. It is accompanied with the broadest sort of self-indulgence in personal living—no denial of pas-

sions and appetites. It makes no demand on our service for anything that even approaches the self-sacrificing and heroic service of the Early Church. The ritualistic emphasis at the bottom is a revision of Judaism and its attempt to reach the soul through the visible.

There is another emphasis that many pulpits today are vibrant with and it is the *Sociological Emphasis*. This emphasis stresses the right relationship between man and the primary aim of religion, an attempt to regenerate man by regenerating his environment. This emphasis is much better than the Ritualistic emphasis. It deals with human needs. Far too many of us see men

that have been wounded and, like the Levite, pass by on the other side. The sociological Samaritan comes and wraps up his wounds, puts him on his beast, takes him to a hotel, and pays the bill. But the attempt to substitute regeneration by environment is a wrong emphasis.

Thousands of preachers have a *Speculative Emphasis*. This is the tendency of the philosophical mind; it probes for causes. The speculative emphasis for a preacher is a misplaced emphasis. A preacher is not, primarily, a truth-seeker but rather a man-seeker. Jesus Christ was the greatest Philosopher the world has ever known, but He was a greater Philanthropist than Philosopher. He did not say, "Follow Me, and I will make you seekers of truth," but rather, "fishers of men." The speculative emphasis fails in that it misses the point of the gospel message.

The speculative emphasis fails because it is so frequently fighting straw men. Its chief function is the defense of the faith; it fights skeptical enemies. The weakness of the speculative emphasis is that it slights the experimental.

This brings me to what I think is the proper emphasis for a minister—the **EXPERIMENTAL EMPHASIS**—by insisting on being born again. Large numbers of people are brought into the church by natural birth instead of new birth. This sort of church does not want a minister that in any way appeals to the emotions. Ex-president Charles Eliot, of Harvard University, is quoted as saying that the religion of the future will be intellectual and not emotional, and that religious emotion is the result of a defective culture and will cease when education and evolution have done their work.

In a recent ministerial meeting a scholarly clergyman classified emotion in religion with the outbreaks of the colored people in the South and with the fits they had in their early camp meetings.

It is not surprising that irreligious men who never have been moved upon by the Holy Spirit should take this attitude toward experimental religion, but it is surprising that the professed followers of Christ should join in the attack on experimental Christianity. This attitude is unnatural, unphilosophical, and unscriptural. In every other department of life the fullest recognition is given to emotion. The facts are that our emotions are being overworked in every phase of our American life except in religion. It is the loss of the emotional ele-

ment that has made the modern pulpit stale, stiff, and mechanical.

Bishop Hughes, of the Methodist Church, said to a group of ministers at an annual conference, "I deplore the increase of intellectualism in religion and plead for a return to the emotion that made Methodism famous."

We are born to feel as well as to think. The suppressing of our feelings after thinking on high and holy subjects is an abortion and does violence to our essential constitution. Emotion can bring us into regions of truth that reason cannot reach. It is as Bishop Hughes has suggested. Emotion kindled in the heart by faith must be credited with the successes of Christianity.

The Spirit of God sets men's souls on fire with feeling, and then action follows. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire"—and if that fire does anything it kindles emotion. More churches are failing from a lack of heart than a lack of head. We have good news for the world, and it must be told with a lot of heart in it. It is too bad when we get more head than heart into our preaching, but nevertheless it is true everywhere that men are intensifying intellect and crying down emotion. Logic is being placed before life. We are living in an age that aims to rob religion of its inflammatory touch, an age that looks upon all signs of emotion and devotion with distress.

A religion without emotion is a religion without God, for God is love, and how could you have love and not have emotion? A religion without emotion is too dry to kindle a fire, to say nothing of saving a sin-captured, devil-enslaved world.

It is amusing to attend preachers' meetings and to hear some dry-as-dust brother get up and seriously read to his fellow pallbearers a paper, warning them against the danger of emotion in religion. Most churches are as emotional as a refrigerator; and while the intellectual brother has been crying down emotion in an empty church, some Pentecostal or other branch has given full reign to emotion and has built a new church a block away and is preaching to crowds. The facts are, when you ignore emotion, you are at war with human nature, for man is essentially an emotional being.

I feel like praying at certain times and in certain places the prayer of the colored man. He prayed, "O Lord, give Dy servant dis morning de eye of de eagle, de wisdom of de owl, connect his soul with de gospel

telephone in de central skies, 'luminate his brow with de sun of heaven, saturate his heart with love for de people, turpentine his imagination, greese his lips with 'possum, loosen him with de sledge hammer of Dy power, put 'petual motion in his arms, fill him plum full of de dynamite of glory, 'noint him all over with kerosene oil of salvation, and sot him on fire."

More fire, more fire in the pulpit and the pew is our great need! God set the church

at Jerusalem on fire, and the whole city turned out to see it burn.

With all our theorizing, organizing, catechizing, baptizing, intellectualizing, advertising, popularizing, socializing, systematizing, and even sermonizing, our greatest need is fire baptizing!

Brethren, you can put the emphasis on the *ritualistic*, on the *speculative*, on the sociological if you like; but, as I see it, it is a misplaced emphasis. Personally, I shall put the emphasis on the *experimental*!

## A M O S

*Ralph Earle*

IT WAS midnight in the wilderness of Judah. By the dim light of the twinkling stars a lone figure could be seen huddled on a hillside. Amos, the herdsman, was wrapped deep in thought.

As he pulled his cloak more closely about his shoulders to shield himself from the chill air of the night, Amos saw one picture after another parade across the screen of his memory. Scenes indelible, unforgettable, clamored for attention.

It was a few weeks ago now that Amos had left his native village of Tekoa, perched high on a hilltop overlooking the Dead Sea to the eastward. On the backs of his donkeys he had packed large bales of wool, clipped from desert sheep, small and ugly, but noted for the excellent quality of their soft coats.

When the last bundle was tied on, Amos had waved farewell to his family. Then turning westward, he took the trail that led to the highway between Hebron and the north. An hour later he and his donkeys turned on to the main road and trudged toward the Holy City. At midmorning they passed through David's City, Bethlehem, six miles north of home. By noontime they were in the streets of Jerusalem, twelve miles from Tekoa. Now they were halfway to their journey's end.

Late in the afternoon they drew near to Bethel, "house of God," so-called because there Jacob had sensed the Divine Presence when running away from his brother Esau. Now it had been turned by King Jeroboam into a shrine for the worship of a golden calf. But the idolatrous city still clung to its sacred name.

After a night spent close by the shelter of the city walls, Amos was up with the sun.

Early morning found him bargaining with buyers in the market place of the town. Straightforward and honest, he soon had his wares sold at a good price. Then he turned his attention to looking the town over.

The scenes that filled his eyes shocked deeply the sensibilities of his soul. Brought up close to nature and accustomed as he was to the clear air of the desert, the herdsman from Tekoa was appalled by the sights and sounds of a degenerate city civilization. Keen of eye and quick of perception, he took in the whole picture. Idolatry and her twin sister, immorality, ruled the society of Bethel. Luxury and licentiousness were the order of the day. All about him Amos saw injustice and oppression of the poor, iniquity, and drunkenness. His soul recoiled at the sight of it all and then rebounded with a terrific reaction. Surely the soul of a righteous God must be filled with loathing and anger as He beheld the sins of this wicked city. Justice demanded judgment.

The steps of the man from the wilderness dragged heavily as he turned toward home. All these scenes passed in swift review before the mind of the shepherd, as he relived the hours of that visit to Bethel. Indignation and fear played a game of tag in his consciousness. He had watched a few hours before as God drew the curtain of night across the sky and then covered it with thousands of sparkling diamonds. But now even their glitter was gone. An ominous hush brooded over the lonely wilderness. A sense of awe of the infinite swept over the spirit of Amos. Something deep in his soul shuddered and shook. It seemed that God was about to speak.

Suddenly—without warning—the silence of the night was shattered by a terrifying roar. A lion was lurking close to the sheep that Amos guarded. Probably he had already seized a helpless lamb, paralyzed with fear. For, "Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey?" (3:4).

As the shepherd quickly stirred the fading embers of the campfire to drive away the marauder, he shivered in spite of the growing heat. The roar of a lion in the middle of the night is something to strike terror to the strongest heart. But it was not the lion alone who was stalking his prey that night. The God of Israel was moving near in judgment. Within his heart Amos had heard a roar from Heaven. The divine warning had sounded in his soul.

Here is the prophet's own probable description of his call, as it came to him that night on the hillside, while he sat brooding over the sins of Israel and the inevitable judgments that must follow: "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (3:8). It was a dramatic moment in the history of the Hebrews.

The next morning, as the sun rose over the hills of Moab, Amos gave the care of his sheep to others and tracked the lion to his lair. But all that he found of the unfortunate lamb was a few bones and fragments of skin. Again he heard the voice of divine revelation, giving him a message from God to His people. "Thus saith the Lord; As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch" (3:12).

Some weeks more had passed—weeks of listening, weeks of learning, in the life of the new prophet. One day we find him back in Bethel. Few people recognized the merchant of recent days. This time he was not here to sell wool but to sound a warning.

Climbing up on something solid, so that he could be seen and heard, Amos watched the people a few moments as they brought their offerings to the golden calf in the king's sanctuary. Suddenly he shouted at the top of his voice, above the din of the crowd: "The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem" (1:2).

A hundred startled eyes turned to look at him; a hundred shocked ears turned to listen. Voices were hushed into silence. Who was this fool and fanatic, this rustic from the wild wilderness, this alarmist with his war cry?

Having captured his audience, Amos proceeded quickly and cleverly to follow up his advantage. Tactfully—with that divine wisdom which accompanies divine revelation—the prophet took his hearers on a circuit of their foreign neighbors before driving in home. "Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof . . ." (1:3-5). We can hear someone in the crowd call out. "That's right. That's what they deserve."

The prophet goes on: "For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; . . ." (1:6-8). The crowd applauds this attack on these sworn enemies, the Philistines.

Back up the coast the prophet swings northward to Tyre, the ancient Phoenician stronghold (1:9-10). Again, "Amen. Give it to them."

Having looked northeastward, southwestward, and northwestward, the prophet now turns southeastward and pronounces judgment on Edom (1:11-12). Still staying east of the Jordan valley, he takes in Ammon (1:13-15) and Moab (2:1-3). The crowd is warming up enthusiastically to this man's preaching.

But now he comes closer home. "For three transgressions of Judah . . ." (2:4-5). Some applaud again; but others remain silent, feeling a little uneasy. Where will the prophet turn next?

He does not leave them long in doubt. "Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; . . ." (2:6-8). The crowd listens in sullen silence as Amos paints a black picture of Israel's sins. The prophet is God's prosecuting attorney. Here are the charges: oppression of the poor, slavery, injustice, immorality, idolatry, drunkenness.

Relentlessly the preacher drives on. God destroyed the Amorites and gave you their land. But now you are following in their footsteps. "Behold, I will press you in your place, as a cart presseth that is full of sheaves" (2:13, A.S.V.). The judgments of God are about to ride over His disobedient people. And there will be no escape (2:14-15).

Amos is the great prophet of justice. His soul rebelled against the selfishness and greed of the wealthy. While they lived in luxury in their winter houses, summer houses, ivory houses, and great houses (3:15), they "oppress the poor," "crush the needy" (4:1). Their extreme avarice is described very graphically by Amos. He says,

in one of the striking hyperboles of literature, that they "pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor" (2:7).

As indignation stirs the prophet's soul he becomes a bit ironical. "Come to Bethel, and transgress; to Gilgal, and multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes every three days . . . for this pleaseth you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah" (4:4, 5, A.S.V.). Like many since their time, they seemed to think that religious observances could take the place of righteous living.

The pathetic plaint, "yet have ye not returned unto me," occurs no less than five times in chapter four (vv. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11). In each case it is preceded by a reminder of God's judgments. Famine, thirst, destruction of crops, pestilence, war—all these were warnings from God. But they had been treated with stupidity and contempt. So God issues His final word of solemn warning: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (4:12).

But mercy seasons justice, and again God's tone turns to one of pleading. "Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (5:4). It is not yet too late to repent.

But the people resent any warning. "They hate him that rebuketh in the gate" (5:10). So God issues another reminder. "For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins" (5:12).

Misled by complacent conceptions of national victory, people are asking for the day of the Lord. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" (5:18-20). The language here reminds us of the modern saying about jumping from the frying pan into the fire. Little did they realize for what they were asking.

The picture which Amos paints of the day of the Lord agrees with that found elsewhere in the minor prophets. It is a day of darkness and destruction. It is God's day of judgment.

The heart of the message of Amos is found in 5:21-24. "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offer-

ings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (A.S.V.). What God wants is not religiousness but righteousness. No amount of the former can substitute for the latter. Amos saw clearly that true religion consists of righteousness rather than ritual.

The prophet winds up this part of his message with a definite warning of captivity: "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose name is The God of hosts" (5:27). His hearers could hardly fail to catch the reference to Assyria, the nation which had already weakened Syria and constituted a threat to the security of Israel.

But the people were lounging in a languor of careless indifference. And so the prophet turned his attention to the capital city. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria" (6:1). Omri, the father of Ahab, had chosen the site of Samaria on an easily fortified hill. He and his successors had built strong defenses, so that it later took the Assyrians three years to capture the city. But the people were lulling themselves to sleep in a false sense of security. Their sins would yet bring about the destruction of the capital.

On one of his annual trips north to sell wool, Amos had visited Samaria. There he had witnessed the luxury and love of ease that characterized the upper strata of its society. Under the rule of Jeroboam II (787-747) the northern kingdom of Israel had reached its greatest period of power, prosperity, and peace. This "ease era" helps us to date the Book of Amos at about 760 or 750, in the middle of the eighth century B.C.

What he had seen in Samaria now stirred the prophet to speak out in stern denunciation: "Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sounds of the viol . . . ; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph" (6:3-6). Reclining with soft cushions on expensive couches, they dined and drank to the sound of music. It is a typical description of pleasure-loving society in all ages.

The prophet's regular occupation was that of a "dresser of sycomore-trees" (A.S.V.). It was his task to pinch or slit the figs to make them ripen more quickly. An inferior species of fig, eaten only by the poor, was what he raised.

A fourth vision is seen by Amos—a basket of summer fruit (8:1-3). There is a play on words in the Hebrew which the English obscures. The word for summer fruit is closely akin to the word for “end.” And so God declares: “The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.” Just as the summer fruit in the basket would soon perish in the heat, so the nation is to perish.

Once more the prophet launches forth on a denunciation of the injustice of the rich. "Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy even to make the poor of the land to fail saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?" (8:4-6). Here were men, already with abundance, grasping greedily for more. They even begrudged the sacred days set apart for worship, so eager were they to make every dishonest penny they possibly could.

Because they are consumed with an insatiable passion for material gain, God declares that they will forfeit their spiritual heritage. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (8:11).

The last vision the prophet sees is the Lord standing upon or beside the altar (9:1). That place, desecrated by idolatry, becomes the place of judgment. God warns that not one sinner shall be able to escape His wrath. No matter where one flees, God will search him out.

Then comes a graphic figure of God's judgment. It is not only for the destruction of the wicked, but also for the salvation of the righteous. "For lo, I will command and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth" (9:9). The sifting process is one of separation. But only the chaff will be thrown away. All the good grain will be carefully garnered.

The Book of Amos ends on a note of hope and promise. The closing verses give us a

beautiful picture of peace and prosperity. God will restore His people from captivity and bless them in their land. The closing promise that they shall be planted there and no more plucked up has not yet been ful-

filled. In the midst of our present chaos and confusion we can take refuge in the assurance that God's purposes never fail. No matter how black the night of sin, there will be a glorious sunrise tomorrow.

## The Office of the Ministry

### *Concluding Article in Series of Three by A. L. Cargill*

*In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you (Titus 2:7-8).*

**A**N OFFICEHOLDER, in order to fill the position properly, must acquaint himself with the ordinances of such office, that he may know his duties in relation thereto. For this reason Paul said to Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). A judge who failed to acquaint himself with the origin and purposes of the laws pertaining to his court would be incapable of properly interpreting such laws. Therefore Paul exhorted Timothy to "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Tim. 4:16).

We are exhorted to diligence in every phase of ministerial work, and this requires an acquaintance with all the revealed will of God in its proper order and relation. God will not approve our work when we are too lazy to study that Word which He has called us to preach. Many preachers live year after year in ignorance of even the rudiments of Bible teaching. We should study that sacred volume, book by book, and chapter by chapter. And when I say this, I mean more than mere critical mental literary study. I mean that the minister should place his heart against every Bible doctrine and pray, "Dear Lord, Thou who art all wisdom, fill and make my heart sensible to the very essence of this doctrine. Let me receive in my soul experimentally just what is in the mind of Thy Spirit; may I assimilate it as food, that it may become as the very blood of my life; that I may not only know Thy doctrine, but be nourished by it."

More than one minister has gone on the rocks because he failed to study and acquaint himself so that he might handle the Word skillfully. Some are endowed with a fluency of speech, captivating address, and physical magnetism. They have no books, and seldom seriously study the Bible, and are ignorant of the great body of its teachings, and do not understand it as a system of truth, fitly correlated in all its parts. They preach, without investigation, on such striking passages here and there as appeal to their imagination. They rely upon emotional attraction, preaching the same sermons, using the same old illustrations. But these sermons and illustrations, by frequent use, eventually become tame, and by their lack of freshness lose their good taste in the mouth of the minister himself; then they have no power over the people. This type of minister often loses his appeal, and joins the grumblers, criticizes leadership and general programs, and talks much of others having a pull while he never had an opportunity.

My dear brethren, there is plenty of water in the wells of divine knowledge. If you are properly to fill the office of the ministry, you must make the Word of God your life study. Let your buckets down deep and draw up the water fresh and sparkling every day, and give it out freely to your thirsty congregation.

The mind feeds the heart, and it is only when you have the fullness that you can preach from a full heart. Study, study, study; then seek the Spirit's power to give utterance to the thought. Paul said to the young minister, Timothy, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (I Tim. 4:13). God may call and use unlearned men and women, but the Bible very definitely demands that the one who fills the ministerial office shall apply himself to reading, and the study of the Word.

I have stressed the need of studying the Bible, but with the understanding of the Scriptures there must ever be the spirit of humility (I Cor. 9:16).

The honor of an office is not in the one who fills the office, but in the one who created it. The importance of a message lies not in the one who carries the message, but in the one who sends it. An officeholder should strive to be worthy of the office, and a messenger should seek to sustain the dignity of the one who sends him. In either case, there is a trust bestowed which must not be betrayed.

The minister should be possessed with a profound and abiding gratitude to God for placing him in the ministerial office. There should ever be in our hearts a grateful appreciation for the fact that we have been chosen from the thousands, not on account of our own merits, but selected by the King of Kings as His representatives for this distinguished mission, as much above any earthly office as the stars in the heavens are above their reflections in the seas. The call to preach should open a ceaselessly flowing fountain of gratitude. We have a divine commission which is a priceless treasure, but it brings a tremendous responsibility.

The minister should have a thorough realization of the importance of his mission, until he can never stand up to preach without deep emotion. Paul said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (I Cor. 2:3). I desire not to be harsh in judgment, but I cannot put aside the feeling that a person who can go into the pulpit lightly, even arrogantly and with seeming effrontery of manner, and, unshattered with the weight of responsibility resting upon him, stand as an ambassador for God, as if he were doing God a special favor, is disqualified for this sacred office. Eternal interests hinge upon every sermon; every sentence may be freighted with happiness or sorrow, and each word may seal the life or death of souls. The minister is representing God in matters which cost the life of Christ, and engaged the attention of beings in three worlds. The one who stands as Heaven's agent to declare the terms of life and conditions for pardon, or to threaten eternal judgments, must not be a wit, indulge in artificial oratory, or play the actor, as if the service were a theatrical display, and heaven and hell were but fictitious scenes arranged to enable him to indulge his dramatic talent.

An irreverent person should never preach. High learning and literary degrees, natural or acquired ability to declaim, or ability to attract multitudes of admirers to himself, do not qualify one to preach (I Cor. 2:1-5). When I hear some preachers speak, I shudder, and cold chills of apprehension creep over me. The ministry is not the office of the mountebank, the profession of the clown or jester, dependent upon the applause of an audience for the success of the calling. I feel quite certain that the divine influence is lost when the audience detects art in the preacher's declamation. The people may admire his ability and talents, but they will not be drawn to God.

It is not for the minister to seek opportunities to reveal his own abilities and talents, but to search wherever human footprints lead, and carry the glorious gospel message, not only to those who patronize the grand cathedrals, but also to those out in the highways and byways—out in the slums and darkest shadows cast by the sins of humanity, where sickness, pain, and death hold sway; out where ignorance, poverty, and vice enthrall the masses; where the lost, fallen, abandoned outcasts are perishing by the multiplied thousands—and preach the blessed hope, salvation, joy, and peace through the glorious gospel of a merciful God.

The true minister recognizes that privileges bring obligations (Rom. 1:14-15). Paul was called to a superior mission, but he did not feel himself a superior person. There was no glorying in himself; his glory was all in Jesus Christ. He could say, "For although I be free from all men, yet I have made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. . . . I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

The true minister should, like the God he represents, send forth the showers of his benevolence upon the just and the unjust, the good and the evil. He should be like the artesian well which flows forth spontaneously from its never-failing source, unpumped by machinery, not stopping to question whether doves or hawks, lambs or wolves, slake their thirst in the cooling stream.

The true minister must be humble; not a sensationalist, relying upon flaming advertisements, slang, theatrical methods, and tricks of elocution. "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (I Cor. 1:26).



# Eradication Versus Suppression, Part II

## Article Five, by Stephen S. White

### THE CLAIM—THE BODY IS INHERENTLY SINFUL

ONE of the most important problems connected with the debate between suppression and eradication is the relation of the body to sin. Those who argue for suppression, or in some other way deny the possibility of eradication in this life, almost invariably make the body sinful. Such a claim logically bars eradication until the present body has been destroyed by death.

R. L. Hollenback, in his book *True Holiness*, writes thus of sin and the body: "Among the several gross errors in the established doctrine of the holiness people there is one which we believe to be foundational, and parent to many others. It is the teaching that inbred sin is a principle entirely separate from the fleshly body. They call this principle or entity by many names, some of which are scriptural in origin, and others not. 'Carnality,' 'the old man,' 'the carnal mind,' 'the Adamic nature,' 'the body of sin,' 'inbred sin,' 'indwelling sin,' 'root sin,' are some of the names used. None of these would be misleading if applied in the right way. They affirm that the words, 'body' and 'flesh,' particularly when found in Romans and Galatians, do not refer to our corporeal body, but to that separate principle designated by the above names. They see no connection between this 'body of sin' and man's physical body; which they hold is neutral and incapable of being sinful.

"It may startle some of the readers when I say that this separate entity which they call 'carnality' is another *pure invention*. It is without the slightest foundation in the Word of God. We have heard many of the holiness preachers use such literalism in referring to it as to call it a 'beast,' a 'snake in the heart,' 'a devilish heyena,' 'the devil's child,' and other things of like nature. But by whatever names they call it in their literalization, the fact still remains that this entity is purely a creature of their own imagination. They affirm that this monster lives in the same heart with the Spirit's life (the Spirit's life, mark you, without the Spirit!) in the born-again soul.

"With exception of two places, the word flesh is from the same word in the original every place it is found in the New Testament;

and always refers to the physical body. (*σάρξ* is the Greek word.) The two places where another word is used is where reference is made to the flesh of animals, and the word used is *κρέας*.

"Likewise the word BODY is from the same word every place but two in the New Testament. (*σῶμα* in the Greek.) Only in Acts 19:12 and Eph. 3:6 is any other word used. By what line of reasoning can anybody say this word means our mortal body in most places, and means a *principle* within our hearts in other places? Human language could not plainer state anything than it does that our mortal bodies are sinful, as careful reading of the following references will clearly show: Rom. 7:5, 7:18; 8:3, I Cor. 9:27."

We have quoted at some length from this writer because the position here outlined is representative of most of the anti-eradicationists. Like him, they regard the claim that there is a sinful nature in man which is psychical and non-physical as both unscriptural and ridiculous. These teachers who are so sure that the body is to be identified with sin cannot imagine how anyone could believe otherwise.

Please notice that Hollenback makes his claim that the body is inherently sinful foundational to his anti-eradicationism. This means that, if this position is proved unscriptural, Hollenback has no case. Let this be kept in mind as we proceed with this discussion.

### THE CLAIM REFUTED—THE BODY IS NOT INHERENTLY SINFUL

Next we shall give what some prominent Bible scholars have to say about this matter. All of them are men who are definitely outside of the holiness movement and, therefore, could not be prejudiced in favor of entire sanctification as attainable in this life.

A.B. Bruce, in his *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, goes into this question carefully and fully. And, although Calvinistic in background, he does not give any sanction to the contention outlined above. He starts out by admitting that the idea of a sinful body is fully in harmony with Greek philosophy, but he definitely denies that Paul patterns after Plato or Plato's followers. He gives us these significant words: "The

theory that matter or flesh is essentially evil is decidedly *un-Hebrew*. The dualistic conception of man as composed of two natures, flesh and spirit, standing in necessary and permanent antagonism to each other, is not to be found in the Old Testament Scriptures. It is true, indeed, that between the close of the Hebrew canon and the New Testament era the leaven of Hellenistic philosophy was at work in Hebrew thought, producing in course of time a considerable modification in Jewish ideas on various subjects; and it is a perfectly fair and legitimate hypothesis that traces of such influence are recognizable in the Pauline doctrine of the *σάρξ*. But the presumption is certainly not in favour of this hypothesis. It is rather all the other way; for throughout his writings St. Paul appears a Hebrew of the Hebrews. His intellectual and spiritual affinities are with the psalmists and prophets, not with Alexandrian philosophers; and if there be any new leaven in his culture it is Rabbinical rather than Hellenistic" (p. 269).

Another quotation from the same writer on page 275 reads thus: "On these grounds it may be confidently affirmed that the metaphysical dualism of the Greeks could not possibly have commended itself to the mind of St. Paul. An ethical dualism he does teach, but he never goes beyond that. It is of course open to anyone to say that the metaphysical dualism really lies behind the ethical one, though St. Paul himself was not conscious of the fact, and that therefore radical disciples like Marcion were only following out his principles to their final consequences when they set spirit and matter, God and the world, over against each other as hostile kingdoms. But even those who take up this position are forced in candour to admit that such gnostic or Manichean doctrine was not in all the apostle's thought." He who believes in a sinful body could get little comfort out of these quotations.

G. B. Stevens, in his *New Testament Theology*, discusses the meaning of flesh or *σάρξ*. The following quotation lets us know where he stands as to this controversy. "In Gal. v. 19-23, the apostle enumerates the works of the flesh, and sets them in contrast with the fruit of the Spirit. Among the former are found not only sensuous sins, such as unchastity and drunkenness, but (chiefly) such as have no direct connection with bodily impulses, — 'enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings.' Similarly in Rom. xiii. 13, 14, the avoidance of making provision for the flesh includes the renunciation, not only of

'chambering and wantonness,' but also of 'strife and jealousy.' In addressing the Corinthians the apostle designates them as carnal, because 'there is among them jealousy and strife' (I Cor. 3:3). Moreover, he speaks (II Cor. 1:12) of a *σοφία σαρκική*; that is, a worldly and selfish policy as opposed to the 'holiness and sincerity which come from God.' These examples appear to me to be absolutely decisive against the view that Paul associates sin inseparably with the body, or makes its essence to consist in sensuousness. In these expressions at least, *σάρξ* is used in a sense at once more comprehensive and more distinctly ethical than the theory supposes which makes it a name for the 'impulse of sensuousness.'

"If we consider Paul's doctrine of the body (*σῶμα*), we shall find that he by no means regards it as essentially sinful, and this conception of it is not equivalent to the idea denoted by *σάρξ*."

Here we have given but a brief quotation from several pages which are devoted to this topic, but it indicates the general tenor of the author's position. Certainly, he does not contend for the view that the body is sinful.

Two modern authorities may be appealed to next. They are Reinhold Niebuhr and Millar Burrows. The former, although Calvinistic in his general theological position, denies the sinfulness of the body. He says that the Bible knows nothing of a good mind and evil body. This is the Greek but not the Hebrew view (*Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vol. I, p. 7). He further states that *σάρξ* means the principle of sin rather than the body (Vol. I, p. 152).

On page 134 in his *An Outline of Biblical Theology*, Burrows declares that Paul did not teach that the body, as such, is evil. He also says that the New Testament uses "flesh" to designate man's lower nature as over against his higher nature. These two men rank among the best scholars of the day, and have no reason at all to interpret the teaching of the Bible in favor of those who believe in eradication.

Turning back to an older authority, Thayer's Greek Lexicon has this to say under the fourth definition of *σάρξ*: "When either expressly or tacitly opposed to *τὸ πνεῦμα* [τοῦ θεοῦ], has an ethical sense and denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God; accordingly it includes whatever in the soul is weak, low, debased, tending to ungodliness and vice."

Sanday, in his great commentary on Romans, has this to say on verse five of the seventh chapter: "ἐν τῇ σαρκί is the opposite of ἐν τῷ πνεύματι: the one is a life which has no higher object than the gratification of the senses, the other is a life permeated by the Spirit. Although σὰρξ is human nature especially on the side of its frailty, it does not follow that there is any dualism in St. Paul's conception or that he regards the body as inherently sinful. Indeed this very passage proves the contrary. It implies that it is possible to be 'in the body' without being 'in the flesh.' The body, as such, is plastic to influences of either kind: it may be worked upon by Sin through the senses, or it may be worked upon by the Spirit. In either case the motive-force comes from without. The body itself is neutral." This quotation speaks for itself, and it certainly does not sanction the idea that the body is in and of itself sinful.

On page 213 of his *New Testament Theology*, Sheldon gives us his view of the term flesh. His words read as follows: "The reader of the Pauline epistles very soon discovers that the term flesh (σὰρξ) is frequently used in a larger than the physical significance. While literally it denotes the pliable substance of a living physical organism, and thus is related to body (σῶμα) as the specific to the general, in many instances it evidently incorporates the ethico-religious sense. From what point of view did the apostle attach to it this meaning? Did he proceed from the standpoint of Hellenic dualism, and thus regard the flesh in virtue of its material as intrinsically evil, from its very nature antagonistic to the spirit in man with its sense of obligation to a moral ideal? Or, did he, putting a part for the whole, intend to denote by the flesh unrenewed human nature, man viewed as dominated by the desires and passions which have their sphere of manifestation especially in the bodily members? The latter we believe to be by far the more credible interpretation."

Then Sheldon gives seven reasons for preferring this interpretation rather than the narrower meaning in the direction of Hellenic dualism. First, because Paul includes sins which are not connected with the physical members or sensuous life in his catalogue of the works of the flesh. Second, the phrase "our old man" is used in such a way as to indicate that its meaning is substantially equivalent to that assigned to the flesh. Third, Christians are so referred

to as to imply that they are not in the flesh. Fourth, the body can be the temple of the Holy Spirit—this could hardly be if it were inherently sinful. Fifth, Christ was sinless, and yet He possessed a human body. Sixth, Paul does not make man's sinful nature the offspring of the sensuous nature, but rather ascribes it to the trespass of Adam. Seventh and last, if Paul had believed that the body is intrinsically evil, he would have been more of an ascetic than he was. I have very briefly summarized these seven reasons which are given by Sheldon, but they suggest the breadth of the foundation upon which his conclusion rests.

#### FIRST JOHN 1:8

There are several Scripture passages which are often referred to by anti-eradicationists as sure proofs of the belief that freedom from sins and sin in this life is impossible. One of the most important of these is found in I John 1:8. Those who are opposed to holiness of heart and life are continually calling our attention to this verse. In the first place, it has never seemed to me to have the meaning they ascribe to it, if it is considered in its context. In the fifth verse we are told that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. This means, of course, that He is absolutely free from sin. Then in the sixth verse we are told that we are liars if we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness, or commit sin. This is followed by the outstanding truth in the seventh verse, which asserts that we have fellowship with God and are cleansed from all sin if we walk in the light. In view of these verses, how can the eighth be interpreted to mean that we can never be freed from sin in this life? The only interpretation of it that makes sense with that which precedes must be that he who denies that he has sin and needs cleansing deceives himself and is a liar. The same is true as to the verse which follows the eighth. What sense is there in saying that we can be cleansed from all unrighteousness if this is something which, according to the eighth verse, cannot be attained in this life? Such a claim as to the eighth verse certainly makes the Bible a comedy of errors.

This is essentially the position of R. Newton Flew in his excellent book *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology*. His words on page 109 as to I John 1:8 are as follows: "There is no way out of this difficulty except to expound the sentence *we have no sin* strictly in its context as the sec-

ond of three false claims of the opponents with whom John is dealing. The first is the claim of enjoying communion with God while living in sin. That is hypocrisy. The second is a general denial of sin in principle. *We have no sin*. The third is a particular denial of one's actual sins. We are not to understand the 'we' as a general statement about Christians. That may be the interpretation which comes naturally enough to Englishmen who constantly hear the words in their Liturgy, but it is at variance with the context. Again and again we are told that fellowship with God means freedom from sin. The thought of I. i. 7, as Westcott says, 'is not of the forgiveness of sins only, but of the removal of sin.'

"The writer of the epistle, then, must be dealing with a specific claim put forward in the church by some who would not admit that there was any sin in them at all. At the end of the first century when Gentiles with hardly any moral sensibility were finding themselves within the Church, such a claim must have been not infrequent. There is only one way, says our writer. We must confess our sins. Then forgiveness is granted and a complete cleansing.

"Once again we hear the austere note of absolute freedom from sin as the mark of the believer. I write to you, my little children, that you may not sin. There may be a fall from this ideal standard (I. ii. I). But this is evidently regarded as altogether exceptional. The possibility of fulfilling the commands of God is set forth later in the epistle (I. iii. 22).

"So, too, in parallel passages in the Fourth Gospel (XV. 7, 8, 16), the fruit of the disciples is expected to 'remain'. The Christian in this world is to be in life altogether like his Lord.

"He that says he abides in Him (i. e. in God)

"Ought himself to walk even as He (*εκεῖνος*, i. e. Christ) walked. (I. ii. 6). The whole of the Fourth Gospel is the true exegesis of this verse."

#### CHRIST'S SUMMARY OF THE LAW

Professor O. A. Curtis in his book *The Christian Faith*, pp. 388 and 389, gives us a discussion of our Lord's injunction which indicates that Jesus' ideal for the Christian in this life is perfection. His words read as follows: "'And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy-

self. On these two commandments hangeth the whole law, and the prophets' (Matt. 22:37-40).

"This one passage should forever settle the entire controversy as to both the ideal and the possible achievement in the Christian life. From the Old Testament (Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18) our Lord takes the two items of supreme moment, and lifts them into a Christian primacy of injunction. It has been said that our Saviour did not intend to give an actual injunction, but only to suggest a Christian ideal. But I do not understand how anyone can hold such a view; for a study of the Saviour's life will show that love toward God and love toward man were the two tests which He used in determining all religious values. And the fact is that today the Christian consciousness surely grasps the Master's words as injunction, and responds to them as such, making them the final test of life. Every Christian deed is Christian, every Christian thought is Christian, every Christian feeling is Christian, precisely to the extent that it expresses this supreme love. Ignatius clearly apprehended the whole thing when he said: 'The beginning of life is faith, and the end is love. And these two being inseparably connected together, do perfect the man of God; while the other things which are requisite to a holy life follow after them. No man making a profession of faith ought to sin, nor one possessed of love to hate his brother. For He that said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, said also, And thy neighbor as thyself.'

#### SOME SIGNIFICANT TERMS

Our final thought will be to list a few of the terms which ascribe God's method of dealing with the sin-nature in the human heart—some that have not already been dealt with in more detail. They are so definite and far-reaching in their meaning that they could hardly be interpreted as teaching anything less than eradication. There are the terms crucify and crucified, which signify to destroy utterly (Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14). Along with these are those which are or could be translated mortify, kill, render extinct (Rom. 7:4; 8:13), destroy, annul, abolish, put an end to, annihilate (I John 3:8; Rom. 6:6), and cleanse, purify, cleanse thoroughly, purge (Acts 15:9; I Cor. 7:1; Titus 2:14). Freedom from sin, or Christian perfection, is clearly implied by these Biblical words.

Thus the chief foundation-stone of those who reject eradication—belief in the body as sinful—is proved to be unscriptural. The

passage which is most often quoted against eradication is shown to be misinterpreted; the teaching of Jesus affirms the possibility of freedom from sin; and there are many terms—especially in Paul's writings—which

substantiate our belief in eradication. This summarizes the four sections of this article and indicates the weaknesses of the anti-eradicationist view.

(To be continued)

## Some Simple Guiding Principles Of Scriptural Interpretation

R. A. Kerby

AS THE minister surveys the vast scope of that Divine Library, the Word of God, his mind becomes impressed, yea, almost distressed, by the responsibility of correct interpretation. This Library, written over a period of fifteen hundred years by some thirty inspired penmen, covers such a vast field that some principles of interpretation are vital if the Word is to enjoy a true exposition. These principles must take into account numerous factors if the thought in the mind of the writer is to be truly transmitted to the listening audience. There is probably no greater witness to the divine origin of the Bible than the fact that it has survived so many misinterpretations down across the centuries. How often has a text been wrenched from its natural context and thus has been forged into a pretext! A careful adjustment and orientation of the text in hand is probably the major portion of the task of correct exposition. A literary man of deep insight, on being questioned as to his success, created or quoted the following couplet:

*I kept six honest serving men,  
Who taught me all I knew;  
Their names are How, and What, and Why,  
And When, and Where, and Who.*

Probably one of the most misused and misapplied portions in all of the Word of God is the consolatory address of Jesus to His disciples on the night before the Crucifixion. How many times has John fourteen been read at funeral occasions when the departed one has made little if any effort at all to meet conditions as laid down in the Word of God! In the effort, honest or otherwise, to console the sorrowing loved ones, great harm has been done to the souls of those who listened. A gross misinterpretation such as this becomes a spiritual blunder of the first magnitude. Any attempt to wrench comforting scriptures from their natural setting grieves the Spirit of Truth, and thereby reduces the whole per-

formance to the flat human level. A consideration of the passages under discussion with these guiding principles of interpretation in mind might serve to illuminate these passages and further set a pattern for safe exposition of the entire Word of God.

*Who:* Who is speaking, and who is being addressed here? The Son of God is speaking to His chosen disciples and bidding them not to allow their hearts to be troubled. He is addressing men who have left all, and have risen up and followed him. These "hearts" have left the tax-table, the fishing-net, home, and kindred to follow the Lord. These are the kind of "hearts" which God has promised to sustain in the midst of mysterious and perplexing trials such as they now are facing. It is plain to be seen how erroneous is the application of this scripture to the case of those who have gone on in sin and selfishness all of their days. The basic factor in any correct interpretation is to consider well who is speaking and to whom they are speaking.

*Where:* This consolatory address was not delivered to the worldly-minded multitude in the market place, nor even to the formalistic throngs in the temple; but rather it was delivered in the seclusion and intimacy of the Upper Room. It is blessedly true that God has a self-manifestation which is reserved for His true followers alone. We may marvel at this and ask, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" But such is the case.

*When:* A consideration of this factor throws floods of light upon this discourse. These precious words were spoken by Jesus, who was then only hours away from the cross. Disregarding the shadow which lay across His own path, His chief thought was for the spiritual welfare of His flock which was so soon to be scattered. Any exposition of the Scriptures which ignores the time element is almost certain to go astray. Dec-

ades and even centuries do not seem to make much difference with some, who will drag a portion of scripture across the field of history and apply it "how" and to "whom" they will. Small wonder is it that so many times people are made to wonder, "Was that true, or was he "just preaching"?"

**Why:** Through an age-long misinterpretation of their Scriptures the Jewish nation utterly missed the plainly revealed fact that their coming Messiah was to give His life for the ransom of the people. By laying hold of those scriptures which set forth His second coming in glory and arbitrarily passing by those which spoke of His humiliation, they utterly rejected the idea of a crucified Messiah. The disciples were heir to this misconception along with the rest of the Jewish nation; and, while they believed Jesus to be the Messiah, they could not believe that He would suffer death. Jesus now speaks to them to bolster up their wavering faith. Well did He know that in a few hours all would be darkness for these men, and His words were now spoken to hold them steady until His resurrection. This band of men richly merited the words, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

The Biblical expositor must ever remember that not one of the inspired penmen ever wrote at random. There is always an underlying cause, a *why*, that must be searched out if the correct viewpoint is to be gained.

**What:** These men to whom Jesus was speaking were soon to be homeless. They had not only left their homes, occupations, and old associates behind, but had left as well a decaying dispensation. The fury of Jewish formalism and the wrath of Roman totalitarianism were soon to be loosed upon them, and thus they were to have "no certain dwelling places." The Roman opposition was to be a bit later, toward the end of the century, but was unspeakable in cruelty. Jesus, knowing all this, and also knowing the native longing of the human heart for a place of dwelling, begins to speak of the "many mansions" in His Father's house. Though He was to be absent from them in His spiritual presence, yet He assured them that, although out of sight, they would not be out of mind. While they are toiling here and denying themselves of the comforts and solaces of an established home, He will be busy up there fitting up mansions which will be eternal. Certainly Jesus spoke to the need of His hearers that fateful night.

**How:** Jesus sometimes used irony and sarcasm, as when He said, "They that be whole need not a physician," "Wisdom is justified of her children," and other sayings of this kind. It is important that the expositor of the Word of God takes into account the manner or mode used by the one speaking. A flat interpretation of "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" would teach that Jesus felt there were some who did not need to repent. A fair survey of Jesus' entire ministry will not bear this out, but will indicate that He was but taking the self-righteous on their own exaggerated estimate of themselves.

In His discourse to the disciples, Jesus is speaking as friend to friend with no reserve whatever. The gracious words were in fact "a heart-to-heart talk" with those who believed that He came out from the Father. How very important it is, to keep in mind the manner or mode of speech used! Oftentimes this will determine and fix the meaning of the words spoken as nothing else will.

The true thought of the Word of God has not been gained until and unless these six guiding lights of interpretation have been focused upon the field of thought under consideration. A true indication that the heart of the subject is being reached is that these six lights converge and unite in one common blaze of light.

The minister whose desire it is to rightly divide the Word of Truth will spare no effort unknown. The experienced expositor intensive in labor, to bring these guiding lights of interpretation into correct focus. He knows that a mature consideration of a scriptural portion with these principles as guides will be rewarded with insight before unknown. The experienced expositor understands that a shallow, showy mode of speech may dazzle for a time; but he also knows that this sort of ministry has but a brief season. Oratory based upon sound principles of interpretation is all well and good, but no amount of dazzling flights of speech will long hide shallow and faulty exposition. Too many times the speaker is in far too great a hurry to make a point and reach a climax. A broader base of interpretation will, in the final analysis, sooner reach the goal of convinced minds and hearts.

The pressing need of the hour is for men who will go into the Word of God and correctly convey it in its true meaning to the people. Will we as ministers be patient and laborious enough to arrive at the true

meaning of the Word, or will we go before the people with a great many ideas of our own and strive to call together enough passages of scripture from here and there to

prop up our theories? On this question hangs not only our ministerial efficiency, but also the destinies of many of those who attend upon our ministry.

## “The Unreturning Soldier”

*A Memorial Sermon, by Harold W. Reed*

*Weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country (Jeremiah 22:10).*

JEREMIAH was the last prophet of the Lord who proclaimed his message to Judah before the entire nation was carried into captivity.

The Babylonian nation was at its height and was reaching out in every direction to find new worlds to conquer. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was near at hand, and the Babylonian king reached out to take it. The men of Judah were called upon to defend their homeland. The flower of Jewish youth was laid upon the altar of sacrifice in order that their homes, their families, and their cities might be protected. In time, the small nation was overrun by the superior strength of the enemy. This meant captivity and slavery for the entire nation.

In one of the large groups taken into Babylonian captivity, as a prisoner of war, was the young prince Shallum. He was forced to leave the luxuries of home and ease and go to a strange people and a strange land. It was heartbreaking for him to go, and it was heart-crushing for those who were left behind. Because of this youth, and the other thousands being carried away, the weeping prophet exhorted: “Weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.” This prophecy literally came to pass for Shallum of Judah, and it has literally come to pass for thousands of our choice youth who went forth in World War II.

Wars have plagued man from the early dawn of history down to our present hour. The avarice and greed, the lust for power and riches have inevitably brought about the clash of tribes and nations from time immemorial to this sad hour.

In Indian lore, the sad story of the unreturning brave is told in a minor refrain. He went to the battle with strength and skill, but returned no more to the tepee and his loved ones. His spirit had departed from the body that housed it, and he was gone to be seen and known here no longer.

Ancient wars, medieval wars, modern wars, Indian wars, and wars of our own nation are scribbled all over the pages of world history; and it is ever and anon the same story of heartbreak, disease, death, and destruction which always have followed in the wake of war's dread scourge. That is no doubt the reason why the Christian religion has always hated war and renounced those who traffic in weapons of death.

While war has always been a scourge, it has become increasingly devastating, and it has reached out in an ever-widening circle to include more men and more nations, until in the last two wars the whole world has been enveloped in a world conflagration. World War I was fought, so we were told, to make the world safe for democracy . . . and in less than twenty-five years our nation was engaged in World War II to throttle and defeat dictatorship throughout the world.

We are still close enough to World War II to have imprinted vividly upon our minds the awful horror which fell upon us like a dark, choking cloud of night, when the ominous news came forth from our radios that Hitler's goose-stepping warriors were on the march. Those were awful days, and the days that followed were awful and fearful. Our precious youth were called to the colors. From the farms, the factories, and all walks of life they came and signed up as soldiers for Uncle Sam.

We shall never forget those days when our boys took their physical examinations, were accepted, and waited for a few days with us before leaving for the training camps. We remember the anxiety and concern which was ours during those days of waiting. Then came the fond and tender good-bys. We remember the furloughs, the training camps, the battles overseas, the thrilling letters of good news, the anxious silences for weeks, the bad news. It was all a part of the price demanded of us by the god of war.

This afternoon we pay tribute to one of our fallen heroes. He, like Shallum of the

Old Testament, was one of the unreturning soldiers. Like that of Shallum of old, we can say three things concerning his short life.

### *I. His Life Was the Toil of War.*

Only a few short years were lived. As a young lad, here he grew to young manhood among the surroundings which are familiar to us all. He attended our church, our school, and worked with his hands in our community. But when the call came to serve his country, he laid down his daily work and took hold of the work of a soldier. He served faithfully and well until he fell in battle on the battlefields of France. His short life knew the rigors of army life. He knew the toil and grind of army service, yet there was no complaining on his part. He was a good soldier.

### *II. Moreover, like Shallum, His Eyes Never Saw Again the Land Which His Patriotism Helped to Save.*

Four years ago it was my privilege to go out through New York harbor past the statue of liberty. But our launch turned around and came back past the great symbol of our great land. However, at that same time hundreds and thousands of our finest young men had passed that landmark, and had sailed to foreign lands to fight for freedom and liberty; and they were destined never again to sail into New York harbor. Among that number was our departed friend and loved one. He was destined never to look again upon the land which his patriotism helped to save. The prophet Jeremiah saw the end from the beginning and exhorted the people concerning Shallum: "Weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country." Such is the personal tragedy of war, and may God grant that we may be spared many years from again being plunged into its dark waters.

### *III. Finally, Like Shallum, His Memory Is Garlanded with Warm Affection.*

He is gone but not forgotten. Today, we pay tribute to our loved one and friend. May God bless his memory among us.

We are reminded that life is short, and that in a very brief time we too shall all be gone. After all, things of time and space matter very little.

While we sorrow today because of the great loss which we have personally sustained, yet possibly the best way to recover ourselves to useful service is to dedicate our lives anew to God, to His Church, and to His work.

I am reminded of Mr. Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg, when he said: "It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

However, patriotic service and devotion are not enough. We must dedicate ourselves to God and to His great service—"For righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

Our nation demands an unconditional service from every soldier. Our God demands an unconditional consecration from every Christian in order that right might prevail against wrong.

Our soldier friend, and brother, gave his all for his country when it called him to its service. May we likewise give our all to God and His glad service. In this way we can express our warm affection and our deep appreciation to one who gave the last full measure of devotion that we might "worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience."

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NOTICE: I am anxious to secure some back copies of the PREACHER'S MAGAZINE. If you have any printed prior to 1944, please write me.—Rev. Dorrance Nichols, Box 435, Gainesville, Georgia.

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There are many promises of rest. Each is connected with some condition. We must meet the condition if we would claim the promise. Perhaps it is to take His yoke upon us and learn of Him. Perhaps it is to "be careful for nothing." Perhaps it is to trust and stay our mind on Him. If we meet the condition, we shall not come short of the promise; and, rested from our burdens, the Lord will lay His burdens upon us and use us to help His tired and heavy-laden ones. Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest.—A. B. SIMPSON.



# USABLE POETRY FOR THE PREACHER . . .

## Whosoever (Acts 2:21)

The Word says, "Whosoever"—yea,  
Of such tremendous scope  
Is God's free grace that every man  
May know eternal hope.

Our Christ has made provision for  
The needs of all mankind;  
And any sinner who will come  
Shall free salvation find.

Yet, in His wisdom infinite,  
Our Lord can only claim  
The ones who come in penitence  
And call upon His name.

Though Christ's atoning blood was shed  
For all the human race,  
Yet only those who call on Him  
Can know His saving grace.

A price sufficient has been paid,  
To save men, one and all;  
But that cannot avail for men  
If they refuse to call.

If any man will come to Christ  
And for His pardon ask,  
He shall be saved, the Lord declares,  
And undertakes the task.

God speaks with full assurance—yea,  
He entertains no doubt:  
His name can save from foes within,  
Or enemies without.

Who knows the power of that name  
Which angel hosts would bless!  
Before it every knee shall bow  
And every tongue confess.  
—REV. HUGH P. YOUNG

## The Land of Rest

Thy loving Spirit, Lord, alone,  
Can lead me forth, and make me free;  
The bondage break in which I groan,  
And set my heart at liberty.

Now let Thy Spirit bring me in,  
And give Thy servant to possess  
The land of rest from inbred sin,  
The land of perfect holiness.

Lord, I believe Thy power the same;  
The same Thy truth and grace endure;  
And in Thy blessed hands I am,  
And trust Thee for a perfect cure.

Come, Saviour, come, and make me whole;  
Entirely all my sins remove;  
To perfect health restore my soul—  
To perfect holiness and love.  
(from an old Methodist Hymnal, 1849)

## The Bible

Within this awful Volume lies  
The mystery of mysteries:  
Happiest they of human race  
To whom their God has given grace  
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,  
To lift the latch, to force the way—  
And better had they ne'er been born  
Than read to doubt, or read to scorn.  
—SIR WALTER SCOTT

"The fool hath said, There is no God." His  
head  
Is bowed. For him there is no upward  
look—  
No lessons to be learned from nature's book;  
He sees the downward trend of things in-  
stead,  
But "I will lift mine eyes," the Psalmist said.  
When I consider the hills, I see God,  
Who left His imprint on the lowly clod  
And on the mountaintop His grandeur  
spread.  
What travail bore the hills, I need not know,  
Nor in what mould the mountain peaks  
were cast;  
I need but see the glorious afterglow  
Of God's creative work in ages past  
To feel His strength uplifted as a tower  
And rest my soul upon His mighty power.  
—MYRA BROOKS WELCH

## God Knows

All of the future, uncertain, unknown,  
Is safe in His hands—  
He knows.  
When I am tempted, afraid and alone,  
God understands.  
When blows  
The rough gale, and the waters are high  
Then safe in the arms of the Father am I.  
He planned it for me,  
That sheltered I'd be  
In the love of my Lord;  
Not tossed on the sea,  
On an ocean of doubt.  
All of the future, uncertain, unknown,  
He knows.  
And He's promised to leave me,  
No, never alone!

—KENNETH ROBINSON

## Life Triumphant

Alas for him who never sees  
The stars shine through his cypress trees;  
Who hopeless lays his dead away,  
Nor looks to see the breaking day  
Across the mournful marbles play;  
Who hath not learned in hours of faith  
The truth, to flesh and sense unknown,  
That life is ever Lord of death  
And love can never lose its own.  
—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

## Examining One's Spiritual Life

"Let a man examine himself," wrote the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians as he instructed them regarding their preparation for partaking of the Lord's Supper. And in his second letter to the church at Corinth he admonished them in their relation to Christ: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."

Periods of searching self-examination are invaluable to one's growth in grace. It is easy, simply through neglect, to grow cold in one's spiritual life; and constant watchfulness is necessary lest we drift into habits that hinder our efficiency as servants of the Most High. It is only by the diligent and frequent and prayerful searching of the heart and life that we are able to keep ourselves aware of the presence of Christ with us and sensitive to His will for us.

There are a number of ways by which we may make such self-examination. One of the most effective of these is to ask ourselves certain vital questions, and then to meditate prayerfully upon the answers that our sincere self-study reveals. An excellent list of such questions appeared recently in the bulletin of the First Presbyterian Church, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, of which Dr. Charles E. McCartney is pastor. There are sixteen questions in all. They are as follows:

Do you daily maintain secret prayer and family worship?

Do you read your Bible daily, and meditate upon what you read?

Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ, and trust Him as your only Saviour?

Do you love Christians and delight in their society?

Do you hate, renounce, and forsake all known sin?

Do you desire to know your Saviour in your domestic relations, in your place of business, and in your social intercourse?

Do you maintain truth and honesty in all your transactions?

Do your conscience and your vows guide you in the matter of church attendance?

Are you at peace with all men?

Are you always in your place at the Lord's table?

Do you keep the Sabbath Day holy?

Do you pray for others and try to lead them to Christ?

Is your religious influence wholesomely felt?

Are you watchful of your tongue?

Do you practice self-denial?

Do you give cheerfully, generously, and systematically to Christ's work?—*Christian Observer*.

Ten reasons why I believe the Bible is the Word of God:

1—It is the testimony of Jesus Christ.

2—It gives fulfilled prophecies.

3—There is unity in the Book.

4—It has immeasurable superiority to any other book, for it contains nothing but the truth. Every truth on any moral or spiritual subject is found in substance in the Bible. If you take from all literature in all ages the wheat, you will not have a book equal to this Book.

5—It contains tidings or good news.

6—Notice the character of those who accept it and of those who reject it.

7—This Book has influence to men.

8—Notice its inexhaustible depth. Generations have studied it and yet they cannot reach its depths.

9—As men grow in holiness, they grow toward the Bible.

10—It is the testimony of the Holy Spirit. We begin with God and end with God.—  
R. A. TORREY.

## Infinite Supply

"My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

Look at the promise in its construction. Everything gathers around and amplifies the verb "supply." In this promise we see a sevenfold perfection of supply:

1. Its source—"My God."

2. Its certainty—"shall."

3. Its fullness—"supply" ("fulfill," R.V.).

4. Its extent—"all your need."

5. Its measure—"according to his riches."

6. Its climax—"in glory" (yet to be).

7. Its medium—"by Christ Jesus" ("in," R.V.).—*Heart and Life*.

We look about us today and see all manner of idolatry in our land. There is vanity and vexation of spirit on every hand. Our people have gone in great multitudes after the gods that are no gods. And in the midst of all of the apostasy of the nation, we may well raise the questions, "Where is the God that delivered us in the days of the American Revolution? Where is the God that brought us through Valley Forge and eventually to Yorktown? Where is the God that delivered us as a nation in the days of the terrible war between the states and reunited us and made us one great people? Where is the God that delivered us in the days of World War I? Where is the God that delivered us in the tragic days of World War II?—In fact, where is human gratitude?"

## From the Files of the late Dr. R. T. Williams

### *The Door of Opportunity, or Achievement Through Difficulties*

TEXT: *For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries* (I Cor. 16:9).

#### Introduction:

Life is a great battlefield; its struggles are toward some definite end; success here depends largely upon three things: (1) an understanding that can see things and situations; (2) a wisdom that can relate those things and situations; and (3) a divine incentive that can furnish the motive and standards for the fight for those worthwhile goals.

- I. Let us notice the door mentioned.
  - A. It is an open door—not closed—a door of opportunity.
  - B. The door open here presupposes preparation for the opportunity.
  - C. The door God has opened—who knows both the door and the opportunity; no mistakes.
    - D. The nature of the door.
      1. An effectual door, worth-while
      2. Not a door to fortune
      3. Not a door to ease and luxury
      4. Not a door to honor and glory
      5. A door to usefulness—to the poured-out life—given life—invested life
    - E. Climax: "More blessed to give than to receive."
  - II. Notice that there are adversaries.
    - A. Note that he says and not but.
    - B. These are certain to be at every effectual open door.
      - C. Nature of these adversaries:
        1. Stubborn
        2. Deadly
        3. Perpetual—never pass—always
      - D. Note some of them:
        1. Fear of poverty
        2. Spiritual indifference about you
        3. Carnal opposition
        4. Human ingratitude on the part of those you try to help
      5. The devil himself
      - E. The ultimate value of adversary.
        1. Develops strength in you by the fight
        2. Brings out the best there is in you
        3. Drives you closer to God for wisdom and strength.
    - III. The victory and the reward.
      - A. The victory is certain. God has promised, and Christ is the Leader in the battle.
      - B. There is a reward in the midst of the conflict.
        1. Reward of conscience that one is doing his duty.
        2. Joy that comes from making others happy and better

3. The comfort of the Holy Ghost in personal fellowship
- C. The victory and reward hereafter
  1. Eternal verities—not of time and perishable
  2. To pass from sufferings to eternal health.
  3. To rest forever from the conflicts
  4. The fellowship of God's people unmarked by misunderstandings and human limitations
  5. Personal fellowship with God forever
  6. The glory of self-expansion, and the seeing into the mysteries of all things

### *Why I Should Be a Christian, or The Advantages of Being a Christian*

TEXT: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matt. 11:28).

#### Introduction:

Christ is an offer, not a command. This offer is essentially a challenge to me. This challenge must be able to give reasons. *Why should I be a Christian?*

- I. Christ makes no unjust demand upon us.
  - A. He asks us to give up nothing that would ultimately benefit us.
  - B. He offers to satisfy every right and legitimate desire and appetite within His own kingdom.
    - II. It is an advantage because of what Christ *saves us from*.
      - A. He save us from taking the wrong road in life.
        1. The road we take determines the *end or destination*—not where are you from, but where are you going?
        2. Christ is the Way, the only true way; you cannot go wrong and follow Him—no one says you can.
      - B. He saves us from ourselves: tempers—dispositions—passions that drive men to self-ruin.
      - C. He saves us from those external forces and influences that wreck lives: wrong alliances—associations—habits, that bring certain destruction.
      - D. He saves us from the necessary *punishment* that must follow sin both in *this life* and in the *one to come*; "remorse here and hell hereafter."
    - III. It is an advantage because of what He *saves us to*.
      - A. He saves us to the highest type of friendship, both human and divine.
      - B. He saves us to the highest personal development.

C. He saves us to the highest state of happiness and contentment.

D. He brings us to the only place of safety regarding life and death. If we live we are happy, and if we die we are safe.

IV. It is an advantage because of what He saves to us.

A. He saves to us modern civilization; music, art, freedom, etc.

B. He saves to us the beauty of nature and the meaning of life.

C. He saves to us the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection.

1. His death means nothing for the man who does not accept the blood atonement.

2. He saves to us the hope of eternal life and happiness.

D. He saves to us His rewards, eternal privileges, and peace in heaven.

Conclusion:

Note the riches of Christ's offer.

Note the results of turning down the offer:

(1) temporary pleasure; (2) pleasures mixed with disappointment; (3) the tragic end.

You have the awful powers to accept the offers of Christ or to reject them. The sooner you accept, the fuller and richer the advantages.

## Some Difficult Situations and Escape from Them

TEXT: *In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: and he did hear my voice out of his temple, and my cry did enter into his ears* (II Samuel 22:7).

Introduction:

Confusion has characterized the human race since the fall; every nation and generation has faced its problems. The whole world is now dizzy with problems, and no one knows the way out of our national difficulties. People today are confused as never before in their lives.

I. Some common difficulties

A. Prosperity and adversity

1. They are related, usually one leading to the other; shirt sleeves to purple robes, and the reverse. Prosperous, and then decay sets in.

2. As a nation, we pass from one to the other—cycles . . .

B. Labor and rest

C. Friendship and enmity; or friends and foes

1. Both make a problem.

2. You face danger with either.

D. Society and solitude

E. Health and sickness

F. Satan and temptation

II. Escape from these situations

A. Faith; David said, "I will trust in the Lord."

1. Hope and optimism are a great aid.

2. Trust in God is a mighty support.

B. Prayer, "I will cry unto the Lord."

C. Our own righteousness

1. Clean hands

2. An unselfish heart

3. Justice toward God and toward men

4. Our character will determine God's conduct toward us.

D. Divine providence

III. How does God deal with us, or what is His method?

A. He sustains us in them.

B. He delivers us from them.

Conclusion:

Everyone today has some kind of trouble. Name your trouble—sins not forgiven—heart not cleansed—problems not solved. What can I do? (1) Do what is right; (2) Trust God, and cry unto God; (3) Give God the honor when delivered, and humble yourself before Him.

## The Greatest Giver

TEXT: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life* (John 3:16).

Introduction:

The philosophy of life is contained in two great propositions: receiving and giving. The lower we sink, the more we stress the receiving; the higher we go, the more we stress the giving side of life. One proposition ends in self; the other ends in God. Let us notice—

I. The Giver

A. He is a Person; not a thing, not an influence, not a mere power.

B. He is a wise Sovereign; He is looking after this world.

C. He is a true and faithful Friend; one who knows all about us, and cares; the truest of friends.

D. He is both good and great; this adds dignity to the gift.

II. The Gift—His Son

A. His very best and most valuable

B. What He could not spare—a Sacrifice

1. He became poor that others might be rich.

2. Emptied himself that others might be full.

3. Went down that others might rise.

C. For all

D. Ample and sufficient to meet every and all needs

E. Himself—not what He possessed

III. The recipient

A. In great need

B. Unworthy

C. Ungrateful; not wanting the gift, and not appreciating it after it is bestowed

D. You and I are the recipients. *Are you glad?*

IV. The benefits—eternal life

A. He has given us food and clothes.

B. He has given us life here on earth, physical life.

C. This gift answers all the problems of life, or questions.

1. The question of sin
2. The question of suffering and sorrow
3. Take the sting out of death
4. Settles the question of another life
- D. Eternal life is our great benefit.

V. The passion back of the gift in the heart of the Giver—love.

A. He seeks only our good; expects no selfish reward.

- B. He gave because he loved.
- C. He still loves us and helps us.

VI. Our responsibility

A. We cannot accept a gift without responsibility.

B. We should love one another and die for one another.

C. We must honor and serve God, our great Benefactor.

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## The Heart God Does Not Despise

TEXT: *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise* (Psalms 51:17).

Introduction:

The heart occupies a place of prominence in the Bible; it is often mentioned; it is always mentioned as of supremacy over all else; the other parts of the scripture finally point to it.

There are hearts of many kinds; good, evil, wicked, humble, corrupt, proud, rebellious, pure.

Here is a special heart that David brings to God.

I. Some things David did not try to bring:

- A. Wasted years
- B. An atonement for his sin
- C. A just plea for not having done better

- D. Good morals
- E. A plea of weakness
- F. A claim that all men had to sin.

II. What is a broken and contrite heart?

A. Negatively:

1. Not one broken over business disaster

2. Not one broken over loss of home ties, deaths

3. Not one broken over home tragedies

4. Not one broken over disappointment in love

5. Not one broken over the discovery of hidden sin

B. Positively:

1. A heart convinced of sin

2. A heart that confesses the sin of which convinced

3. One that renounces all personal merit, seeking mercy

4. One that regrets the sin—not because found out—but from principle

5. Basis of regret because of God; Godward thought

6. One that does not cavil about the punishment deserved

7. One that seeks deliverance by correction of cause, change of nature. Sins forgiven avail not unless heart is changed.

III. God's attitude toward that heart

A. He listens to its call: "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

B. His attitude is one of pity.

C. He forgives; "He is faithful and just to forgive."

D. He restores; treats us as if we had not sinned.

E. He changes the heart (thank God!). Every fiber is changed.

F. He heals the heart, comforts it.

IV. Practical application

A. Today, many souls have sinned.

B. Many have unforgiven sins on their record now.

C. Those sins are of commission, and omission.

D. You have rejected Jesus Christ.

E. You have refused Him that which is His—your life, your time.

F. You may bring a broken and contrite heart now, or carry away a rebellious heart.

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## At the Center of One's Life, or A Supreme Issue

TEXT: *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God* (Acts 8:21).

Introduction:

Philip had a great revival in Samaria. When the news spread to Jerusalem, Peter and John came down. They prayed for the people to receive the Holy Ghost. Simon, who had been baptized, saw them lay hands on the people, and the Holy Ghost was received. He, desiring this power, offered money for the power that he might use it. The reply is the text, "... thy heart is not right in the sight of God."

I. The importance of the heart life.

A. It determines the quality of character—good or bad—negative or positive—righteous or unrighteous.

B. It determines, more than all else, the nature of our ethics; more than mind or knowledge; out of it are the issues of life.

C. It determines, more than any other one factor, success or failure.

1. Mind never can accomplish its best results without the heart.

2. It gives energy to effort as nothing else will.

3. It takes the friction and drudgery out of endeavor.

D. It fixes our contacts, either to the low or the higher things in life; to sin or to God; to good or to evil.

E. It finally settles our relationship to God—determines happiness.

- II. Note the heart that is right with God.  
 A. One that is cleansed from sin  
 B. One that accepts the wisdom of God as superior to his own wisdom and judgment  
 C. One that seeks the will of God in perfect obedience  
 D. One that puts God and His fellowship supreme over all else—things and people  
 E. A heart with a *right* motive—unselfish, true  
 F. A heart with a fixed determination—Godward
- III. Note the advantages of a heart that is right with God.  
 A. It throws all of life in proper relation.

- B. It delivers from a thousand temptations to go wrong.  
 C. It gives life a fixedness and decision.  
 D. It makes for contentment and happiness.  
 E. It prepares us for the end of the journey.  
 IV. How to get a right heart.  
 A. Not by good works.  
 B. Not by resolution or human effort.  
 C. It is done through Christ—He alone can make the heart right.  
 V. My responsibility.  
 A. To want a right heart  
 B. To lay myself before God  
 C. To trust in Christ and His blood

## Sermon Outlines from the Files of the late Rev. H. H. Wise

TEXT: *His anger endureth but a moment;  
 In his favour is life:  
 Weeping may endure for a night,  
 But joy cometh in the morning*  
 (Psalms 30:5).

### Introduction:

Obvious antithesis in this text: His anger—His favour; His anger lasts but a moment—His favour lasts all through life.

In the second part of the text we see a double antithesis: weeping set over against joy; the night set over against the morning.

Picture of two guests: One is bright-robed, coming fresh in the dewy morning. The guest if the night comes weeping. The text suggests the transitoriness of sorrow and the permanence of joy. The whole is a leaf from the Psalmist's experience, who commemorates his deliverance from affliction and sorrow.

### I. Seasons of sorrow.

A. Sorrow comes in the night.

B. Sorrow becomes our guest in the night of broken health.

C. Sorrow comes to tarry with us in the night of bereavement.

It may be for an infant, or friend or lover, or mother or father, etc. The heathen are pathetic who weep in their darkness, while the Christians weep, "but sorrow not as those who have no hope."

### II. The sojourn of sorrow.

A. Sorrow always comes with a mission.

*The dark brown mould's upturned  
 By the sharp-pointed plow,  
 And I've a lesson learned.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*My life is but a field*

*Stretched out beneath God's sky,  
 Some harvest rich to yield.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Where grows the golden grain,  
 Where faith—where sympathy?  
 In a furrow cut by pain.*

B. Sorrow tarries only for a night.  
 It takes its departure when its mission is fulfilled. Text is pointed in reference to this discipline.

### III. The supplanter of sorrow

A. Joy comes in the morning. Dark-robed guest gives way to the bright-robed joy. Sorrow transformed into joy. Trial is a truer refiner of character than is pleasure.

B. One can anticipate the morning even in the night of sorrow. God will wipe away all tears. Illustration of the eagle outriding the storm.

## The Romance of Faith

TEXT: *And Peter answered him and said,  
 Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee  
 on the water* (Matt. 14:28).

### Introduction:

We owe much of this account of the miracle to Matthew alone. Singularly enough, there is no mention of it in Mark's Gospel, supposed to have been written under Peter's guidance. Maybe he was ashamed of the circumstance—maybe he didn't want to be prominent—maybe because it was written from the Roman Catholic viewpoint.

In it there are charming lessons for everyone; it is a fascinating story; it makes one more hopeful and a better person.

### Scene I

Small boat in the midst of an awful storm that had lasted all night. A dozen men fighting for their lives; grappling with death; tired and discouraged. One says, "If the Master were only here!"

To their terror, they saw someone approaching. He came in a way that they knew not (He usually does). His dealings with us often are not understood by us. They were afraid even to the point of terror. Jesus said, "It is I; be not afraid."

### Scene II

Note the stimulating effect of the presence of Jesus on Peter. Doubts and fears

are all gone now; hope reigns supreme. In him is born a beautiful and reckless faith.

It was this Presence that made disciples speak, "We cannot but speak . . ."

It was this Presence that made martyrs go to the stake.

Peter's action shows the instinctive shoot of love in his heart for Jesus. His desire was to be by His side. "Bid me come unto thee," was far more important than, "Bid me come unto thee on the water."

Never once has Jesus praised a calculative, cold faith; His blessings come to those who trust with a romantic, reckless faith. Illustration: Woman with issue of blood—Syrophenician woman—Leper returning to give praise—Sick man let down through the roof.

### Scene III

Jesus sets His sanction on Peter's request. "Come," He says.

Peter might have said, "Lord, I would like to come, but there is water, waves, storm, etc." But no. He might have said, "I'll think it over and maybe try someday." But no. Peter drops his oar, draws his girdle tight about himself.

Imaginative response of the disciples:

Andrew, "Sit down. We can hardly stay on top now."

Thomas, "Man, you are mad. Nobody can walk on water."

John, "I don't see how, but—maybe!"

Peter, "I can, by the help of the Lord."

Better fail again and again than never to try. It does look bad, but Peter steps out.

### Scene IV

Note that while in the boat he had three or four planks under him—just trusting in a few planks. What does Peter now have? The sure word of God—the arms of Omnipotence—dropped into hands that hold the seas and the universe. Before Peter could sink, God's arm would have to break. Mad as it may have seemed, Peter never was so safe!

Peter did walk on the water; true, he didn't go far, but he walked. He might have gone farther; it wasn't Christ's fault he failed.

### Scene V

What happened to Peter. Fortunately, the Bible tells us. When he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid. He believed in his hindrances more than his helps. Instead of looking at the tempests, step off on God's promises. There is only one door through which Christ comes to help—the door of trust. Christ's power to hold him up was cut off by doubt. How far he sank we don't know, but we do know that Christ lifted him up.

Application—suggested closing poem:

*Out of my shameful failure and loss,  
Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;  
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,  
Jesus, I come to Thee.*

*Out of the depths of ruin untold,  
Into the peace of thy sheltering fold;  
Ever hereafter Thy face to behold,  
Jesus, I come to Thee!*

## *The Compulsion of a Great Compassion*

TEXTS: *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things* (Luke 24:46-48).

*Also, They that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word* (Acts 8:4).

Introduction:

What a miraculous transformation! The disciples have emerged from darkness and defeat and now are possessed with a new hope and a new purpose. From disaster and panic, they have emerged with a dynamic.

I. They went out to represent a militant Master.

A. He is a transforming Master. Rev. 19:11-16 shows something of His conquering power.

B. Being a militant Master, He gave the world a transforming discipleship.

II. They went out to proclaim a dynamic message.

Its mission was salvation, liberation, consolation.

Its motivation was love, truth, grace, mercy, and peace.

Its field is the world.

Its soil is the human heart.

Its objective is human emancipation.

It is applicable to all classes, times, climes, and conditions.

The disciples, with the help of the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Ghost, proclaimed this message.

III. They went out on an unparalleled mission.

They went out to conquer sin—went out on a crusade—went out to evangelize the world. (Dr. Jefferson said)

Conclusion:

Jesus walked up and down the Judean and Galilean country; called twelve men, journeyed with them a few days, and left them on their faces crying, "My Lord and my God!"

He walked up and down the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, called twelve more men, Augustine, Savonarola, Huss, Luther, Calvin, and others; left them on their faces crying, "My Lord and my God!"

He walked up and down the countries bordering the Atlantic and called another twelve men—Knox, Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Spurgeon, Moody, Henry Ward Beecher, Brooks, and left them on their knees crying, "My Lord and my God!"

And still He calls us, etc.

# Sermon Skeletons

## For Advent and Easter

TEXT: *And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain* (I Cor. 15:14).

### Introduction:

Consider evidence of Resurrection.

1. The nature of the witnesses; not rich or great, but poor; had nothing to gain by such a contention if Christ had not risen.

2. The number of witnesses; enough to support the contention. All would not have lied.

3. Facts—they avow they saw.

4. Agreement of their evidence. Four Gospels quite harmonious.

5. The place in which they bore their testimony; not in a corner, but in Jerusalem, in the synagogue.

6. Time of testimony. If chicanery had entered into this, they would have waited until the ardor of the Crucifixion had died down; but they bore testimony within three days, and faced persecution for their claims.

7. The tribunals before which they gave their evidences: Jews—heathen—philosophers—rabbis—courtiers—laymen. Paul before royalty: Agrippa, Felix, Festus, and Caesar.

8. Their motive. It was not selfish, for they accepted nothing for the spreading of the good news; physically and materially they would have been better off in Judaism. Their motive was to spread the good news.

*But if Christ has not risen—*

I. We have a religion without a personality—a lifeless religion.

A. Greece said, "be moderate, know thyself."

B. Rome said, "Be strong; order thyself."

C. Confucius said, "Be superior; correct thyself."

D. Shintoism said, "Be loyal; suppress thyself."

E. Buddhism said, "Be disillusioned; annihilate thyself."

F. Hinduism said, "Be separated; merge thyself."

G. Mohammedanism said, "Be submissive; assert thyself."

H. Judasim said, "Be righteous; conform thyself."

I. Modern materialism says, "Be industrious; enjoy thyself."

J. Modern dilettantism says, "Be broad; cultivate thyself."

K. Christianity says, "Be Christlike; give thyself."

The personal element enters in. Do you find a personal element in any other religion?

II. We have a religion without a hope. "Your faith is also vain."

A. What is life without hope? Hope is an anchor—a helmet; one of the three abiding things.

B. A comforting boon as to Christ's return.

III. It ceases to be a religion and becomes merely a system of ethics with no moral support.

A. What power is there in Christ's words without the Resurrection?

B. What power is there in Christ's miracles without the Resurrection?

C. What good is the Golden Rule without a living Christ?

IV. The Bible is false—from Genesis to Revelation.

V. We have a religion of fear.

A. The last enemy is death. If Christ be not risen, then the last enemy is not destroyed.

B. But "now is Christ risen from the dead."

Only Christ could raise Lazarus; but only God could raise Christ!

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TEXT: *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do* (John 17:4).

### Introduction:

Jesus experienced both the easy and the hard way to victory.

Easy way by Hosannas; hard way by Calvary. Easy way by the Triumphal Entry; hard way by the persecution of the Cross. Easy way by the plaudits of the multitude; hard way by the Crucifixion.

The Cross is the crossing for many crossroads; the crossroad of resignation—consecration—sacrifice—victory.

But why did Jesus cry, "It is finished"? What was finished?

I. His suffering was ended.

A. No more reflections upon His holy character

B. No more questioning His veracity

C. No more sleepless nights of praying in the mountains

D. No more pharisaical quibbling

E. No more being misunderstood

F. No more betrayal by friends

G. No more welts at the whipping post

H. No more mockeries of unjust trials

I. No more crucifixion agonies

II. His day's work was done.

A. No more labor

B. No more conflict

C. No more calloused hands—aching back—fatigued brain and body

III. His mission was brought to a triumphant close.

A. His mission is to seek and save that which was lost.

B. His sacrificial death completed His task.

C. He took the sting out of death and the grave.



D. He died that we might be saved from sin.

E. He suffered "without the gate" that we might be sanctified.

1. Mercy's door is open wide.

2. Justice and the gospel are given to the poor and needy.

3. Heaven's gates swing ajar on hinges of grace and love.

4. Angels shout—devils tremble—earth rocks.

IV. His finished task, our "unfinished task."

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TEXT: *And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him (Luke 23:33).*

Introduction:

The world has many historic places, but none of such significance as Calvary. I presume that more people make loving pilgrimages to this spot than to any other one place in the world. It is made historic by what took place there.

I. Calvary is the place of forgiveness.

II. Calvary is the place of promise.

III. Calvary is the place of love.

IV. Calvary is the place of loneliness.

V. Calvary is the place of pain, suffering, and resignation.

VI. Calvary is the place of salvation.

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### ***"The Place Called Calvary"***

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

A. It was a place of pain.

B. It was a place of pardon.

C. It was a place of paradise.

Scriptural references for points.

I. "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."

II. Father forgive them; for they know not what they do."

III. "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise"—the place where sinner and Saviour meet.

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### ***Echoes of Victory from the First Easter***

TEXT: *So when . . . this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory . . . But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:54-57).*

Introduction:

Echoes of victory are found—(1) in the moral influence of Christ in a material world; (2) in the lavish and impartial bestowment of the grace of salvation; (3) in the soul's anchorage in the Infinite; (4)

in the final fulfillment of Messianic prophecy.

Echoes may be observed:

A. In every philanthropic attitude and social environment

B. In the response of Christ to every human call in time of need

C. In the response from almost every heart, showing a hunger for God.

D. Finally, in the fulfillment of the second coming of Christ

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### ***"Ecco Homo" (Behold the Man!)***

SCRIPTURE: John 19:5

I. Whom do we behold?

A. A Man whom God sent as His representative

B. The historical Man whom the Jews rejected

C. The Man whom His own disciples forsok in His hour of need

D. The Man whom the Romans slew, though instruments of a divine purpose

E. The Man who, though He received such undeserved treatment, was destined to bless and rule the world

II. What do we behold in Him?

A. The faultless One

B. The benevolent, self-sacrificing Man

C. The Man-Mediator, bringing reconciliation between God and man

D. The ideal Man; the Head and Founder of the new Christian society

III. How should we behold Him?

A. With sincere interest and concern

B. With admiration and reverence

C. With gratitude and love

D. With faith and trust

E. With consecration and obedience

F. With the hope of beholding Him again

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### ***The Cries from the Cross***

TEXT: Luke 23:33

I. The cry of divine compassion, "Father, forgive . . ."

II. The cry of promise, "To day shalt thou be with me . . ."

III. The cry of affection, "Woman, behold thy son."

IV. The cry of disappointment, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

V. The cry of human Jesus, "I thirst."

VI. The cry of resignation, "It is finished."

VII. The cry of absolute confidence, "Father, into thy hands I commend . . ."

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Other suggested titles for the Seven Sayings:

I. The Reach of Divine Compassion

II. The Promise of Paradise

III. The Last Charge of Affection

IV. The Solitude of Jesus

V. The Human Jesus

VI. The Triumph of Redemption

VII. The Triumphant Reunion

# Communion Sermon Outlines

Robert W. McIntyre

## *The Lord's Supper*

SCRIPTURE: Luke 22:14-20

### Introduction:

Notice some aspects of the Lord's Supper.

I. It is a commemoration (a memorial, v. 19); looking at the past.

A. A reminder.

1. Disciples may not have seen the need of it.

2. Imagine the first Lord's Supper after He was gone.

B. A reminder to us of the Last Supper and the events of the night.

C. A reminder of One who suffered death that we might live

II. It is a communion (a fellowship, v. 15, "with you"); looking at the present.

A. With Christ.

1. We grow quiet—He speaks.

2. He examines—we search our hearts.

B. With fellow Christians.

1. Around a common table.

2. The altar—a great equalizer.

3. Distinctions and differences forgotten—love prevails.

C. More than mere remembrance, it is present experience.

III. It is a covenant (a pact or contract, v. 18); looking at the future.

A. He has made a vow too sacred to be broken.

B. A vow to us to live in covenant relationship.

C. Remembering, communing, makes us want to serve.

## *Christ, Our Passover*

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Exodus 12:1-17

TEXT: *For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us* (I Cor. 5:7).

### Introduction:

The text refers to the Jewish Feast of the Passover; the sacrifice takes the name of the feast. An Old Testament type must appear in the New Testament; unless it does we may spiritualize, but not typify.

I. The Problem

A. Israel in Egyptian slavery.

B. Typifies bondage of sin.

C. God makes a way of deliverance.

D. The Passover—slaying of the first-born.

E. God provides way of escape for Israel.

II. The Provision

A. The Lamb

1. Male lamb—strength—courage and faith of Christ

2. Tested four days for blemish—Christ tested by scribes, Pharisees, Satan

3. Slain

a) In the evening, shortly after noon

b) Christ's triumphal entry occurred on anniversary of day of choosing lamb.

c) Christ died at the time the Passover was being killed.

4. Blood applied—His blood

a) Slaying not sufficient

b) Death angel could tell only by seeing the applied blood.

c) Was not applied to threshold lest it be trampled underfoot.

d) His blood must be applied to our hearts.

B. The Feast

1. Lamb roast with fire

a) God's wrath against sin

b) Directed at Sin-bearer

2. Unleavened bread — separation from evil

3. Bitter herbs—reminder of Egypt

4. "Let nothing remain"

a) To prevent spoiling (hot climate)

b) Things offered to God kept from corruption

c) Christ ("Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.")

5. Eat with girded loins

a) Wore long garments

b) Girded—kept tucked up for traveling, labor, service

6. Feet shod

a) Customary to eat with shoes removed

b) Meant readiness

7. Staff in hand, ready to surmount obstacles.

8. Eat in haste

a) Destroying angel and enemies coming

b) Flee Egypt—flee from sin

9. "Ye shall keep it a feast for ever"

a) Kept faithfully until destruction of Jerusalem

b) Jews now observe Feast of Passover without sacrifice

c) Why? The One Sacrifice has been offered, and God will not allow the anti-type to be carried on, since the Great Type has appeared.

d) Christians now keep the Passover as the Lord's Supper

e) We partake of the bread and wine, symbols of Him who was the true Passover lamb.

f) Since it was commanded "for ever" we shall probably partake of it with Him in heaven; "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

TEXT: *But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom* (Matt. 26:29).

I. Notice the ordinance.

A. Not a saving ordinance—it is for those already saved.

B. Bread reminds us of our weakness and dependence.

C. Also, reminds us of the goodness of God in supplying our physical needs. What bread is to the body, Christ is to the soul.

II. The breaking of the bread reminds us of the wounds and bruises on the body of our Lord. Reminds us of the tortures of His soul for the redemption of a lost world.

III. The fruit of the vine reminds us that we are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

IV. Ordinance not only recognizes the death of Christ as a past event, but reminds us that He is coming again. We will continue the remembrance until His mediatorial work is done.

V. Notice the spirit in which this ordinance is to be observed.

A. Humility and forgiveness

B. Love

C. No ill feelings or hatreds, national or individual

VI. If ordinance is properly observed, it will strengthen our character and nerve our arm for war. Meditation and communion are character builders; "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."

VII. This ordinance points toward the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

A. In the text He made an appointment with us.

B. Will you keep this appointment?

III. We have the word of His patience; "thou hast kept the word of my patience" (v. 10).

A. Keep patience in tribulations

B. Keep patience in tasks

C. Keep patience in trust

IV. We have the word of His protection, "I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation."

A. Assisting us to escape temptation

B. Assuring us of enablement in temptation

C. Awarding us for enduring temptation

V. We have the word of His promise (see vv. 12-13).

A. Promise to the conquerors, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple." Assured of a place to serve in His Church.

B. Promise of the city, the "new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God."

C. Promise of the crowning, "That no man take thy crown."

## Revelation 3:14-22

Introduction:

The Laodicean church evidently represents the spiritual condition of the Church approaching the last days. It is distressed with indifference and self-satisfaction. The Lord was not dwelling in it, but at the door, seeking to enter.

I. The visitation, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock" (v. 20).

A. The Person at the door. "The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (v. 14). God's word is final. "The Amen." God's witnessing is faithful. God's work is first. He is the Creator and Cause of all.

B. The plea. "I stand at the door, and knock."

1. Let us hear the knock.

2. Let us heed the knock, and open to Him.

C. The promise, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

1. Receive Him by faith.

2. Rejoice in fellowship.

3. Reign in fullness.

II. The Voice. "If any man hear my voice."

A. The voice of conviction; "Thou art neither cold nor hot."

1. Lukewarm in love

2. Lukewarm in living

3. Lukewarm in laboring

B. The voice of counsel; "I counsel thee" (vv. 17-18).

1. From spiritual poverty to spiritual riches; "buy of me gold"

2. From spiritual nakedness to spiritual clothing; "white raiment"

3. From spiritual blindness to spiritual vision; "eyesalve"

## Expositions from Revelation

T. M. Anderson

### Revelation 3:7-13

*Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown (v. 11).*

Introduction:

A study of the message delivered to the church in Philadelphia shows that the emphasis is placed upon keeping the Word of God. We are exhorted to hold fast to this Eternal Word, and by so doing we shall receive the crown at His coming.

I. We have the word of the Person (v. 7).

A. The character of God, "He that is holy"

B. The certitude of good, "He that is true"

C. The custodian of government, "He that hath the key of David"

II. We have the word of His pleasure; "to know that I have loved thee." (see vv. 8-9)

A. The open door, "I have set before thee an open door."

1. Door to liberty

2. Door to life

3. Door to labor

B. The obedient devotion, "hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

1. Kept His word of witness

2. Word of His will

3. Word to watch

C. The voice of chastening: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (v. 19); repent or be punished.

III. The victory. "To him that overcometh (v. 21).

A. Overcome the spiritual decline; victory rather than defeat.

B. Overcome by the Saviour's indwelling; "even as I also overcame." Our victory is through His victory.

C. Overcome to share His dominion; "will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

### **"First Things Forsaken"** (from, "Searching the Scriptures")

*Thou hast left thy first love* (Rev. 2:4).

Introduction:

This truth is a disclosure of the first step in a departure from God. At the close of the epistle to this church is the exhortation of the Spirit, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (v. 7). There must be the disposition to hear what is spoken. Some may lack this willing attention and be left without further word from God (see Matt. 13:15-16). Let us give ear to the message of the Lord spoken by the Spirit.

I. The First Love. "Thy first love." First love means chief and pre-eminent love; the love that fulfills all the law of devotion and duty to God and man.

A. Love is first placed in the Lord. To love the Lord with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength is the first duty of man. God must be given the first place in our affections before—

1. Persons
2. Possessions
3. Positions of honor and fame

B. Love is first to evaluate labors. "For my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted" (v. 3). Despite this fact of faithful labors, God was displeased because of

a departure from love. A man would much prefer the love of his wife above her labors. A hired man can do work; but a wife's love is far more important than her services in the home. (Study verses 2-3 and note what one may have that is commendable, yet be wanting in love for God). Love is before—

1. Patience in works
2. Proving of works of others
3. Perseverance of works; "not fainted"
- C. Love is first as a condition of life.

One who forsakes the love of Christ forsakes the life in Christ. His love

1. Provides life
2. Produces life
3. Protects life

II. The Forsaken Lord; "Because thou hast left." There is nothing in the context to show that this decline had been caused by any mastering force of Satan. It shows that it was done by a willingness on the part of the individual. It does not say, "Thou hast been forced to leave thy first love." Again, it is not stated what had brought about his act of the will. The very silence of God implies that they knew the cause of the leaving of love. A few suggestions as to causes are in order:

A. Conflicts that were not conquered (v. 7)

B. Cares that were allowed to congest us

C. Compromise that surrendered convictions

1. Fears of persons
2. Fears of persecutions
3. Fears of privations

III. The Fallen Life. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen" (v. 5).

A. Remember: The Place—the place of His pleasure—the place of power.

B. Repent: A sorrow for sin; a supplication to the Saviour; a surrender.

C. Return: "Do thy first works." First step, forsaking sin; second, faith in the Saviour; third, fully confessing the need to Christ. This is the way to recovery.

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## **Prayer Meeting Talks on Holiness** **From the 119th Psalm**

*Prepared by L. Wayne Sears*

### **11. The Constancy of Holiness**

PSALMS 119:81-88

TEXT: *I hope in thy word* (v. 81).

#### **INTRODUCTION**

There is encouragement and help in these words of the Psalmist, for they reveal the fact that there do come times of discour-

agement and defeat for all of us. No matter how we may try, there will be times of despair—times when the outlook is dark, and there seems no way out. But in the midst of distresses and persecutions, with the world against him, his own soul dried up, and even God not near, the Psalmist holds on to his hope; "I hope in thy word." David

could say, "When the outlook is not good, try the uplook." When sins and sorrows beset, hope in God, believe in Him, and look to His faithfulness and mercy. This is the constancy of holiness, the trust in God even in the midst of evil circumstances.

There is given here a dramatic picture of woes and troubles. David complains of his enemies; he knows that his own flesh and heart are about to fail; but in the depths of his sorrow, he calls on God and believes for the quickening power of the Spirit.

### I. HE COMPLAINS OF HIS ENEMIES

To say that none of us has enemies is to deny what we know is true. There are enemies of the soul, enemies of our good, enemies of all that we hold dear that seek to devour us all. The Psalmist delineates his enemies in a way that sounds all too authoritative. It almost seems that he has seen and known the enemies of his own soul.

He complains that they are proud, and that they are sinners (v. 85). Sin and sinners are the enemies of the life of holiness, and it is a good thing to recognize that irrefutable fact. The things of the world never can help us on to God. Not only are they proud, but they are treacherous, for they "have digged pits for me" (v. 85). He feels that the devil has sought to trap him, as indeed we know is true. There is also the feeling of unjust persecution. Many times we are willfully misunderstood to our own discredit and perhaps harm, and we feel that they may "persecute me wrongfully" (v. 86). All this indicates that, in heart and conduct, the enemies of the Christian are in rebellion to God and His law. They do wrong and intend evil. "They had almost consumed me" (v. 87) is the complaint. Would that we today could have such a clear perception of our enemies!

### II. FLESH AND HEART NEAR TO FAIL

Added to the enemies from without, there is the dramatic picture here of the soul of the Psalmist about to fail. He is almost "to the end of his rope"; his soul faints and his eyes fail. He looks about, but sees no hope. How strikingly accurate is the statement, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke" (v. 83)! Note that he had in mind the skin bottles of ancient times that were dried and shriveled and shrunken in the smoke; they were hard and ugly, of little use, and about to be consumed.

Such was the despair of soul that seemed to overwhelm the writer of these words. There is no hint of giving up or quitting, only a tearful description of his estate. Faced with a similar situation, a young man in New York City committed suicide. He felt he was helpless, hopeless, worthless, and forsaken. He left a note saying, "Cremate my body and scatter the ashes among the booze joints of New York, where I lost my soul."

### III. HE CALLS ON GOD

The constancy of holiness is revealed when this writer, who knows his true source of help, calls on God. Note these statements, "I hope in thy word," I do not "forget thy statutes," "Help thou me," and, "I forsook not thy precepts." Instead of suicide, there is succor; instead of helplessness, there is hope; instead of worthlessness, there is wealth untold. In place of scattering the ashes of the body where the soul has been lost, there is the resurrection and the glorification of the body where the soul never dies.

This is the constancy of holiness. Hope and confidence in the word and nature of God keep the soul true and constant in the midst of defeat and seeming hopelessness; and there is the sublime trust of the prayer of the 88th verse, "Quicken thou me after thy lovingkindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth." This is a plea for the kindness of God to inter-vene. Here are not the "thunders of Sinai, but the love of a Heavenly Father" (A. Clarke). Here is a comforting trust. Holiness in the heart—the abiding, cleansing Spirit of God—keeps that attitude of trust alive in our hearts, so that we can rise from "sullen earth to sing hymns at heaven's gates." For the remembrance of the sweet love of God is enough to quicken and restore the fainting soul.

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## 12. The Perfection of Holiness

PSALMS 119:89-96

TEXT: *For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven* (v. 89).

### INTRODUCTION

Holiness is a complete, perfect, eternal term. The essence of holiness emanates from the infinitely holy God. Holiness includes the crisis of sanctification, but more; it includes the life of rectitude, but more. Holiness is the essence of the moral character of God, and as such it is bound up in all the acts and attributes of God. The acts of creation were acts of holiness. The salvation of man is an act of the holiness of God. Eternity is a part of the holiness of God, for His holiness is eternal in mind and purpose.

No narrow, limited understanding of this term is sufficient to sense its grand implications. The threefold ascriptions of praise to God in Isaiah 6 are ascriptions of holiness. They include the Holy Trinity; they include the idea that God is holy in the past, the present, and the future; and they include the fact that God is holy in nature, attributes, and purposes. No wonder then, with such a vision in his sight, the prophet would cry, "Woe is me!" The Psalmist in these verses speaks of the perfection of holiness, including the perfection of holiness in creation, in salvation, and in eternity.

The concept of holiness completes, explains, and enlarges the work of God in creation. Through these words, "Thy word is settled in heaven," and, "Thou hast established the earth," we see that the work of creation was a work of holiness, and that the results of creation continue in their places because of the holiness of God. Creation of the world and all that is in it, without the essence of holiness involved, would leave the world without form and void. "They continue this day according to thine ordinances" reveals the fact that the continuance of the heavenly bodies in their courses is the result of the continued influences of the holiness of God. Holiness, then, is the perfection or completion of creation.

## II. THE PERFECTION OF SALVATION

Holiness is the perfection of salvation. "I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me" (v. 93) tells us that holiness working through the commandments of God is the quickening, life-giving agent of salvation. "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction" (v. 92) explains the fact that holiness in God demands the punishment of all the finally impenitent. (Holiness here is the motivating force of justice.)

The faithfulness of the Holy Spirit to all men is expressed thus: "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations" (v. 90), and expresses the fact that the nature of holiness demands that God shall warn, convict, and lead all men to repentance. "I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts" (v. 94) calls to attention the fact that in a real sense we belong to God by right of creation, and, so far as we will allow Him to do so, He must exert every energy in the direction of our salvation. So holiness, as the nature of God, is the motivating force in our salvation, bringing redemption to the race through the manifold grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## III. THE PERFECTION OF ETERNITY

"For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (v. 89) is the expression that holiness is the settled perfection of eternity, since "thy word" is holy and is settled there for ever. "I will never forget thy precepts" (v. 93) indicates that throughout eternity the precepts, or the moral institutes of God, will be remembered. "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations" (v. 90) indicates again the perfection of holiness for eternity. "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad" (v. 96) expresses the thought that there is an end to all the perfection of man and material things; but the commandment, or the holiness of God, is exceeding broad, and will continue through the cycles of eternity.

Everlasting law is everlasting command; it rewards with everlasting bliss or damns with everlasting fury. There are everlasting mercy and grace to enable any soul to keep the will and command of God forever, for "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations." Eternal holiness, supreme, solemn, motivating force of Almighty God! It is the perfection or completion of all the attributes of God.

Holiness is a grand theme, wider than time, broader than the universe, and endless as eternity. Let us not be narrowed down to a discussion of holiness in man alone, but breathe the air of eternity, sense the majesty of God on the throne, hear the music of the ages, then declare to a sin-cursed world that the doctrine of holiness is the grandest theme in connection with Jesus Christ upon which the mind of man may dwell or the lips of man may speak.

## 13. The Benefits of Holiness

PSALMS 119:97-104

TEXT: *O how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day* (v. 97).

### INTRODUCTION

The benefits of holiness make the life of holiness one of beauty and of blessing. Rare indeed are those who turn away from the blessing when they really receive it; for there are in it such infinite benefits that it effectually binds with cords of love all who embrace it with their whole hearts. It is no wonder that David could cry, "O how love I thy law!" He saw in the law of God such blessing and benefits that it captured his imagination, and fired him with resolve to love and meditate in it all the day.

### I. WISDOM DERIVED FROM HOLINESS

The 104th verse says, "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." Understanding is to be distinguished from the knowledge of items of information. Wisdom and understanding are the results of knowledge and considered thought. Therefore, "Through thy precepts I get understanding" simply means that, in consideration of the law and precepts of God, it is possible to come to a right understanding of sin and its consequences. The result, "therefore I hate every false way." The wisdom to know the difference between right and wrong, sin and holiness, comes from a study of the precepts or laws of God. Human reason, unaided, with no standard of conduct, never can arrive at a correct conclusion or sense of rightness. But the man who knows God and meditates in His law has a deep understanding of sin and its consequences, and is not led astray into the pitfalls of wrong and worldly indulgences.

There is also wisdom to outwit the foe; "Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me" (v. 8). The devil is

cunning and strong; wicked men are constantly setting snares for the soul, and the world besets on every hand with temptations that sound so plausible. But the sanctified one waits for the still, small voice, weighs all the pleasures of sin in the balance of the commandments of God, and finds the way of escape that is promised.

There is also wisdom, in the Word of God, that surpasses the knowledge of the ancients and of the world today. "I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation" (v. 99), and, "I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts" (v. 100). People of reputed wisdom, doctors of knowledge in its various branches, without God are of less understanding than the child of God. Accumulation of items of information does not constitute wisdom, for, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

## II. VICTORY OVER SIN

Another benefit of holiness is the constant victory over sin that is found in its experience. There are sins of omission, and sins of commission. There is both a negative and a positive aspect to the problem, but the experience of holiness solves all the angles of the need in our hearts. On the negative side, holiness keeps us from the sins of commission; "I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word" (v. 101). In order to keep the word or law of God it is necessary to avoid evil of every kind, to depart from the commission of sin, in order to live the pure life that is demanded.

Holiness also solves the positive problems of omission; "I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me" (v. 102). Too many people, after they have done with the negative, do not also include the positive. We must not fail to seek out ways of God, to continue in His law and love, remembering that negatively avoiding evil of every kind is only half the life of holiness.

Wisdom in the knowledge of right and wrong, in the overcoming of our adversaries, and understanding of the basic facts of our human existence are wonderful thoughts. It is a great benefit to know the law and be able to enjoy complete and constant victory over sin very day; but the crowning benefit of holiness is the experience of love for the law of God that is the text for this message, "O how love I thy law!" Love it for its benefits—but its greatest benefit is the boon of loving it for itself. "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (v. 103). These words express deep communion of soul, superior privileges in Christ, and a heavenly-mindedness that is alluring above the power of man to describe. We can only exclaim with David, "O how love I thy law!"

## 14. The Light of Holiness

PSALMS 119:105-112

TEXT: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path* (v. 105).

### INTRODUCTION

Holiness as a Bible theme covers all the major points of life; it includes the mind, heart, spirit, understanding, morals, thoughts, words, and deeds. Every point of life is touched and bettered by this marvelous grace of God. Holiness as light on our pathway deals with the necessity of man for guidance and leadership. Light is the antithesis of darkness; it was one of the first creations of God, and is one of the most vital necessities of life.

The late Dr. J. B. Chapman used to tell of the futility of trying to expel the darkness from a building by means of fans before turning on the light. Light by its very nature dispels darkness, so that it is unnecessary to dispel darkness—even impossible—without replacing it with light. Light and darkness are terms used to indicate the kingdoms of God and of Satan.

Light in the natural realm is necessary for immediate uses. Without light it would be impossible to write or read these words; but also, we need light to point farther than the immediate present—and of course we want light forever. One of the most awful pictures of hell is a place of "outer darkness." An automobile needs light on the dashboard to tell how fast it runs; and it needs headlights that can pierce the darkness to the distance within which it is safe to stop the car.

The light of holiness is immediate, suffices for the present; it is outreaching, points to the road ahead; and it is eternal, will last throughout eternity. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" expresses the idea that the Word of God, which Word is holy and teaches the experience of holiness, is both immediate and outreaching. The "word" of God is the law of God, is used to express the idea of law, statutes, and precepts.

### I. IMMEDIATE LIGHT

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet" speaks of immediate, step-by-step guidance; we have the precepts and principles of God to guide in everyday transactions. This light is constant and abiding, and we can know this constant fellowship. The Word of God and the experience of holiness are constant and abiding, so that as we walk we can know the constant fellowship and leadership of the Spirit in all things. A lantern in the pathway is helpful because it reveals the immediate path. The light of a million stars is of little good in a dark lane; there is the necessity of a smaller, more immediate light to point the way and reveal the pitfalls.

"The wicked have laid a snare for me"; yet because of this immediate light that re-

views such hidden traps, "I erred not from thy precepts" (v. 110). Immediate light reveals sin and the snares of sin, making safe the pathway of man.

## II. OUTREACH OF LIGHT

"And a light unto my path" indicates that there is not only a light in the immediate necessities of life, but also the long-term goals of life; not merely everyday occurrences, but also the entire plan of life. Young people can know the plan of God for life. The lantern in the lane shows only the immediate steps, but the stars fix the general direction of life. For centuries, mariners have used the silent stars to mark for them their course across the trackless reaches of ocean. The experience of holiness, through the Word of God and with the Word of God, gives plan and purpose to every yielded life, and sets the general goals while guiding the everyday steps.

## III. ETERNAL LIGHT

"Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever" (v. 111) reveals the fact that holiness gives light for eternity. The same thought is expressed in the next verse, "I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end" (v. 112). The heritage of holiness is the kingdom of everlasting light: no night, no death, no sin, but life, light, and holiness for all the bright ages of eternity!

Holiness as a guiding principle of life does not stop in the minor affairs and concerns of life, but points the way to the great goals that God has set for each of us. But it does not end there! The principle of holiness of life will not end in death, but will be the eternal felicitation of the soul when at last the end of the journey is reached, the last step is taken, the last river crossed, and the last battle won. The last mile of the way leads into the fulfillment eternally and perfectly of all that we have known in part here.

# 15. The Safety of Holiness

PSALMS 119:113-120

TEXT: *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe* (v. 117).

## INTRODUCTION

Holiness people have the safest doctrinal position of any group of Christian people. Dr. B. F. Neely has pointed out that, if the predestinationalists are correct, then we are just as well off as they are since nothing can be done, in their opinion, to change election. If those who believe in and preach unconditional security are right and we are wrong, then we are as well off as they are. If those who preach a doctrine of "sinning religion" are right, and we do have to sin every day, in word, thought, and deed, then we are no worse off than they are, and we are still as safe as any of them. But on the other hand, if we are right in any or all of these vital differences in doctrine,

then they are in a most dangerous position while we are still safe.

But there is a greater safety than that of doctrinal safety; it is the safety of the care of God as expressed in the text, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." And so long as we are depending not on our doctrine, but on our God, then we are safe regardless of the outcome of theological storms. Within this care and keeping of God there is a freedom of safety that the world knows not and cannot understand. For, "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," we are at ease from all "corroding care," sinful strife, and the attacks of the enemy of our souls. Being safe in the hands of God includes safety from the sins of the world. This is a thought that occurs time and again in this psalm; it is reasonable that it should, for sin is the great enemy of holiness.

## I. SAFE FROM SIN

The idea of safety from sin is expressed in the words, "Depart from me, ye evil-doers: for I will keep the commandments of my God" (v. 115). Here is a definite and positive statement of determination to serve God to the exclusion of the world. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually" (v. 117) is another way of saying that the experience of holiness is one of being kept from sin, for the continual keeping of the statutes of God precludes the idea and possibility of sin.

## II. SAFE FROM THE WRATH OF GOD

Another expression of safety here is that of being safe from the wrath and justice of God that shall be visited on the heads of sinners. "Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes: for their deceit is falsehood" (v. 118); "Thou putttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies" (v. 119). These verses reveal the coming wrath of God on sin and wrongdoing. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18). And again, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments" (v. 120). Far from being full of pride and false uplift, sanctified people have more fear and reverence than others; for the nearer one gets to God, the more of reverence there is.

But the experience not only keeps one safe from the sins of the world, and safe from the wrath of God, but also—

## III. SAFE IN THE KEEPING OF GOD

This is the primary meaning of the text. There is a feeling of safety within the bosom of God, a safe and sure retreat, a "shelter in the time of storm." "Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word" (v. 114). This is a picture of the soul completely yielded to God; trusting, leaning, and believing. "Uphold me according unto thy word" (v. 116) refers to the sustaining influence of the Holy



Spirit in the heart that acts as a stay and support in time of need. This hiding place and shield, this safe and sure retreat, this sustaining grace is the property and the inheritance of the life of holiness. No other hiding place beside Christ can avail; and that is the supreme safety of the experience of holiness.

In this place of safety from sin and wrath, there are songs of trust and confidence. The prize-winning picture at a contest for peaceful scenes was not the fair meadows at evening with the long shadows and the calm repose of twilight. Although that was a beautiful representation, the prize went to another scene, that of a nest of young birds near a roaring cataract and falls, protected by a strong rock. That is more the Christian scene; not the safety of absence of danger, but the safety of a sure refuge, the delight of a strong tower of defense, the surety of a Keeper in the midst of storm and trial. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe"; yes, "Abide with me, and I shall be secure despite all the dangers near by."

## 16. The Confidence of Holiness

PSALMS 119:121-128

TEXT: *I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies* (v. 125).

### INTRODUCTION

The confidence of holiness is based on knowledge, assurance, and promises. There is the knowledge of fellowship with God, the assurance of divine love and care, and the promise of good for the future. With our confidence in God, our hopes and our eyes fixed on Him, we may remain unmoved amid strife and serene amid storms. The quiet words of the text suggest a strong confidence that needs not the service of passion to proclaim its serenity. "I am thy servant" lends the air of secure calm that is unmoved by comings and goings of others.

This confidence of holiness is a copy of Christ's confidence during the wild storm on turbid Galilee. Amid the shrieking winds, rolling thunder, forked lightning, and tossing waves, the Son of God was unafraid; His was the confidence of knowledge, assurance, and quiet power. There was nothing in that wild scene to indicate hope to the disciples, but Christ looked beyond the scene to the God of heaven and earth; and He rebuked the fears of the disciples before He quieted the wind and the waves.

### I. CONFIDENCE OF FELLOWSHIP

"I am thy servant; give me understanding." These words are the statement of the confidence of knowledge of a definite relationship with God. This confidence of fellowship with God is one of the strong anchors of the experience of holiness. In the New Testament we read, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Surely there can be no more confidence-begetting

knowledge than the knowledge of unbroken communion and fellowship with God. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." The confident heart, standing consciously uncondemned in the presence of God, is the producer of that feeling of security that the world cannot know nor take away. "There's a peace in my heart that the world never gave, a peace it cannot take away." Surely this blessed confidence of acceptance with God is worth more than the fear and anxiety of the divided heart.

There is another ground of confidence in unbroken fellowship—"I have done judgment and justice" (v. 121). This declaration of unbroken faith also lends the feeling of security.

### II. CONFIDENCE OF OUR FAITH

In the midst of a wicked and ungodly world, making void the law of God, paying lip service while denying the power of God, there is the strong confidence of our faith in God that He will vindicate himself and His Word. "It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law" (v. 126). Our hope is in God; and, though the wicked go unpunished and ungodliness reigns in the land, still there is the confidence in God that one day there will come a reckoning.

Because the wicked and sinful world holds the law of God in disfavor and contempt, yet will I love it the more. After the verse, "They have made void thy law," come these words, "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." The falling away of the wicked shall not affect my faith in God; for the more they despise, the more I will hold to the law of God. For there is the validity of the Bible, the validity of salvation and God's law expressed, "Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way" (v. 128).

### III. CONFIDENCE OF FINAL ACCEPTANCE

The experience of holiness assures one of final acceptance before the throne of God as no other experience of life. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God," and, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," do not worry or frighten; rather are they blessed promises of coming victory. The plea of David, "Be surety for thy servant for good" (v. 122), reveals the longing for this final bliss.

The confidence of holiness is one of faith and trust in God. It is not the blind presumption of wishful thinking; but it is assurance that is grounded in present fellowship, strengthened by the knowledge of God's purposes as revealed to us by our faith, and the further assurance of final acceptance before the throne. "I am thy servant" expresses this confidence of David that all is well. A well-known preacher used for a topic for a funeral sermon, "Piety

Produces Strong Confidence," and he included in piety all that we accept in the matter of acceptance before God.

## 17. The Standard of Holiness

PSALMS 119:129-136

TEXT: *Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me* (v. 133).

### INTRODUCTION

God has a standard of life for each of us to live. We are each one responsible according to the amount of light we have. The Swazis of Africa are not judged by our standards, and neither can we felicitate ourselves because we are above them. Following in the light of God will lead one inevitably to the standard of holiness. Walking in the light that we have is the standard of obedience for each of us. As long as we are obedient to the light we have, we have no fear and no need for doubt; for as we follow along, the light grows brighter, the path clearer, and the way sweeter.

### I. THE STANDARD OF HOLINESS

Our text declares the everlasting standard of holiness as it is revealed in the Word of God. "Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (v. 133). The first phrase, "Order my steps in thy word," speaks of obedience and faithfulness in walking in the increasing light. "Let not any iniquity have dominion over me" is the Old Testament statement of what Paul said, ". . . . For sin shall not have dominion over you" (see Rom. 6:12-14). Of course, there is a sense in which this is not complete, for it implies the presence of sin that is under control; but as nearly as the Old Testament explains it, this is the life of holiness.

Later revelations of the power of God teach us that sin not only does not have dominion, but also it has no existence in the life of the sanctified. But these words demonstrate the approach to the life and standard of holiness when they plead for rectitude of life and conduct. Many people live even below this standard, for they forget that dominion implies the idea of obedience; and Paul write, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:16). And it is but a step, an all-important step, from this point of freedom from the dominion of sin to the freedom from sin expressed in these words, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:22).

### II. REVEALING THE STANDARD

We have said that walking in the light leads us inevitably to the life of holiness. David understood something of this when he said, "The entrance of thy words giveth

light" (v. 130). It seems to be a corroboration of our statement that God will reveal His will and standard to every earnest, seeking soul. We need not be afraid that we will come to the judgment and find there standards of which we are ignorant; for the entrance of the Word of God in our souls gives light on the will and purpose of God, and teaches us what we need to know with relation to it. The attitude of prayerful expectancy is shown in these words, "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes" (v. 135). With that kind of desire, and obedient walking in the light, no soul will miss the way to the City of Gold, and God will reveal His will all along the way.

### III. KEEPING THE STANDARD

Of course, after we have known the standard, and it has been revealed to us, there is still the necessity of keeping that standard. Many times the holiness people have been accused of pride at this point; we are accused of being proud of the fact that we do not sin. Such an attitude is not compatible with the facts; for here, of all places, do we invoke the blessing and help of Almighty God. Like David we pray, "Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me" (v. 132); and "Deliver me from the oppression of man" (v. 134). The sincere attitude of holiness people here is in our deep, sincere desire and prayer for the help of God that we may keep the standards that are revealed.

There is only one standard of holiness in the Bible, while individual men are judged on the basis of their light. "Be ye holy: . . . for I the Lord, . . . am holy," was the word of God to Moses; and it stands today as the ultimate goal of our achievements. Whether we be holiness people or not, God's standards are the same; and we are responsible to God for our treatment of the light we have, and the obedience with which we walk in the light that He sheds on our pathway. May God grant to us that we may ever be found faithful in the fulfillment of His standards. May God grant that we may ever walk in all the light that He sheds on our pathway, and may we ever constantly desire and seek after a more perfect understanding of the will of God.

## 18. The Description of Holiness

PSALMS 119:137-144

TEXT: *Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it* (v. 140).

### INTRODUCTION

In this division, David talks to God concerning His law; it is a prayer of meditation and adoration. Perhaps, as a king, he realized his own inefficiency, and the lack in his government; but he looks to God, where alone is found perfection.

### I. SOURCE OF HOLINESS

"Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments" (v. 137). These words

indicate that the true source of all holiness and righteousness is God; nowhere else can we go to find the needs of our souls satisfied. Also, David realized that this righteousness is everlasting; for he remarks, "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth" (v. 142). Only from a perfectly pure fountain can we obtain pure water. There is no need to expect pure holiness from a sinful world; the source of our righteousness is God.

## II. HOLINESS IS RIGHTEOUSNESS

"Upright are thy judgments" (v. 137) lets us know that one of the ingredients that go to make up and describe holiness is that of righteousness. "Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful" (v. 138). Righteousness as a part of holiness simply indicates that much so-called holiness fails here, for its standards of rectitude are not up to the standards of righteousness in God. Some "holiness churches" allow sin, infidelity, worldliness, and kindred sins. Only a strict standard of righteousness will fulfill God's requirement.

## III. HOLINESS IS FAITHFULNESS

"Thy testimonies . . . very faithful" (v. 138). Faithfulness is another way of saying that holiness is constant and regular in its fulfillment of the demands of God. Faithfulness to the doctrine, faithfulness in performance of known duty, faithfulness in devotion—all kinds of faithfulness to God are a part of the life of holiness.

## IV. HOLINESS IS PURITY

"Thy word is very pure" (v. 140) indicates that the love of God is a refining process. Purity indicates love, and begets regard and faithfulness. This word "pure" reminds us of the refining fire of the Spirit that brings the blessing of a pure heart. Purity is one of the essentials of holiness and must be included in any description of that grace.

## V. HOLINESS IS EVERLASTING

An earlier article has indicated that holiness is broader than time and is as long as eternity. It is expressed again here by the words, "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness" (v. 142).

## VI. HOLINESS IS TRUTH

The standard of holiness is that of close adherence to the truth. "Thy law is the truth" (v. 142) indicates that there is a standard here of correction and truth. It is reminiscent of the words of Jesus, "I am . . . the truth." Holiness includes absolute truth and rectitude; shadings of the truth for matters of "policy" are not compatible with true holiness—for this is one of the ingredients that make holiness what it is.

## VII. HOLINESS IS DELIGHTFUL

"Thy commandments are my delights" (v. 143) indicates that this experience is not that of long-faced, sad-visaged formalism. Rather, it is the delightful, refreshing, inspiring presence of God that delights the heart and thrills the soul.

## VIII. HOLINESS IS LIFE

"Give me understanding, and I shall live" (v. 144) reveals the idea that holiness brings life. Spiritual life is ever different from spiritual death, and the atmosphere of holiness is the atmosphere of life and strength. An understanding of God and His ways leads to spiritual life—life that is eternal.

## IX. HOLINESS IS FOR ALL

"I am small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts" (v. 141) indicates that this experience is for all; not any privileged few—no monopoly on the experience, but all may have it, from the least to the greatest. Holiness, composed of righteousness, faithfulness, purity, truth, and life that is delightful and everlasting, is also within the reach of any and all. By coming to the source, we may drink our fill.

Because of all this, holiness is obligatory, it is desirable, and it is more valuable than any earthly treasure. Seek it, desire it, obtain it, retain it, cherish it. One day it will present you "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

## 19. Seeking Holiness

PSALMS 119:145-152

TEXT: *I cried with my whole heart: hear me, O Lord: I will keep thy statutes* (v. 145).

### INTRODUCTION

These eight verses indicate the steps to take on the path to holiness and the pure heart. All want to know how to find rest in God; and we have here the necessary steps to take in order to obtain that promised rest. These steps are simple and plain, as the way of holiness is and ought to be; God has promised that even a fool need not err therein.

### I. WHEN TO SEEK

The time to seek the blessing of holiness is expressed in these words: "I prevented [preceded] the dawning of morning, and cried" (v. 147); and, "Mine eyes prevent [precede] the night watches" (v. 148). Thus the time to seek this blessing is now—any time, any season; in season and out. There is expressed that continual longing that must characterize the soul until the blessing be obtained. We are not to give up in despair, but to continue early and late to seek for God. Surely we should not have to beg people to seek this blessed experience; yet such is the case. And if there are these definite times to seek God, surely, brethren, there are just as many times when it should be preached and exhorted and pressed upon men and women with the insistence of the Spirit. There is no time like the present to speak out and exhort and seek for the fullness of the blessing of God.

### II. WHOM TO SEEK

This is one of the most important steps in seeking holiness; we must be careful to state *whom* we seek, and not *what* we seek. David said, "I cried unto thee" (v. 146). He

wanted God—not the gifts of God, but God himself in fullness and in blessing. “I shall keep thy testimonies” (v. 146) is a picture of God at our side, and keeping God’s testimonies again emphasizes that we seek a Person. So many people who come to our altars have heard so many testimonies about an experience that they come seeking a blessing; they are not sure just what it is; but they know, or think they know, that it is a wonderful feeling. We should be careful to instruct them to seek God.

### III. HOW TO SEEK

Another direction in seeking holiness is how to seek; the only way in which the blessing will come is by the way of the whole heart’s seeking. “I cried with my whole heart” (v. 145); just a halfway measure, a sort of indifferent search, will not prevail. We must be sure that, when people seek God, they seek Him to the exclusion and crucifixion of all else; only thus will they be able to find His grace and help.

Then, in how to seek, David recognized that faith also was necessary. “Hear my voice . . . O Lord” (v. 149) is a statement of his faith that God would hear and answer. To the man seeking God with no faith and no belief, there comes no answer; for, when we come to God, we must “believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” The simple, trusting childlike faith that believes and trusts when the whole being is on the altar will not be denied. God will answer that kind of faith.

### IV. OPPOSITION TO SEEKING

One thing often overlooked is that there is always opposition to seeking holiness. “They draw nigh that follow after mischief” (v. 150) is a recognition of the fact that enemies are not far away when one seeks God. There is always opposition, and it is often amazing how many barriers will arise on the path to God. All these must be surmounted if we are to continue. Let us remember that barriers are but steppingstones and, when surmounted, will lead us on to God.

### V. RESULTS OF SEEKING

The grand results of the seeking soul are the blessings of the God of salvation. “Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth” (v. 151). God has promised to be near to every seeking soul, and all His commandments are truth. That is, the command to seek God is automatically a promise of the aid and help of God when we draw nigh. “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8); “Seek, and ye shall find,” are the grand promises of the Scriptures. No soul need to be left alone or outside the fold; for always there is the seeking Shepherd, who loves us and has given His life in seeking us.

## 20. The Eternity of Holiness

PSALMS 119:153-160

TEXT: *Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever* (v. 160).

### INTRODUCTION

According to Hebrew scholars the word “beginning,” as it is used here, is the same root word as the opening words of the Book of Genesis. We may infer from this that “thy word” is true from “the beginning,” not only from the beginning of time, but also from the beginning of its writing. It must be true, for it flows from the Fountain of Truth. Since the Word itself is true, we may safely assume that the doctrines it declares also are true, for they are a part of the Word.

From these deductions we can come to the conclusion that holiness, as one of the doctrines of the revealed Word of God, is true from the beginning. We may call it the eternal truth of holiness; true from “in the beginning” unto the farthest reach of eternity. Taking this for our starting place, this paragraph reveals four aspects of the eternity of holiness. It reveals eternal hatred for sin, eternal mercy for the believer, eternal love for the law of God, and the eternal quality of the judgments of God.

#### I. ETERNAL HATRED FOR SIN

Holiness as a term and as a doctrine is forever opposed to sin in all its forms and manifestations; the two are mutually antagonistic and mutually exclusive. Where sin abounds, holiness languishes. When holiness is strong, there sin is driven from the field; neither can abide in the presence of the other. One or the other will triumph and drive the other away, depending on the will of the person involved.

An expression of this is found in these words, “Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes” (v. 155). These words seem to reveal to us the fact that the wicked are not within reach of salvation because they seek not the statutes of God; in other words, they seek after sin, and thus holiness is driven from them. Another expression of the same thing is, “I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word” (v. 158).

#### II. ETERNAL MERCY FOR BELIEVERS

Holiness includes eternal hatred of sin, and also eternal mercy for the believer. “Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord” (v. 156) shows us that, for those who seek God, His tender mercies are great and deep and wide. That this is true we must believe, for it is the logical conclusion of the concept that holiness is eternally opposed to sin. The antithesis of sin in our lives must be met by the holiness of God in the expression of great and wonderful mercy. No other conclusion could be valid, in the very nature of things; and it is a wonderful blessing to know that God does have great mercy for those who seek after Him. He is long-

ing that we shall come to Him, and He is waiting to bless all who will come in faith believing.

### III. ETERNAL LOVE FOR THE LAW OF GOD

Holiness in the heart begets an eternal love for the law of God. This is also a logical necessity. The law of God is eternally opposed to sin, just as is the holiness of God; therefore the law of God and holiness will reveal to each the love of kindred ideas and concepts. And, in the heart of man, which is the important field of combat, holiness will lead to a deep, abiding, and eternal love for the laws of God.

Another paragraph begins, "O how love I thy law!" and it is one of the natural results of holiness that such should be the case. A love for the law of God reveals itself in a heart that is interested in keeping that law, and counts it not a heavy burden, but a wonderful privilege. That is to be distinguished from the poor, misguided souls who count the standards of holiness too high and too "strict" to be kept.

### IV. ETERNAL QUALITY OF HIS JUDGMENTS

"Every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever" (v. 160) seems to state that the judgments of God, His standards of right and wrong, will endure forever. There is such an eternal quality about holiness that it reveals the fact that its conclusions also are eternal.

Thus we have the eternal truth of holiness. This holiness is based on the eternal commandments that follow the eternal standards and reveal the eternal love of the eternal, omnipotent God. No wonder we sing the glad song, "Holiness Forevermore!" We can lift the glad hymn "Holiness unto the Lord," and know that it will continue throughout the ages as the anthem of the King, the glorious theme that is the occupation of the four beasts and the four and twenty elders, the ascription of "Holiness unto the Lord!"

## 21. The Peace of Holiness

PSALMS 119:161-168

TEXT: *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them* (v. 165).

### INTRODUCTION

The peace that holiness brings to the soul is the peace of confidence, obedience, and devotion. The poet wrote, "Nothing sweeter can be known than full surrender to the perfect will of God eternally." There is, in the words of this majestic octave, a description of peace so sublime, so eternal, and so sweet that there is nothing that can make it to offend.

Another translation says, "Great peace have they which love thy law, and theirs is the open road." The idea expressed is that great peace comes from God; peace so sublime, so sweet, and so all-pervading and all-encompassing that the road to heaven stretches away into the future, an open road, with no stumbling blocks, only stepping-stones, and nothing to offend or cause to fall.

This "great peace" that is described comes to those who love the law of God. Love for the law of God will include its watchful keeping and obedience. Love for the law of God means that there is meditation in it, and constant searching to comply with it.

### I. PEACE OF CONFIDENCE

The first source of this peace is the confidence that one has, who loves the law of the Lord, that the salvation of God is his; and, secure and serene in this confidence, nothing can shake or cause him to offend. "Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation" (v. 166) expresses the thought that the hopes and desires all have been toward the salvation that God has for us. And the peace that is the result comes because of the confidence that what He has begun He will finish, and what He has promised, He will do.

We sometimes sing.

*Have you reached this abiding place in Jesus?*

*Are you grafted in the True and Living Vine?*

*There is rest from every care in the secret place of prayer.*

*There is victory for you all along the line.* And another song expressive of this confidence is "Blessed Quietness." It is the confident waiting on God that is the source of the peace of holiness of which we speak.

### II. PEACE OF OBEDIENCE

The peace of obedience, while one of the attributes of holiness, emphasizes a different aspect from the peace of confidence. The peace of obedience indicates the rest and inner calm that comes when the conflict ceases, the fighting is all done, and the victory is won. It is expressed in these words, "My soul hath kept thy testimonies" (v. 167); and, "I have kept thy precepts" (v. 168). The rest or calm that comes to the soul trusting in Jesus is like a calm after the storm, like the rest that follows pain, and like a hope returned again.

The struggle for control is all over, and peace reigns supreme. The struggle for selfish ways and our own will is ended, and the resulting calm is the peace of a surrendered will and life. No more is there strife over the known will of God; when it is known, there is the instant response, instant obedience, and instant eagerness to accomplish the will of God. Such a peace comes only to those who love the law of God so much that they have crucified the flesh and henceforth "live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

### III. PEACE OF DEVOTION

Still another aspect of the peace of holiness is the peace of devotion that comes when confidence and obedience are perfect; then there comes that sweet devotion, and fellowship such as "none other hath ever known." It is that communion in "the secret of His presence" in the cool of the day,

where He walks and talks with us in the garden. David says of this, "I rejoice at thy word" (v. 162), and, "Seven times a day do I praise thee" (v. 164), and, "I love them exceedingly" (v. 167). There is so much rejoicing that seven times a day, nay, "at all times," is not too much of a devotion. There does not come a time when the Word of God is not a delight, but there is an exceeding love for it and the Author.

Holiness brings peace and joy to the individual heart; it is its own best proof. The tongues of angels could not express the ineffable peace of the surrendered soul, but it is available to all who will accept. "Great peace have they which love thy law" (v. 165). If you desire peace, deep, lasting, solid peace, you can find it in the will and obedient following of God.

## 22. The Summary of Holiness

PSALMS 119:169-176

TEXT: *My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness* (v. 172).

### INTRODUCTION

The 119th psalm from beginning to end is perfect; every line, every phrase has a deathless message concerning the law and commandment of God. There are many different emphases possible; there are many ways to approach these truths. This particular division could be first, middle, or last. Because it is the Word of God, it is perfect and complete; it fits our need, and it fits itself. Anywhere, any time, any way, rightly used, the Word of God is profitable.

Holiness, like the Word of God, is the same message wherever found in its purity and beauty. The closing paragraph seems to lend itself to this exposition of the summary of holiness. It includes the prayers of holiness, the thanksgiving that is also a part, the confession of error, and the prayer for mercy that is the spirit of every child of God, closing with a promise of obedience to the will of God.

### I. PRAYERS OF HOLINESS

The typical prayer of the sanctified man or woman is one that is personal, deep, and sincere. There is supplication for an understanding of the Word of God; there is a beseeching for help in doing His will, a praying to keep the word, and a knowledge that all our righteousness depends on God. These thoughts are expressed in the words of these verses: "Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord: give me understanding according to thy word. Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word" (vv. 169-170). These verses indicate the complete dependence of every soul on God, and it is typical of holiness that there is a longing for better understanding and a deeper knowledge of the will of God. To those who have never tasted the real joys of the deeper things of

God there is little incentive for these matchless joys; but to one who knows, there is a hunger and a thirst for more of God.

### II. THANKSGIVING IS PART OF HOLINESS

No people are more appreciative of the goodness of God than are the holiness people. There is none of the self-righteous attitude that we have accomplished our own goodness, as so many would try to accuse us; but there is deep and sincere thanks and blessing for favors received and joys bestowed. "My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes. My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness. . . . Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee" (vv. 171-175). And the true believer in holiness always has a song or prayer of thanksgiving on his lips for the goodness of God. To him, the whole earth is full of the glory of God, and all is somehow directly from the hand of God and meant for the benefit and enjoyment of man.

### III. HOLINESS CONFESSES ERRORS

When the Pharisee came to pray, he was proud of his righteousness and liked to compare himself with others whom he considered not so good; but the attitude of the sanctified man is one that is humble in the confession of error. "I have gone astray like a lost sheep" (v. 176); not willful and obstinate, but like a wandering sheep that has missed the way. There is nothing of the proud or "perfect" attitude that admits of no error; rather, the sanctified heart, in tune with God, is far more conscious of error and disharmony than the one who is far away. Holiness is easy to be intreated and quick to admit error; yet at the same time there is the knowledge of no conscious wrongdoing or willful sin.

### IV. HOLINESS CRAVES MERCY

A typical attitude of a holiness man or woman is one that knows we all must have mercy. Humility is part of mercy; the sanctified man is not puffed up with pride, and is not ready to condemn sins in other people. Rather, there is the knowledge that, in the sight of God, we are all imperfect and lacking in so much and so many good graces that the attitude is one that asks for mercy. The poet who wanted at the bar of God "justice; only this and nothing more," was not sanctified. What we want is mercy!

### V. PROMISES OBEDIENCE

There can be no better conclusion for the summary of holiness than this last item. "I do not forget thy commandments" (v. 176) is a promise to remember and perform the laws of God. This is always the purpose and will of the sanctified man. He promises obedience in obtaining the grace, and he never withdraws that obedience from the altar, but it is always his attitude. He never wants to have his own way, but only to know and to do the perfect will of God eternally.

# ILLUSTRATIONS . . . . .

*Supplied by Buford Battin*

## ***Power in Prayer***

A woman came to a missionary in India, asking him to interfere and prevent a certain native Christian from praying for her. When asked how she knew that the Christian was praying for her, she replied, "I used to perform my worship to the idols quite comfortably, but for some time past I have not been able to do so. Besides, he told me he was praying for my family, and now my son and two daughters have become Christians. If he goes on praying, he may make me become a Christian, too. He is always bringing things to pass with his prayers. Somebody must make him stop."

## ***A Wise Choice***

A very wealthy man called his servants together on his birthday to give them presents. He had a Bible and some twenty-dollar notes. The servants were to make a choice between the Bible and the notes.

First came the gardener, who said, "I would like to have the Bible, but my wife is very sick and I need the money. I will take the note."

The cook said, "I do very little reading, so the Bible would not do me much good. Give me the money."

The coachman said, "I would appreciate having the Bible, but I have some pressing obligations. I believe the money will help me more."

Finally the errand boy came for his gift. The old gentleman asked, "Son, which will you take?"

The boy replied, "I really need the money; but my mother, who has gone to heaven, used to read to me from the Bible. I will take that."

The old gentleman was very much pleased with this choice. As he handed the Book to the boy, he said, "God bless you, my son, for your wise choice. I present this Book to you with all its contents."

The servants were still sitting in the presence of their master. The boy slowly opened the pages of the Book. A shining gold piece dropped out. This the boy picked up and handed to the donor of the Book.

"No," said the old man. "Did I not give you the Book with all it contained?" The boy continued to turn the pages, and all along through the Book he found bank notes. When these were counted, there proved to be quite a fortune. The other servants sat back, quite ashamed in the presence of the boy whose choice had meant more than he had known.

So it is when one chooses Christ. It might appear that one is denying himself a great deal and making a sacrifice to become a Christian. One gets more in return, when he rejects the world and chooses Christ, than can be seen on the surface. There are hidden treasures in the Christian life that the world does not know about.

## ***God Gives Bread***

A boy was bringing home a loaf of bread, and one said to him:

"What have you there?"

"A loaf of bread."

"Where did you get it?"

"From the baker."

"Of what did he make it?"

"Flour."

"Where did he get the flour?"

"From the miller."

"Where did he get it?"

"From the farmer."

"Where did the farmer get it?"

Then the truth dawned upon the boy's mind, and he replied:

"From God."

"Well, then, from whom did you get the loaf?"

"Oh, from God!"

Here is a boy who, in the last resort, acknowledges God to be the Giver of good. In this materialistic age men deal with God only as a last resource. Man says, "My business supports me and my family"; but God speaks to this age and says, "Thou shalt put Me first and business second."

## ***A Boy and His Canary***

A little boy had a beautiful canary, which sang to him every day and awakened him every morning with its sweet twitter. The mother of the child was ill and the song of the little bird, which to the boy was delicious music, disturbed and distressed her to such an extent that she could scarcely bear to hear it. One morning as the boy stood holding his mother's hand he saw, when the canary sang, that an expression of pain passed over the face of his mother. She had never told him that she could not bear the noise and, when he asked her, she said, "Son, it does not sound like music to me." He looked at her in wonder and said, "Do you really dislike the sound?" "Yes," she said, "it is distressing to me."

The boy, full of love for his mother, left the room. The golden feathers of the songster were glistening in the sunshine, and he

was trilling forth his loveliest notes; but they had ceased to please the boy. The bird's music was no longer beautiful and soothing to the boy; and, taking the cage in his hands, he left the house. When he returned he told his mother that the bird would disturb her no more, for he had given it to his little cousin.

The mother said, "But you loved it so! How could you part with the canary?"

"I loved the canary, Mother," he said, "but I love you more. I could not really love anything that would give you pain."

This illustrates what our attitude should be to God. If we love supremely, we will show the same sensitiveness about doing anything that will be displeasing to Him.

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### ***Stanley in Africa***

Henry Stanley is known for his expeditions into the darkest forests of Africa. The greatest foes he found in Africa and the ones who caused the most death and discomfort among his caravan were a tribe of little dwarfs. These little people did not look so hideous as other tribes, but they were so annoying that very slow progress was made through the territory they occupied. These little men used small bows and tiny arrows that looked like children's playthings, but upon these arrows was a drop of poison that would kill a man or beast as surely as a rifle bullet. They would steal quietly through the forest and shoot their deadly arrows from their hiding place before they could be discovered. They dug ditches and covered them with leaves so that one would fall into a trap, unaware of danger. They fixed spikes in the ground, tipped them with the most deadly poison, and then covered them over for a snare. Into these ditches and onto these spikes man and beast would step to their death.

Sin is like that. Sin may not look so hideous and may appear as a thing that is harmless. But all sin is treacherous and is a snare containing deadly poison.

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### ***Pouring Water into a Basket***

The story is told of a king who was once in need of a faithful servant that would be a dependable worker. The king gave notice that he wanted a man to do a day's work, and two men came and asked to be employed. He engaged them both for certain fixed wages and set them to work to fill a basket with water from a neighboring well, saying he would come in the evening and see their work. He then left them to themselves and went away. After pouring a few bucketfuls, one of the men said, "What is the good of doing this useless work? As soon as you pour the water into the basket, it runs out and is wasted."

The other man answered, "But we have our day's wages, haven't we? The use of

the work is the master's business, not ours."

"I am not going to do such a fool's work," replied the other; and, throwing down his bucket, he went away.

The other man continued his work till about sunset, and all the water had been dipped from the well. Looking down into the well he saw something shining at the bottom. Carefully letting down his bucket once more, he drew up a precious diamond. "Now," he said, "I see the use of pouring the water into the basket. If the bucket had brought up the diamond before the well was dry, it would have been found in the basket. The labor was not useless after all."

God has a purpose in all things. The Master does not explain His plan and purpose every time. Perhaps we will understand things better at the close of our day.

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### ***Solution to World Problems***

When Calvin Coolidge was president of the United States, an organization known as the Pocket Testament League prepared a beautiful, especially bound copy of the New Testament for the President. A committee was sent to Washington to present the little book to Mr. Coolidge. The chairman is said to have made a lengthy and flowery presentation speech, while the President listened. Receiving the little volume graciously. Mr. Coolidge, in his characteristic manner of few words, lifting the copy of the New Testament in his hand, said: "Gentlemen, in this Book will be found the solution of all the problems of the world."

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### ***Philosopher and the Ferryman***

A philosopher was crossing a stream on a ferryboat. As he entered the boat he picked up a pebble, and said to the ferryman, "Do you know geology?" "No," replied the ferryman. The learned man said, "Then one-quarter of your life is lost." As they went on, the philosopher picked up a leaf that was floating in the stream, and said, "Do you know botany?" The ferryman replied, "No." "Then one-half of your life is lost." By and by they reached midstream, and the philosopher, looking up into the heavens, said, "Do you know astronomy?" "No, sir." "Then," said the philosopher, "three-quarters of your life is lost." Just then the ferryman looked up the stream and saw a wall of water coming down upon them. The dam had given way. He turned to the philosopher and said, "Sir, do you know how to swim?" "No." "Then," said the ferryman, "the whole of your life is lost."

In the great crises of human life, theories and excuses are of no value. You will not care about them when you come to die. You will not even mention them at the judgment. Only one thing will count then, "Have you taken Jesus Christ as your Redeemer and does your soul abide in Him, the Rock of Ages?"



# EVANGELISM QUOTES . . . . .

A missionary's primary task is evangelism—"man's part in the unending process by which God works with and through His Son, Jesus Christ, and his disciples, to bring men into that right relationship with himself, which is salvation; for the disciple, it is carrying God's saving message of life to all men everywhere, so long as there is any person who has not yet received it."—*Selected*.

If it were revealed to me from heaven by the archangel Gabriel that God had given to me the certainty of ten years of life, and that, as a condition of my eternal salvation, I must win a thousand souls to Christ in that time, and if it were further conditioned to this end that I might preach every day for the ten years but might not personally appeal to the unconverted outside the pulpit, or that I might not enter the pulpit during those ten years but might exclusively appeal to individuals, I would not hesitate one moment to accept the choice of personal effort as the sole means to be used in securing the conversion of ten thousand souls as the condition of my salvation.—*GOODELL, Pastoral and Personal Evangelism*.

Revivals are not brought down from heaven; they are worked up on earth—*C. G. FINNEY*.

The real test for our desire for a revival lies in what we are doing now to win souls for Christ.—*Watchman Examiner*.

Some years ago King George was broadcasting to the world on the occasion of the opening of a naval conference in London. An official of the Columbia Broadcasting Company discovered a few moments before the king was to be heard that there was a break in the wiring of the radio apparatus. It would take twenty minutes to make the repairs, and meanwhile the millions waiting to hear the king would miss his message entirely. So without hesitation the radio man gripped the ends of the broken wires, one in each hand, in order to restore the circuit. The shock of the 250-volt charge shook his arms and burned his hands, but he held on, and through his body there went out to the world the king's message of peace.—We all want to be helpers of our fellow men—channels through which the greatest of all messages of peace, the message of Christ, will reach the waiting world. But we cannot be used for this purpose unless we are ready to accept discomfort and self-sacrifice.—*Pulpit Digest*, March, 1948.

Organizing and agonizing are splendid team-mates when it comes to evangelizing.—*DAWSON*.

A prosperous merchant was approached for a contribution for a charitable cause. "Yes, I will give you my mite," he responded.

"Do you mean the widow's mite?" asked his friend.

"Certainly."

"I shall be satisfied with half that much," suggested the solicitor. "Approximately how much are you worth?"

"Seventy thousand dollars."

"Then," said the friend, "give me your check for \$35,000; that will be half as much as the widow gave; she gave, as you remember, all that she had, even 'all her living.'"—*Radio Evangelist*.

Wake up, sing up, preach up, pray up, pay up, stay up, and never give up, let up, back up, or shut up until the cause of Christ in the Church and the world is built up.—*Selected, from Christian Digest*.

We are not responsible for conversion, but we are responsible for contact. We cannot compel any man to decide for Christ, but we may compel every man to decide one way or the other; that is, we may so bring to every human being the gospel message that the responsibility is transferred from us to him, and that we are delivered from bloodguiltiness. God will take care of the results if we do our duty.—*A. T. PIERSON, in Christian Digest*.

- GIVING—should be—
- 1—Periodic—"Upon the first day of the week." Worshipful, habitual, prayerful, cheerful.
  - 2—Personal—"Let each one of you." Each man, each woman, each boy, and girl; no proxies.
  - 3—Provident—"Lay by him in store." Beforehand, deliberate, thoughtful, intelligent.
  - 4—Proportionate—"As God hath prospered him." Generous, careful, responsible, faithful.
  - 5—Preventive—"That there be no gatherings when I come." No deficit, no interest on loans, no worry, no retrenchment. This is God's own plan for financing the work of His Church on earth.—*Selected*.

What we choose to do when we are free to choose what we please is an unfailing test of character.

# A Study of Holiness from the Early Church Fathers

By Professor J. B. Galloway, B.S., Ph.B., B.D.

## Chapter Thirteen

### Eusebius, the Father of Church History

OUR study of the literature of the Early Church would not be complete without noticing the *Ecclesiastical History* by Eusebius. A few attempts at chronicling sketches of church history had been made before the days of Eusebius, but he is the first to give us a complete history of the Church to his time. All later church historians are indebted to him. The author was born in Palestine about A.D. 260. He took the surname of his teacher, Pamphilus of Caesarea, whose great library furnished him much of the extensive historical sources Eusebius used later. At the martyrdom of his teacher, Eusebius fled and was imprisoned in Egypt. In 313 he became the bishop of Caesarea. At the Council of Nicaea he made the opening address, and he led the moderate party. He stood in high favor with Constantine the Emperor, who declared him fit to be the bishop of almost the entire world. He received many letters from the Emperor and was frequently in his palace and entertained at his table.

Constantine also committed to Eusebius, since he was skilled in Biblical knowledge, the care and superintendency of transcribing the fifty copies of the Scriptures that the Emperor wished to place in the churches that he was building at Constantinople. He died at Caesarea about A.D. 340. He was the most learned of the Church Fathers after Origen, but was without his genius. His chief works are: *Chronocum*, a history of the world in his day; *The Praeparation Evangelica*, extracts from the heathen authors fitting to prepare the way for Christianity; *Demonstration Evangelica*, arguments to convince the Jews of the truths of Christianity; and his *Ecclesiastical History*, relating the principal occurrences in church history to 324—this is his greatest work and is in ten books.

#### EUSEBIUS ON HOLINESS

##### *Prayer for Holy Ghost*

He frequently makes mention of what seemed to be the universal custom of the Early Church when a person was baptized, for the bishop to lay hands upon the persons baptized and pray that they might be filled with the Holy Ghost. A can-

didate for baptism must be fully saved without question before he was a candidate for the baptism of the Holy Ghost or the experience of holiness. Eusebius gives a narration which he contends is true history about the Apostle John, in which the filling of the Spirit through the laying on of hands is called "a perfect safeguard in the seal of the Lord." This occurs in *Book 3, chapter 23*, and the narration briefly stated is as follows:

After John returned from the Isle of Patmos to Ephesus, he went about the neighboring regions to appoint bishops to new churches and appoint to the ministry those whom the Holy Ghost should point out. Seeing a youth of fine stature, grace, and an ardent mind, he turned to a bishop he had appointed and said, "Him I commend unto you with all earnestness, in the presence of the Church of Christ." John returned to Ephesus; and the presbyter, taking the youth home, educated, restrained, and cherished him, and at length baptized him. But, thinking he was now committed to "a perfect safeguard in the seal of the Lord," he relaxed his former care and vigilance over the youth. Then certain idle, dissolute fellows familiar with all kinds of wickedness attached themselves to him; at first by expensive entertainment, then by going out at night to plunder and taking him along. They encouraged him until gradually he became accustomed to their ways, and "like an unbridled steed that had struck out of the right way, biting the curb, he rushes with so much the greater impetuosity towards the precipice." At length he renounced salvation and became the captain of a band of robbers, surpassing them all in violence, blood, and cruelty.

#### *John and the Robber*

After a time John demanded the young man; and the old bishop said, "He is dead." John asked how. "He is dead to God," said the old bishop. "He has turned out wicked and abandoned, and at last a robber; instead of the church, he has beset the mountain with a band like himself." When the apostle heard this he tore his garments, asked for a horse and a guide, then rode out to the country and was taken prisoner by the robbers' guard. But he said, "Lead me to your captain." When the robber recognized John, he was overcome with shame, and turned to flee. But the apostle, pursuing him, cried out, "Why dost thou flee, my son, from me, thy father? Fear not; thou still hast hope of life. I will intercede with Christ for thee." Hearing this, the robber stopped with downcast looks, threw away his arms; then trembling and weeping bitterly, he came up and embraced John. The apostle pledged him that he

had found pardon for his sins at the hand of Christ, praying, on bended knee, and kissing his right hand as cleansed from all iniquity. The apostle then led him back to the Church, and did not leave him until he was fully restored to salvation.

### *Irregular Baptisms*

In *Book 6, chapter 43*, Eusebius tells how Novatius was baptized while sick, but was not prayed for that he might receive the Holy Ghost. On this account the bishop is condemned.

The question soon arose about what should be done with those who wished to return after they had fallen into heresy, who had previously been prayed for with the laying on of hands that they might be filled with the Holy Ghost. In *Book 7, chapter 2*, we read:

Dionysius wrote the first of his epistle on baptism, as there was no little controversy, whether those turning from any heresy whatever, should be purified by baptism; as the ancient practice prevailed with regard to such, that they should only have imposition of hands with prayer.

### *Rule of Faith*

In chapter 7 of the same book he adds that it was the rule and form received from our father, the blessed Herecles, when one who made public confession after he had returned from those who taught strange doctrines and come from the heresies that they be received back without baptism, even though they had been expelled from the Church; for he says, "they had already received the Holy Spirit."

### *Living Holy Common Practice*

Eusebius mentions a number of incidents that show that living holy and being filled with the Spirit was the common practice of the Christians in the early centuries. In *Book 3, chapter 31*, we read: "Philip, one of the twelve who sleeps in Hierapolis, and his two aged virgin daughters. Another of his daughters, who lived in the Holy Spirit, rests at Ephesus."

### **HOLY MARTYRS**

At the close of *Book 8*, in the *Book of Martyrs, chapter 11*, we read concerning Porphyry,

Truly filled with the Spirit, and covered with his philosophical garb thrown around him like a cloak, and with a calm and composed mind giving exhortations and beckoning to his acquaintances and friends, he preserved a cheerful countenance at the very stake.

A little later in the same chapter he records the death of another martyr who was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Julianus had just come from abroad, and not yet entered the city, when learning of the death of the martyrs on the road, he immediately hastened to the sight. There,

when he saw the earthly tabernacles of the holy men lying on the ground, he embraced each one, and kissed them all. Upon this he was immediately seized by the ministers of death, and conducted to Firmilianus, who consigned him to a slow, lingering fire. Then Julianus, also, leaping and exulting with joy, gave thanks to God with a loud voice, who had honored him with a martyr's death. He also was a native of Capadocia, but in his manner he was most religious, and eminent for the sincerity and soundness of his faith. He was also devoted in other respects, and animated by the Holy Spirit himself.

In *Book 8, chapter 7*, Eusebius calls those who suffered for Christ at Phoenixe holy:

At these scenes we have been present ourselves, when we also observed the divine power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ himself present, and effectually displayed in them; when for a long time the devouring wild beasts would not dare either touch or to approach the bodies of those pious men, but directed their violence against others. But they would not even touch the holy wrestlers standing and striking at them with their hands as they were commanded, in order to irritate the beasts against them. Sometimes, indeed, they would also rush upon them, but, as if repulsed by some divine power, they again retreated. This continued for a long time, creating no little wonder to the spectators; so that now again on account of the failure in the first instance, they were obliged to let loose the beasts a second and a third time upon one and the same martyr. One could not help being astonished at the intrepid perservance of these holy men, and the firm and invincible mind of these also, whose bodies were young and tender. For you could see a youth of scarcely twenty years, standing unbound, with his arms extended like a cross, but with an intrepid and fearless earnestness, intensely engaged in prayer to God, neither removing nor declining from the spot where he stood, whilst bears and leopards breathed rage and death, almost touching his very flesh, and yet I know not how, by a divine power, they had their mouths in a manner bridled, and again retreated in haste.

## Chapter Fourteen

### Holiness Through All Ages of the Church

Holiness is one of the highest attributes of God. Man was created in His image, not the physical image, but in His moral likeness. "Which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24). Man lost his blessed holy estate by the fall, but the new man may be restored again to holiness through the merits of our Saviour. The first thing that God

did to set man an example was to rest upon the Sabbath day; He sanctified it and made it holy. God not only created man in His image of holiness, but He wishes man to be like Him through all the ages. "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1:16).

God would not permit Moses to approach Him without first recognizing His holiness. The Holy Spirit anointed the judges and kings of Israel. Samuel anointed David with oil, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward (I Samuel 16:13). The prophets were moved and spake by the Spirit. Isaiah was only a man of unclean lips until God touched him with the fire and Holy Spirit. John the Baptist had a special anointing of the Holy Ghost, and so did Jesus. The apostles received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; and time and time again the Holy Spirit came upon them with fresh power in times of need.

The birthday of the Church was a baptism of the Holy Ghost, and this same power has been found in the Church ever since. Sometimes only a few have professed it, but God never has been without a witness of holiness in the earth. Paul was constantly talking about it. When the Church needed to select officers, the qualification for the deacons was "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." When new converts believed, as at Ephesus, the Church sent down certain disciples, who inquired, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" And when they heard that they had not, they laid their hands on them, and "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Great Bible scholars and church historians recognize the fact that it was the custom of the Early Church to pray for all believers to be filled with the Spirit. The usual custom was to baptize the converts, and then the elders would lay their hands upon them and pray that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Early Church believed in and prayed for the filling of the Holy Spirit, and this was the secret of their great power. They lived in the Spirit, walked in the Spirit, prayed in the Spirit, and testified in the Spirit. They were undaunted in persecution because they were helped by the Holy Spirit within them.

Many writers before the days of Constantine have left their testimony that they believed in and lived a life of holiness; from some of these we have quoted. The same thing is seen in the literature coming from Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustine. When the Church became ritualistic and formal, the Latins demanded fourscore pounds of gold

for the anointing oil, and there was a quarrel between the Roman and the Greek Catholic churches. The Greeks rejected the authority of the Roman bishop, and began to consecrate their own anointing oil; and since that time they have been separate churches.

From time to time through the Dark Ages witnesses to the truth of holiness appeared, and with the dawn of Reformation the light begins to shine again. The Quietist movement among the Roman Catholics, which centered around Fenelon and Madame Guyon, and the Quakers among the Protestants, were two great movements to make the whole Church feel the need of being filled with and led by the Holy Spirit.

John Calvin acknowledged that the custom of praying for the new converts to be filled with the Holy Ghost was derived from the apostles, and admitted that the Protestants should have something in the place of it, yet did not emphasize this in his teachings. We read this from his "Commentaries" when commenting on Hebrews 6:2, which speaks of laying on of hands:

This one passage abundantly testifies that this rite had its beginning from the Apostles, which afterwards, however, was turned into superstition, as the world almost always degenerates into corruption. . . . Wherefore the pure institution at this day ought to be retained, but the superstition ought to be removed.

In Oxford University there was a group of students who were seeking after holiness; they were ridiculed and called the "Holy Club." Soon we hear of the great Wesley revival which was conducted by some of the former members of this club. They placed great emphasis upon the Holy Spirit and the doctrine of sanctification. Wesley said that the purpose of the Methodist church was to spread scriptural holiness over the lands. He says in his *Journals* that at one time there were almost as many people seeking and claiming entire sanctification as claimed salvation in his meetings. When the movement spread to America, hundreds and thousands were reached. Many were professing the blessing of holiness for many years in the Methodist meetings, especially in the revival and camp meetings. Then the modern holiness movement began to be heard of; at first it was interdenominational. Those who believed in and professed the experience of holiness, from all churches, began to get together in associations and hold revivals and camp meetings all over America, and also in other countries.

As opposition became more and more marked, it soon became evident that, if the cause of holiness was to be conserved, it would be necessary to organize the work. Then little holi-

ness churches began to appear in the Eastern part of our country, and almost simultaneously they appeared on the western coast, and in the South. Several of these churches united under the leadership of Dr. P. F. Bresee and Dr. H. F. Reynolds, and the Church of the Nazarene came into existence in 1908. Other holiness churches appeared, and thousands now belong to the holiness churches. Hundreds of young people are in the holiness colleges, and other holiness institutions are aiding in various capacities to carry on the work. Thousands of pages of holiness literature are coming from the presses of the publishing houses of those who believe in holiness. Holiness churches and revival meetings dot the land from coast to coast where the holy fire burns upon the altar; and sacrificing missionaries are carrying the message of full salvation to the ends of the earth.

The long list of the holy saints of God who have lived and preached holiness is too numerous to mention, but God has them all recorded in the Book of Life. The apostles carried the message of holiness from the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost to the Jews, and Paul was not satisfied until he had carried the same truth to almost all the great Gentile cities. John laid down the work at Ephesus at the close of the first Christian century; then the long stream of heroes carried the same truth to the multitudes from that day to this.

There are Polycarp, Clement, Barnabas, and Hermes of the early days of the Church, preaching the truth. Ambrose, Athanasius, and Chrysostom followed the days of Constantine with the blessed, holy gospel; and a few lights here and there shined out from the Dark Ages with the message of holiness. Savonarola thundered against sin and worldliness in the streets of cultured Florence until the people knew that they must live holy lives. One of the vilest popes had him burned on the public square of the city he had done so much for and loved so dearly. Fenelon and Madame Guyon were bright lights for holiness among the Catholics.

Then there are George Fox, John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, and John Fletcher in England. There are Jonathan and Mrs. Edwards, David Brainerd, and Asbury, who enjoyed the blessing of holiness in the early history of America; they are followed by Upham, Mahan, Charles Finney, the great revivalist who preached holiness. And we may mention Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, Frances Ridley Havergal, Frances Willard, and Hannah Whitehall Smith, who wrote *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, and a host of others from among the noble women who enjoyed the blessing



of holiness. Then there are A. B. Simpson, David Updegraff, Daniel Steele of Boston University, J. A. Wood, Inskip, and McDonald, all great holiness preachers; and on down to our sainted Dr. P. F. Bresee—these all died in the faith.

Today, hundreds are preaching the same message of holiness to the masses; almost everywhere you go there is an advocate of holiness. Who has not heard of the late Bud Robinson, who for so many years preached holiness every time he spoke?

### THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE AND HOLINESS

The fight for holiness did not originate in the twentieth century, nor with the Church of the Nazarene. No, it is the fight of the ages. Holiness graced the inner chambers of eternity. Holiness is older than sin; it is coexistent with God. Holiness is as eternal as the Jehovah of the Bible. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Isa. 57:15). We may be accused of being a small bunch of religious "faddists" with a new notion of religion that we are trying to propagate, but not so. Those who judge us so are only betraying their own ignorance and lack of reading concerning holiness, sanctification, and perfect love. We are not alone. The greatest minds and holiest saints of all ages of the Christian Church have upheld the doctrine and enjoyed the experience of holiness.

Holiness is not just a doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene held by a little handful of professors of religion here and there, but there are a great number from almost all denominations who believe in and teach the same blessed truth of holiness. There is a great cloud of witnesses to the rich experience that the children of God may enjoy. A number of denominations are known as holiness churches. The Methodist church stood for holiness before she grew so worldly and filled with Modernism. Some teaching on holiness occurs in the doctrines of almost every church. The Wesleyan Methodists, Free Methodists, Primitive Methodists, Orthodox Quakers, Holiness Methodists, Reformed Baptists, Full Gospel Presbyterians, Christian Missionary Alliance, Pilgrim Holiness, Salvation Army, and a number of smaller churches stand with the Church of the Nazarene as advocates of holiness.

### *Its Doctrine of Holiness*

The Church of the Nazarene stands for the fundamental evangelical doctrines, but makes the test of all its standard of holiness and entire sanctification. The doctrine of the church on entire sanctification or holiness is as follows:

10. We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect.

It is wrought by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service.

Entire sanctification is provided by the blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by faith, preceded by entire consecration; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness.

This experience is also known by various terms representing its different phases, such as "Christian Perfection," "Perfect Love," "Heart Purity," "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit," "The Fullness of the Blessing," and "Christian Holiness."—*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene.

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