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Motives for Evangelism**

Wilson R. Lanpher*

WHEN THE CHURCH of the Nazarene projects a quadrennium of focused attention on evangelism, it is far more than the effort of an aggressive holiness church to combine intelligent techniques with a revered and changeless commission. It is far more than the effort of a comparatively small religious body to shoulder its share in keeping pace with the population explosion, and at the same time cut into the huge mass of modern pagans and indifferent churchgoers. The truth is, the Christian Church is fighting for its survival, and while this is not a new experience for the Church, the struggle has become global and more intense during our lifetime. As pointed out by one writer, "Not since the seventh century, when the Moors swept across North Africa, and up through Spain and France, has there been such organized, fanatical opposition to the Christian faith as may be witnessed today in China and Russia, where churches are confiscated, congregations proscribed, and clergy persecuted, and even martyred. Where there is no positive opposition in so-called Christian lands, there is an aloofness from the church, and indifference towards it, a materialism which does not respond to its message,

and a secularism which spurns its piety and ideals. Even within the church, there is lethargy, a lukewarmness, a compromising attitude that betrays the Gospel, and repudiates the morality and ethic the church is supposed to uphold." And above it all hangs the ominous shadow of a mushroom cloud that drives some to futile fatalism, or a self-destroying hedonism.

Personally, I thank God for the questing and soul searching that we are doing as a church. In quiet groups of pastors you will often catch the significant sentences that point to a sincerity and a hunger: men who are wise enough to reach for new techniques and plans, men who are self-disciplined and zealous enough to lead the way, and men are searching back in their own hearts for a motive that can stand the gaze of a suffering Saviour. Weary of the nominal and ordinary, they are moving into a new dimension of faith and obedience. Unhappy with mediocrity, they are devoting everything—soul strength, time, nerve strength, temptations, dry seasons, victories—all for the terribly compelling privilege of bringing Christ to the sins and the hungers of human beings. The ministry is much more than a slow-moving stream for undedicated opportunists who fondly hope that, once placed in this stream, it will waft them without too much

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effort to places of privilege and power. It is a place where, if your eyes are open, you can see the corroding acids of cynicism of your middle-aged people, searching your words, your acts, your very soul, to see if you are real. It is a place where your ears can hear the unformed and wordless questions of your teen-agers, who stand undecided, almost on tiptoe, entering the time when some decisions will be irrevocable, and some attitudes will bless or curse for life and for eternity. It is a place where your spiritual radar will pick up invisible danger warnings; places where your presence, your prayers, your spirit are desperately needed. And into these situations you must take integrity of conduct, a faith tested in your personal furnace, and a set of your soul that communicates without words.

Now need I labor the point that we must go back, and go back, often, to remind ourselves that being God's man inevitably involves suffering, but that if we suffer, we must not suffer as wrongdoers, but as unto the Lord and unto Christ? We are sharing in His affliction, for the gospel's sake. And if we succeed, it is not really a credit to any personal cleverness, wisdom, or energy, given to us by special dispensation. The truth is that other men planted, others watered, and we are entered into their labors; and above all, it is God who has given the increase. Humility is a fragile flower that doesn't survive too much light, especially if our fumbling fingers are adjusting the reflectors.

It is not only the special emphasis on evangelism that makes us go back and take a new look at old promises; evangelism applies to every part of our calling. Or, if you please, there is a sense in which every bit of our work is evangelism. Sometimes we resemble a man who is making copies

of an original, but across the years other little lines and shadows have crept in, and they will continue until he goes away back and keeps just one copy away from the original. As long as we copy copies, it's bound to happen. We need a closer exposure to the original. How can a religion whose Founder was born in a borrowed manger, killed on an ugly Cross, amid jeering, disappointment, and desertion, and buried in a borrowed tomb, get too far away from the fact of suffering? How can we who not only profess His name, but have taken the solemn vows of being leaders and undershepherds of the flock, settle for being anything less than copies of Him who said, "He that findeth his life shall lose it," and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"?

When our denomination was young, many of her effective ministers were comparatively untrained, many of her buildings were poor and inadequate, her position in the community was often one of reproach, and even accounting for the purchasing power of the dollar, her finances were pitiful. But she seemed to be rich in one commodity. She seemed to be rich in dedicated men: men whose depth of consecration had included losing everything anyway, so that anything on the plus side was an unlooked-for blessing; men whose actions said, The difficult we can do right now; the impossible takes a little longer; men who were happier doing the will of God as they understood it than plotting a clever course to insure the best impression. They were men of courage, and if I am able to catch the thrust of their lives, it came from an ungoverned, reckless, even mad, love and devotion to Jesus Christ.

And while it is a fruitless and impossible thing to separate a church

from its times, yet one cannot but be a bit wistful in wondering if it is absolutely necessary to give up that beautiful, attractive, and compelling courage that forms the strong foundation on which we stand today. Yes, we have read history, and we know that almost every church starts out as we did. Heroism, sacrifice, and miracles were common, but we were to be the church that would not become the prisoner of our blessings and strengths. And so we built good and adequate churches, hoping they would not be too nice for tears and "Amens"; and so we built colleges (primarily to train ministers and missionaries), hoping that the ravages of secular, liberal education would not blight our youth; and so we improved our techniques. We saw the wisdom of system and of records. And as we were doing all of these things, the world around us was always changing. It was moving faster and faster. The time span of the history of our church includes two major world wars, with their accompanying decay. It includes a tremendous impact of political philosophy with emphasis on security. It includes a revival of interest in religion, that somehow has failed to bring our nation to the moral resurgence and leadership the world desperately needs.

And in the midst of all, or part of these forces, we have been calling and training and influencing our ministers. And right about now we usually hear it said that they are a pretty good bunch. Well, of course we are; you can't knock your own family too much. But I can't help but wonder how we would "stack up" without our rose-colored glasses. How would we rate in terms of choosing to be called "men of prayer and piety," rather than to be known as good organizers and propaganda men? Do

we nourish such a deep longing for security that it dictates our service to Christ? How would we rate in terms of raw courage that went into a town to hold a campaign just because we felt it was God's will?

Some have long ago settled for the mediocre and the average, and it is not a menace peculiar to any age. Young preachers, old preachers—it's fight for all. Some have spent their energy in a search for gimmicks and gadgets, as if the work of holy men could be done with some trick. Some have paid homage to figures and numbers, either to show by numbers that they were progressing or to excuse themselves because of them, that they were more rugged and tougher than their brethren—but both of them bowing to numbers. And some have just sort of adjusted to "getting along." Not enough courage or plan or passion to be much good, but at the same time trying not to make anyone too mad. Within our own Zion we must keep evaluating and re-evaluating, or else we will find ourselves more conditioned to the voice of what image we are creating in terms of superficial criteria than we are to the sob of a sin-crazed world. We can create an image of busyness and breathless activity, or we can adopt an insipid aloofness and retreat from reality on the grounds that "I just can't work with people who won't go the old-fashioned way." What do we mean, we can't work with them? Who else has needier hearts? Who else is our special assignment? Who else may be waiting for the sincerity of our motives to shine through accumulated layers of occupational professionalism? The burning question that you and I must face in the secret recesses of our own spirits, and before the outstretched arms of a crucified Saviour, is, "Lovest thou me more than these?"

As a denomination we have left the store fronts, the tent meetings, leaky tents at camp meeting; the impulsive, romantic missionary giving in Hallelujah Marches. Our ministry is better trained; our singers and musicians are equipped to move from Lillenas to Bach. Our seminary men can step into good teaching jobs. Our financial standing is one to be envied. But must it be an inevitable procedure that, as God blesses us, we must be conformed, and pushed into a worldly standard of success? We can go on talking about fire when our hearts are cold. We can go on talking about peace when we are just lazy and don't want to fight. We can measure ourselves with some church that doesn't believe in an all-out surrender to Christ and the infilling of the Holy Spirit and we look pretty good; but I wonder which church fits us best in Revelation—Ephesus or Laodicea? "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil; and thou hast tried them that say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Or would Laodicea fit us better? "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou

mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

What are our motives for evangelism? What else can they be but a pure and consuming, kindling love for Jesus Christ? A love that scorns defeat and excuses. A love that is both quick and patient; a love that feeds our own souls as it feeds the hungry to whom we minister. We are fond of saying that this love helped Paul to burn his way through a pagan world. Well, ours is a pagan world for all of its profession. We are apt to say that it carried Peter beyond his cowardice. Well, the opportunities for courage are not limited to the first century. And we like to think that our beloved church was started by holy men whose hearts burned with the message of God's truth. Well, ours is just such a needy day, and God's truth is just the same, and we can be the holy men of love, if we want to be more than anything else.

In the final accounting it will be the quality of our love for Christ that tells the story. Our works of hay and stubble, done with inferior and unworthy motives, will perish. Let us be those vessels of gold and silver, instead of wood and earth. Let our motives stand the searching light of a Lord whose truth echoes in our souls, and whose work is still done by men who care and love enough.

IT IS NOT the fact that a man has riches which keeps him from the kingdom of Heaven, but the fact that the riches have him.

XVIII. Prayer and Worship

IT WOULD SEEM that, of all of the elements of public worship, prayer ought to be the most important. Since public worship at its best is communion and communication between man, the worshiper, and God, and prayer is that unique vehicle which brings man into the presence of God, then it should be a phase of worship that is always at its best. But all too frequently prayer is not at its best, and instead of being one of the strongest parts of the service it is one of the weakest. There have been those who have felt that prayer was too sacred an element of worship to be tinkered with or to give prior attention to. Some, in seeking to stay away from any semblance of "set" or "planned" prayers, have given little or no thought to their prayers. Under such procedure only weakness can result.

SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES

There are some general principles to keep in mind which relate to most prayers which are prayed in public service. Let us notice first what are a few of the more important ones.

1. *Public prayer is prayer for a group.* Here, perhaps more than in any other part of the service, the minister is a "priest," in that he is representing, not primarily his own need, nor uttering primarily his own petition, but that of the group whom he leads in worship. Hence the minister must not think in personal terms so much as in terms of the group. This means that in his opening phrase he

must call the group to prayer, for all will not be in a mood for prayer. (2) He must phrase his prayer in such a way that any semblance of the personal is omitted; in a real sense his prayer must be addressed, "Our Father." (3) He must keep his own moods from reflecting in his prayer; his voice, his words, his ideas must radiate faith and hope and victory. (4) He must, as nearly as possible, truly represent the varied needs of the group. Some will be joyful; some will be sorrowing; some will be radiating victory; others will be in the slough of despond. (5) He must use language which is understandable by all within the group and which will be vivid enough, beautiful enough, gripping enough to challenge the worshiper to follow with the prayer. The children, the educated, the unlearned—all must find in this prayer the expression of their own hearts.

2. *Public prayer is motivated by the one leading the prayer.* Here of course we find the differences of opinion which have separated religious groups throughout history. Should the prayers within the church be liturgical prayers, made up from the historical utterances of the Church and by the leaders of the Church in a central place, or should they be extemporaneous, formulated and inspired by the local minister, the one who is leading the prayer? This of course was one of the focal points of the Protestant Reformation and particularly as related to the "free"

churches which pulled entirely away from liturgical forms. Needless to say, there were reformers who gave their lives over the principle that the minister should pray an extemporaneous prayer rather than a set, liturgical one. And many of the students of public worship today, even among groups who lean toward a more ritualistic form of worship, will contend that the "poorest extemporaneous prayer" prayed in the Spirit and from the heart is better than the best liturgical prayer ever uttered. Certainly this is our heritage and our concept of public prayer. While there is perhaps a place for short liturgical prayers in the ceremonies—marriage, baptismal, the Lord's Supper—other prayers within the church should be extemporaneous. Let those who would seek to modify this position remember that in so doing they are calling into question their entire philosophy of worship. This is a point to be guarded, if necessary with our lives.

3. *Public prayer should be prayer and not a speech.* It is important for us to see that, if the public prayer is to be all that it ought to be, it must engage the mind and spirit of the one praying and should be, to him as well as to the group, the expression of true prayer. This is one of the reasons we contend that the leader is concerned with reading the written prayer well, or recalling it if he has attempted to memorize it, and he fails to make it a prayer which comes from his own inner heart directed to God. And of course even the extemporaneous prayer can degenerate into being a sermon instead of a prayer. We must be careful lest the words of the prayer be directed *toward the people* instead of *toward God*.

4. *Public prayer is of such significance that it warrants some thought ahead of time.* At first glance this

seems contradictory to what our concept of public prayer has been. And it is at this point that many of the "free" traditions have erred. Just because a public prayer is to be extemporaneous and given by (constructed by) the one doing the praying is not to say that it should not be given some thought ahead of time. This will in no way defeat the purpose of the "prayer of the Spirit" but rather make it more significant both to the minister and to the people.

a. This preparation should include an awareness of the needs of the people. While the pastor in every instance might not mention the needs in terms that would isolate those involved, yet he can faithfully represent those needs to God in his prayer.

b. This preparation should include a review of the ideas or thoughts that will be covered by the prayer. If the minister does not do this, he will find himself entangled in needless repetition and a monotony of prayer which will be deadening. Not every prayer should include all of the needs around the world. It is good to outline, at least in the mind, on paper if necessary, the petitions to be voiced.

c. This preparation should include some thoughts as to words and phrases to be used. One successful pastor made it a practice to pray his Sunday morning prayer in his study Friday or Saturday, aloud, just as if he were before his people. This gave him a chance not only to pull to mind the particular needs of the congregation and the needs of the community and the world, but it gave him a chance to think through on words or phrases which would most aptly and vividly portray those petitions. Rather than hurting his prayer Sunday morning, this preparation brought his prayers alive.

d. This preparation should, of course, include the preparation of his

own heart to make the minister worthy to be the one to thus voice the prayer of his entire congregation. One who has prayed alone during the week will, everything being equal, be the one who can best pray for the people on Sunday. If the concept of "free," extemporaneous prayer is to be all that the church through the years has thought it could be, the minister must be one who is "prayed up" and filled with the spirit of prayer. If one is not willing to pay this price, he had better pray the prayers written by others.

PRAYER IN THE SERVICES

It is not necessary, in the main, to go into great detail to outline the types of prayers which the average minister employs in the services of the church. We shall mention the most common and note a few of the principles which ought to be kept in mind if each of these is to be as relevant as it can be.

1. *The invocation.* Here is the prayer which begins the service. It should be short and should be guarded lest it steal ideas which are to be reserved for the principal prayer. It should in a very real sense be a "call to worship." It should bring the minds of the people "into captivity" for the service and direct their minds toward God. It should not be thought to be a "gimmick" with which to silence whispering or to get the service started, but should be a genuine prayer from the heart. This invocation, while not necessary in every service, can well set the spirit and atmosphere of the service.

2. *The pastoral prayer.* The pastoral prayer, as it is so often called on Sunday mornings, or the "principal" prayer in other services, needs our special attention. This, more than any other, is the prayer of the service. The "general principles" as noted

above apply to this prayer more than to the others. Care should be taken that this prayer is warm and relevant to the needs of the people. The pastor should guard lest it be too informal with language which is personal. It is best to retain the "Thee" and "Thou" of the historic prayers in addressing Deity, and yet it is best to avoid an overemphasized "Oxford accent" or the ministerial tone. Never should the minister be more sincere or less conscious of himself and "how he is doing" than when he is praying. Without doubt here is one of the great ministries of a preacher to his congregation. It is quite customary for the pastor to pray this prayer himself on Sunday morning. There is value in using laymen in other services, at least on occasions.

3. *The offertory prayer.* The offertory prayer should be kept short and to the point. It is not a time to catch up all of the items which were forgotten in the pastoral prayer. It should direct the minds of the people to the privilege of worshiping God with tithes and offerings. It should not always be the type of prayer which "sicks God on the people" or be a stewardship sermonette. The pattern varies as to when the prayer is offered. Some prefer it ahead of the offering; others make it a "dedicatory" prayer after the offering is received. Which procedure one follows is largely a matter of personal preference determined by the plan for the entire service.

4. *Prayers for special needs.* Now and then there is a demand for prayers for special needs. Usually these are included in the pastoral prayer; in emergency situations, taking most of the time of this prayer. At other times it may be wise to call

(Continued on page 28)

The Preaching of M. V. Dillingham

By James McGraw*

I FEEL JUST as good when I don't feel good as I do when I do feel good!" This could be a quotation from Stengelese double talk but it is not. It is M. V. Dillingham's way of saying, in his own unique style, that a preacher can discipline his feelings so that they matter very little. What matters most is that he knows he is in the center of God's will, and doing his best to point people to the Christ who can transform their lives and purify their hearts. This expression was typical of Michael Vance Dillingham, whose preaching ministry was an example of such a philosophy. When he felt good, he prayed and shouted the victory, and exulted in the holy joy of full salvation; but he knew that the trials and burdens of life are to be counted as precious as fine gold, and he accepted with calm joy the hard places and heavy burdens. So he went through life helping thousands to "feel good" even when they didn't feel good.

Born in Gladewater, Texas, on May 20, 1863, M. V. Dillingham had no easy time of it in early childhood and young adulthood. He knew very little about genuine Christianity and nothing about heart holiness, as his early life brought disappointments which he learned to hide by fast living and worldly amusements. He was a carefree, fun-loving young widower in his early thirties when he was converted.

One of his daughters, Mrs. J. C. Dobson, recalls hearing about the brush arbor in the Comanche County community and the devout Christians

who prayed for the instigator of the shindigs and card games, whom they believed would lead others to Christ if they could only reach him. Without realizing he was the object of such fervent intercessory prayers, Michael V. Dillingham attended the revival more for the pastime and amusement of it than anything else. But something happened to him one night, as anyone who has ever experienced a genuine case of Holy Ghost conviction for sin can understand. Dillingham did not remember later how he got there, but he found himself at the handmade mourners' bench, praying for forgiveness. The peace that came to his soul when God gave witness of his sins forgiven brought such a change to him that he instantly loved a brother-in-law that he had hated so much he had promised to kill him on sight.

Five years after his conversion he was sanctified on a hot summer night as he lay on his cot in the yard, looking into the heavens and holding communion with his Lord. It was while he lay there praying that he received an indescribable outpouring from God. His shouts of joy could be heard for miles on that still, clear night. In fact, neighbors hearing it quickly saddled their horses, hitched up wagons and buggies, and came to see what was the matter at Dillingham's house. They found him shouting his praises to God, and his enthusiastic testimony that night brought conviction to them, and several became believers. From the moment of his baptism with the Holy Spirit—which came to him long before he had ever heard it preached or understood its theological explana-

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tion—M. V. Dillingham's life and energies were directed toward the goal of spreading the gospel of full salvation.

One of the characteristic methods of the holiness movement in its early days was the calling of a team of evangelistic workers by some layman who felt that he should take the entire responsibility of putting on a revival campaign. Local churches who feel today that revivals are too costly and they cannot afford them may well take notice. These consecrated laymen would call workers, build brush arbors, advertise the meetings, and then fast and pray for the coming of the Lord and the arrival of the preachers.

Such was the case of a certain San Saba County farmer named George McCluskey. The brush arbor he built was about like any other brush arbor, and the team of workers he called for his "campaign" were B. F. Neely and M. V. Dillingham. But the results were just a bit unusual, for both McCluskey and his wife were sanctified, and his two daughters were converted and sanctified, and they both married preachers. One of them became the bride of Roy M. Parks, and the other was ordained at the same time with M. V. Dillingham and a year later became his bride. Together they formed a team for God and holiness; and three years later, at its organization in Pilot Point, for the Church of the Nazarene.

Mrs. Dobson, one of Dillingham's three daughters who married preachers, tells of some of the early pioneering experiences of her preacher parents. "They went into communities to preach the Word often without invitations or a place to stay," she writes. "When churches or school-houses were closed to them, they met in homes, rented vacant buildings, or used brush arbors. Their spirit was

dauntless, although many times they did not know what or when they would eat next. When food was not available, they took it that God wanted them to fast and pray. They did. They carried a flame of holy fire to crossroad communities, backwoods farms, and towns. Overripe fruit and rotten eggs were often hurled at them from darkened shadows. The communities did not claim them, but they claimed the communities for God and holiness. The people did not want them, but they wanted the people for Jesus Christ. They held street meetings, sang songs, pumped squeaky organs, strummed out-of-tune guitars . . . traveling on dusty trains, horseback, buggies, and bumpy wagons." This was the type of ministerial training and early experience which helped to mold M. V. Dillingham into the man of God whose life and ministry touched the lives of so many who heard him preach.

From the time they united with the Church of the Nazarene in 1908 until they ended their pastoral ministry in 1944, M. V. Dillingham and his wife held ten fruitful pastorates, the most outstanding among them being Oklahoma City First Church; Ponca City, Oklahoma; and Shreveport, Louisiana. In Oklahoma City there were scores of professions of faith, and in one year a hundred members were received into the church. This dedicated couple complemented each other in achieving significant effectiveness as pastors. They have been compared with a smooth-running motor—"Sister Dill," as Mrs. Dillingham was affectionately called, with her dynamic drive and push, being likened to the engine's combustion chamber; and Brother Dillingham, to the oil that kept the movements well lubricated and running smoothly. Usually she preached the evangelistic sermon in the Sunday evening service

and he fed the souls of the members in the Sunday morning worship hour.

M. V. Dillingham's preaching ministry was characterized by some of the same factors which have made other men great. He wanted to preach, and he enjoyed preaching. Moreover, he wanted to preach well. In his early ministry he became interested in an advertisement which read, "Learn how to preach! Send \$1.00." He sent the dollar, expecting a large volume on preaching. To his surprise, his package turned out to be one sheet of paper, on which was written, "Have something to say, say it, and sit down."

M. V. Dillingham had something to say, and what he said was based on the Word of God. His preaching ranged from running commentary to exposition; but whatever else it was, it was Biblical.

One of the outstanding qualities in the preaching of M. V. Dillingham was its warmth in human interest, based on his great and growing love for people. He sensed their needs, he felt their sorrows, he suffered with them in their heartaches, he was concerned with their problems. This they intuitively knew, and the result was warm rapport between preacher and congregation.

Influencing his preaching significantly was his attitude toward prayer as a basic part of his preparation. He prayed often and he prayed fervently. His members looked forward to hearing his pastoral prayers, and they received strength from hearing him pray in their homes. They knew he made a "serious business" of praying for his flock. He kept cards with names and needs listed, and he went before the Lord with his cards every day, naming the people one by one, interceding in their behalf before a God who encourages such prayer

and is gracious to give His answers. In the last few years of his life Brother Dillingham had accumulated an active file of more than a hundred such cards; his good wife held them for him and read the names to him, so that he might continue his ministry of intercession.

There was nothing bombastic about his delivery. His was the conversational style, and his effectiveness was not found in elocutionary skill but in purity of communication. He would have nodded smilingly at John Henry Jowett's description of his sermon at the Water Street Mission in New York. Jowett tells how a man prayed in the beginning of the service that night in which he was to preach, "O Lord, we thank Thee for our brother Jowett. Now blot him out! Reveal Thy glory in such a blazing splendor that he shall be forgotten." This was the case when Jowett preached, and it was no less true of Dillingham's preaching. The glory of God came down, the Spirit's presence was felt, and the preacher was "blotted out."

When M. V. Dillingham died in Shreveport at the age of eighty-one, a long-standing request was carried out at his funeral. Dr. B. F. Neely closed his funeral message with an invitation for anyone with spiritual need to come forward for prayer, and ten hungry souls knelt and found victory. The people who loved him placed a monument at his grave which tells more eloquently than a thousand words how they felt about his preaching. It reads: "To our pastor."

Perhaps the life and ministry of this man who "felt good" even when he didn't feel good teaches us that when the glory of God comes down upon preacher and congregation, when Christ is exalted, when the Holy Ghost is honored, one preaches just as well when he doesn't preach well as he does when he does preach well!

The God We Worship

By Marvin E. Grooms*

TEXTS: Genesis 1:1 and Matthew 6:9

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth (Apostles' Creed).

Man is incurably religious. He is the only one of God's creatures that has the capacity to worship. And from the dawn of creation man has worshiped someone or something. Quite often the object of his worship was a visible thing, such as the sun, the stars, or fire. Others, in their primitiveness, gave obeisance to the spirit world, evil and good. The false worship was the result of man's fall.

When we affirm that God is "the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," we are not bowing at the shrine of an unknown god, but the God of Abraham, of Jacob, of Joseph, and of Jesus.

THE GOD OF POWER

God is first thought of as almighty. He is the God of power. He "laid the foundation of the earth." We must always realize this fact in connection with any of our problems. Dr. Whitcomb Harding has a unique way of illustrating this truth. He takes the Bible in one hand, representing God's power, and in the other hand another book representing our problems and difficulties. Our security lies in constantly having the Bible, God's power, higher than our problems. Only thus are we able to cope with life.

INFANTILE CONCEPTS OF GOD

It is these who live in the twilight of the Christian faith, or those with a

shallow experience, who have immature and infantile concepts of God. To them He is the local policeman who is always trying to catch them doing something wrong. Or He is conceived of as an old, very old, grandfather who is ancient, out-of-date, and cares little what is going on in the world. We grow up mentally in every area of our thinking except in our ideas of God. Many are still in the kindergarten stage.

Others go to the opposite extreme and consider God in uncouth, familiar terms as the "Man Upstairs" and the "Inseparable Partner" who gives them peace, power, and prosperity on a silver platter. After all, they reason, is He not a "cosmic bellhop" to answer all my prayers, dreams, and aspirations? They address God as "Father" when they really mean "Mamma"! He is supposed to "baby" them, and reassure them that everything will work out well for them. These are the ones who come to church occasionally, perhaps to fool themselves that they are "tipping" God. This is treating God as a means to an end. We are to seek God for himself.

Again, some are immature enough to try to play the part of a god. They accept the falsehood that the serpent in Eden gave to the primitive couple: "Ye shall be as gods." Commenting on this verse, Peter Damiani, the medieval preacher, remarked that the devil was the first grammarian when he taught men to give a plural to the word "God." No wonder the first commandment is: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." And no

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gods after Me, not even yourself! We must remember that we were made in God's image, not He in ours.

What does it mean when we affirm our faith "in God Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth"? We mean that God is the Cause and Creator of the universe. He is the God that revealed His holiness and power to Abraham, Moses, and Elijah. He solely is our Object of worship. We stand in admiration of His power and holiness, but also in adoration of His love. This is adult faith in God, the Creator.

But if we thought of God only in terms of power and might we would shrink from His presence. We can affirm, as the Early Church fathers affirmed their faith in God, that He is "God the Father Almighty." Not One to fear, but One to follow; not One to run from, but One to run to.

THE FAITHFUL FATHER

God is in the human drama. "For God so loved the world, that he gave . . ." But "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." God in pursuit of the sinner! He is the "Hound of Heaven," who refuses to let anyone be lost.

Remember Jesus' story of the hundred sheep?

*There were ninety and nine that
safely lay*

In the shelter of the fold;

*But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold.*

And the Shepherd? Seeking the one! This is our God!

It is true that there is "a good deal in the Bible about men seeking God, but there is much more about God seeking men, and coming upon them unawares when they were not seeking Him, and even when they were dis-

posed to flee from Him."¹ To know this is true, we have only to look at the lives of Moses, Samuel, Jonah, and Paul. It was this tremendous truth that found expression in the Psalmist's words: "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there." Oh, the inescapable goodness of God!

We have noticed that God as Father is faithful and "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Let us also notice that God as Father is forgiving.

THE FORGIVING FATHER

Allow me to say here that we should not take the arrogant position of one who said, as he was dying: "God will forgive me; that is His business."² This is pride, and it presumes on the grace of God. God's forgiveness is not sentimental nor trivial. It is costly! God is not represented in the Scriptures as forgiving sin because He cares very little about sin, nor because He is so exclusively the God of love that all other attributes are excluded. He delivers sinful men because He loves them, and loathes sin.

While one is reading the Bible, he is amazed that "the most lyrical outbursts of sudden poetry and doxology both in the Old Testament and in the New, are those that celebrate forgiveness."³ Micah shouted: "Who is a God like unto thee?" Not in wonder and in wrath! But "who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy."

God is grieved when we go astray. A small boy once was tempted to do wrong, but he refused. The other youngster asked: "Are you afraid

¹D. M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (2nd ed.; London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1955), p. 64.

²Heinrich Heim. Quoted by Dr. J. Kenneth Grider in the *Preacher's Magazine*, April, 1960, p. 17.

³James S. Stewart, *A Faith to Proclaim* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1953), p. 49.

your father will hurt you?" "No," replied the small fellow, "I am afraid I would hurt my father." What truth is packed in that incident! We must realize that God is hurt when we sin. He desires that we repent and turn to Him for forgiveness.

We belong to God and He refuses (for which we should be eternally grateful) to let us forget that fact. Dr. Joseph Fort Newton tells a true story of the history of Tennessee. An Indian band had raided a pioneer settlement and carried off some little boys with them into the wilderness. Years passed and in a skirmish with the Indians some of their warriors were taken prisoners, among them a few men with faces almost white. Word went out inviting all who had lost sons in Indian raids to come to the fort. Several mothers made the long

trip to the fort to see if they could find their lost boys. But the mothers looked into the wild faces in vain. Finally an officer asked if they remembered any song they used to sing to their children. One mother started singing a lullaby. Suddenly one of the warriors broke from the line and came cautiously toward her. They looked at one another, she still singing, until the wild man, her son, fell on her shoulders and both cried for joy.

There is always hope for a world like ours as long as we know there is a God walking along the line, bringing love back, and reminding us with a song that we belong to Him! That no matter how far we have journeyed away from Him, He still loves us! Such a God as this "demands my soul, my life, my all."

Is the Sinner's Will Actually in Bondage?

II. The Sinner Choosing a Good Act

By Earl E. Barrett*

THE ISSUE BEFORE US is not freedom in the highest sense, attained only in a second work of grace—freedom from sin; but rather a limited freedom, that of choice within the context of prevenient grace. True, "If the Son therefore shall make you free [from sin; see context of John 8:36], ye shall be free indeed." True, the cleansed leper at Christ's bidding went his way (Matthew 8:4); but he also went his way before, as did another sinner having free will (Matthew 5:24). In fact, all sinners go their "own way" (see Isaiah 53:6).

The cleansed leper went his way, the way he freely chose both before and after deliverance from sin. The only difference was that God's way now became his way by choice. On the human side, presupposing of course the activity of Satan and of God, sin may be regarded as the result of the wrong use of God's gift of free choice; salvation, the result of the right use.

Christ took for granted the power of the sinner's self-decision, and held the sinner responsible for its exercise: "Ye will not come unto me" (John 5:40), not "cannot," nor the future of "come," but the present of the Greek *theleo*. "You are setting your will

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against coming to Me." Again, using the same Greek word and tense, Jesus promised, "If any man will [willeth to] do his will, he shall know of the doctrine . . ." (John 7:17). Is there any slavery of the will here? Can "any man" by any stretch of the imagination be taken to mean the saint alone? Does this lend any support to the unscriptural doctrine that the will of the sinner is in bondage right up to the moment of believing on Christ for salvation (ignoring all other preceding facts of faith used in a broad sense), at which time mysteriously, somehow, it is set free? Jesus had already told some sinners why they had not come to Him. It was not will trouble but an emotional or affectional disorder—"men loved darkness rather than light," and feared exposure, "because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19-20).

To be saved, then, something has to happen to the sinner's emotions, the desires that move or motivate the will. Desire has to be kindled or excited, the sinner won, "not with enticing [persuasive] words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit" (I Corinthians 2:4). Jesus cried, "Let him that thirsts come unto Me" (John 7:37; see Matthew 5:5). In part, this thirst arises under the conditioning of prevenient grace; in part, it is created by God's people, "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). Following our analogy, the "handle" has been created, in this case, through the co-operation of God and man in the awakening of desire.

Let's follow the example of Christ and be realistic about this matter of the sinner's ability to choose to do a good act. Why the discrepancy between the pictures of the sinner in the Bible and in actual life? What is the answer? Prevenient grace. It has been said that the question is not

whether a man is free, but how free, and that a man is as free as he is intelligent. For instance, a man in the air is as free as his light on flying. This is just as true in the moral realm: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Corinthians 3:17), and Paul could have added, "and light," for the Holy Spirit is an illuminating Spirit, and Paul was speaking of intellectual or enlightening liberty. Under the checks and incentives of a Christian civilization and the Christian Church, under the guidance of the Spirit, the sinner is free to a limited degree, free to choose and do the good on the moral and spiritual planes, and meet with the approval of man, and in a more restricted, sense of God. Theoretically, the sinner has been stripped of the last and least shred of goodness, and has absolutely nothing in him that could possibly respond to the solicitations of God and good people. Actually, the good desires kindled by the Holy Spirit, and the good disposition created by the sinner's responses in co-operation, furnish the answer to an apparently absurd situation. Both Arminius and Wesley held this, Wesley stating:

And although I have not an absolute power over my own mind, because of the corruption of my own nature; yet through the grace of God assisting me, I have power to choose and do good, as well as evil. I am free to choose whom I will serve.⁴

So then, although totally depraved in the sense that all his powers have been affected by sin—intellect darkened, sensibility deranged, and will weakened—man is not so totally depraved that in him is no knowledge of spiritual realities and no desire for restoration. Apart from prevenient grace, the depravity can be described as "inclined to evil and that con-

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 133; see Arminius, J.

tinually," but with divine aid the depravity is "mitigated," as Dr. H. Orton Wiley expresses it. Thus, actually, the sinner may have a desire to respond to the heavenly influences, and the will to choose Christ and a better life. Wesley is more consistent and clear on this than Arminius. Speaking to Christians, Wesley said:

He did not force you; but, being assisted by his grace, you, like Mary, chose the better part. Just so has he assisted five in one house, many thousands in a nation; without depriving any of them of that liberty which is essential to a moral agent.⁵

But Arminius declared that the free will of the sinner "towards the true good" is "destroyed."⁶ But if this be true, could even the Almighty "assist" it, as Arminius thinks He does in prevenient grace? But the "image" in the sense used here, personality, has been damaged but not destroyed. Presupposing the initiation of the process in God (John 4:10), what is now needed is the strengthening of the weak, i.e., the weakened but awakened person in the valley of decision.

Theoretically, the unaided, natural man can do no righteous act. Actually, there is no such creature. "The grace of God hath appeared to all men." John Wesley, rightly then, viewed the sinner as in a state of both nature and grace.⁷ Any sinner is what he is not only by the sin of Adam and his own sin, but by the grace of God. For through the merits of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8), the Holy Spirit lost in the Fall was immediately restored; otherwise the race would have perished instantly. Actually, then,

the race has been only an instant or less without the grace of God. Due to His striving, His calling attention to the attraction of the Christian life and the attractiveness of Christ himself, desires are kindled and elevated, as has been shown. The sinner freely responding and co-operating is "drawn away of his own [desires]" and solicited (in the good sense). The "handle" God uses to lift up the sinner is thus the product of co-operative effort.

As with sin, so with salvation, the "child" conceived is the product of the union of two wills—now, those of God and of man. It is not a metaphysical union, but an ethical union, like that of the wills of husband and wife who become "one" without any loss of individuality. It is like the union of the vine and the branches, based upon voluntary, loving co-operation (see John 15:1-7 with 14:15-21). Here we are told that "the vine cannot bear fruit of itself." The divine desire and will must be matched and supported by human desire and will in co-operation (II Peter 3:9; John 15:4).

So man, supposedly unable to make a move towards God, unable even to perform the good acts of repentance and faith, can, if he chooses, respond to the stimuli from the heavenly world (even as Adam could respond to the stimuli from the satanic world), with desires elevated by the "softening up" process. Actuated now by higher motives, co-operating with the whole Trinity—Author, Agent, and Administrator of atonement and salvation—man is actually free to repent and believe, i.e., to obey the inspired direction, a persuasive promise and not a compelling threat—"Draw nigh to God," in the confidence that He too "will draw nigh" (James 4:8).

(To be continued)

⁵Op. cit. See Burtner and Chiles, p. 145.

⁶Op. cit. See Arminius, I, 526; II, 287.

⁷See Burtner and Chiles, op. cit., pp. 148-49; Wiley, O., and Culbertson, P., *Intro. to Chr. Theol.* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1949), p. 262.

Paul, the Intercessor

By R. E. Bebout*

And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God (Phil. 1:9-11).

WHAT AN IMMENSE PRAYER! And what an invigorating vision it opens to every child of the Father's love! While the apostle is praying we catch something of the vastness, the challenging expansiveness, of the life that is love-redeemed and love-impelled. It is to be a life of ever-abounding love.

Paul was a man of prayer. Because he was a man of prayer, he was a man of power. Prayer is power, transforming power. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Likewise when the church or individuals, guided by the Holy Spirit, pray with passion and energy, it avails much.

Note four things Paul requests in behalf of the Philippians: (1) growth in love: "That your love may abound yet more and more"; (2) discriminating judgment: "in knowledge and in all judgment"; (3) Sincerity and blamelessness: "that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ"; (4) full fruitfulness: "being filled with the fruits of righteousness."

He wanted these things for them because God willed these things for

them. When Paul prayed, he prayed with the mind of Christ. The Spirit was helping him and making intercession for him. Christ was in the prayer life of the apostle; therefore he prayed according to God's will. His prayers are a revelation of God's will for men.

We too can pray effectually. Our prayers can be guided by the Holy Spirit. We especially need the aid of the Holy Spirit, who helps our infirmities in prayer. He understands and will quicken the flagging soul until it shall mount up as on eagle wings, run without becoming weary, and walk without fainting. Note Paul's burden in prayer:

The first petition is one for growth in love. Abbott-Smith defines the word "abound" as meaning: "to be over and above," "to be in abundance." Another translates the verse as follows: "And it is my prayer that your love may overflow." In other words, love is a virtue of which one cannot have too much.

The love which must overflow, however, is not mere emotional love. It flows abundantly, but within the banks of knowledge and judgment. The knowledge in which love abounds is knowledge gained by experience—personal knowledge. We love the Lord because we know the Lord. "You will love Him when you know Him."

The word "judgment" means "moral perception." Divine love sends us in loving quest for the sinner, but does not blend us to the "sinfulness" of sin. We need the ability to hate sin

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without hating the sinner, to love the sinner without whitewashing his sin.

What dulls the edge of our spirituality? We shall find the answer in the second petition, which asks for discriminating judgment. The believer's love is to abound in knowledge and moral perception in order that he may come to approve the things that excel.

The Church's keen edge of victory is dulled today by worldliness. Worldliness has crept into the Christian homes and into the churches until it has dulled and blunted the keen edge of victory that God's people should have. Now some things that are worldly in character may not necessarily be evil. Some worldly pursuits and pleasures might be justified as containing some good. It may be that the greatest harm done by some worldly pursuits is that of occupying one's time and affections to the point of leaving no room for those spiritual exercises without which the spiritual life becomes dried up.

Paul's second petition seeks for us the discrimination to approve things, not merely because they are good, but rather only if they are the most excellent things available to us. We are not to be satisfied with the good, or the better; we are to major on the best. We are not to be content with what is tolerably good; we are to insist on what is superlatively good.

The third request is for sincerity and blamelessness. One translation is as follows: "And be men of transparent character and blameless life." The word rendered "sincere" means, according to many scholars, "judged in sunlight," referring no doubt to the practice of holding things up to the sunlight in order to detect flaws. May our lives show no defects when held up to the sunlight of our Lord's scrutiny.

The life of growing love is marked by blamelessness. We are to be "without offence." The standard is high, but not too high. We do not understand this to mean freedom from fault, but rather freedom from blame. The Holy Spirit through Jude tells us that we are to be "preserved blameless" here. Blameless here; faultless yonder.

Paul urges the Philippian Christians: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings.

When the preacher sees his people victorious in faith, holding forth the Word of life, then he may rejoice that his prayers and tears and labor have not been in vain.

The final petition of the four is for full fruitfulness in righteousness. The tree's purpose is to bear fruit. It is a thing of beauty in the spring when it puts forth its leaves and blossoms, but it is a thing of delight in the summer or autumn when it is laden with fruit. The initial experiences and blessings of the Christian life are wonderful, but its real objective is that of fruit bearing—that is, mature character, loving service, and soul winning.

The fourth lovely plant that God wants to make flourish in the garden of love is one named fruitfulness. We are to be "filled with the fruits of righteousness." God is not content with lives that are negatively good—free from "offence." He wants lives that are positively good—laden with the "fruits of righteousness." With these we are to be filled, filled up, filled full, the whole soul and life occupied with them, ever doing something by which glory is brought to God and good is done to man.

The Pastor's Responsibility for Church Planning

By Forrest Woodward*

WHY DOES THE MAN who has recently moved to a new pastorate so often completely change the building plans which have been discussed and carefully planned and approved by the church and its board under the leadership of the former pastor?

The writer, having had many years experience in designing and building churches as a profession before entering the ministry, has been pondering over this question for several years.

Many times, years of planning and expensive architects' services have been recklessly and unwisely discarded because of the pressure applied on the church by the new pastor. Too many times this has proved not only expensive but unwise.

The extent of a pastor's responsibility is limited to his using past experiences as a basis for advice and recommendation. He should realize that it is the people of the church who are to "live with their problem." When the main factors have been considered, such as the seating capacity (allowing for reasonable future expansion and growth), type of construction most suitable for local conditions and needs, available funds, proper financing of the balance, etc., and the planners have all been paid for their services, it is almost a tragedy to see years of planning destroyed in a matter of days because of the insistence of a pastor who doesn't

realize that he is only a temporary "fixture."

In some instances, blunders and unwise planning have been corrected but usually the change has proved tragic and expensive.

Remember, the congregation is at the top of the "responsibility ladder," not the pastor.

Of much importance is the proper consideration and assurance of the possibility of future expansion. The building layout should be such that it would not prove too costly in adding to at a later date. Some churches have within a year outgrown their limited facilities, and because of improper planning, expansion is almost impossible.

Another factor which is of great importance is the construction of the building. After the blueprints have been received showing all vital details of the construction, the contractor or superintendent should be careful to carry out all these points which are so vital to the permanency of the building. It has been noted that in many instances the idea, This is just as good, or, This change will save money, has later proved expensive in early building repairs. The contractor must be reliable. Check on his past experience and qualifications. Look over some of his past work. Talk to some of the pastors involved. A few hours spent in investigation may be a future saving of thousands of dollars in costly repairs later.

Of necessity, of course, is proper

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financing before beginning the construction work. Most banks are favorable toward construction loans if the congregation has raised a reasonable amount of money among themselves, and if there has been a loan "commitment" made by a reliable lending agency to pay off when the building is completed. Completion of some churches has been delayed for months, and sometimes years, because of faulty or improper financing. Know where the money is coming from before starting construction.

The pastor who has never been in a building program has much to learn.

He should make sure his inexperience does not prove costly to his congregation. It is better to "admit ignorance than to display it." The pastor can prepare himself for the building program through intelligent reading and research. He should not look over the value of discussing the many problems with others who have had firsthand experience.

Another bit of advice, Keep prayed up—keep sweet," for a unanimous favorable attitude toward the building program seldom exists on the part of the congregation. You may not stay long to enjoy the new building.

Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle*

Romans 12:9-13

HYPOCRITICAL LOVE

Can there be such a thing? Paul seems to imply the possibility when he writes, "Let you love un hypocritical" (lit. Gk.). The word means "without hypocrisy," and so "genuine" or "sincere." Of course, love that is insincere is not really love at all. In this, as in other attitudes of life, sincerity is the most essential thing. We must be sure that we are genuine. Sanday and Headlam call attention to an interesting fact: "It is significant that the word is not used in profane writers except once in adverbial form, and that by Marcus Aurelius."¹ Sincerity did not receive its full credit in the ancient world.

HATRED OF EVIL

The Greek word for "abhor" is the present participle *apostygunte*, found only here in the New Testament. It is a very strong term meaning "hate" or "abhor." Expressing extreme dislike, it may be translated "loathing," as it is in Moffatt and *The New English Bible*. Weymouth has: "Regard evil with horror." Williams emphasizes, as usual, the force of the tenses (both present). He renders the latter part of the verse thus: "You must always turn in horror from what is wrong, but keep on holding to what is right." Sanday and Headlam say of the term: "The word expresses a strong feeling of horror."² The Re-

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¹Romans, p. 360.

²Ibid.

vised Standard Version renders it "hate."

GLUED TO THE RIGHT

The Greek word for "cleave" is the verb *kollao*, which means "glue." It may be represented in English by either "cleave" or "cling." It suggests that we are to be cemented securely to what is right.

On first sight this verse seems to contain an odd combination of ideas. But there is warning here that is very relevant to modern life. Paul urges his readers to be sure that their love is genuine, that it is not just hypocritically parading as love. Be sure, he says, that you hate evil and hold tightly to the good. Only thus can you escape the temptations that cause many to fall.

FAMILY AFFECTION

"Be kindly affectioned" (v. 10) is an adjective, *philostorgos*, found only here in the New Testament. The first part, *philos*, means "beloved." The second is from the noun *storage*, meaning "family affection." Vincent points out the implication of this when he writes: "The word here represents Christians as bound by a family tie."³ "Brotherly love" is one word in the Greek, *philadephia*.

These two verses emphasize two important corollary truths. Our love for our fellow Christians (brothers) must be affectionate, but at the same time it must be pure. This cannot be emphasized too strongly.

The exact meaning of the second clause of verse ten has been a matter of dispute. The verb "preferring" (*proegeomai*) literally means "go before as a leader," to show the way.

The ancient versions (Old Latin, Vulgate, Syriac, Armenian) take this passage as meaning "try to outdo one another in showing respect." That is the sense adopted by the Revised Standard Version: "outdo one another in showing honor." Vincent would render it: "leading the way in showing the honor that is due."⁴ The sense of the King James Version is preferred by Denney,⁵ and also by Sanday and Headlam.⁶

BUSINESS?

The word translated "business" (v. 11) is *spoude*. It means "speed, haste," and so "eagerness, earnestness." The King James Version elsewhere renders it "diligence," "haste," "care," "forwardness," but only here "business." The propriety of doing so is certainly open to question. Probably the best translation is "earnestness" (Williams) or "zeal" (Weymouth, Moffatt, R.S.V.). Denny writes: "It denotes the moral earnestness with which one should give himself to his vocation."⁷

"SLACK" OR "SLOTHFUL"?

The Greek word is *okneros*, which means "shrinking, hesitating, timid"⁸ or "idle, lazy, indolent."⁹ It is used by Jesus for the slothful servant (Matthew 25:26).

The phrase is best rendered, "Let not your zeal slacken" (Weymouth), or, "Never let your zeal flag" (Moffatt), or still more simply, "Never flag in zeal" (R.S.V.). Luther put it: "In regard to zeal be not lazy."

BOILING

The word "fervent" is the present (continuous action or state) participle

⁴Ibid.

⁵EGT, II, 692.

⁶Op. cit., p. 361.

⁷EGT, II, 692.

⁸Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, p. 314.

⁹Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, p. 565.

³Word Studies, III, 159.

of the verb *zeo*, which means "boil." In the New Testament the word is found only here and Acts 18:25. Goodspeed seeks to bring out the original force of the word in his translation, "on fire with the Spirit." Very similar is "Be aglow with the Spirit" (R.S.V.). Moffatt has, "Maintain the spiritual glow." Weymouth says, "Have your spirits aglow." Williams agrees closely with Goodspeed. He renders it, "always on fire with the Spirit."

It is obvious that one problem is that of translating *to pneumati*. Does it mean "in your spirit" or "with the Spirit"? Sanday and Headlam wisely suggest the combination: "the human spirit instinct with and inspired by the Divine Spirit."¹⁰

PATIENT OR STEADFAST?

The Greek word is *hypomenontes*, present participle. The verb *hypomeno* means literally "remain under." It has the metaphorical meaning "stand one's ground, hold out, endure."¹¹ Sanday and Headlam suggest that the idea here is "endurance in persecution."¹²

It seems surprising that so many have retained "patient" here (e.g., Weymouth, Williams, R.S.V.). The Berkeley Version has "endure," which more correctly conveys the basic meaning of the verb. "Patient" tends to be too passive a term in modern English to represent adequately the Greek. Moffatt has, "Be steadfast in trouble." Goodspeed agrees: "steadfast in time of trouble." That seems better.

INSTANT OR INSISTENT?

The King James Version reads: "continuing instant in prayer." The true idea here, however, is "insistent"

rather than "instant." But the word "insist" was a new term in 1611.¹³

The verb is a very strong one, *proskartereo*. It means "attend constantly, continue steadfastly."¹⁴ The thought is brought out correctly by most modern versions: Goodspeed and the Berkeley Version both have "persistent in prayer." Williams brings out more fully the continuous force of the present participle. He renders it, "ever persistent in prayer." Denny writes: "The strong word suggests not only the constancy with which they are to pray, but the effort that is needed to maintain a habit so much above nature."¹⁵

DISTRIBUTING OR CONTRIBUTING?

The Berkeley Version has the latter in verse 13. The simple Greek is "sharing in the needs of the saints." The verb *koinoneo*, here in the present participle, means "have in common," and so "share." In the case of giving to those who are in need it could well be rendered "contributing." But why not adopt the simplest term, "sharing"? The only objection would be that we share with people in need rather than with their needs. But neither do we contribute or distribute to their needs!

HOSPITALITY

The Greek word *philoxenia* means literally "love of strangers." That is what real hospitality is. The word is used only here and in Hebrews 13:2. There, and elsewhere in the New Testament, it is clear that "hospitality was recognized as one of the most important of Christian duties."¹⁶

"Given to" is literally "pursuing" (*diokontes*). Some of the recent versions say: "Practice hospitality." That is the right idea.

¹⁰Op. cit., p. 361.
¹¹Arndt & Gingrich, op. cit., p. 853.

¹²Op. cit., p. 362.

¹³EGT, II, 692.

¹⁴Sanday & Headlam, op. cit., p. 363.

The Sunday Evening Service

By M. Clarke Garrison*

DARKENED CHURCH buildings on Sunday evening are getting to be commonplace in our day. It is a shame. It is a pity. It ought not so to be. There must be a reason. Most of us agree this should never happen in our beloved Zion.

Tragic as closed church doors may be Sunday evening, there is perhaps another picture about as dark; that of evening congregations being so small and uninterested as many are . . . even in our midst. There must be a reason.

Is it because the pastor is not interested? Is it because some of our people do not care for the evening service any more? Is it because so much emphasis is being placed on the morning services there is little time left for planning the evening service? Is it because there are so many other events bidding for the people's time they do not attend? Many queries such as these could be asked and all, to a degree, could be answered in the affirmative.

Recently this writer had the privilege of preaching in a sister church on a Sunday evening. There was seating room for about 250. By actual count there were 240 present. A surprisingly large number were teen-agers. And this in a denomination which in many places does not even open the

door Sunday night. This number was not an exception. It was regular to a marked degree. There must be a reason.

Was it because the pastor was a great preacher? He was average. Was it because he had "pony rides," "lucky bucks," "hot seats," "grocery barrels," or other spectacular media? No! And the same answer goes for any question referring to a gimmick of one kind or another. He had merely accepted the challenge issued him earlier to place as much emphasis on the Sunday evening service as on the Sunday school and morning worship hour. With enthusiasm he sold his congregation on the idea they should be present for the evening service. With planning he led them in a service that was spiritual and uplifting. To be fair, I must add that it was not very difficult to preach that evening.

A pastor of our own faith challenged himself to have as many present for the evening service as were present in Sunday school that morning. This was a real challenge. After several weeks, with few exceptions, the night crowd equaled or bettered the Sunday school attendance . . . and this over a three-year period. Oh, yes, the Sunday school was above average and increased in attendance each of those years. There must be a reason.

*Hot Springs, Arkansas.

The reason was the accepted challenge. Along with it went prayer, planning, faith, and work . . . much work, to be sure. Advantage was taken of every opportunity to promote the evening service. Advantage was taken, too, of the closed doors of neighboring churches. A number of the year's special events were scheduled for the evening rather than the morning service. As much care in selecting sermon topics, special musical numbers, and songs was used for this service as for the morning.

The people loved their pastor. They believed in him. He was their leader. His enthusiasm was catching. He believed in them. They must not let him down. He must not let them down. Together they succeeded.

You too, pastor, can succeed in building your Sunday evening congregation. Issue a strong challenge to yourself. Make it a real challenge. Sell your people on it. They will follow in most instances. God will help. God will bless you.

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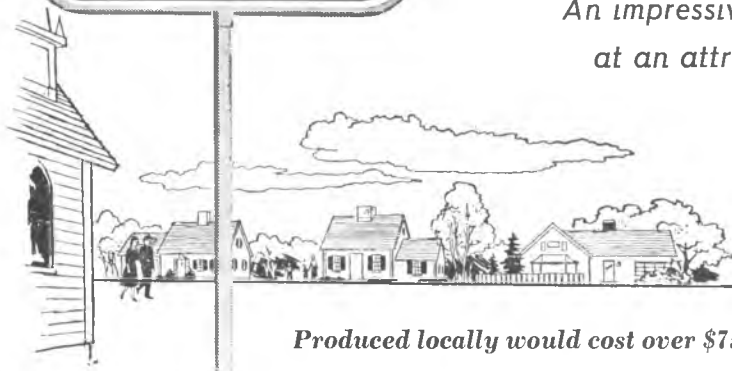
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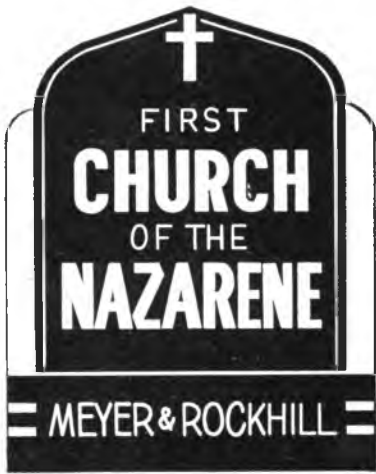
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"QUEEN of the PARSONAGE"

*May she who in the parsonage dwells be radiant, poised, serene;
And every moment of each day be every inch a queen!*

Contributed by Ruth Vaughn*

Portrait of a Queen

GERTRUDE, you will find your greatest pay in life will come from what you put into other people's lives. This will be your greatest joy and satisfaction."

The day before he passed on to his reward, Dr. J. B. Chapman uttered these words to his daughter, Mrs. Wilson Lanpher, now parsonage queen of the First Church of the Nazarene, Washington, D.C. And she has found his words to be true in her life . . . joys and satisfaction in the parsonage far above her greatest expectations.

It was in her senior year at E.N.C. that Gertrude Chapman met Wilson Lanpher and accepted his calling to be her calling, his place of service to be hers. They entered the pastorate in North Manchester, Indiana—a new work. Many were the lessons learned!!!

This pastorate began in the middle of the depression. The new pastor and his bride soon learned to differentiate between wants and needs. Winter came and they had no way to heat their tiny parsonage. Heat seemed to be a necessity of life, so they finally managed to get together enough money for a down payment on a used heating stove.

But it just seemed an impossibility

to save the amount of that first monthly payment. The due day came and no money! Up until this purchase the young Lanphers had refused to buy even a loaf of bread on credit for fear they could not pay for it. Now in desperation on the due day they felt they were in a position to disgrace God's work by default on a payment.

Wilson and Gertrude had prayed but no answer had come. Then—there came a knock at the door. A stranger came in, visited awhile, and as he left he put some money into the young pastor's hand. It was equivalent to the due payment!

In the very same manner this man paid for that stove. The Lanphers never told him or anyone else of their need. After the stove was completely paid for, the man never gave them another money gift. God had provided!

This is exemplary of the many times when God's care was evident—not only in financial crisis, but oft-times in supplying grace (with a little glory) to endure privations, stress, disappointment, frustration, sorrow, humiliations, and personal battles. During one of these testing times the Lord gave to her a promise which has almost become her personal golden text. It is: "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (Exodus 14:14). She has proved His grace sufficient.

*Lubbock, Texas.

Gertrude Lanpher is endowed with a keen sense of humor. Thus she has been able to find the humorous side to many otherwise distressing situations . . . and so she has found life to be fun! She is wondrously able to see the ridiculous in the commonplace, the humor in the pathetic.

Deeply consecrated, with the "beauty of Jesus" radiating from her countenance, her conversation, her daily impact upon the world is for good. Through her life she illustrates the matchless splendor of complete surrender to the will of God, the unsurpassed wonder of living a lifetime guided by His hand. To her husband, her two daughters, her parishioners, everyone whom she meets, she gives a glimpse of the glory of God. Truly this is a portrait of a queen!

ROYAL COOKBOOK

This month we conclude the very excellent answer Mrs. Dell Aycock has given to the question concerning "The Preacher's Wife as a Counselor." We are deeply grateful to Mrs. Aycock for this splendid advice.

"Often people come asking for advice when really what they want is your sanction on something they have already done or something they plan to do. You can get 'little old you' in a heap of trouble unless you exercise great care. Even though you say nothing, they will feel you give assent if you act as though you agree with them either by a smile, a nod, or a look. We all know people who have gotten into difficulty and came back on another, saying, 'I thought she agreed,' or, 'I thought it was all right by the way she acted.' I am not suspicious of everybody but I have lived a lot of years and met a lot of people and learned a lot of things about some of these people. So never try to 'walk a tight rope.' It is a hard thing to do; even the best tight-rope walkers

sometimes fall—and not into the net either. Be woman enough to take your stand when you need to take it.

"Be on your guard for that special type who comes, not really seeking personal help, but to pry, to find out something or to tell you something and perhaps get you involved in a situation involving other people. Remember, the less a person confesses to you, the better off both of you will be. And do not be guilty of prying yourself. If you do, you may live to regret it.

"In all, seek to be God's woman in every dealing you have with your people."

BOOKSHELF WITH LACE

For those spontaneous parties you are called upon to direct, the tiny *Ideas for Young People's Parties* is a wonderful book to fall back on. It is also filled with excellent ideas for planned parties. Ken Anderson and Morry Carlson have compiled a great little book filled with games which are not only fun but also educational. (May be purchased at your Publishing House for seventy-five cents.)

HER MAJESTY: A MOTHER

During the next few issues we will be featuring a new division dealing with the problems and blessings of motherhood in the parsonage. We all want our children to be good and successful in life—but many times in the busy whirl of parish demands we fail to give to this, our greatest task, our very best. Dr. G. B. Williamson, in his book *Overseers of the Flock*, said: "Preachers' children are not naturally good or automatically successful. They take time, patience, discipline, love, and prayer the same as any others. Probably parsonage children have been lost more for lack of attention than because they were inherently bad. While preachers are saving others, they may lose their

own. It is doubtful if God ever required any man (or woman) to do God's work to the ruin of his family. Regularity at mealtime, faithfulness to a family altar, fairness in all decisions, firmness always with love, and with discipline when needed, are parental duties not to be superseded by any routine demands of a day." Let us check up carefully on our lives in this important area, that we will not fail the precious children whom God entrusted to us.

HEART TALK

Our "queen," Mrs. Wilson Lanpher, gives us some of her views concerning the career of the "parsonage queen."

"I believe that any wife, and especially a minister's wife, has a big and full-time career in being wife, mother, and helpmeet. My career has always been my husband—trying to make everything dovetail to help his sacred calling. In a sense I am custodian of a man of God, aside from his being my

husband. His very call gives me a special part in making him available to the demands made upon him, so that his professional duties will not be unnecessarily complicated by home problems or a lazy, indifferent, complaining, or selfish wife and family. Our children are my responsibility at home, church, and social activities. He belongs to the people in a unique way. I must make our home a haven from discord and ugliness, something of beauty upon which he can depend at all times.

"In the years of our daughters' childhood, we have done without many things in order to pay for baby sitters, so that I would be free to go when my husband felt my presence was needed. This even helped protect our girls from some things against which they needed protection. In their presence, church difficulties and problem members were never mentioned. Yes, I know I have my rights, but I try to let the Lord protect them. I've been more than repaid."

Prayer and Worship

(Continued from page 7)

a special time of prayer into the service for the special need. The prayers of the midweek service are often thought of as being this type, with special requests being pointed up in a given prayer session. The prayer for physical healing, either in the service or apart from it, would come in this heading. Here the prayer is concentrated on the specific need. There is value in pulling the interest and faith of the people to a single purpose.

5. *Benediction.* The closing prayer of the service is just what its name implies; it is the prayer of blessing

upon the people as they leave the place of worship. Historically, ministers have used any one of a dozen or more of the scriptural benedictions. These can be effective if used with a personal touch. Others have combined what would be a "closing prayer" to the sermon with the benediction. In other cases this is a simple dismissal. Care should be taken not to make it too long or make it a recapitulating of the sermon.

Prayer and worship go hand in hand. The minister could well give all of the prayers of the services of the church a careful scrutiny. The chances are he will find a way to improve some or all of them.

The Pastor's Spiritual Responsibility to Himself**

By J. Melton Thomas*

WE DO NOT GET very far in any week until we begin to think in terms of responsibility. We do not get far from the phrases of the oft-sung song

*A charge to keep I have
A God to glorify.*

It is this personal plane that arrests us when we think of the responsibility we have to our own spiritual lives.

*A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.*

In its ultimate probing this finger has a climactic reminder,

*Help me to watch and pray,
And on thyself rely,
Assured if I my trust betray
I shall forever die.*

This is the staggering declaration of Paul, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Corinthians 9:26-27). This is the reasoned determination of John Wesley as he says: "To candid, reasonable men I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of the day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God. And returning to God: Just hovering over the great gulf till, a few moments hence, I am no more seen: I drop into

an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing—the way to heaven: How to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the Way: for this end He came from heaven." Says Paul, "... lest ... when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Says Wesley: "I want to know one thing—the way to heaven: How to land safe on that happy shore." This is the ultimate personal responsibility of every man—and not less, nay, even more, the man of God.

But there are constituent parts of this responsibility, and it is of these that we want more especially to speak. I have a responsibility, here and now, not only to say, but also to be; not only to profess, but also to possess; not only to proclaim, but also to partake of the benefits.

To this end, then, let us view four facets of this personal responsibility.

We have responsibility, *to the confidences of Christian life*. In other words, we must know faith ourselves; we must have a personal confidence in God. This will be a confidence that begins with a heart-changing rendezvous with the Spirit of God. A man can never be a man of God until he first realizes with Isaiah, "... Woe is me! for I am undone" (Isaiah 6:5). For him there will be no flying angel, no burning coal; there will be no fire to cleanse, no flame to challenge; there will be no sense of mighty commission and moving commitment, unless he has had this heart-humbling,

*Pastor, Spokane, Washington.

**Paper read at Northwest District Preachers' Convention.

life-altering conviction pierce his inmost being, "... I am undone."

How well I remember when it came to me! "... Woe is me! ..." I remember that, but I remember more. I remember that the fire was real; that the flame, too, was there; for when I drew near, my hands felt the warmth; my mind sensed the fire; my heart caught the glow. God not only convicts; He just as surely converts, just as completely cleanses, and just as certainly empowers. To every committed life the promise eventuates in fulfillment, "... ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." It is true that these experiences will be manifest to various individuals in various ways. But to everyone the reality is the same.

And no man dare stand to say to others that God can do, unless for him these things have been done. The gifts of God vary, but the grace of God is uniform. Every pastor will offer to a congregation a ministry that is peculiarly his, but no pastor has anything to offer who does not have a personal testimony. The man of God must first be that, the man of God! He may offer brilliance; he may offer cleverness; he may offer scholarship (and none of these are to be despised) —but he must first offer himself. Dr. R. T. Williams used to tell us that a crowd not only sees and hears a preacher, but also feels him. He referred to this outgoing of the person, which cannot go unless the preacher himself is. We dare not, my brethren, bespeak that which we ourselves do not experience. Our first responsibility is to settle confidently the initial experiences of the Christian life. And this must be a progressing relationship, becoming richer, more satisfying with passing days.

The pastor has a second personal spiritual responsibility and that is to the *convictions of Christian longing*.

This is to say the pastor has a responsibility to face up to, and must find a satisfactory answer for the great issues of life. In this area there may not be the ultimate satisfactions one can have in initial experience; for there is no place for static dogmatism as relates to Christian revelation. Nonetheless, the preacher has a responsibility, both to himself and to those he serves, to settle his beliefs and to begin proclaiming them. It will be true that God will ever and again give new insights. It will be true that one will discover new approaches to truth. It will be true that fresh interpretations of old revelations will keep the mind keen. The preacher, however, must have some cardinal beliefs that know no altering; else he shall be unsettled every time he reads a dissenting opinion. A good place to begin is with the statement of beliefs of the church as given in the *Manual*.

These things the preacher must lay hold on. With some of them he will warn; by some of them he will inspire; with all of them he will proclaim. He has a responsibility to let them grip his heart until they are his, personally his.

In like manner the general and special rules of the church must become a part of the individual preacher. If he is uncertain as to what those rules are, or uncertain as to what they mean, or uncertain as to how binding they are, he will produce weak and unstable members. Let these ethical interpretations never become insignificant in his thinking.

The third area of personal spiritual responsibility is in the *consecrations of Christian loyalty*. Laymen have a right to expect dedicated ministers. They have a right to expect their preacher to put in just as many hours, to give just as faithful service, to exploit all possibilities in the ministry, as does the layman in his job. It goes

without saying that a congregation will do no more than does its leadership. If the preacher shows a lack of faith and commitment when the offerings are being received, he will never tap the financial possibilities of his people. If, as he approaches his boards and committees, he shows no imagination, he cannot expect his leaders to come up with any dazzling ideas for advancement. If he has a bored and lazy outlook on his own phases of work—calling, leading, administering—he cannot expect the laymen to get excited about their work. If he shows in the pulpit that he has no sense of the glow and glory of spiritual truth, he cannot expect his teachers and workers to be spiritual.

The preacher must be dedicated. He owes it to his own ministry. He owes it to his own potential in service. He owes it to what may be accomplished by his surrendered and dedicated self. Only as he is dedicated will he have the sense of satisfaction and accomplishment which must be his as he builds the Church of Jesus Christ. His hobbies and his avocations must be secondary. His services to the organizations and clubs and schools of his community must be given a subordinate place. His task is to build the church. He is responsible to put in a day's work, to earn his pay check, to show by his results in parish and pulpit that he gets up mornings, and works through the heat of the day, and until the setting of the sun.

And last he has responsibility to the constraints of Christian love. What an inspiration is the ministry of the Apostle Paul! You cannot read the Epistles without sensing that his was a great heart. He was dedicated. When his friends would have restrained him, he replied, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?

for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). He was an intrepid missionary; he was an organizer of infant churches; he was a great scholar; he was a powerful preacher; he was a patient organizer; he was a faithful shepherd. All of these things are revealed in Paul's writings—which in themselves are the depository message of Jesus, accepted by the entire Christian Church.

Now why? What was the source of this cascading energy that drove the restless apostle on? There were incidental phases to his ministry to be true. But the great secret of his mighty life is not found in these lesser things. Rather it is found in these words: "... I am ready . . . for the name of the Lord Jesus." He was doing it for Jesus; he was in love with Jesus; he felt the pulsating love of Jesus, so he exclaimed, "For the love of Christ constraineth us" (II Corinthians 5:14).

And this is the greatest responsibility the preacher has—to fall in love and stay in love with Jesus. Only this will ultimately cause him to carry through. People will fail him. He will feel that his work has not been properly evaluated and appreciated. He will be tired, and weary, and worn. Of making many sermons there will be no end. The jangling telephone will rob him of peace of his mind; the good, jangling gossipers will rob the peace of his life. There will be committees and boards and sessions to meet. There will be projects to promote, money to raise, campaigns to carry out. And it all will bring a weariness of the flesh and spirit unless he is constrained by love.

The preacher has a responsibility to love himself—that is, to believe in his own dignity and worth, to feel that

he is God's man. He has a responsibility to love his people—to accept as reality their religion and their allegiance. He has a responsibility to love his work—to let it thrill and

excite and stimulate him, or else to get out of it! But finally he has responsibility to love Christ, who first loved us and “gave himself for our sins.”

The Marvelous Minister

THE MARVELOUS MINISTER . . . no, I'm not thinking of the world-wide evangelist, with hour-long television programs from coast to coast, with daily radio broadcasts, large audiences, and many volumes to his credit. No, I'm thinking of you—the marvelous minister, pastor of a little “first church.”

Ministers receive public recognition, sure! They aren't unsung heroes. It may happen even twice a year at your church (Christmas and recall time of course). But we really don't begin to appreciate you. Who else sits outside a hospital door while life begins or ends, marries the living, buries the dead, corrects his youngsters, and mows the lawn—all in the same day?

But the marvelous thing—think of it—is preparing 150 messages a year! No other public speaker must do this. Lawyers and politicians have their speeches prepared for them by writers and secretaries, but not the minister.

Anyone can be creative, original, and unique . . . once in a while, but not three times a week! Texts and themes come, at times, by inspiration, but messages come by hard work . . . and they must be homiletically correct, theologically sound, and interesting. Look how fatigued the layman is who just completed a thirty-minute N.Y.P.S. program.

With a message long enough to get the gospel across, short enough to please the board, unique enough to interest the crowd, and simple enough to be understood, you enter the pulpit to preach to what looks like a replica of the stone faces at Mount Rushmore, intermixed with crying babies and fidgety children—and you do it three times a week.

How? The laymen will never know, and all of this for the pay of a common laborer.

We marvel at you . . . the marvelous minister!

—GORDON W. NICHOLS

"I Am So Glad You Were Here"

By H. C. Little*

FRANK HAD BEEN very sick for several months. Every time I called I could see he was failing. It seemed clear that he could not live long, except by a miracle of healing. He and his wife had been Christians, and members of the church, for many years.

One night after a busy day of calling and other "work of the ministry," as midnight neared, the phone rang. The message, taken by my wife, was, "This is sister S——. Tell Brother Little that Frank is worse. There is nothing the pastor can do, but I just wanted him to know." I said, "That means Frank is near the end. There is one thing I can do. I can go and be with them in this hour of anxiety."

In a short time I was in Frank's home. When his wife saw me she said, "O Pastor, I did not expect you to come at this hour of the night. I just wanted you to know." I replied, "I understand, but I wanted to come." Entering the sickroom, I saw that Frank was in a coma. Since it would be useless to try to talk with him, I suggested that we pray. And I was glad that I could say confidently, "Into Thy hands, O Father, we commend the spirit of our brother." Within an hour Frank slipped away to meet the Master, who many years before had transformed his life by His "amazing grace."

Thinking of that most trying moment when sister S——'s loved one would be taken from the home, I tar-

ried until the undertaker came and removed the body. Again I waited until the extreme grief of that moment would somewhat subside. Knowing that some of the neighbors would remain with sister S——, it seemed unnecessary that I stay longer. Even so, I still lingered, being loath to leave the house of sorrow. Finally, however, I said, "Sister ——, I will be going now. But we will be praying for you, and I will see you tomorrow." Then, from the depths of her sorrowing soul, she said, "O Pastor, I am so glad you were here."

As I drove down the deserted street in that hour before the dawn, the weeping words of the woman, now a widow, kept ringing in my mind and heart, "I am so glad you were here." Before I reached home I seemed to hear the "still small voice" of another saying, with surpassing sweetness, "I too am so glad you were there, walking with My sheep through the valley of the shadow of death."

O my brother minister, let us do our best to be always ready, day or night, to hasten to the home or the hospital when one is going through life's supreme sorrow. Perhaps you will say but little, for words are never weighty when weeping weighs us down. But your presence will speak loudly in that hour. The people may forget what you say, but they will never forget that you were there. And when you meet them again, in the city of God, will they not say once more, "I am so glad you were there"?

*Evangelist, Columbus, Ohio.

Malachi, a Preacher with His Eye on Money

By Ira E. Fowler*

A LOT OF MODERN-DAY congregations would not give a preacher like Brother Malachi a call. They would not want a man like him to be their pastor. I do not think too many would even bother giving him a call as an evangelist. Their attitude would be: A good man, I am sure, but a bit radical along the line of money. He talks too much about tithing and spends too much of his sermon on offerings."

Malachi preached a lot about money. Every sermon he delivered to his congregation struck them where it hurt the most—their pocketbooks! Some accused him of not having any other sermons to preach, but Malachi kept right on preaching about money anyway. It is right certain that some whispered behind his back that all he was interested in was a bigger salary and a larger offering, that the poor old man was money-mad and desirous of "feathering" his bed.

Well, this did not seem to bother Brother Malachi too much, for he had his message from God; and when a preacher has God's message, God will stand by his side while he preaches it! Malachi took God's word as a burden on his heart, and when a preacher gets up to preach with a burden, something is going to happen.

Yes, sir, Malachi was a preacher with his eye on money. He kept a close track on the tithes and offerings that his congregation gave. He knew

that people who really love God will gladly give. He knew they would give the best they had. Malachi also knew that when his congregation began to get "tight" with God, and to offer the Lord less than their best, they would soon be backslidden and lost.

That is why he preached like he did. That is why he kept his eye on the money. Malachi had learned the hard truth about money. He had watched his congregation. He saw them start holding back on God. Offering God sick sheep and blind cattle for a sacrifice! He saw them argue with the devil and lose the argument. He saw them put the love of money and material things ahead of their love and devotion to the Lord God, and then watched their spiritual fervor dwindle.

Timid and dignified folks feel that a preacher should never get excited, especially about money, but Brother Malachi got excited anyway! Recall Sunday might be just around the corner, but Malachi put God's message first, and the searing truth thundered out to the money-loving crowd.

What a man! What a burning message! What blazing truth comes from the lips of this great prophet of the Old Testament! "Ye have robbed God. Ye have robbed God of his rightful tithes and offerings. They belong to God and ye have robbed Him. Ye are thieves and robbers. Ye are cursed with a curse for your sin. Even this whole congregation

*Pastor, Parkersburg, West Virginia.

has robbed God and is cursed with a fearful curse.

"Bring in all the tithes—not a part of them—no, but all the tithes into the storehouse. No more using God's tithe for a new chariot payment and the rent. No more sending it off to sick Grandma and little Hosea, who is away at school in Jerusalem. No, bring them to the storehouse of God. Bring your offerings after you have

given your tithes, and watch God turn the curse into a blessing—so great that you cannot contain it. God will bless you till there is not room enough to receive it."

Malachi was not a popular preacher. He did not have a popular message. But he was God's preacher. He kept his eye on the money, for he knew that God Almighty kept His eye on the money too.

Journey Through the Junk Yard

MY FRIEND was looking for a certain thing that was not on the market, so his search finally took him to the junk yard. And I was right at his heels, for I was curious. What do they have at such places? Where do they get it? Why would anyone buy junk, or even collect it free? What does he do with it? And how does the owner make a living with such a very unimpressive hobby?

My questions were soon answered. The owner makes a living buying and selling junk. It is not a hobby but a full-time, profitable business. But I hardly believed it. Old rags were piled up in bales. Old bottles were put into stacks and piled everywhere. And there seemed to be no end to the mountain ranges of scrap iron: car motors, wheelbarrows, cultivators, sewing machines, and on and on the list goes. They were all broken and rusty and twisted and worthless, I thought. But the junk man knew better. The rags would be made into slick white paper for expensive books and beautiful pictures. The broken bottles would be cut glass or mirrors. The rusty, twisted iron would be transformed into expensive watches and automobiles.

Then I thought of the human wreckage all about us. I too am in business: the dignified business of reclaiming broken mankind, bringing precious souls to the foot of the Cross, where they are turned from darkness to light, from the power of sin unto God. Others often fail to see the value of the wrecked souls I work with. But I know "the power of God unto salvation." Jesus saves!

—FLETCHER SPRUCE

"No Man Can Serve Two Masters"

By Harry Childers*

THE WORDS OF this title are the Master's words in His Sermon on the Mount. He was declaring to men of His time and of all ages that there were no sinner Christians nor Christian sinners but, without exception, men would be one or the other.

I should like to borrow this phrase and lift it out of its context to express a truth which needs to be aired.

Being better acquainted with my own experience than with those of others, I shall begin with my own.

I sat in my study on Saturday morning. By my right hand was my open Bible; by my left (my writing hand) was my note pad. Arranged across the back of my desk were several open books.

Somewhere here amid this jumble was the sermon which, when touched by the Holy Spirit, should set at rest tired minds and heavy hearts. They had faced the cares of life, the discouraging effects of an unconcerned world about them, and the onslaughts of Satan. I, their pastor, to whom they looked for much of their food and strength, had little to offer them. Through my mind raced masonry, concrete, roof beams, labor, and many other details of the building program which was in progress.

The job had not been imposed upon me—I assumed it willingly. Having been born and reared in the building business, it was natural for me to do it; and, due to the particular financial circumstances, it was a matter of assuming the job or not building. A new building was essential to the continued existence of that church, so

there was seemingly no choice. Thus, they had a builder but no pastor in any real sense of the word. The vital work of the pastor was either barely touched or ignored completely, for I could not serve two masters.

Tired in mind and body, I doggedly worked and prayed, finally delivering that sermon. I am sure that God was faithful to His children at that and many other like services; I am equally as sure that some of them went away feeling that He could have helped them as much at home.

I am not unaware of the circumstances which make contractors of pastors, yet I ask the question: Can any church afford the loss of their pastor for that amount of time? To a considerable extent, that is what happens, for Jesus said "No man can serve two masters."

The church building program is by no means the only master which sometimes gains unrightful control of the pastor's time. A pastor of whom I know resigned an important and influential civic chairmanship. The position was in many ways an asset to his work as minister in the community; but he confided that the work, as important and beneficial as it was, consumed so much of his time that he was neglecting much of his pastoral work—his first responsibility.

I think that these examples suffice to make my point clear. Any matter that becomes master of so much of the pastor's time as to hinder him in his all-important work of gathering in lost sheep and feeding the flock is an illegitimate master, for "no man can serve two masters."

*Nampa, Idaho.

SERMON WORKSHOP

Submitted by Nelson G. Mink

YES, I TITHE

And what a difference it has made in my enjoyment of my religion and my church!

I don't have a guilty feeling when the offering plate is passed. I have a satisfaction that I am doing my part.

I don't feel a resentment toward my pastor any longer when he preaches faithfully the Bible doctrine of tithing. I know now that he wasn't preaching for my money, but for me, because giving is a spiritual experience.

I don't feel like it is "their" church but "our" church; for when I pay my tithe into the church, I am putting in part of my life, spent in earning that money. My heart is where my treasure is, so I find my heart in the church as never before.

Now I know that I believe the Bible from cover to cover. I am done with explaining away its obvious commandments and promises.

—MR. NEW TITHER

I AM THE CHURCH!

The great Creator drew the plans for me within His heart of love;

The great, eternal God gave His dearest Possession that I might be erected;

My only and one Foundation is His Son, whose body was nailed to a tree;

My Chief Cornerstone—the Stone which the builders rejected;

My walls—placed without hammer's sound—are built by the martyrs of the centuries;

My steeple points ever toward that Great Architect—Builder throughout eternity;

My door swings open to all of every age—bidding them welcome.

A REAL HOME

Because of the housing shortage near the military base where he was stationed, a young doctor and his wife and three children had to live in cramped quarters in a hotel. A friend said to the doctor's six-year-old daughter, "Isn't it too bad that you don't have a home?" To which the philosophic young one replied, "Oh, we have a home, we just don't have a house to put it in."

ON BEING CONSISTENT

"What funny names those Korean towns have!" remarked a man from Schenectady, as he read a Poughkeepsie newspaper while on his way to Hackensack.

"We all make footprints on the sands of time. Some leave the imprint of a great soul—others just the mark of a heel."

SENTENCE SERMONS

"Every Christian occupies some kind of pulpit and preaches some kind of sermon every day.

"Discontent is the penalty we must pay for being ungrateful for what we have.

"When you talk, you only repeat what you already know—listen, you may learn something.

"If someone were to pay you ten cents for every kind word you spoke about people, and collect five cents for every unkind word, would you be rich or poor?"

"To teach something you don't know is like coming back from where you haven't been."

—Gathered by the way

SERMON STARTERS

Trusted with the Gospel

TEXT: I Thessalonians 2:4

- I. TRUSTED TO SPEAK
 - A. Not pleasing man, but God (v. 4).
 - B. Not flattery (v. 5).
 - C. Not self-glory (v. 6).
- II. TRUSTED TO LABOR
 - A. Not be chargeable to anyone.
 - B. Night and day (v. 9).
 - C. Unblamable in conduct (vv. 10, 12).
- III. TRUSTED TO WIN
 - A. "For what is our hope?"
 - B. "Ye are our glory and joy" (v. 20).

—M. D. CLINE
Cayce, S.C.

Acting Under Orders

TEXT: Acts 8:26, 40

- I. GOD'S COMMAND GIVEN
 - "The angel of the Lord spake . . . saying, Arise, and go" (v. 26).
- II. GOD'S COMMAND OBEYED
 - "And he arose and went" (v. 27).
- III. GOD'S MESSAGE DELIVERED
 - Philip preached Jesus (v. 35).
- IV. GOD'S OBJECTIVE REACHED (v. 39)

—M. D. CLINE

Evangelism First

TEXT: Acts 8:4-6

- I. PREACH WITH A PURPOSE. Where people are found (v. 4).
- II. PREACH TO, NOT AT, PEOPLE. He "preached Christ *unto them*" (v. 5).
- III. PREACH CHRIST, NOT ABOUT HIM. He "*preached Christ* unto them" (v. 5).
- IV. PREACH EXPECTANTLY. "The people with one accord gave heed" (v. 6).

—M. D. CLINE

Power Unlimited

TEXT: II Timothy 1:7

- I. GOD GIVES US POWER OF LOVE AND SOUND MIND (v. 7).
- II. GOD GIVES US POWER TO WITNESS (v. 8).
- III. GOD GIVES US POWER TO BE UNASHAMED (v. 12).
- IV. GOD GIVES US POWER TO BELIEVE (v. 12).
- V. GOD GIVES US POWER TO SUFFER

—M. D. CLINE

There Is Joy in Losing

TEXT: Philippians 3:8-10

- I. LOSING ONESELF IN HIM (Christ)
 - Count all things loss to gain Christ (v. 8).
- II. LOSING MY RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FINDING HIS (v. 9)
 - "Not having mine own righteousness" (v. 9).
- III. LOSING MY WILL RECEIVING HIS
 - "That I may know him" (v. 10).

—M. D. CLINE

Awakening to Realities

TEXT: I Corinthians 8:6

- I. "THERE IS BUT ONE GOD."
 - All must meet Him (Philippians 2:10-11; Romans 14:11).
- II. HE IS GOD OF ALL THINGS. Without Him there is nothing.
 - A. Creator (Psalms 24:1)
 - B. Sustainer (Psalms 23:1, 4)
 - C. Leader and Guide (Psalms 25:5)
- III. HE IS GOD TO ALL. (John 6:37; Isaiah 55:7).

—M. D. CLINE

Divine Urgency

TEXT: Romans 1:14-16.

INTRODUCTION: Everyone of us desires to make some sort of progress in this life. In business we like to see that it is moving forward. In school we apply ourselves to the task of making good grades, and this is as it should be. For there is a sense of urgency in about everything we undertake to do in this life. However, there is a sad lack of this enthusiasm in proclaiming this glorious gospel to the ends of the earth. May God enable us to see the glorious opportunities afforded every one of us in this coming quadrennium to advance the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth as fast as we can in order to reap a great harvest of souls. Consider the text:

- I. **WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE OUR DEBT.**
 - A. For experience we are enjoying.
 - B. For enabling grace that is ours.
- II. **WE MUST ACCEPT OUR TASK.**
 - A. To present a universal gospel.
 - B. To prepare for challenge.
 - C. To say: "I am ready." For any task. To speak boldly.
- III. **WE MUST AUGMENT OUR COMMITMENT.**
 - A. No service can be acceptable unless self is. "So, as much as in me is."
 - B. We must intensify our efforts in these next four years.
 - C. Let us be faithful to those who are less fortunate. "I have kept nothing back that was profitable to you." "So, as much as in me is"—of the love of Christ that constrains, the grace that inspires—"I am ready."

CONCLUSION: Let us assume these personal responsibilities and launch an offensive against the forces of evil in these days of uncertainty, and assure ourselves that we can do the job that we are challenged to do this quadrennium.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.
Baton Rouge, La.

TEXT: Genesis 4:1-15

INTRODUCTION: There is no difference between the brothers. They were both corrupt branches of decayed tree. But a great difference between their sacrifices. The words "by faith" in Hebrews teach that God had revealed a way of approach to Him (Romans 10:17).

- I. **ABEL ACCEPTS THE WAY THAT GOD HAD APPARENTLY REVEALED.**
 - A. God is approached only through atoning sacrifices. Christ is our Mediator (I Timothy 2:5).
 - B. God is glorified by a life of faith. "He pleased God" (Hebrews 11:5).
 - C. He validated his profession of faith with works of righteousness (I John 3:12), and in James, faith and works are coupled together.
- II. **CAIN REJECTS THE WAY OF SACRIFICE.** Notice how it affected his life.
 - A. He was angry at his brother. How easy it is to be bitter against those who are better than we are! Anger manages everything badly.
 - B. The New Testament speaks of "the way of Cain" (Jude 11).
 1. "The way of Cain" is the way of selfishness. Christ sends none away empty but those who are full of themselves.
 2. "The way of Cain" is the way of hatred as opposed to love.
 - C. Strange thing, but in the third chapter, Adam sins against God, and in the fourth chapter, Cain sins against man. Every form of sin is mentioned in these two chapters. Cain's way was too refined to slay a lamb, but not too cultured to murder his brother.

CONCLUSION: These altars exist today. Few are gathered at the altar of Christ, while many go "the way of Cain."

—MARVIN E. GROOMS
Grand Island, Nebraska

A Desire to See Jesus

TEXT: John 12:21

INTRODUCTION: Since man is instinctively a religious and rational being, he desires to worship and adore someone higher in power and authority. Jerusalem was crowded with worshippers. Among them were certain Greeks who inquiringly asked to see Jesus. Consider the ways we can see Jesus.

- I. JESUS SEEN THROUGH HIS WORD
 - A. The Scriptures speak of Him (John 1:1, 4).
 - B. The testimony of himself (John 16:28).
- II. JESUS SEEN THROUGH HIS HUMANITY
 - A. While on earth (Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:9).
 - B. Touched with man's infirmities.
- III. JESUS SEEN THROUGH HIS SAVIOURHOOD
 - A. As promised Saviour (Matthew 1:21).
 - B. As powerful Emancipator.
- IV. JESUS SEEN THROUGH PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
 - A. Through the new birth (John 3:3).
 - B. Through the newness of life (Romans 6:22).

CONCLUSION: As we have personally experienced Jesus, let us not fail to point Him out to others, so that they too will get a glimpse of Jesus.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

Self-omitted Fool

TEXT: I Samuel 26:21

INTRODUCTION: Saul was once a chosen vessel of the Lord. The people desired him for a king. He had all of the qualifications of a great leader. Success blinded his eyes. His way up the political ladder was ultimately his mighty downfall. Consider how the capable leader played the fool.

- I. BY REJECTING THE OVERTURES OF MERCY
 - A. Through the means of a faithful mediator (Samuel)

B. Through the measures of merciful providence

- II. BY RESISTING THE OVERWHELMING INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD
 - A. By the avenue of sweet music (David's harp)
 - B. By the aim of satisfying missions
- III. BY REFUSING THE OVERALL WORKING OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE
 - A. In the cave of Adullam (I Samuel 22:1)
 - B. In the wilderness of Ziph (I Samuel 26:2)
- IV. BY RENOUNCING GOD'S OFFER OF RECONCILIATION
 - A. A chance to be restored when so undeserving
 - B. A challenge to accept all of God's grace

CONCLUSION: A man may admit himself to be a fool and never do anything about it. We must blame self for our backslidings and not others, but we must ourselves be willing to fall at the feet of a merciful God and acknowledge our wrongs.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

The Test and Triumph of Man

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 3:10-11

INTRODUCTION: These verses of scripture given by divine inspiration, give the people of God sufficient warning so as to avoid the many pitfalls devised by the devil. Faith in God and His promises makes us less vulnerable to Satan's attacks. Let us ponder these words of warning for our eternal good.

- I. THE WORDS OF GOD'S PATIENCE KEPT
 - A. Christians are the patterns of Christ's patience.
 - B. Christians are patterns of conduct and accomplishment.
- II. THE WONDERS OF GOD'S PROTECTION PROMISED
 - A. Christians kept during fierce testings and fiery trials.
 - B. Examples of this protection throughout the Bible.
- III. THE WILES OF SATAN'S POSITION SHOWN
 - A. Trying to destroy saints.

B. Trying to refute God's Word.

IV. THE WISDOM OF GOD'S PROPHECY REVEALED

A. Confirming all that Christ and the prophets had spoken.

B. Declaring that Satan's kingdom will be destroyed.

V. THE WILL OF GOD'S PROMISE PREVAILING

A. Fulfilling His covenant promise.

B. Furnishing crowns for the overcomers.

CONCLUSION: May these words of truth give us the needed comfort and strength in these days of test and uncertainty. God will prove himself a Strong Tower for His people.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

Man—a Victim or Victor of Sin?

TEXT: Genesis 3:15

INTRODUCTION: Is man conquered or conqueror? The Bible reveals the story to us.

I. MAN CANNOT IGNORE THE REALITY OF SIN.

A. We may deny the story of Eden, but the trail of the serpent is in evidence.

B. What is sin? The center of sin is self-centeredness. Sin creates chaos.

II. MAN WAS MADE TO TRANSCEND SIN.

A. Man is not a necessary part of man, although "all have sinned."

B. Paul informs us: "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

C. Man is to be a son of God and not a slave to sin.

III. MAN CAN TRIUMPH ONLY BECAUSE OF CHRIST.

A. The sufferings of Christ are our succor (Isaiah 53:5).

B. His grace grants us forgiveness (Ephesians 1:7; Romans 3:24).

C. His "grace is sufficient . . ." (II Corinthians 12:9). "All that I need is Jesus," because all that I need is in Jesus.

D. "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (I John 4:4).

CONCLUSION: Truly all of us can be glad of the verse: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). Man is victor because of the victorious Christ.

—MARVIN E. GROOMS

The Forgiveness of Sin

TEXT: *But where is the lamb for a burnt offering? . . . God will provide . . .* (Genesis 22:7-8).

INTRODUCTION: From primitive times have offered sacrifices for their sins. Notice the outstanding sacrifices for sin in the Bible. (Outline thought from George Williams, *The Student's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, p. 74.)

I. ABEL'S SACRIFICE FOR HIMSELF (Genesis 4)

A. It was a blood sacrifice of the first fruit.

B. It was offered "by faith" (Hebrews 11:4).

II. THE PASCAL LAMB FOR A FAMILY (Exodus 12)

A. To be placed on the "side posts and on the upper door post of the houses" (Exodus 12:7).

B. This was for the protection of the first-born.

III. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT FOR A NATION (Leviticus 16:30)

A. The priest was to offer a sacrifice for himself.

B. Then the priest offered a sacrifice for the sins of the people.

IV. THE LAMB OF GOD FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD (I John 2:2)

A. He is God's Sacrifice for sin (Romans 5:8).

B. Propitiation (God's means of dealing with sin) for sin (Romans 3:25).

C. Pardon promised through Christ (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22).

CONCLUSION: The Old Testament sacrifices were not sufficient to permanently redeem men. True forgiveness, which the human soul needs, is only through the sacrifice of Christ.

—MARVIN E. GROOMS

A Prompting to Be Filled with the Spirit

TEXT: Ephesians 5:16-18

INTRODUCTION: God urges us to be "filled with the Spirit." There is a great deal of truth contained in these verses of scripture for our edification.

I. WE MUST KNOW THE DIFFERENCE. "Be not drunk with wine."

- A. By spiritual discernment.
- B. By serious disquisition.

II. WE MUST DESIRE THE BEST. "Be filled with the Spirit."

- A. Since it is God's will.
 - 1. More to be desired than silver and gold.
 - 2. We must thirst after it.
- B. Since the Spirit came for this purpose.
 - 1. There is no limit to the blessing.
 - 2. There will be the enduement of power.

III. WE MUST ACCEPT THE BEST.

- A. By a thorough consecration.
- B. By a complete trust and willingness.

CONCLUSION: May God enable us to see what He has in store for those that love Him and seek His will. Amen.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

The Soul

TEXT: Genesis 2:7

INTRODUCTION: Man does not possess a soul. He is a soul! A living and eternal soul! And the Scriptures reveal three amazing facts about the soul.

I. THE SOUL FORMED BY GOD (Genesis 2:7)

- A. God created the soul. He communicated to him life.
- B. Man is a self-conscious and self-determining being.
- C. Life is a divine bestowment.

II. THE SOUL DEFORMED BY SIN (Genesis 3)

- A. The temptation (vv. 1-5).
- B. The transgression (vv. 6-13).

C. The tragedy of the Fall (vv. 14-24). Especially verse 24 shows the expulsive power of evil. "So he drove out the man . . ."

III. THE SOUL TRANSFORMED BY CHRIST

A. The need.

- 1. Born in sin (Psalms 51:5).
- 2. Acts of sin. "All have sinned . . ." (Romans 3:23).
- 3. Material does not profit. "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26) The soul is of paramount importance.

B. The nature of this transformation. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become NEW" (II Corinthians 5:17).

CONCLUSION: The Psalmist's question, "What is man?" can be answered only as one looks at the Cross. It was there Christ died to save your soul.

—MARVIN E. GROOMS

A Walk with God

TEXT: Genesis 5:2

INTRODUCTION: This is the last glowing account of a man who experienced a walk with God before he was taken to heaven. This gives us ample proof of the possibility of walking with God in this life.

I. A WALK WITH GOD IN LIFE

- A. Among friends and foes
- B. Amidst trials and tests

II. A WALK WITH GOD IN TRUTH

- A. A testimony that bore witness
- B. A task that brings wholesome rewards

III. A WALK WITH GOD IN FAITH

- A. When the devil assails
- B. When darkness abides

IV. A WALK WITH GOD IN HOLINESS

- A. By sublime consecration
- B. By solitary obedience

CONCLUSION: If we are to enjoy God's presence, we too must walk before Him in holiness. This is an experience to be enjoyed by all.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

Getting a Bad Start in Life

(Lot)

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 13:1-13

TEXT: . . . and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom (Genesis 13:12).

INTRODUCTION: If Shakespeare had written about Lot's life, it would have been classified a tragedy. And it was! Notice the downfall of Lot:

I. POSSESSIONS PRODUCED STRIFE.

- A. This is the first instance of riches in the Bible.
- B. Possessions became the major item of Lot's life. Great abundance of riches cannot by any means be both gathered and kept without sin.
- C. Wealth brought strife. How should the child of God handle his wealth?

II. STRIFE PRODUCED SEPARATION.

- A. Abraham makes a generous proposal in vv. 8-9, "We be brethren." Let this word "brethren" rule your life of dealing with others.
- B. Lot makes a selfish choice. Someone has said, "Lot lifts up his eyes in self-will and obtains a few acres; Abraham lifts up his eyes in self-renunciation and is given the whole land."
- C. Lot was as materialistic as Abraham was magnanimous.

III. SEPARATION FROM GOOD THEN BRINGS ITS INEVITABLE RESULTS (c. 19).

- A. Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom" (v. 12). Dr. T. Cuyler points out, "And soon Lot moved into Sodom and before long Sodom moved into him."
- B. When destruction was about to fall, he could not influence his sons-in-law to flee from the city. Don't lose your testimony!
- C. Lasciviousness follows when Lot's two daughters give birth to children of their father.

CONCLUSION: Lot got a bad start in life when he chose Sodom. It is choice, not chance, that determines your character and destiny.

—MARVIN E. GROOMS

Divine Providence

TEXT: Genesis 50:20

INTRODUCTION: An unforgettable line from a familiar hymn reminds us that

God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform.

Certainly this is applicable to Joseph's life!

I. WHEN GOD USES MEN'S AGENCY, IT IS COMMON FOR HIM TO MEAN ONE THING AND THEN ANOTHER.

- A. Man proposes—"they conspired against him to slay him."
- B. God disposes—"But God was with him . . . and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house" (Acts 7:9-10).

II. AGAIN, WE SEE IN THIS STORY THAT GOD OFTEN BRINGS GOOD OUT OF EVIL.

- A. God prepared the man. Two things are seen in Joseph:
 1. That God is good, even in bad times.
 2. That disappointments may be His appointments.
- B. God prepared the man for the task and brought good out of the bad incident.

III. THE FINAL TRUTH WE LEARN FROM THIS VERSE IS THAT THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD WORKS THROUGH THE INDIVIDUAL TO BLESS OTHERS "TO SAVE MUCH PEOPLE ALIVE."

- A. The blessings and providence of God should be a means to an end and not an end in itself. Pass your blessings on!
- B. God prepared the man, and now Joseph prepares the people. One thing is crystal-clear: things won't right themselves. They never have and never will! God uses individuals to do His work.

CONCLUSION: God is working in every life. He desires to make and mold you so that you can be vessel "meet for the master's use."

—MARVIN E. GROOMS

An Acceptable Sacrifice

SCRIPTURE: II Samuel 24:18-25

INTRODUCTION:

Every one of us should express his indebtedness to Christ, the Church, and Christians. For this reason we ought to exalt these influences to a high level before a God-denying, Christ-rejecting world. There are many Christians who sacrifice unstintingly of their goods to keep the Word of God progressing, and their actions have been honored by God. Consider the worth of these scriptures:

- I. A COSTLY SACRIFICE
 - A. An expressive desire to give
 - B. An extreme delight in giving
 - C. An extensive distribution of gifts
- II. A CONSCIENTIOUS SERVICE
 - A. Depth of sincerity
 - B. Disregarding own security
 - C. Demonstrative in service
- III. A COMPLETE SANCTION
 - A. Confirmation of sacrifice
 - B. Conscious of task
 - 1. Plague was stayed.
 - 2. Position regained.

CONCLUSION: We must consider that no sacrifice is acceptable unless it costs us something. We must be willing to sacrifice all for the good of the Kingdom and the salvation of the lost.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

A Glimpse of the Invisible

TEXT: Hebrews 11:24

INTRODUCTION: Christians will be tried in one way or another, and when we are going through such experiences, we must cleave to God and truth, even though it may involve suffering and misunderstanding. For with the eye of faith we see "him who is invisible." Consider the text by observing how:

- I. MOSES PROTESTED THE INJUSTICES.
 - A. Unafraid when faced with decisions (v. 23).
 - B. Unexcelled when threatened with dissension (v. 24).
 - C. Unchallenged when told of deliverer (v. 40).

- II. MOSES PROTECTED THE INHERITANCE.
 - A. Refusing worldly popularity (v. 25).
 - B. Renouncing ungodly pagans (v. 24).
 - C. Resisting evil practices (v. 25).
- III. MOSES PLANNED THE INSURRECTION.
 - A. Purposed this when in palace (v. 24).
 - B. Perceived this when in prayer (v. 26).
 - C. Planned this when a partisan (v. 23).

CONCLUSION: Your faith in God will be tested. When the world, the flesh, and the devil are arrayed against you, planning your destruction, a glimpse of Him who is invisible will give you the assurance of a peaceful haven beyond this life.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

The Man I'm Most Disappointed in

(Esau)

TEXT: *Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, and . . . sold his birth-right unto Jacob* (Genesis 25:27, 33).

INTRODUCTION: Here's a man I wish had succeeded! He could have! In my opinion he's a boy's idol—a sportsman and an athlete. But he failed. Why?

- I. BECAUSE HE FAILED IN A TEST—THE TEST OF THE TRIVIAL
 - A. We are tested more by trifles than by great crises.
 - B. We must stand the test of faithfulness in little things. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10).
 - C. Someone wrote: "No one has any more religion than he can command in an emergency."
- II. BECAUSE HE FAILED IN A FIGHT—THE FIGHT OF FAITH
 - A. He lived for the flesh. No place for the spirit. The little girl's explanation of St. Paul "keeping under his body" was not far wrong: "by keeping his soul on top." (Griffith Thomas, *Devotional Commentary on Genesis*.)

- B. He lived for the moment. He was a minute man. By this I mean he had no consideration for the future.
- C. He later regreted his blunder, for Hebrews 12:17 tells how he failed, even with tears, to persuade his father to change his mind.
- D. The scripture terms him "profane"—no appreciation or respect, and even no place for the sacred and holy things.

CONCLUSION: Esau failed to see that the soul needs food as well as the body. Many do today! Are you guilty?

—MARVIN E. GROOMS

A Son of Belial

TEXT: Mark 5:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus made only one visit to Gadara. It was there Jesus demonstrated His power in ousting the devil from this demon-possessed, raving maniac. When it seemed as if all hope was gone for this son of Belial, Jesus came to Gadara. His presence makes the difference. May His coming to church today make a noticeable difference. May we examine this case for our own good.

I. HIS ABODE. "Dwelling among tombs."

A. Association undesirable (Ephesians 2:1).

B. Assigned to place by Satan.

C. Assaulted those who passed by.

II. HIS ALLEGIANCE (to Satan).

A. He was unmanageable.

1. None could help or advise him.

2. He abused his body. "Cutting himself with stones."

3. Many are doing the same thing today:

III. HIS ANGER: "He cried out."

A. His aggravation. "What have I to do with thee?"

B. His argument. "Torment me not."

C. He was addressed by Jesus. "Come out of the man."

IV. HIS APPEAL. "I adjure thee by God."

A. An innate desire to be free.

B. An intrusion that payed off. "He was made whole."

1. Christ is approachable.

2. Cry out to Him.

CONCLUSION: Regardless of how far a man may have departed from God, or how deep in sin he may have gone, or how greatly possessed he is by the devil, Christ can set the captive free.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

Trust God's Providences

SCRIPTURE: Esther 4

TEXT: . . . *and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?* (Esther 4:14)

INTRODUCTION:

A. Notice the contrast between the books of Ruth and Esther.

1. Ruth is idyllic, pastoral; Esther is a historical book.

2. Ruth describes lowly persons; Esther tells of the king and queens and courtly affairs.

3. Ruth is a story of a family circle; Esther is the story of a nation.

B. Esther is a distinctively religious book.

1. God's name is never mentioned within it.

a. Yet could not be written by an unbeliever.

b. Reading it is a source of strengthening faith in the providences of God.

2. The book describes the event that gave rise to a highly honored feast among the Jews (Feast of Purim).

C. Consider these teachings from the book:

I. THE JEWS OF THE DISPERSION WERE AS MUCH UNDER THE DIVINE CARE AS PALESTINIAN JEWS.

A. Judah had thought of God's protection as belonging to their nation. Here God cares for them as individuals among a foreign people.

B. Christian, you are safe anywhere, except outside the will of God.

1. In life's extremities, we are kept.
2. In the midst of trials, we are kept.
3. (Read the first stanza of "He Will Carry You Through," No. 211, in *Praise and Worship*.)

II. GOD WORKS THROUGH HIS PROVIDENCES, EVEN IN THE LIVES OF THE UNGODLY, TO BRING ABOUT THE GOOD HE DESIRES FOR HIS OWN PEOPLE. Three cases in point:

A. Esther comes to the throne (cc. 1—2).

1. Tell the story of the feast and events leading to Esther's being made queen.
2. Don't blame God for the drunken party, the sensual king, but it was He who raised Esther to be queen.
3. God can do the impossible for His own.

B. God's people are saved (cc. 3—9).

1. Tell the story of Haman's plot, Esther's faithfulness, Haman's end, and the Jews' victory over their enemies.
2. Qualities Esther needed were: courage, loyalty, and faith in God.
3. The assistance she received was: the fastings and prayers of God's people, parental encouragement (Mordecai might be considered her foster father), and the power of her own prayers.
4. Christian, when we line up with God's will, we are safe.

C. Mordecai is exalted (cc. 6, 10).

1. A sleeping king and the sleepless providences of God work together.
2. The Jews are protected; Mordecai is exalted.
3. Christian, be faithful at the gate and you may have an opportunity to be faithful on the throne.

CONCLUSION:

- A. God's providential care is real!
- B. The triumph of right over wrong is certain!
- C. Steadfastness in the life of a Christian is needed!
- D. Romans 8:28 is our promise!
- E. Be encouraged; press on, beloved of God.

—ROSS R. CRIBBIS

Brantford, Ontario, Canada

Warnings Given

TEXT: Philippians 3:2

INTRODUCTION:

Paul lovingly warned his people of the dangers of false prophets and false teachers, etc., who were trying to imbue the people with damnable heresies and making merchandise of them. Because of these vicious leaders many were led away from the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As we view this remarkable text, let us pray that we may gain strength from it.

I. AN INDICATION OF DANGER. "Beware of dogs."

- A. Deceiving demagogues and destroying demons.
- B. Dangerous doctrines and delusive dedication.

II. AN INTRUSION OF DECEIVERS. "Beware of evil workers."

- A. Principles that were ungodly.
- B. Practices that were unstable.

III. AN INCENTIVE TO DISCIPLINE. "Beware of the concision."

- A. Avoid such circumscribed will-worship.
- B. Acquire such creeds as relate to Christ's teachings.

CONCLUSION: May Christ give us wisdom and grace to avoid the influences of these damaging doctrines, and by so doing enable us to keep free from any other such entanglements.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

The Preacher's Magazine

THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE

(Oxford-Cambridge, 1961, 447 pages, cloth, \$4.95)

To put it in just a statement, *this is the British answer to the Revised Standard Version*. In 1946, when the New Testament of the R.S.V. came from the press, the same year the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland set in motion the development of a translation of the Bible by British scholars. There were representatives from most all of the church groups of the British Isles, except the smaller Wesleyan groups, and that is a distinctive lack which reveals itself in the translation.

The publishers insist this is not a version but a translation. By that they mean it is not the revision of recent versions, but the scholars, they insist, went back to early manuscripts and are giving us an actual translation.

The committee of British scholars has been under the direction of Dr. C. H. Dodd, himself an eminent Biblical scholar, who in retirement, has given vigorous leadership to this very substantial project.

It has a distinctly British tone and flavor; many words that are not commonly in use in American conversation could be found throughout. It is perhaps a better literary style than is the Revised Standard Version, but certainly considerably below the actual literary beauty of the King James.

At the spots in the New Testament where Wesleyan theology crops out, the New English Bible will not be found any more kindly or friendly to the holiness position than was the original version of the R.S.V. The use of "consecrate" for "sanctify" is a confusing factor in this Bible.

Perhaps it would be well to sum it all up by saying we have not yet found, even in this, a fully worthy successor to the King James Version. Much that the New English Bible gains in the way of more recent scholarship it loses by awkward expressions, and a failure to have taken into careful consideration the holiness scholarship of the British Isles. It is another translation worthy of its place on the minister's shelf for sermon preparation. We are yet waiting, and may wait throughout our lifetime, for a successor to the King James for public reading in the pulpit.

MAN TO MAN

Richard C. Halverson (Cowan, 1961, 258 pages, cloth, \$3.95)

Here is a list of one hundred sermon guinea pigs. Each one is more than a text and less than a sermon. The author sets out to speak to men in man's language, forcefully, directly, avoiding platitudes of piety.

I think he has quite well succeeded in stating his case in understandable language, but I will have to admit he hasn't made a very strong case. The author does not have truth well organized or well enough arranged to provide a reference book for you if you were being asked to speak to a group of men at any place.

MESSAGES FOR MEN

H. C. Brown, Jr. (Zondervan, 1960, 150 pages, cloth, \$2.50)

This book sets out to answer two significant questions: (1) "What do discerning laymen think of the layman's role in the church?" (2) "How do they regard the pulpit ministry of the pastor?" Seventeen outstanding laymen have been chosen; each one gives two contributions in an attempt to answer these two pressing questions. The men selected are outstanding men—and there are some fine messages. There is no doctrinal emphasis. These are inspirational and rather pointed messages. You will especially appreciate the way the laymen state flatly their high expectation of the pulpit ministry and their desire that the minister disentangle himself sufficiently from the routine that he may, when he climbs the pulpit steps, be vigorous and anointed.

MATTHEW HENRY'S COMMENTARY on the Whole Bible

Matthew Henry (Zondervan, 784 pages, cloth, \$9.95)

We are all acquainted with the set of commentaries by Matthew Henry, which has been a stand-by in evangelical circles for many years. Dr. Wesley F. Church has edited this entire series by abridging and condensing it into this one large volume.

The text of the Bible is not included, merely the commentary. There are nearly eight hundred pages. There have been retained the actual words of Matthew Henry. There are times when a Sunday school teacher would like to buy a commentary with less than the amount of money required for an entire set, and this is something that is conservative and evangelical. It could not be classified as a holiness commentary, but our long use with the Matthew Henry set reminds us that it does not militate against the Wesleyan position to make it objectionable.

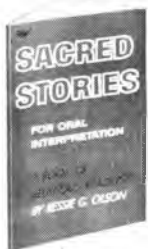
ALL THE KINGS AND QUEENS OF THE BIBLE

Herbert Lockyer (Zondervan, 1961, 253 pages, cloth, \$3.95)

It has become a successful format to develop encyclopedic books covering certain types of persons in the Bible. This author has had previous volumes on "The Men of the Bible," "The Prayers of the Bible," "The Miracles of the Bible," "The Parables of the Bible," and "The Promises of the Bible."

Here is a volume now on the kings and queens of the Bible, with the subtitle "Tragedies and Triumphs of Royalty in Past Ages." It is non-doctrinal of course, and does provide a wealth of research for a sermon series on some such theme as "The Royal Road to Kingliness."

The author gives us more than merely a restatement of the facts from the Biblical account. He incorporates also a lot of valuable historical material from secular history to make this a worthy successor to the previous volumes covering facets of Bible personality.



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