

# LIVING MEMOIRS

of

CHARLES D. CARTER

Compiled by

his wife.



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CHARLES D. CARTER

*I am not ashamed of the  
gospel of Christ: for it is a  
power of God unto salvation.*

—Romans 1:16.

**DEDICATED**  
to the  
CAUSE OF NEW TESTAMENT  
CHRISTIANITY  
*Memorabilia*



## P R E F A C E

The sermons contained in this book were not written for publication, nor were they written for the purpose of class room criticism, but were written by the pen of one who wrote as he thought and in the writing of them formulated a message from God to give verbally to his congregation. Had he known at the time of writing that they some day would be forced under the printer's ink, the formulation of sentences and thoughts would undoubtedly have been styled differently. However, to the hundreds who have requested these sermons as a token of memory and inspiration from the one who was so dearly beloved because of his continual Christ like character, we are glad that we can pass on this choice bit of literature. May the sweet truths contained herein abide forever within you. May the spirit of the Christ dwell afresh in your soul during the reading of each one as it did through the heart of the author in the writing and delivery of each one.

MRS. CHARLES D. CARTER.



## C O N T E N T S

I.	THE GOOD FIGHT	- - - - -	11
II.	THE HANDS OF JESUS	- - - - -	25
III.	THE EMPTY PEW SPEAKS	- - - - -	39
IV.	JESUS OF NAZARETH PASSETH BY		53
V.	INTHE MIDST OF THE SEA	- - -	67
VI.	THE SIX OF INGRATITUDE	- - - -	79
VII.	BECOMING DOERS OF THE WORD	-	91
VIII.	A TRUE MOTHER	- - - - -	103
IX.	HEAVEN	- - - - -	115
X.	CHURCH GOVERNMENT	- - - - -	127
XI.	DERELICTS	- - - - -	133
XII.	THE UNRULY TONGUE	- - - - -	145
XIII.	WHEN RELATIVES INTERFERE	- -	159
XIV.	WHY I PREACH THE GOSPEL	- -	171
XV.	FAREWELL SERMON	- - - - -	187





## THE GOOD FIGHT

*2 Tim. 4:7-9.*

*Preached at Latonia, Ky., August 21, 1938.*

Mr. Carter was to have preached the third in a series of sermons for this evening message but at almost the last hour changed his sermon to this one. It seemed to come as almost a premonition from on high for only about nine hours after this sermon was preached with strength and power which far excelled, if that were possible, past messages, Mr. Carter met with instant death at the hands of a truck on the highway while starting on his vacation with his family to the home of his mother and father. We give you this message in print as he gave it to his dearly beloved church at Latonia, Ky., in the hopes that it will ever dwell afresh in your hearts and ever create within you that burning desire to fight the good fight of faith as he did to the end.

"The gods do so unto me, and more also if the dust, of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me." Such insolent message did Ben-hadad send to the king of Israel. Ahab's reply was as spirited as it was wise, and one that, from such a man as the husband of Jezebel, and the cowardly murderer of Naboth, was like the first that flashes, when it is struck from a cold black flint: "Tell him," said the king roused by the insult, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." Ere four and twenty

hours, the Syrian host was scattered by the arms or rather by the God of Israel, like autumn leaves before the wind; and this proud boasting foremost of a band of horsemen, was galloping away for life.

When the Apostle used such words from which I intend to speak he did not lie upon to any such taunts as Ahab's. He was no young soldier on his way to battle, with unsoiled armour, and unwearied arms. Nor like many a Christian man, who now in the thick of it, now giving, now receiving blows; now with sword flashing, and voice shouting, pressing forward; and now alas! born back; now brought to his knees, and again rescued by his captain and revived by prayer, rising to his feet to once more persuing his enemies and renew the combat. Paul had been through all this. He had reached the close of a long hard struggle. In him we see a veteran of a thousand battles. On his arm a battered shield; his hands calloused from gripping the sword that had conquered over sin in many a hard fought fight; on his head was the helmet of salvation dented by the blows of the enemy in many a struggle. He stands before us with his body scarred and bruised yet draped about with the laurels of a hundred victories. His sufferings, toils, trials, travels, preaching, prayers are nearly over; with foot planted on the threshold of glory, he is about to enter on his reward. The battle fought, the victory won, nothing remained but to die, and that he counted as

nothing. The dark valley of fear, of which so many have dreaded throughout the long years' struggle in life, was no enemy of his; he had no fear of death, no quarrel with it. "I have finished my course, I have fought a good fight". It is done and over; he now looks forward to that silent couch much like a wearied soldier coming in from battles welcomes his bunk. Paul was ready to go, thus he says, "I am already being offered; the time of my departure is come. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all those that have loved His appearing." What a wonderful message has Paul delivered to us in these few words. A message that should interest us all and strengthen us for the great battle that is before us. So many feel that if they have been baptized into Christ and are now looked upon as Christians, that they will be saved. Oh what a sad mistake! When we have repented of our sins, confessed our faith in Christ, and have been buried with Him in baptism, then and only then, has the Christian life begun. You are not a soldier of the cross until you have complied with the terms of admittance. The battle does not begin until you have fallen into the ranks. So taking this lesson of Paul's as a background let us first of all look upon the Christian life as a great fight.

In a sense we might say that all life is a

fight. Look at the world! What a scene of disquiet and disorder: what a succession of great battles which begin at the cradle and do not end until we have crossed the bar. Some have greater struggles than others; poverty, yes and riches, trials, misfortunes, sickness—they rise up early and lie down late, and eat the bread of sorrow. What a struggle on the part of the majority trying to get riches. What a struggle among the different members of society to get uppermost. Young people get the idea that they have to be up in society to be recognized and sorry to say parents urge them on in these visions. They do not stop to realize that more strife, jealousy, and sin rage in society so called, than anywhere else. We might compare this world to a rock at sea, on which eager to escape the jaws of death, more drowning men seek standing room than it offers; and when they whose gain has been others' loss, when the few that have risen on the shoulders of the many that sink, have possessed themselves in wealth, or power, or pleasure, of the objects of their ambition, they have only reached a bare, black, unsheltered rock, on which at some future day, a giant wave rises roaring to sweep them from their slippery footing. Let no man be deceived, even this world is not to be gotten without fighting; and compared with the good fight of faith, though its reward be golden crown, presents a scene of no more real dignity than a nursery quarrel—children fighting for some gilded toy—streets

where a few ragged boys roll over each other for a few copper coins. I admit that it has pleasures, but its sweet enjoyments perish in the using. I admit that it has roses; but oh! the countless thousand of thorns that are found there, and the hand that plucks these roses must bleed. Nor are any of these to be obtained without a struggle. The few prizes which this world offers are not to be won without much toil and hard labor. To have your picture on the front page of the Who's Who requires sacrifice. This world's pearls are not to be picked up among the pebbles of the shore; he who would possess, must seek them in a sea where sharks are swimming and storms rage. Indeed I dare say that, so far as the followers of the world being exempt from toil and hardship, it would not take a man half the care, and time, and trouble, to get to heaven, which it takes any man to get rich and many a man to get to hell. The questing therefore is not whether we shall fight, for a battle is before us no matter which side we take; but the question foremost in our minds, on what side shall I fight? On the side of Jesus, whose award is life, or on that of sin, whose wages is death?

Now realizing that the Christian life is a fight, let us try and enumerate a few of the enemies, and there are many, which every Christian has to fight against.

He has to fight against the world. Jesus tells us, "It hated me, before it hated you." It had no crown for Him but a crown of

thorns; it found no way to exalt Him but on a bloody cross; When He came to earth to dwell with us and the angels announced His coming with shouts of joy, it refused Him a night's lodging. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nests, but the Son of Man hath no where to lay His head." "The servant is no better than his master." I feel friends that if we are going to be true to God and reject the world we will go along less smoothly along the path of life. Jesus said, "woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you." It is nice to be called a good fellow, a good sport, but the pay in the end is poor. Not less true, than shrewd, was the remark of a Scotch woman respecting one who had just settled in the ministry, and had been borne to his pulpit amid the plauds of all the people,—"if he is a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, he will have all the blackguards in the parish on his head before a month is gone." I am not saying that the world is always wrong in its judgment or that it is always right to go against its customs. Alas! the "children of this world are sometimes wiser in their generation than the children of light." But as a living fish is often found cleaving its way against the stream, and that fish is certainly dead that floats on the top, is always moving with it, so we might make a comparison to the Christian by saying he is no living Christian whom you ever find walking according to the course of this world. They who wear a crown in heaven must don the

Christian uniform, shoulder the cross of Christ, carry always the sword of the spirit for a defense and tigh the good light of faith without flinching every day of their lives. Paul says, "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." This is not an easy job. We need but look about us to see the multitude of Christians following with the great procession to do evil; yielding to the customs of the world, fearful of being laughed at and called an old foggy; they would rather fail in their duties as a good soldier of the cross than to offend some friend. My good people if your friends laugh you to scorn because you have become a follower of Christ they are not worthy of your friendship. You are the one to feel proud because you are a part of the salt of the earth, if you yield to their remarks you have lost your savor, and "if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of man." It takes a real man or woman to be bold for Christ, and not be ashamed of the cross. Bad men glory in their shame, and it would seem as if good men were ashamed of their glory. In the strength of God, then stand up for the good, the holy, the true; seeking not the praise of men pitying the world, though your reward here should be none less than his who rinding a serpent frozen, warmed it in his bosom, to have it sting him for his pains. "The servant is no better than his master, nor the disciple than

his Lord." So we see that the world is one great enemy against which we have to fight.

Next the Christian has to fight against Satan.

When Napoleon Bonaparte, watching the course of the battle, saw the charge of the enemy at Waterloo; boldly they clashed like a thunderbolt into the thick of them, crushing and bearing down all before them he exclaimed, "How terrible are these Greys!" I hit what mortal foe so terrible as him we have to fight / So restless, so relentless, ever walking about seeking who he may devour. No serpent so cunning, no roaring lion so cunning. You can not escape his presence, but you can prevent from entertaining him. He may come to the banquet, and he is most always present, but you can refuse him a seat. Martin Luther once said, "You can't prevent the birds from flying through the air, but you can prevent them building nests in your hair." You can't prevent the temptations which the devil places before you. but you can keep from yielding to those temptations. You cannot avoid him. There is but one refuge that is the hollow of God's hand, the shadow of His wings.

The Sabbath was instituted as a day of rest. A day in which we are to withdraw from our regular routine of work to commune with God. But Satan has no rest day, the day on which men are to rest is usually the day when he is most active; inducing men and women from the church. Telling them that an automobile ride, or a walk through the fields and the



forests would be much more enjoyable. Yes, he is more persuasive than the most eloquent preachers, and more wakeful than most anxious hearers. Because of the hardening of their hearts, not to the pleading of men, but to the pleading of the Holy Spirit, men and women march from the doors of the church arm in arm with Satan down the long broad road that leadeth to destruction. Men take up arms against the greatest odds and fight on their own barn lots to be with the majority to have the respect of their fellow-men. Can you visualize a force that can make himself invisible, able to pass in a moment over a league of country; able to live without sleep; to march without wearying; to work without food; one who regardeth neither sex, nor innocence nor age. Such an enemy has no page in the annals or war; nor did man ever find such a foe in man. But we have such a foe in Satan. That you do not see him is nothing; no man ever saw the disease which it is death to breathe. He can conform himself to any shape, size, or aspect. He works in mysterious ways his evils to perform. Two weeks ago when I preached, my wife had to take our little hoy from the building to keep him quiet. While she sat in the car a group of girls, out for a little hike were passing by. The foremost four, seeing that church was going on, thought it would be nice to go in for Church. They had made up their minds to that effect, but as there were two more of their group bringing up the rear they

waited for them to get their decision. When they came up they were approached with the subject. These two only laughed and considered it a joke. The result was that none came in to church. The devil was present standing just out side the door urging people not to go to church. They were left *just outside* the door. The Bible tells us that many are going to be in that position on the judgment day, *just outside the door*. It is hard to imagine victory over such an enemy as this, but Oh for those precious promises. "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet." "Fear thou not, for I am with them, be not dismayed, for I am Thy God: I will strengthen Thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Courage! my friends; a little child with God at his back is mightier than the devil and all his angels. He that is with us is greater than all that be against us.

The third great enemy against which the Christian has to fight is the flesh which is merely one of the devil's agents. "The Prince of this world cometh," saith the Lord, "and hath nothing in me." Can we say so? assuredly not. Hence the disadvantages under which we carry on the combat. Called with such a nature, to contend both against the influences of a world that lieth in wickedness and the temptation of the Evil One, we sail, as it were, in a poor crazy, damaged, leaking boat which has

both wind and tide against her. It is not so remarkable after all, that many make shipwrecks of the faith. The wonder is, is not that many never reach the harbor, but that any do. Oh! friend, if I can just stir your heart to a realization that this is a hard battle and it takes real fighting to conquer. "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Our corrupt nature is food for temptation, as Pat is food for flame. We are ready to be set on by the fires of hell. Under such conditions it takes every ounce of Christian virtue to conquer in this great fight.

"Now that we realize that the Christian life is a great fight; the next thing we are interested in is the character of the Christian's fight; we are happy to say it is a good fight.

How often have good men been fighting on the bad side. How often has the trumpet summoned from its distant home and peaceful occupation, those who had no quarrel to settle, nor wrong of which to complain, to the work of blood slaughter; to destroy each others lives and to mangle each others bodies, until they would be in such a horrible condition that a dear mother would not know her son. In war both sides cannot be right. Some one is wrong, someone is going to be judged as a murderer, the guilt being laid at the right door. No war is justified, that is waged between man and man. But as soldiers of the cross, we have an immense advantage, that our cause is just, and noble, and holy, and good. The Christian

battle is a "good fight." Our enemies are not our kindred, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; they are enemies of God and Christ and light and peace; tyrants that would bind us in chains worse than iron, and burn not our houses but our souls in hell forever. His men are waiting to be addressed ere the fight began. Erect in his saddle with his gray hair streaming in the wind, he stretched out his arm and pointed to the foe in front and said, "There are the enemy; if you do not kill them they will kill you." So with us if we do not destroy sin it will destroy us.

This fight is not only a good fight, but here victory is intermingled with joy. It is not so in other fights. The laurels that are worn, are steeped in tears; when the cannons roar, and bells ring out a victory, and shouting crowds throng the streets; and illuminations turn night into day. Dark is many a home where broken hearted parents and lonely ones weep for the brave who shall never return. There are thorns in victory's proudest crown.

Thank God; our joy over sin slain, bad passion subdued, Satan defeated has to suffer no such abatements. Heaven, that I can fancy, hiding its eyes from other battles, watches the fortunes of this with keenest interest; angels rejoice in our success; nor are any fears shed here but such as poured from the father's eyes, when kissing the returned prodigal, and folding him in his happy embrace, he cried, "Let us eat and be merry; for the son that was dead

and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

My kind friend, you that are not a soldier in the ranks of battle, I would like to enlist you as a soldier of the cross. This is a good fight; one that is captained by Jesus, with arms in the whole armor of God; and as they shine in the beams of the Sun of righteousness they make Satan tremble; what a helmet for the head; what a shield in faith, what breast plate in righteousness that protects the believer's heart; what sword is that Spirit, the word of God; what a girdle for the body in truth; what shoes for the feet; and last of all what a crown for the victor! "Fear not him who is able to destroy the body, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." This is a fight for your soul; it is a battle for heaven. Break away from your sins, just the ranks of the army of God, throw yourself into this battle.

No doubt it is a hard fight; I do not disguise that. How can it be easy for a man to overcome this world and crucify his own flesh; but if that is hard, it is harder still to suffer the pains of a lost soul to lie down in everlasting burnings. Oh! surely, my friend it is better to lose a hand, than have the whole body burn; better to part with *sonic* daring sin than part with Jesus. You have no choice; they only who shall carry swords on earth shall wave palms in Heaven. The crowns are for the saints, not sinners, for conquers, not cowards. How can you conquer unless you fight?

Listen to the words of him who said "Take up your cross and follow me." "To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of life but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels." And still higher honors. "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne."

Oh my brother can He say of you and of me, as He said of Paul "I have fought a good fight, I have finished His course, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness and not for me only but for all of those who have loved His appearing?"

## THE HANDS OF JESUS

*Matt. 8:1-4, Matt. 19:13-15, Matt. 3:7-12.*

*Preached at Latonia, Ky., August 14, 1938.*

The hand is a symbol of skill, energy, and action. If a commodity is "hand-made" it brings a higher price when placed on the market than if made by a machine in the factory. It is a proven fact that the hand is quicker than the eye. A careful student of the hand can, by observing the palm tell the kind of work in which the owner is engaged. The engineer, the farmer, the factory worker, the clerical man or the house wife, all have hands of a different texture and appearance. Much of a woman's beauty is in her hands yet true beauty is more than skin deep. Beauty is as beauty does and the most beautiful hands are the hands that serve.

Three young maidens sat one day comparing the beauty of their hands. They could not agree as to which one possessed hands the most beautiful, so they arranged to contest for the honor. They were to part for a period of some few weeks after which they would meet again for comparison of their hands. One girl lived near a beautiful meadow. She arose one morning to see the grass all covered with dew, sparkling so beautifully in the sunlight. She thought, "If I wash my hands in the sparkling dew each

morning, when we meet again I will have the most beautiful hands." This she did each morning thereafter until the day of meeting. Another girl lived by the bank of a babbling brook with wafer so clear and lovely. She thought, "If I will wash my hands in this sparkling water each day surely I will have the most beautiful hands. This she did. The other lived by a lovely garden. She conceived the idea that if she would dust her hands each day with some of the pollen of the dainty flowers that she would surely come forth with the most beautiful hands. The day for the decision arrived and the three young maidens met to compare their hands. While they were debating among themselves, a poor orphan girl came by. Her clothing was soiled, her hands were wrinkled and calloused from hard work. As she looked upon the lily white hands of the three maidens and then upon her own she blushed with shame and hid her hands beneath her apron. Then there came a poor old woman with a heavy bundle upon her back. As she was about to pass by, the little orphan girl took pity upon her and offered to assist her on her way. When they came to the end of the journey the old lady removed from her shoulder the shawl which she wore. The bonnet flew off of her head and lo she was an angel in disguise. She said to the orphan maid who had helped her on her way, "Fear not, the hands that serve are the most beautiful hands of all."

The most wonderful hands ever seen by the



eye of man were the hands of Jesus. While no palmist ever read them and no apostle made effort to describe them we are able to understand much about them through a study of the events of His life wherein His hands are specifically mentioned.

*1. His hands were a medium of His miraculous power.*

It is true that Christ employed many methods in the performance of His mighty works. Sometimes He worked at a distance as in the case of Jairus' daughter and the man who washed in the pool of Siloam. There were times when He used only the spoken word, as in the raising of Lazarus when He said "Lazarus, come forth"; and again in the stilling of the waves upon the sea He simply spoke "Peace, be still" and there was a great calm. He stood before the poor demoniac who cried out against Him and simply said "Come out of him" and the demons obeyed without delay. But I believe if we will check carefully we will discover the most of His miracles were performed through the use of His hands as a medium. Not that His hands were necessary to the outgoing of His power, for the variety of His methods teach us that the true cause in every case was His own bare will. "He needed but to speak and it was done; command and it stood fast." But the frequent use of His hands in healing is indeed significant.

It is Mark, who wrote the shortest Gospel of them all, who seemingly delighted to dwell

upon the hands of Jesus as a medium of His mighty power. It is Mark who tells how Jesus, in the Healing of Peter's mother-in-law put out His hand and "lifted her up" and immediately the fever left her. Mark tells us how Jesus laid His warm hands upon the marble form of the dead child's forehead and she lived again. Mark tells us how Jesus was handicapped on certain occasions by the unbelief of the people so that He could lay His hand on only a few of the sick and heal them. It is Mark who tells us how Jesus in healing the deaf and dumb man laid His hands upon him, thrust his fingers into his ears, touched his tongue with saliva and said to him, "Be open", and the man heard. It is Mark who tells us how Jesus in opening the eyes of the blind man, led him apart from the multitude, then laid His hands upon the eyeballs and with singular slowness of progressive cure enables the man to see.

To me one of the most interesting and significant incidents of healing whereby the hands of Jesus were used as a medium was in the healing of the leper. Jesus laid His pure hands upon the living mass of corruption, a thing which no other man dare to do, and immediately the disease passed from him. Surely His were the most tender and compassionate hands ever known.

Ever since the dreaded disease had come upon this poor man no one had dared to come near him, let alone touch him. If he had a

wife he had been separated from her. If he had children they were not permitted to kiss him or place their tiny hands into his hard palm. Through the months of suffering he was forced to wander along, an outcast from society with the "plague cloth" over his face, crying "unclean! unclean!" His food was placed before him as though he might have been a biting dog and what little clothing he wore was never washed. But to his astonishment and to the astonishment of all, Jesus came and stretched forth his hands across walls of separation, breaking down all restrictions and touched him with His own pure hands that had never known disease or defilement. Here was the first touch of love the man had felt since first he had been stricken with leprosy. It was the touch of one who was the holiest that ever wore our mortal frame! It was a touch of sympathy, but there was also healing in His touch, for immediately his flesh came to him again, as the flesh of a child and from that moment he was clean. If others had touched him they would have been defiled thereby; but when the pure one put His hands upon him he imparted His own purity to him and the disease departed from before His hands of power.

Surely this act of Jesus might well be taken in a very important sense as a pattern for His people. "Well might He have said, "What I have done go and do likewise." If we ever hope to carry out the great commission of Jesus and elevate men from their fallen level we must, if I may so express it, put ourselves on a

level with them. Wasn't this what Christ did when He touched the leper? Wasn't this what God did for us when He sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that he might condemn sin in the flesh, and that all might live through him? If we would save the lost we must put ourselves on a level with them. While we are not to partake of their sins, we must stoop to their level that we may lift them up to that elevation from which we ourselves have stooped.

There is, in Uncle Tom's Cabin, a very suggestive scene, where Miss Ophelia was compelled to revise all her theories about the training of Topsy, by overhearing the dark little woolly head saying to some of the other slaves, "La! Miss 'Phely would no more touch me than she would a toad!" Miss Ophelia felt that the little darkie had spoken the truth, yet she did not know how she had discovered it. Yes, this revelation led to a change in the method of bringing up the child. Is not this the very weakness of the Christian church at large today? We are seeking to save the lost without a willingness to touch them. We are leaving with them, and rightly too, the feeling that we come, more out of a sense of duty, than through true compassion for the lost. We can never hope to fake flu' world for Christ until we are willing to humble ourselves to the level of those whom we would save. I wonder how many of us here this morning would be willing to eat with the Chinaman, sleep in the hut of the negro, that we might by some means

save some. This was the passion of Jesus whose hands were outstretched to touch the leper.

I have somewhere read of a hardened criminal condemned to die and waiting for execution. Christian people were deeply interested in him and wished for his salvation. Pastors of different churches visited with him, talked with him and prayed with him, but none of them ever got near him, none ever touched him. At last a man of the community who was known for his tenderness, his ableness in winning people was sent to visit him. His first approach was to shake his hand. He then seated himself beside him, told him the simple story of Jesus the mighty to save. When he had finished he laid his hand upon the criminal's shoulder and said to him with a look of compassion, "Now wasn't it a great sacrifice for the Son of God to lay down his life for guilty sinners like you and me?" The heart of the man was touched, the big tears ran down his cheeks and from that time on he was a different man and often spoke of the good and holy man who visited him and put himself on a level with him and said, "Sinners like me and you."

So our efforts to be effective must be motivated by the overflow of the heart, and a willingness to "touch" the objects of our solicitude. We must have compassionate hands!

## *II. The Little Children,*

In the tenth chapter of Mark and the nine-

teenth chapter of Matthew we are told of an incident in the life of the Lord where His hands figured, an incident sacred and touching to the hearts of men. The Lord had just closed His ministry in Galilee where He had been reared. He had looked for the last time upon the hills which He had so often climbed, and the lake on which He had often sailed, the streets and the synagogues in which He had so often taught. And had now turned His face toward Jerusalem where the priests hated him and had set themselves in array against Him. Knowing that the Samaritans would not receive Him, He crossed over the Jordon and traveled through Perea on the eastern side of the river. It was here in the desert of Perea that the mothers brought their children to Jesus that He might bless them. The disciples were indignant and rebuked the mothers considerably For so doing and were insistent that the Lord turn away from so trivial an act. Put he who loved little children more dearly than any mother could, said. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Then He took them into his arms and loved them and Matthew says He laid his hands upon them. A little child never forgets the tender touch of a matured hand when laid upon if in kindness. Surely the hand of Jesus was capable of the tenderest touch of all.

What a place was given to children in the ministry of Jesus! He found in them much to light up the love of God. He stood on the

mountain and preached the great sermon about the heavenly Father. He picked a flower from the held and held it up and said "look on it. If God doth so clothe the grass of the field shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" He bid them listen to the chirping sparrow and said "Your heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much better then they?" Then he stretched forth His hand and drew to Himself a little child and said, What man of you if his little son asked bread would give him a stone, or if he asked for a fish would give him a serpent, if he asked for an egg would give him a scorpion. Therefore if ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" How dearly Jesus loved them! "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not!" Taking them into His arms, laying His hands upon them. It is a very common thing to see people repulsive to the little ones even as were the disciples of Jesus. Many would, like them say, send them away. To such Jesus said, "Except ye become as little children ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven," "It is better that a mill stone be hanged about your neck and you be cast into the sea than that ye should cause one of these little ones to stumble." Surely heaven will be made bright and beautiful by the voices of little children. "We read near the close of the gospel narrative of how "the scribes and priests saw the things that Jesus did and heard the voice of the

children in the temple singing Hosanna to the Son of David and said to Him, "Hearest thou what they say?" He replied, "Have you not read, 'Behold how He welcomes the children's sons.' Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings he has perfect praise."

History tells us how a certain French general was sent to fight with the English during one of the early wars. When they had alighted from the boat at the end of the voyage the French general lifted up the first pebble upon which his foot trod, and plucked the first flower upon which his eyes fell, and sent them to his only daughter who lived many, many miles away. The general was very ill when he landed. In fact he died only a few days after. His mind was occupied with many things, but there was still a place for thought of his little daughter far away.

There is also a significant story of one of the great sculptors who, when he was working on his statue of Christ, took a little child into his studio, placed her before the figure and asked her what she thought of it. For a moment the little one hesitated and then replied, "He was a great man." The sculptor was disappointed for that was not the idea he had set before himself. So again he went bravely to work, toning down this line, throwing more expression into the features, then at length it seemed that his goal was reached. And so it proved. For when the little child was permitted to gaze upon the wonderful figure there was no longer any hesitancy in her words as she



exclaimed, "That is Jesus who said, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me.' "

So I would say to parents of this generation, bring your children to Jesus. During the very tenderness of their early days, take them often with you into the quiet chamber and there before the throne of God kneel in prayer, and in that prayer present their lives to the Christ who loved them so. Remember the mothers of Perea. How they came not with their children to Peter, James or John, but went directly to the highest of all, Jesus the Lord.

Every child should know the story of the infant Jesus. Tell them often about it. When the Christmas season comes again, let us not major so much upon the material as upon the ideal for which it was established. Would that we all could have that same tender affectionate attitude toward the children that Jesus had.

### *III. A Hand to Judge.*

We have been speaking thus far of the tender sympathetic side of Christ's work but truly there was another side. For His mission, while one of mercy, was also one of judgment. He was to administer the baptism of fire as well as that of the Holy Spirit. He was not only the Lamb of God, but also the Lion of the tribe of Judah. His hands were ever open to bless little children, to touch the dead that they might live, to bind up broken heart strings, to bring comfort to those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the bit of joy for grieving and the garnet of praise for the

spirit of heaviness. No guilty wretched soul, however sunken in sin and crime feared to approach Him. He had a heart to feel and a hand to touch them all. But to those who stubbornly closed their hearts against truth and mercy he had stern words of rebuke and threatening hands to denounce.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus who bore witness of Him says, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said. He that cometh after me is come before me, and I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose His shoe." Then one day he made this very significant statement concerning Christ: "His fan is in His hand and He will thoroughly clean His threshing floor. The wheat he will gather into the garner but the chaff will be burned with unquenchable fire!"

In the days of John the Baptist wheat and other grain was not threshed by machine. It was beaten out with Hails, or trodden out by oxen on a smooth, hard plot of ground called the threshing floor. These threshing floors were built on elevated places where the wind blew freely. After the grain had been trodden out it was separated from the chaff by being tossed into the air with a shovel which they called a fan. When so tossed the wind blew the chaff away, and the clear grain fell back upon the threshing floor. This John takes as an illustration of the judgment day when Christ the judge shall stand with the Gospel, which is the fan, in His hand, and with it separate

the good and the bad, the saved and the unsaved. Here they grow up together even as the wheat and the tares but one day they will be separated at the hands of Jesus. Jesus compares His threshing floor in this present time by gathering His saints into the church and leaving the unrepentant in the world. But on the day of judgment He will make a complete and final separation between the just and the unjust, by sending the evil out of His presence and gathering His own into the garner of heaven. "He will gather the wheat into His granary but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire."

Many believe that God will restore all the wicked eventually and save all the human race. Others hold that God will annihilate the wicked and thus end the torment. But this picture of John's would be hard to reconcile with either of these views. For the same God who once purged the world with water at the time of the Flood, will again purge it with fire on the day of judgment,

If I had only the power to make men realize what sin is and the awfulness of its end, I am sure that after I had preached to them a few times, there would be no sinners left, for all would quit the error of their ways. But this power I do not have. But I would to God that each one of you here tonight would consider carefully and try to get others whom you know to consider that when a sinner unforgiven dies, he goes immediately to a place of torment and will after judgment be sent into a torment of

suffering and sorrow beyond all imagination and will have to endure it forever and ever.

*IV. Conclusion.*

In conclusion allow me to say "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God." Therefore let us lift up the hands that hang down, the palsied knee, and make straight the paths for our feet." "If our right hand offends us cut it off, for it is better that one of our members shall perish than that our whole bodies go into hell." And let us enter into His presence with clean hands and a pure heart so we may go home with Him forever and we can feel the touch of His hand on ours and hear Him say "Well done!"

## THE EMPTY PEW SPEAKS

*Preached at Capitol View Church of Christ,  
Atlanta, Ga., Oct. 14, 1934. Latonia, Ky., March 22,  
1936.*

One of the most familiar faces seen at the services of the average church today is that of the empty pew. This morning the empty pew seems to have taken on mortality with a voice as pleasant and kind as any modernistic preacher, but as dangerous as that of John Barlycorn. He proceeds to carry on conversation with a few of the folks who have come out to the services.

Wanting to appear mannerly and polite the Empty Pew approaches first of all the minister, who with a forced smile upon his face is about to begin his morning sermon.

"Good morning, Mr. Preacher! How are you feeling this morning?"

"Oh about as usual I guess. But pray tell me, why have you interrupted the service in this manner?"

"Now Mr. Preacher, you know I am always looking out for the good of others, and I thought from your looks that you weren't feeling so well and it might be much better for you and all concerned if you would dismiss the congregation with prayer and all go home."

"No, no, no!" replied the minister. "I would

not think of such a thing. I do thank you however for your thoughtful suggestion."

"Don't mention it. I have been thinking of you much here of late and just decided to have a little talk with you. You haven't appeared well the last few months, especially this summer, and I have come to the conclusion that you are worrying too much about the church members; as to why they manifest such little interest in the affairs of the Church. I see they won't come to choir practice and Bible study. You could not get them out with 'silver trail.'

"I know that many of them come to Bible School, but hurry home as soon as it is over, leaving many empty chairs around the Lord's table and forcing you to hold the bag. I think however that *I* have diagnosed your case properly and I am going to prescribe a little remedy."

*The Empty Pew continues.*

"Your sermons are too cold and logical; you do not preach eloquently enough. You are living in an age of itching ears when people are heaping to themselves teachers after their own lusts. The thing for you to do is read more current literature and make your sermons a little more flowery. Cut out the scripture quotations and quote more from the Literary Digest and Review of Reviews."

While the Empty Pew continues to ramble on and speak of the people who stay at home and hear eloquent sermons over the radio, the minister recalls a few passages of scripture

which reads as follows: "And I brethren when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified and I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

These words the minister quoted to the Empty Pew, but it was just like pouring water on a duck's back. For he immediately replied:

"Oh yes, I know all that, but that was Paul living in a former age, an age of ignorance and superstition. Were Paul living and preaching today he would be wise enough to change his speech to please the people."

"Another weakness of yours," says the Empty Pew, "is this. You preach too much doctrine. People do not want to hear doctrine today, they want inner-church messages for all the people of all the churches. Your own church members will tell you that. You are young now but you will become wise some day."

Again the Preacher recalls some Scripture and quotes it: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example to them that believe, in purity. Till I come give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. . . . Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching, continue in these

things, for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." "If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrine which is according to Godliness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, where-of cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising, wranglings of men, corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain. O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and opposition of the knowledge which is falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith."

"Bah!" says the Empty Pew. "You know that the principles, methods and message of that early church cannot be duplicated in the church of today. People want soothing words which ease their conscience and harmonize with their prejudices and preconceived ideas. If you want to be popular and live on easy street give the people what they want."

"Another thing," says the Empty Pew, "You are too strenuous in your condemnation of sin. Condone sin a little more, and your church members will not be easily offended."

The minister continues to reply with the language of the scripture: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God



may be furnished completely unto every good work. I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. Put be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry."

"Very well", says the Empty Pew, "If that is the way you feel about it I can say that I feel sorry for you. Just this little story and then I leave you. There was once a loyal Preacher of the Gospel who thought along the line which you are now thinking. He received a call to a church which offered him a salary almost princely. He accepted. A short time after his arrival upon the new field he began to learn of the many sins of the congregation. He arose one morning in the pulpit and proceeded to drive out the Devil, believing as you now believe that the Devil must be driven out of the church to make room for God. His language however was just a little too hot for Mr. Goldsmith, the wealthiest member of the church and the largest contributor. For Mr. Goldsmith arose from his private seat, which no one dare occupy, with fire in his eyes and shouted: "Mr. Preacher, we hired you to preach

the Gospel." "Yes", replied the Preacher, "and to condemn the Devil and that is what I am doing." He proceeded with his discourse. "Now," says the Empty Pew, "all that was very heroic on the part of the Preacher, but it cost him his job. You certainly do not want that to happen to you do you?"

The minister dropped his head for a moment and a prayer was upon his heart. Shortly he shrugged his shoulders and with the voice of a brave soldier of the cross he replied: "All of your suggestions are very tempting and I know that hundreds of preachers have accepted them and acted accordingly, but personally I prefer to follow the Master rather than men. I know the road is rough and the load is heavy, but like Moses of old, 'I prefer to suffer ill treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. I count the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt for I look unto the recompense of reward.' "

Having failed in his first attempt to turn a man from the way of righteousness to the way of error, the Empty Pew now turns to his neighbor on his right, Mr. Prospective Church Member, who is giving very close attention to the sermon.

"Ah my good friend," says the Empty Pew. "I perceive that you are contemplating church membership, am I right?"

"Well, well, yes, I was thinking a little about it." comes the reply.

"Now you just give me your attention for a moment for I have some important advice to give you." I once thought as you are now thinking, and I continued to think until my thoughts brought forth action on my part and I joined the Church. That was one of the biggest mistakes I ever made. I have learned since that Church membership does not pay. Why just think of how much you have to give up; all the pleasures of sin."

The Empty Pew continued to pour the poison vile of the Devil into the ears of his good friend whose attention was now drawn to the words of the Preacher: "Jesus said, 'For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his own life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?' "

But the whispering of the Empty Pew drowned out the words of the minister and once again Mr. Prospective Church Member was listening to this servant of the Devil.

"Do you know," says he, "that I have discovered that all the preachers are out for the money. They are just a bunch of lazy scoundrels; too lazy to work so they take up preaching. It sure is a soft job. Just think, they only have to work one day a week and at the most not more than three or four hours. I sure wish I had it that soft."

"Put listen," says his good friend. "What

is that the Preacher is saying? 'Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men,—Think not that I come to send peace on the earth. I came not to send peace but a sword. He that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me'."

"Come now" says the Empty Pew, "you don't want to listen to what that man has to say. Listen to me, I am trying to help you. The church is full of hypocrites. About two thirds of the membership are hypocritical. Even some of the men of the Church board are worldly. You certainly don't want to line up with a bunch like that, do you?"

"But listen," said Mr. Prospective Church Member, "the Preacher is saying something about that now."

"The Church is not a group of perfect people, but a group of imperfect people who have thrown themselves on the mercy of Christ! Paul has written 'All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.' John says, 'If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.' Every man must give an account of himself to God. Jesus said, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.' "

Mr. Prospective Church Member who was somewhat wavering now leaned to the Empty

Pew and whispered, "I don't care what the preacher says. I know that there are lots of hypocrites in the church and I think that I am just as good as they are."

"Now you are talking," said the Empty Pew. "Furthermore if you should go into the church it wouldn't change your life any. In fact you will have more evil thoughts after you go in than you had before. Look at the lives of any number of church members. You can't tell them from the men of the world. All this talk about the Holy Spirit helping your infirmities is the bunk. You are a little excited now because you are naturally emotional. Wait awhile, think of these things."

The minister was now aware of the conversation that was going on and so he continued to give a few final scriptures hoping that the Prospective Church Member would act upon them.

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it is of God or whether I speak of myself." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." "Every one therefore, who shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven." "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him

should not perish, but have eternal life." "Not everyone that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven." "The time of ignorance therefore God overlooked but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent." "Now is the acceptable time. This is the day of salvation."

The Empty Pew, seeing that he had become the victor gave his good friend, Mr. Prospective Church Member, a slap on the hack and said hypocritically, "God bless you brother." He then turned to look for other worlds to conquer.

He selected for his next victim a bosom companion Mr. Waverly Christian. A fellow driven by every wind of doctrine; like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. A double-minded man unstable in all his ways.

"Good morning my friend", said the Empty Pew. There was no reply. The Empty Pew then glancing into the face of his old pal discovered the poor fellow to be fast asleep.

The minister, whose eyes were searching the congregation saw that several heads were nodding while others were yawning. He finished his quotation from Job with a shout, "Thirty days and Ninevah shall be destroyed." People came to attention. Mr. Waverly Christian shrugged his shoulder, rubbed his eyes, then peeping around like a whipped pup to see if any one was looking at him peered straight into the smiling face of his old companion the

Empty Pew. The minister was rehearsing the experience of Jesus in the Garden. See him that night in the garden lying on his face with the sweat oozing from the pores of his agonizing body, as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground. Listen to what He says: "My Father if it be possible let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt," What cup? The cup is the New Covenant in my blood, says Jesus. The cup of death on the cross, the reality of which broke His heart. When He arose from prayer He came to His disciples and found them sleeping. He said to them, "Why sleep Ye? Arise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

The Empty Pew sensing the situation and not wanting to lose his good friend, engaged him in conversation.

"Evidently," said he, "You are not so vitally interested in the Church and the preaching." "You know it wouldn't be half so embarrassing to you or discouraging to the Preacher if you would sleep at home. You have lots of friends who have learned that very thing, so instead of coming to church and sleeping they just stay in bed on Sunday morning and snooze their religion away." "By the way" continued the Empty Pew, "Have you been fishing lately?"

"Yes I was out last Sunday but couldn't do any good. Fish weren't biting. I am thinking seriously of going next Sunday. You know Sunday is the only day I have off and I think every man should have some recreation," said Mr. Waverly Christian.

"That is right!" said the Empty Pew. "That is the way a large majority of Church members feel, and I can't see any harm at all in going fishing on Sunday even if you do have to miss church. If a man pays his church dues and goes once a month I think that is enough."

"By the way," said the Empty Pew, "I see you come to Sunday School quite often but you seldom stay for the Lord's Supper and preaching. Do you go to church elsewhere, or do you go visiting'?"

"Well you know," replied the man, "I told you about going fishing some times. Some Sundays I go with the family on a little picnic. The weather is so nice now and nature is so beautiful and as I say, I work all of the week so Sunday is the only day I have to get out. But excuse me, I want to hear what that Preacher is spouting off about."

The minister was still quoting scripture, clarifying it a little now and then with an illustration. "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by in the storehouse as God prospers you. Forsake not the assembly of yourselves together as the custom of some is. But exhort one another and so much the more as you see the day drawing nigh. Upon the first day of the week when the disciples had come together to break bread Paul preached unto them."

But the words of the Empty Pew prevailed over the word of the Preacher and Mr. Waverly Church Member went home after church more



determined than ever to go fishing next Lord's day.

Yes, the Empty Pew has spoken and its voice is most eloquent today and many are they who shall perish thereby!



## JESUS OF NAZARETH PASSETH BY

*Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43.*

*Preached at Capitol View Church, Atlanta, Ga.,  
Oct. 28, 1934. Latonia, Ky., April 1936.*

Trudging along on a dusty highway near the city called Jericho were Jesus and His disciples. With them was a large company of people, for Jesus' fame as a teacher and healer was wide-spread. People were constantly seeking an opportunity to see Him and hear Him talk. His great magnetic power to draw people to Him has never been equaled in the history of the human race. The highways over which they were walking were not smooth, and no doubt the dust was very heavy, making travel very disagreeable, but still the multitudes followed after Him.

In happened on that day that a blind man was seated by the side of the road asking for alms, for he had no other means of providing for himself the necessities of life. It was the spring of the year and all nature was announcing the season. All the gardens around the little city were blooming in beauty as usual, and charmed the eye of the beholder; the feathery palm lifted high its head and waved in the morning breeze; the Jordan valley stretched away into the distance. It was spring, and great multitudes were on their way to the great

spring festival of the Passover at Jerusalem, and spring had clothed the landscape with beauty. The flowers were beginning to bloom, the birds were singing and chirping as they do in the spring, but, what were all these beautiful sights and scenes to poor Bartimaeus? He had never seen the flowers and trees. He could hear the birds singing but he had no conception of their beauty and the bright plumage which adorned them.

Poor fellow, he was not only blind but had to live the life of a beggar. We know nothing of his family ties; he was known as the "Son of Timaeus." What a pitiable sight he must have presented as he sat that day by the roadside; his face pale, his head bare and probably bald from age; flies no doubt had begun to come to pester him and add to his misery. One look at such a sight might well move the hardest heart to pity. The blind man as he sat there thinking and perhaps mumbling to himself, as lonely people do at times, could hear the sound of travelers going on their way. He could hear the conversation of passers-by and many were they that passed him by unnoticed. Many a time the proud Priest, had gone that way, but always passed by on the other side; or the haughty Levite who only cast a glance of curiosity in the blind man's direction; sanctimonious Pharisees, with broad phylacteries, had looked with scorn on the poor mendicant. Many a time the cheerful voice of men and women had sounded in his ear. Often

he had been thrilled by the noise of the frolicking boys and girls coming out of the city to play. All must have seemed to him lively and cheerful and all happy save himself. This day however, he hears the rush of many feet. With the keen ear of the blind he detects the unusual sound long before a man with all his faculties would have done so. Immediately he sat erect. All the senses, except the one most needed were called into play. His ear told him that the approaching company was large. He felt sure the alms would be correspondingly large. With a voice filled with curiosity and interest he shouts out, "Who comes?"

At this point we have demonstrated the corresponding state of the unconverted. Many in the state of their souls resemble the poor blind beggar. The scripture speaks of men and women "having eyes but see not." This blindness is brought upon them because of the hardness of their heart. Satan, the Prince of darkness, blinds the minds of them that believe not. He loves the darkness, and what a host of followers he has that love his leadership. His followers are of the night and the darkness, and he is in hopes that they will all follow him to the end when they shall be cast into outer darkness. He is a skilled artist of the night, always thinking up new devices to attract the attention and lead astray the pleasure lovers. By nature man is spiritually blind. Left to himself, he will degenerate. As the vegetable and animal kingdom needs man's care and direction to bring

them to perfection, so man himself needs the supervision of one wiser than himself to cultivate his graces and perfect his character. Too often man declines God's help. Neglected, he will change into a worse man. If a man neglects his body he will deteriorate into a wild savage. If it is his mind he neglects he will degenerate into imbecility and madness; solitary confinement has the power to weaken the mind and leave men idiots. Conscience neglected leads to lawlessness and vice. "There are certain burrowing animals—the mole, for instance—which have taken to spending their lives beneath the surface of the earth. Nature has taken revenge upon them, in a natural way, by (dosing up their eyes. In the desire to live in darkness eyes are not a necessity. Hut neglecting their eyes these animals have made it clear they do not want them. There are certain fish, also, which have had to pay the same forfeit for having made their abode in dark caves where eyes can never be required. The fish in Mammoth Cave, so I am told, apparently have perfect eyes, and yet they have no vision. "They have eyes but they see not." Does this not remind you of what Christ said of people "who love darkness rather than light," "Having eyes they see not."

Such are they that are face to face with great realities—God, heaven, and eternity, but they do not see them. They are on the brink of a great precipice, but they do not see it. Like a blind man out on the edge of a dee] abyss,

seemingly secure just because he is blind to the danger. Neither do they see any terror in the threatenings of God, nor much, if any, sinfulness in sin. The sinner is a blind man and every day he continues in sin he is deadening the optic nerve of the soul which some day may plunge him into outer darkness.

The sinner is not only blind but also poor. He has no place in this world, no prospect for the next; he has no real satisfaction on this earth, and no sure hope of heaven. He has neither part nor lot with the people of God. He is without the only blood that can cleanse<sup>4</sup> from sin. He is without Christ, without (Hod, and without hope. This surely is poverty—spiritual poverty—the deepest and the worst. They are blind in soul as Bartimaeus was in body; poor in spiritual things as he was in temporal.

Such is the condition of the majority in the world today. They have eyes but see not. Yet, if they will only incline their ears they can hear the approach of one that is able and willing to restore their sight.

Bartimaeus had heard the approach of the multitude and he asked, "who comes?" "Jesus of Nazareth passeth boy," came the reply.

Forgotten was the need for alms. Forgotten was the loneliness. Forgotten was the pain and sorrow which has surged through Bartimaeus' being time after time, because of his blindness. "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." That same Jesus who had healed the nobleman's son. That

same Jesus who had healed the man with the palsy. That same Jesus who had provided food for a whole multitude of weary, hungry people, when only some few loaves and some small fishes were to be had. "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

Jesus of Nazareth can open blind Bartimaeus' eyes! Jesus of Nazareth can bring to an end this long dark night. Jesus of Nazareth can make it possible for the blind man to earn his own bread, and not be dependent upon the alms of the passers by. Jesus is passing by, Bartimaeus thinks this is his opportunity, a most precious opportunity, far too precious to be lost. "If I lose this opportunity I may never have another." He says. "The tide will soon ebb; I must take it at the flow."

The steamer will soon start; I must enter it or it will leave me. The bell is ringing and the train will soon be off; if I do not take my place, I am left behind. Somehow thus reasoned the blind beggar—if we may be permitted to translate his words or express his thoughts, in modern parlance.

So "he began to cry out, 'Jesus Thou Son of David have mercy on me! Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me! Jesus have mercy! Jesus!' " Over and over Bartimaeus cried out. He could not know certainly whether Jesus was near the head of the procession, in the middle, or at the end. In order to be sure to attract His attention he called continually, even though



those in the crowd commanded him to be silent. "Jesus have mercy on me!"

What rare faith was here expressed. He was far ahead of the crowd in his knowledge of the Saviour. They only informed him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, but that was enough. The multitudes regarded Him as a prophet, and from a despised place at that. "Can any good thing," asked Nathanael, "Come out of Nazareth?" But, Bartimaeus knew better. Blind as he was, and so shut out of books as a source of knowledge; poor as he was and so deprived of means of acquiring information, he had made himself in some way or by some means acquainted with the descent of the Messiah. Hence he addresses Him not as Jesus of Nazareth, but "Jesus Thou Son of David."

Seeing Jesus did not produce his faith; not seeing Him seems to have helped it. Paul tells us in Bom. 10:17 "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Bartimaeus was in need of something most precious to him, and he knew that Jesus could give that one thing to him. There are some things the world can give us but it has its limitations; Bartimaeus had been existing on this world's goods, but now he senses a higher power. His crying expressed a clear insight into something at least of our Lord's unique character and power. Brethren, unless we know Him to be all that is involved in that title, "The Son of David," I do not think our cries to Him will ever be very earnest. Our cries to

Him will only be earnest when we recognize our need of a Saviour and at the same time, behold in Him the Saviour that we need. The world is full of a so called Christianity that is just the opposite of the most needed kind. Many look upon Christ, not as the New Testament teacher, the Incarnate word of God who for the sins of the world bare them in His own body on the tree; but an example, a Teacher, or a pure Model, or a Social Reformer, or the like. If they think of Him as such, they will never cry to Him, "Have mercy upon me."

What a lesson we have for ourselves; Jesus passeth by; He is near to us and His presence is close at hand. He passeth by every Lord's day morning when we see the light of the sun and gather in His house to remember Him until He comes again. He passeth by every time we are privileged to hear a Gospel sermon. He passeth by every time we read from His word or sing His praise, or call on God's name in prayer. He passeth by every time we partake of the sacraments of the Lord's Supper. How oft our hearts are made to rejoice when we partake of the emblems recalling to our mind the sacrifice that has taken our sins away. He passeth by every time we feel the spirit saying "come unto me! He passeth by many times and we do not sense His presence. Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come unto him; and will sup with him and he with Me." Jesus has passed by us many a time, and yet some

of us, up to the present moment, care for none of these things. We have never cried for help as we ought; we have never eagerly sought His forgiveness. We have been lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot. If so, let us beware lest we be spewed, out of his mouth. We may have been at ease in Zion and unthoughtful of the danger we are facing. How little of the earnestness of this blind beggar do we show in the things of God. If the man out in the world could only feel His need, he could not but be earnest and energetic. The hungry man will beg for bread; the thirsty man will repair to the (dear cool springs; the starving babe will cry for nurture; even the dumb animals have ways of making known their wants; should we, my friends, be so indifferent to spiritual necessities and eternal interests.

Jesus has never turned a deaf ear to one who called upon Him. He did not do it now when Bartimaeus called. The record tells us that, "Jesus stood still." Remember that He was on His way to the cross. His mind was filled with tragedy that soon was to take place. Never was a journey so important as this one. Heaven and Earth and hell were all affected by that journey; the glory of God was connected with it; and the redemption of man depended upon it. But there was never a journey so important in the life of the Master that He could not pause long enough to relieve the suffering. How often do we read of Him going out of His way to give aid to the needy. The prayer of the

blind beggar stopped Him! He is in heaven today, surrounded by its glories, and administering the affairs of the universe. He does not need to pause to hear you and me. He is, at this very moment, all that He ever was, and is doing in loftier fashion all the gracious things that He did upon earth. The living Christ is as tender as a friend, has as quick an ear, and is as ready to help today, as He was when he stood still outside the gate of Jericho.

We are feeling the need of His gracious care in the way of refreshing showers, and many in the way of financial help. If we can only arouse faith enough to cry out "have mercy on us!"

"Jesus is near to comfort and cheer,  
Just when we need Him most!"

The waves of the sea stood still, and the waters of the river stood still in the interests of God's people; the sun and the moon stood still at the cry of Joshua; the shadows stood still or rather went back on the dial plate of time at the prayers of King Hezekiah, and He who controlled all these; who can hold the water of the earth in His hand and has meted out the heaven with a span, stood still when that crisis, the greatest in the world's history, was fast approaching, that He might restore sight to the eyes of poor blind Bartimaeus.

And Jesus stood still and "called" for Bartimaeus to be brought to Him. Immediately there was a change in the attitude of the multitude. One moment before they were demanding

silence from the blind man, but they were all eager to encumber him with help, and to say "Rise up, be of good cheer, He calleth Thee." Bartimaeus did not wait for a second invitation, or did he wait for a more convenient season, but he sprang to his feet and flung away his frowsy rags that he had wrapped around him for warmth and softness of seat, as he waited by the side of the road, and he came to Jesus.

Brethren; here is a great lesson for us. When we hear the invitation of Jesus we should cast aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run to the same refuge. You have to abandon something that entangles your legs and keeps you from finding your way to Him. Is not that which awaits you far more precious than all this world has to offer? Those precious promises of God stand out like stars in a clouded sky. Cast away the garment spotted with the flesh and rush to Jesus, and there you will find peace for your soul.

Once Bartimaeus was in the presence of Jesus, he was asked that question of all granting love, "What wilt thou that I should do unto Thee?" A very few hours before He had put the same question with an entirely different significance, when the sons of Zebedee came to Him and tried to get Him to walk blindly into a promise. Jesus put the question to them in such a way as to state that He needed to know what they wanted, then judge before He committed Himself. But when He said the same

thing to Bartimaeus, He meant exactly the opposite. He was putting the key of the treasure house into the beggar's hand. He knew that the thing this man wanted was the thing He delighted to give.

But the tenderness of these words and the gracious promise that is hid in them, must not make us forget the authority that speaks in them. Think of a man doing as Jesus did; standing before another and saying. " I will give you anything that you want." He must be either a mad man or a blasphemer, or God manifest in the flesh; Who but God Himself would dare to make such promises.

And what said the man Did he ask for silver or gold? This was his accustomed request. No! he realized his greatest need in this life, that of sight. "Lord that I may receive my sight." Suppose, my good friend, Jesus Christ stood where I stand, and spoke to you! "What will thou that I should do for you?" If you were a wise man, your answer would come as swift as the beggar's, 'Lord heal me of my blindness, take away my sins, and give me salvation.' Oh, thou foolish man that does not realize the most precious thing in all the world. "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his own life!"

The supposition that I have been making is realized. Jesus is standing today, just as anxious to grant that one request to you. Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Jesus opened the eyes of blind Bartimaeus. The cure was immediate. He received his sight straightway and followed Jesus. He proved his gratitude by following Jesus. So with all who love the Lord; they follow Him. He not only followed Him, but he also glorified God. He wanted others to know the power of Jesus. When once we have tasted of the heavenly gift, we should be so filled with joy that all about us will be made brighter.

Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. He was never to be in Jericho any more. If Bartimaeus did not get his sight then he would be blind all his days. Christ and His salvation are offered to you, now. Perhaps if you let Him pass, you will never hear Him call you gain, and may abide in the darkness forever.

"Jesus of Nazareth had passed by." Blind Bartimaeus no longer sat by the wayside begging alms. Jesus of Nazareth had passed by. Once more the eager multitude has seen a miracle performed. This time a blind beggar had received his sight. Jesus of Nazareth passed by. Another now belonged to the company that "followed Him in the way."

Nineteen centuries have elapsed since this event took place. But still there are blind men on life's highway—men who are morally and spiritually blind. Nineteen centuries have elapsed but still, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." And during all this time He has never failed to hear and heed the cry, no matter from

whose throat it came. "Jesus thou Son David, have mercy on me!"

"Again He comes; from place to place  
His holy footprints we can trace.  
He passeth at our threshold—nay,  
He enters, condescends to stay.  
Shall we not gladly raise the cry,  
'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by?'"

Ho, all ye heavy laden come!  
Here's pardon, comfort, rest and home!  
Ye wanderers from the Father's face!  
Return, accept His offered grace!  
Ye tempted ones, there's refuge nigh  
'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by!' "



## IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA

*Matt. 14:22-34.*

*Preached at Columbia Church of Christ, Aug. 26, 1938, Cincinnati, Ohio. Capitol View, Church of Christ, Sept. 9, 1934, Atlanta, Ga. Latonia, Ky., Feb. 16, 1936.*

It is significant how much of Jesus' life and ministry was spent out of doors. After his birth He was taken into Egypt for protection. This was a wide and broad country very thinly populated and no doubt His parents spent most of their time while there out in God's great out of doors. Then we find Him spending His boyhood days in the little obscure village of Nazareth. As a boy, I can see him wandering about the hills and fields in the vicinity of Nazareth enjoying the beauty of Nature and probably holding conversation with His Heavenly Father about his future ministry. After His baptism He was driven by the spirit into the wilderness where He was tempted of Satan for forty days. Then we read of Him traveling on foot in Judea, through Samaria, and it is interesting to note that He did not visit the cities and towns on His travels. We find Him seated on a well curl) out side of the city of Samaria where He talks to the woman at the well, she tells the glad news of Him and the people go out of the city to see Him instead

of Jesus going into the city. Most of His great sermons and teachings were delivered in the out of doors where people came to Him. We find Him in the mountains teaching, also going there to pray. Time and time again we find Him on and in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee. He was not in the city much until the latter days of His Ministry. We would think that He would have gone to the cities where the crowds were, but not so, instead of Him seeking the crowds the multitudes sought Him. So with John the Baptist. Instead of beginning in Jerusalem, we find Him crying in the wilderness, living on locust and wild honey. Preaching in the wilderness along the River Jordon. Baptizing at Aenon near unto Salim, because there was much water there. The multitude came from Jerusalem and all the regions round about to be baptized of Him. Jesus and John's ministering were similar in this respect they both sought the open spaces. The brothers of Jesus criticized Him for not showing Himself more. Jno. 7 "His brethren therefore said unto Him, depart hence and go into Judea that thy disciples also may behold thy works which thou doest for no man doeth anything in secret and himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou doest these things manifest thyself to the world." But Jesus was not human in this respect. It is human nature to seek notoriety and popularity. Not so with Jesus. His popularity came in His wonderful personality and power to draw men to Him instead of seeking the people by going to them.

The multitudes came into the mountains to hear His sermons, to the seashore to hear His parables, to the desert where they were fed. There is something sinful, filthy, stifling and artificial about a city. God paints nature to draw people out of doors. The beautiful, sparkling brooks with their songs no artist can imitate. The little flowers with their different shapes and shades, giving off a fragrance no perfume or toilet water can equal. The great forests with their mosses and vine covered trees, how they moan and groan as they sway in the breeze. The hills, the valleys, the mountains, the plains, the rivers, the lakes, the seas all answer their purpose in God's great painting. The birds, the bees, the little animals of the forests and fields, what would we do without them? There is no better cure for spring fever than to get out in the woods and listen to the songs of the birds, watch the little ground squirrel as he skips across your path and perches himself upon an old rail fence to watch this strange intruder who has trespassed upon his territory. There is no rest for the weary body like getting out in God's nature land. Take your children out in the country in the springtime. Teach them the necessity of God's existence, the wonders of nature. His pledge of love and care for us. Is it any wonder that Jesus spent most of His ministry in the great open spaces? Even after His resurrection we find Him walking along the country road. In the garden among the

flowers. In the mountains and by the sea. These were the favorite abodes of Jesus.

All day long the curious sin-sick crowd had thronged about the Man of Galilee. He had spoken the word of cheer here, He had given the healing touch there. He had lifted the fallen. He had fed the hungry. The great miracle of the loaves and fishes had been performed. The greedy multitude had sapped the strength of Jesus. Through the long days of teaching and healing He had given no thought of Himself. All His strength, all His power, all His thoughts were devoted to others. Evening had come. The long hard day with all its labor of love had come to a close. He perceived that the multitudes were about ready to take Him and make Him King, so He sent His disciples to the boat to depart to the other side. He tarried to send the multitude away. After the last man had wended His way slowly down the hillside, "Jesus went up into the mountains apart to pray." As weary and tired as He was from the day of toil, yet He still had strength to climb the rugged mountains to talk with God. I can see Him as He climbs the steep rugged mountain path. The loose stones slippery under His feet, yet unhesitatingly He goes on, feeling the need of prayer. He is alone on the mountain peak. Oh how He needed to renew His physical strength. How He needed to be charged from the great dynamo of God. He constantly drew on the great resources of the King of glory. He spent most of the night

in prayer—about eight hours. He was in deep distress. The death of John the Baptist and the return of the disciples oppressed Him. The attempt to make Him King added to His distress. The people refused His spiritual teaching. Instead of being willing to be led by Jesus, they insisted on commanding Him. That night on the mountain was another Gethsemane. "What a lesson this should be for us. When we are oppressed with our work, tired and weary, we should call upon (Sod for strength. If we do so we will be able "to mount up with the wings like eagles, run and not grow weary, walk and not faint." If this marvelous man, a part of Deity himself, needed to withdraw from the multitude, apart to pray, how much more should puny insignificant feeble man feel the need of Heavenly guidance.

His little band of faithful followers had made their way slowly to the little boat. They were puzzled at the actions of Jesus. Why had He commanded them to depart to the other side while He remained behind. Why had He gone up into the mountain.' Why did He refuse to accept the crown so many times offered Him? When would they see Him again? All these questions they must have pondered as they tarried by the shore hoping He would come. No doubt they rowed toward the head of the lake hoping to meet Him there. Finally as the darker hours began to come on they started for the other side. The Sea of Galilee which is about six and one-half miles wide is

surrounded by mountains which make it very susceptible to sudden violent storms. They had traveled but a short distance when suddenly a whistle and a roar sounded down the mountain side. The wind broke forth in all its fury to wreck the vengeance on this Utile boat load of disciples headed for Capernaum. Oh, how hastily they worked. They hauled in the sails. Oars were placed in the oar lock and every man bent to his task'. Still the wind bowled and stronger it grew. Higher and higher rolled the waves, and darker and darker grew the night. They tacked to the right, they tacked to the left because the wind was contrary. "They were in the Midst of the Sea." A longing for Jesus was in their hearts. Why had they left Him on the shore? If Ho were only there all would be well. They could make no progress against the wind, and if they tried to turn they would be swamped surely, and all would be lost. Far off in the dim distance they could see the light along the shore. Pond memories of home and loved ones came vividly before them. The wind laughed in glee over their heads. How far land looked. How deep the water. How high the waves. Midnight had passed—and one o'clock—two o'clock. How slowly the hours crawled. Would the wind never cease? Three o'clock had come and gone, and still the storm raged and the disciples labored on. Morning would soon break. Thank God for that, but now they were "In the Midst of the Sea."

There are limes in our lives when we find

ourselves in the "Midst of the Sea." The wind is contrary. We have chosen our goal and boldly launched out, but the winds of chance many times are contrary. God has certain laws of nature and if our course leads against these laws we are going to find the winds contrary and ourselves in the ".Midst of the Sea." Most of those whose life's work is based on chance have a very hard time in reaching the harbor. Maybe just while we are gliding along smoothly with the harbor in view, sickness comes into our homes. We are in the "Midst of the Sea." How our hearts go out to those who have struggled through those long months of illness. When the waves of doubt were rolling high. Many times injured for life and their chosen goal becomes a glimmering spark in the far distance.

People who are striving for an education and cannot advance, possibly because of sickness, or lack of money. Those who are striving for money, may feel that if they can just get an education then money making will be an easy task. People who are striving for money, to support a family, educate their children, care for the aged, make a little and then straightway it is gone. Striving against sweeping winds. People who strive for success see the goal, launch out. Contrary winds come in and they find themselves in the "Midst of the Sea." Life is one great struggle "in the Midst of the Sea." Winds of sin and temptation are continually blowing about 71s. The harbor is

off ill the distance and it fakes work, sacrifice, patience, love to reach it. Some times we lose confidence and give up in despair, but if we will only open our eyes wo can see Jesus standing near, ready to offer a helping hand.

So it is with this boat load of disciples. In my imagination I see Peter bending over the sturdy oar. He starts up with a look of terror. "In the name of Jehovah our God, men, look at that!" All eyes were turned in the direction that Peter designated. "What is it brother?" Do we see a ghost? Is it aid from heaven or an evil spirit to bear us down? "and all with one accord cried out with fear." Even now after two thousand years of evolutionary progress—everybody believes in gradual progress. The only question is how it began and whether it has continued unbroken. We have vast steam ships that go in and teeth the wind. Not like a sailing vessel or row boat that is helpless in a storm. Yet in spite of their vast size and strength they are helpless at times. Look at the Titanic with its power, yet it went down to destruction. Consider that vast Dirigible the Shenandoah with its five great motors and its vast size, yet it was destroyed by contrary winds! Even when the great ships are not lost, often they are driven out of their course, helpless. Contrast with this Jesus in the "Midst of the Sea." How superior! God in the flesh! Who can doubt it? The Divinity of Jesus. Picture Him walking with ease and without fear upon the boiling, angry sea. See Him as



He comes into view riding upon the crest of the wave. Then He goes down as if swallowed by an angry wave, but only for a second, then He comes into view again. Christ heard their cry, as He has heard every cry that has echoed through the ages. With a voice calm as a summer sea, and with reassuring tones, He said: "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." So in times of spiritual helplessness Christ comes to us. That which renders man helpless—is nothing to Him. In sin and temptation Christ comes and conquers. He is saying "be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." When death comes into our homes and spreads sorrow and gloom, "Jesus is near to comfort and cheer, just when we need Him most." In finance and disaster He says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added unto you." "Let not your heart be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me."

Could they believe their ears'? Jesus? That cannot be; we left Him on the mountain side hours ago, but His voice sounds familiar. It might be He. "Lord" Peter cried, "Bid me come unto you on the water." "Come unto me," said Jesus. Poor, frail, impetuous Peter took the Lord at His word; he started in good faith, but failed because the waves were boisterous and fear came into his heart. Down, down he went, and would have been gulfed forevermore beneath the waves, but for the timely assistance of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. "Oh, Lord save me," this poor frail disciple

cried in terror. As long as He looked at Jesus he walked. But Christ's power to help is limited by our faith. Peter saw the waves and forgot Jesus. So it is with our lives. "When contrary winds come, we forget Jesus. Perhaps Peter might have thought of taking his eyes from Jesus and relying upon his own power. As a result he was helpless. Sometimes in our lives when everything is in smooth running order, and we are progressing, we forget Jesus. If so we are going to fail, just as Peter failed. But if we can arouse our faith and cry as Peter did, "Lord save", Jesus is at hand. He stretched forth His hand and caught Peter, saying unto him, "O Thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Then Peter with the Saviour, got back into the boat and the wind ceased. Then the disciples confessed Him. "Of a truth thou art the Son of God." This beautiful incident in the life of the Saviour should be very precious to every Christian heart, for just as surely as the Master quieted the waves of Galilee, and installed faith and cheer in the hearts of His disciples, so today He is walking across the turbulent sea of our emotions, speaking peace to our troubled minds and crushing fear in cowardly hearts. Not only does the Man of Galilee control the elements of nature, but has the power to assist and enlighten poor, frail, erring humanity. Out of His boundless love He stretched forth a hand to help Peter. There have been millions of Peters in the world since then. They had seen

the boisterous waves, and have gone down in despair. Men and women are sinking beneath the waves of sin. In there no one to help? The lights of the harbor are dimly seen. We sink! We sink! What is yonder apparition? Can it be the Saviour walking on the troubled water! Oh, no; He is far away; He cares not for me. The winds of doubt assail us, and the whirlpool of selfishness is sucking us down, down. But across the rolling waves comes that still small voice: "Come unto me, be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." We start toward the Master, we hesitate; the wind still blows; the waves roar, and through fear we go down. But the mighty arm of the Master is there to lift us up and place us safely in the boat of life then quiets the storm and speaks peace to our soul. "He cares for *y o u*; He cares for me. He guides our bark o'er troubled sea; His arm outstretched, true succor brings; My faith in Him forever clings."

Are you in the "Midst of the Sea?" Then come to Jesus. Believe, repent and obey.



## THE SIN OF INGRATITUDE

*I. Thes. 5:18; Psalms 136.*

*Preached at Caldwell, Dec. 5, 1929. Constance, Ky., Nov., 1929. Grant, Ky., Dec, 1929. Petersburg, Ky., Dec, 1930. Columbia Ave., Nov. 22, 1931. Capitol View, Nov. 22, 1934.*

What trait of character is more beautiful than gratitude ( What more base than ingratitude. "Blow, blow winter winds, thou art not so unkind as man's ingratitude. Thy tooth is not so keen, because thou art not seen, although thy breath is made." Ingratitude means unthankfulness. We all hate the chill of the winter winds. Yet, this is not to be compared to the disregard we have for ungrateful man. The wind cannot be seen, but man's ingratitude is very visible. The sting of unthankfulness is very keen. An unappreciated or unthanked act is very seldom returned. This is man's attitude toward those who do not give thanks for the kindness shown toward them. If unthankfulness to man is so considered, what shall we say of unthankfulness to God?

Paul answers this question in Rom. 1:21 by saying it is the greatest sin of the heathen world. He tells how God revealed Himself to the heathen. Made known His power, His divine love. The heathen had no excuse because he knew God. He knew His greatness, yet,

failed to recognize Him as God. He did not give thanks. The climax of his wickedness was his unthankfulness, ingratitude is heathenish.

From the heathen world God had chosen a people. He made known His power unto them. He revealed Himself unto them. With a mighty hand He delivered them from their oppressors. He guided them safely through many a conflict. For forty years He manifested Himself to them in the pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, while He fed them with angel's food. He led them on with increasing blessings. How great were those blessings. Moses, in his final address, says. "The Lord alone did lead them, and there was no strange God with them. He made them to ride upon the high places of the earth and they did eat the increase of the fields. He made them to suck honey from the rock and oil from the flinty rock: butter of kine, milk of sheep, and fat of the lambs, and rams of the breed of Bachan and goats with the fat of the kidneys of wheat; and of the blood of the grape did they drink wine."

Now they are about to enter the land promised to their fathers, and what a glorious land it is, "A good land, a land of brooks of waters, of fountains and depths that spring out of valley and hills; a land of wheat, barley and vines; and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where they shall eat bread without scarceness, a land whose stones were iron, and out of those hills thou mayest dig brass." Having enjoyed such blessings of the past and now about to enter into a

land where they can enjoy many more bountiful blessings, one would think the hearts of those people would have overflowed with gratitude, but such was not the case. Moses looked upon them and said, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked. They waxed fat, they grew thick, they became sleek, they forsook God who made them and lightly esteemed the rock of their salvation." As I read these words, I imagine I can hear the old man as he stood before those people with whom he had patiently borne with their unbelief and ingratitude. He is moved to compare them with fat bull, that had been pampered and grown sleek and never thought of the hand that groomed them and from which they had been fed and given them a place where they could lie down in safety. What scorn there must have been in his voice, as he looked down upon those people; who surely must have passed with drooped heads in shame, and uttered those words. Who was it that had thus grown fat and sleek? Who was Jeshurun? Jeshurun means righteousness. They were not heathen people, but people who claimed to know God and claimed to be the true worshipers of God, but they were ungrateful.

Still God was with these people who did not thank him. He kept His covenant with them. They dwelled in cities which they builded not. In homes which they furnished not. Ate of the trees and vineyards which they planted not—yet they forgot God. He said through Isaiah "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib but Israel doth not know, my people doth

not consider." And through Hosea He said, "She did not know that I gave her corn and wine, and oil and multiplied her silver and gold, which she prepared for Baal." The blessings that God had given them devoted to the beastly heathen God. What a degradation of noble gifts. Yet, is this not repeated in Christian lands? Are we not inclined to forget God?

Hut all did not bow the knee to Baal. In contrast to this condemnation uttered through prophetic life, the Psalmist sings, "Oh give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the people. Remember His marvelous works that He hath done; His wonders and the judgment of his mouth."

If men were called upon to give thanks to God for the many rich gifts that He had bestowed upon them in former dispensations, how much more should we call forth of our souls to give thanks to Him who has heaped upon us and is continually heaping upon us, rich and bountiful blessings too numerous to mention. We sing, "Count your many blessings, name them one by one," but is this possible? Isn't it true that the many gifts and blessings which we receive from God are far too numerous to mention. Some of them are so frequent and wonderful and we are too dull and stupid to recognize them. But let us consider a few of the vast quantity of gifts. Truly God has dealt with us, as a people, far greater than He has dealt with any other people.



Think of this great land which God has given us. In ages past He lifted up a great chain of mountains from which we mine all kinds of rich ore and precious metals. He has traced mighty rivers and streams which aid us in navigation and afford means of getting rid of the refuse of the cities and villages. He has planted for us vast forests, trees of all kinds that are useful to mankind. From His scientific hand we have a soil from which most any crop can be produced which is needful to the maintenance of the Human family. He has stored up for us under tin's land a vast amount of oil and gas, coal, iron and all kinds of metals. He has afforded for us scenery which no other country can claim. Throughout the uncounted millenniums the great Architect toiled to prepare a fit place for our nation.

Then He prepared a people to compose this nation. "Who were they? They were men and women from whence sprang those that were worthy and qualified to lift the torch of liberty to enlighten the world. They came from among men and women who had felt the thrill of that new life which was born from the revival of learning and the Protestant Reformation. From these people God picked the sturdy Pilgrim fathers to found the New England colonies. From brave liberty-loving Holland He brought men that were needed to found New Amsterdam. Quakers and the choicest souls of Germany He brought to cultivate the fertile fields of Pennsylvania. High born Loyalists with their chivalry and culture He brought to

be the great planters of Virginia. The noblest hearts of France longing For religious toleration and freedom He brought to people the Carolinas. From the offsprings of these varied types assembled the first congress to decide the great principles for which this country stands. Some one has said, "That Congress was composed of the finest body of men ever gathered in the history of the world!"

from the day on which that congress adjourned, the mighty heart of infinite wisdom and goodness has been over this nation in divine benediction. It is true we have had our conflicts within and our perils without since that day, but through it all we have come out victorious. Today safe investments are available. Luxuries are possible to the many, while few are without the necessities of life; the poor and needy are provided for in well established and cared for institutions. Education from the common school to college and universities is accessible to all. The physical side of life is being protected as never before. We have a land in which the climate is such as to produce strong sturdy men. This story is told which illustrates the sturdy race which compose the people of America. During the infancy of America a council was held in France in which America was represented by several men of noble stature and ability. Benjamin Franklin was one of the group, and one of the problems before the council was to encourage immigration to America. One of the French representatives stated that the climate'

of America was such as to injure the physique of man. Benjamin Franklin in his rejoinder asked that all the American representatives stand and they did so. Great six foot giants as they were. Then he asked that the French men stand and they did. But they were little short weakly looking men. Then Mister Franklin said, "Now you can see very plainly that the climate of America is very injurious to the physique of men." Truly we can say, "God has not dealt so with any other people."

But we have blessings which far transcend those which we have mentioned. As far as the heavens transcend above the earth. We live in a land where the influence of the Bible is felt on every hand. Every individual feels it. Every institution is influenced by it. It has brought about our high standard of morals and it is the chief cause of our prosperity and happiness; it is the bulwark of our liberty; the guarantee of our future welfare.

It is the Bible which makes God known to us. It is the reflection of His wisdom, power, love and tender mercy and judgment.

Still more wonderful does the Bible reveal God to us in Jesus Christ our Saviour and our Lord, through whom so many enjoy the blessing of pardon and adoption into the family of God by becoming heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Through Jesus we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and language cannot express these spiritual blessings which God has bestowed upon us in Jesus.

These blessings are general so far as God's children are concerned. They are enjoyed by all who have named the name of Christ. Each has his own peculiar blessing or joy. One of the greatest blessings which we enjoy and which we seldom look upon as a blessing is temptation, the trials of life. If it were not for these we would not be able to share the joy of overcoming them. Enjoy the beauty of "self mastery." Is it not a good blessing when we feel the thorn tormenting us to hear the voice of Jesus say "fear not," and "Lo I am with you even unto the end of the world?" We learn to cast our care upon God and know that He is with us. That "all things work together for good for those that love the Lord."

I have only mentioned a few of the blessings which the Father of Lights has bestowed upon us, but surely they are sufficient to cause us to acknowledge that it is a good thing to give thanks to Jehovah. How shall we give thanks to God? How shall we bless His Holy Name?

*In our worship.* The Psalms which David wrote to be sung in the temple services are full of thanksgiving, Jesus in talking to the woman at the well said, "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshiper shall worship in spirit and in truth." That is worship with the spirit of God. Do not come into the place of worship with hatred in your heart; do not come with problems of business or investments on your mind, but come with the loving spirit, the spirit which Jesus laid down in the great

commandment. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind soul and strength and your neighbor as yourself." Worship with the truth which Jesus has revealed to us through His holy Word, He has given us the true system of worship which we must follow as faithful followers of His.

Our prayers should be made up largely with Thanksgiving. The Apostle says, "Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving." "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." Let us pour out our hearts in supplication to God, but let us not forget to give him thanks for all things. For every good and perfect gift cometh from above.

The Jews expressed their gratitude to God by a thank-offering. We must do the same. Their thank-offering was a lamb slain and laid upon the altar. The thank offering which we bring is far more precious than that of the Jews. The Apostle says, "I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Not one part of your body, but the whole body, everything that composes the body.

*Again we can give thanks to God by the treatment which we give to those who are in need.* "True religion and undefiled before God is to visit the widows and orphans in their affliction and keep yourselves unspotted from the world." What does this do for the individual who

expresses his gratitude to God. It brings a blessing that can come in no other way, it means enlargement of soul.

Jesus was entering into one of the obscure villages of Galilee when there met Him ten men that were lepers who stood afar off. They lifted up their voices saying "Master have mercy on us!" And when He saw them He said unto them, "go and show yourselves to the priest." And it came to pass that they went and were cleansed and one of them when he saw that he was healed turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God, and he fell upon his face at His feet, giving Him thanks, and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus said, were not the ten cleansed? Where are the nine? This stranger was the only one that returned to give thanks to God. We have here evidence that God longs for the gratitude and adoration of His children. God hungers for the loving fellowship of His own. It is not enough that the gratitude be assumed but we must make it manifest in our conduct.

Regardless of the desire which God has for the gratitude of His own, it is evident that there are nine who accept the favor of God and go their way, to the one who thinks promptly of the Giver and returns to speak a word of thanks. Where are the nine? What are they doing? Perhaps they are singing their joy. Perhaps they are rejoicing at their new found freedom and strength. Perhaps they are telling other men to go and receive the

same blessing from Him. There is no law that they should return and say "thank you", but the law of love and that they do not have.

How our brethren would be shocked if it were proposed that we abandon our Spiritual practice of observing the Lord's Supper every Lord's day. Yet, where are the brethren when the Lord's Table is spread? Nine of them are else where; 01;. is here. Where are those that should be here this morning? What a fine audience we would have if the other nine for each one here were only present. What is the trouble? They do not know the law of love. It is not a matter of form. It is a matter of individual appreciation.

But ingratitude! How it debases! Head the first Chapter of Romans and see the awful degradation into which men fell because of their ingratitude. They became vain in their reasonings. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools. They grew lower than the animals of the field. Engaging in all kinds of sin and corruption.

We also have an example of the spirit of ingratitude in Nebuchadnezzar. God had given him great power and glory. He was made to rule over many nations. His kingdom was mighty and wealthy. He lived in splendor and fared sumptuously. Hut his pride became greater than his love and appreciation. He made an image of gold and set it up in the plain of Dura. He was unthankful for all of the good things which God had done for him. What

was the result? He was driven from the sons of men and made to live with the beasts of the field. He did eat of the herbs of the field and his hair became like the feathers of eagles and his nails like bird claws. His body was wet with the dew of Heaven. What a terrible picture! Just as graphic should be the picture of any man today who descends to the low and animal plain of ingratitude.

What is Hell? The abode of the ungrateful souls. Oh friends if we have been unthankful, let us repent, let us cry unto God for forgiveness and let us resolve that we shall, as long as we live, continue to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance!



## BECOMING DOERS OF THE WORD

*James 1:22.*

*Preached at Columbia Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio, Sept. 20, 1931. Capitol View Church, Atlanta, Ga., April 7, 1935. Latonia, Ky., Sept. 1937.*

We have a natural aversion to being cheated. There isn't anything that will turn us against our friends so quickly as to have them cheat us. A merchant who makes a practice of short changing or giving short weight to his customers is soon found out and the result is a loss in business for the merchant. We abhor a cheat. Yet, do you know that the world is full of people that are cheating themselves, and they seem not to realize it? Yes, and the sad part of it all, is that the majority of church members are self-cheaters.

James says that those who hear the word, even though they may hear it gladly, but do not according to what it says, cheat themselves. Regular attentive hearers who endorse the sound doctrine may be "hearers only." If so, they are like the man who ploughs and sows, but never reaps. What would you think of a farmer who spent all season working hard at his crop, but when it came time to harvest he left it to rot or be destroyed by the birds and wild animals. Such is the case with the man who is a hearer of the word but not a doer.

"Hearers only" cheat themselves of the very best in this life and perhaps rob themselves of Heaven. Jesus has said according to Matt. 7:21 "Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but they that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven."

"Be Ye Doers of the Word". These words contain first—Encouragement for the Discouraged.

We, many times becomes discouraged because we have not been able to measure up to the New Testament's Standard of living. We look about us and see our fellow brethren and sisters in Christ who seem to be more able to resist temptation than we; who seem to find more joy in the Christ life than we; who seem to have a deeper spiritual insight than we have; and we become discouraged feeling that the Christian life is not for us. J bit if we will just take a thorough examination of ourselves, ask ourselves a few questions we will find in the majority of cases that we are putting very little effort into the Christian life. If we hope to get anything out of it, we must put something in. We need to become "doers of the Word."

In the Creek the present tense of the verb is used, which indicates continued action. We are not to be doers of the word one day and then rest until the end of the week then be doers of the word again. We have too many Sunday Christians now. We are to be doers of the word all the time, continually. It is a life

long process. "Doers of the Word" sets us a perfect standard. It gives us a goal which we should be constantly striving to attain.

We need not, however, expect to attain this perfection all at once. It is a gradual growth. When we are born into the Christian life at baptism we are then like little babes newly born into the world. We have a maturity ahead of us into which we have to develop. One cannot become a skilled mechanic, a master musician, a ripe scholar over night. He has to pay the price. Christian maturity will not be reached by those who are not willing to pay the price of growth. I have in mind a young man who lives in Cincinnati; he practices on the violin for eight hours every day; he is paying the price and some day, God willing, he will reap a reward from his labor. "Become" indicates a gradual process. Growth of anything takes time. An acorn does not become an oak in a day, it takes years of steady growth. It takes time and patience and much hard labor to become matured Christians. There is no easy short cut to maturity. We must stay by our guns.

A gunner, describing the intense moment just before the new recruits came up that turned the decisive battle of modern times, said that moment seemed ages, and the dust and smoke of the battle were so thick and intense that the gunner, as he stood on the height on which he had been placed by the commanding officer, could not see five yards in front of him;

He felt the swaying tides of the battle move this way and that, and he did not know at one time whether he was among friends or foes. Some one asked him, "Well my friend, what did you do in that supreme hour of darkness and solitude?" "I stood by my guns," said he. That is all you and I have to do. We are not responsible for the swaying tides of battle, we are not responsible for apparent defeat or apparent failure. The question is, "Am I where God puts me, and do I stay where God puts me, and do I do as God would have me do?" In other words am I a "Doer of the Word?" The secret of success in the Christian life is being a doer of the Word.

The failures, disappointments, heartaches, and drudgery of apprenticeship may cause us to raise the "white flag" but the promise is to those who endure to the end, growing in grace and knowledge.

"Herbert H. Casson, the well-known British business writer, relates this incident: There is a gold mine in South Africa, which is called the White Feather. The first man who dug it went down for over **200** feet. Then he gave up—surrendered to bad luck, flew the white feather as the miners say. He sold his mine for a few pounds to a newcomer. This new man went down bravely and in one day uncovered a vast store of gold. He has since dug up a fortune. The first man stopped digging when he was within twelve inches of a ton of gold. In digging into the careers of scores and scores

of the men who have made the greatest marks in American industry, I have had it brought home forcefully that nearly all of them were called upon, at some stage or other, to muster up superlative courage. You encounter few white feathers on the summit of success.

A failure may become a pitfall; it should be a stepping stone. We learn through our mistakes. Mistakes may conquer us; we should conquer them. We are bound to make mistakes. They that don't make mistakes are dead ones. James says 3:2 "For in many things we all stumble. If any stumble not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also." If you have stumbled, do not give up and turn your back to the wind; face it. A vast majority of animals turn their backs to the wind, but the American Bison is built to face the wind. Let us become "Bisons" in the Christian life. Listen to the words of the Apostle Paul, Phil. 3:12—"Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Our being doers of the word encourages others in the Christian life. Some one is watching our light every day; someone is following

in our foot steps. The story is told of one of the early church fathers who was noted for his purity of life. His goodness shown in his countenance. He enlisted a young man to accompany him in his evangelistic tours, and to help him in his work. They started out going from town to town visiting with the people and walking in and out among them. After they had traveled for several days the young man began to wonder where and when they were going to hold their first preaching services. He understood that they were to preach and deliver messages and orations. One day as they were walking along the street the young boy looked up into the face of the old Christian Father and asked, "How now Master, when do we preach?" The old man looked into the young man's face and with a smile he said, "We have already been preaching." Your very life is the greatest sermon that you can preach. If ye are doers of the word people are going to know from the life you live that you are a Christian man or woman and your life will encourage them to be faithful Christians.

"A Clergyman, with his wife and son, was once journeying to a new field in the West, when by venturing on an unsafe bridge, all their lives were greatly imperiled. The father reached the shore, but saw with great anguish that he could give no help to his loved ones, until other assistance could be secured. He went in search for it and the mother and son clung to some pieces of timber lodged in the midst of the cold, fast flowing current, as their

only hope of safety. The mother's hands were growing numbed and her slight frame wearied out with the effort of holding on. She felt that the struggle for life could go on but a little longer. Her boy was young and vigorous. He might hold out till help came. With the mother's living tenderness she spoke her words of farewell, and gave such counsel as a mother might who was looking into eternity. But she was not prepared for the response: "Mother," he said, "If you let go, I will." Oh! here was a new anguish. She had hope in a Saviour but her dear boy had so such hope. She felt that she held his destiny in her hands. She must live, for his sake. With almost superhuman strength the mother kept her hold on the plank for if she loosened her grasp, her boy's soul was lost for eternity. In two hours, help came and they were rescued.

"Be Ye Doers of the Word" means not only encouragement for the discouraged, but also humility for the self-satisfied.

When we examine ourselves in the light of Jesus, the perfect standard, we reveal how far short we fall, and find no room for egotistical boasting. It is when we compare ourselves with ourselves that we become egotistical and self-satisfied. Many Christians compare themselves with weaker brethren and glory in their superiority. It is when we compare ourselves with weaker brethren that we become puffed up. Jesus, one time, spoke a parable to those who trusted in their own self-righteousness. In this

parable He told about two men that went up into the temple to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other a Publican. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank Thee that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. Then he began to tell God all about his goodness. He fasted twice a week and gave tithe of all his possessions. "The Publican stood afar off, and would not as much as lift his eyes to heaven, but mote his breast, saying God be Thou merciful to me a sinner." This Publican, says Jesus went down to his house justified rather than the self righteous Pharisee. "Everyone that exhalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Yes, we pat ourselves on the back when we compare ourselves with the weaker brethren; but we do not feel so big when we stand beside Jesus Christ. When we look into God's word, the mirror of the soul we see our short coming and reveal how far short we fall of the perfect standard. This is one beautiful thing about the Bible; it enables us to see our own imperfection. Our neighbor's tie is twisted, or a bit of dirt mars his countenance and it disturbs us much. But to "see ourselves as other see us" is more difficult. It was Bobbie Burns the poet, who was sitting in church and amused himself very greatly by watching a louse perform its "daily dozen" upon the hat of a very aristocratic lady. How proudly she sat in her silks and satins, but little did she know that Bobby was being



amused by a little louse that had crawled out of her hair and was now running too and fro upon her hat. From this incident Burns composed the little poem in which he says, "O would some power the gift to give us, to see ourselves as others see us."

If we become doers of the word we will eliminate self-satisfaction with any degree of maturity we may have reached, for it reveals many worlds ahead yet to conquer.

To be doers of the word involves the concern of those who do not rise to higher levels. You remember the little story that Jesus told in the 25th chapter of Matew about the man when going into a far country called his servants and delivered unto them his goods. To one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one. The first was an industrious man and doubled his talent, the second also doubled his amount, but the one talent man digged a hole and hid his Lord's money. When the Lord returned, he had a day of reckoning. The two faithful servants received praise and honor, but the one talent man who hid his Lord's money, not only lost his talent but the Lord commanded that he be cast into outer darkness.

Such shall be the end of those who hear the word, but do not do. "Be ye doers of the word."

If we become "doers of the word" it gives us a burning passion for all.

When we look into God's word we see the perfect standard to which we are to strive to attain. We see Jesus Christ our example, and

*have a passion to be transformed into the same image. The only way we can accomplish this is by becoming "doers of the word."* Rom. 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service, and be not fashioned according to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." It is when we become fascinated and interested in the affairs of this world that we cease to be doers of the Word. We are to be governed by the laws of the Bible; to fashion our lives after the example of Christ. We must form new habits.

For the whole Church to become "doers of the word" means a complete restoration of the Apostolic zeal. We will then have a burning desire to please God, to do his will, and to advance his glory in the world in every possible way. We will then be swallowed up in one thing, and that one thing will be to please God. Every one that becomes a doer of the word will always find a sphere for his zeal. If he cannot preach and work and give money, he will cry and sigh and pray, yes! if he is only a pauper, or an invalid on a bed of sickness, he will make the wheels of sin around him drive heavily by continually interceding against it. If he cannot fight in the valley with Joshua, he will do the work of Moses, Aaron, and Hur, on the hill. If he is cut off from working himself he will provide help for others to carry on. This is what

James means by "Being doers of the word."

You know the habit of mind that makes men great in this world—that makes such men as Alexander the Great, or Julius Caesar, or Oliver Cromwell, or Peter the Great, or Charles X I I , or Napoleon or Pitt. You know they were all alike in one thing. They threw themselves into one great pursuit. They cared for nothing else, they put everything else aside. They counted every thing else as second-rate, and of subordinate importance compared to the one thing they put before their eyes every day they lived. I say that the same habit of mind applies to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This my friends was the characteristic of the early Christian. They were men everywhere "spoken against." They were driven to worship God in dens and caves of the earth. They often lost everything in this world for their religious sake. They generally gained nothing but the cross, persecution, shame, and reproach. But they seldom, very seldom, went back. If they could not dispute at least they could suffer, ff they could not convince their adversaries by argument, at any rate they could die, and prove that they themselves were in earnest. Look at Ignatius, cheerfully traveling to the place where he was to be devoured by lions and saying as he went, "Now do I begin to be a disciple of my Master Christ." Hear poor old Polycarp before the Roman Governor, saying boldly, when called upon to deny Christ "Fourscore and six years have I served Christ, neither hath He ever

offended me in anything; and how then can I revile my King." This was true zeal. This zeal comes to only those who "become doers of the Word."

In closing I feel that I can do no better than to place before you that word picture which Jesus produced as it is recorded in the 7th chapter of Matt. This pictures the blessedness of those who hear and do; and also the tragic end of those who are "hearers only." Jesus says, "Everyone that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who builded his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon the rock. And everyone that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: and the rains descended, and the flood came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof."

"Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," for our eternal destiny depends on whether or not we become doers of the word.

## A TRUE MOTHER

*Matt. 15:21-28*

*Preached at Columbia Church of Christ, Cincinnati, Ohio, May 8, 1932. Capitol View Church, Atlanta, Ga., May 12, 1935. Latonia, Ky., May, 1936.*

The author of this book dedicated this sermon to his mother Mrs. W. M. Carter. In introduction of this message he said, "My mother is one of the finest, most Christ-like women in this world. I thank God for giving me such a mother."

This is "Mother's Day." Each of us will find his way into his own memory field today and wandering in and out along the pathway of the past, he will gather forget-me-nots and heart's-ease for a bouquet. What an armful of flowers, with nectar sweet as that in the cups of the rose-buds and with fragrance outmatching Arabic gardens. You may go where you like along these roads of memory; but let me go straight to my mother. I am just coming into the age where I can look back and cherish those sacred moments of childhood spent in her presence, and I hope, as the years go by, these memories will become more sacred and cheery to me. Mother is the sweetest word on earth today, but has it always been such? We find, by searching the history

of the world before Christ came that woman was merely a tool for man. The mother did most of the providing for the home. Woman was the play thing of man, and was not regarded much more than a dog. After the coming of Christ and the Christian dispensation, motherhood was established to its rightful place, and mother became the most sacred person on earth.

There is an old saying, "What is home without a mother?" Yet, when I look out on the younger generation of woman-hood, and see the type, largely, that are to be the mothers of the future, I sometime ask myself "What is the home going to be with that type of mother?" Young girls smoking cigarettes, drinking, immoral, ruining not only their character but also their health and losing the respect of mankind.

God made woman superior to man in many ways. God gave to woman the most sacred place on earth, that of being the heart of the home. As long as the mother's love lives, the home will live. She is the breath of life. She is its fragrance. She is its glory, its soul.

"God needed help to show His love, and so he gave us mothers." What an hour that was in the council of Heaven when the thought of mother was conceived first in the heart of God; when the plan was wrought out to nourish the seed of life in her flesh. The mother, I think, is one of the great proofs of God!

This morning, in paying our tribute to moth-

er, let us look at the character of this mother who came and fell down at the feet of Jesus and worshipped Him, pleading that He might come and heal her daughter.

Jesus had just passed the high tide of his ministry when He fed the five thousand. His friends were becoming more urgent that he accept the crown and become their king. His enemies were closing in, little by little, and it was now becoming very dangerous for Jesus to make His appearance in and around Jerusalem. So in order to escape the opposition of His enemies and the mistaken movement of His friends, He withdraws to the parts of Tyre and Sidon. As He was not on a missionary tour it was perfectly proper for Him to enter heathen territory. Hut Mark tells us, "He could not be hid. For a Canaanitish woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit, having heard of Him, that is having heard both of His great healing power and His arrival in the neighborhood, came out from these borders and cried saying, have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David: My daughter is grievously vexed with a demon."

Even though Jesus had retired into a place of seclusion to rest and teach His disciples, He could not resist the pleadings of a mother's love. The vivid picture given to us by the evangelist sets before us a very remarkable character. Let us observe some of the most interesting features.

We have a devoted love. This characteristic

should be found in all mothers. Mother should be absorbed in her devotion to her children. A true mother's love is no mere sentiment and it is not satisfied to spend itself in idle tears. This mother is lifted above her people, and is carried forward to attempt what others never thought of, because her love will not permit her to give up her hope and her effort. No doubt she went in secret felling no one of her plans. Isn't that just like a mother? Doing things unbeknown to others. If we could only read the secrets and thoughts that are stored away in mother's heart, I am sure we would love her much more than we do.

The mother is the soul of the home. This is the language of sentiment, but it is nobly true. The foundation of the home may be of wood, birch or stone; the floor may be inlaid hardwood, or pine or slab or beaten sod; the roof may be shingles, slate or clapboards, the illumination may be fallow candles, coal oil lamps, gas jet or electric bulb; these things may be of whatever sort we desire or can afford, but the home is inanimate without mother. She is the life of the home.

How may we account for the wonderful strength she possesses? With no such physical organization as that of man; and yet unmatched in strength for carrying love's load, for patience, endurance, for unwearied waiting, for answering uncounted calls, for ministries that strain the soul. Is there no limit to the mother's sacrifice? Will her arms never tire? Will her



dear fingers never grow weary? "We can only account for tins unequalled strength by placing love back of it. Love lifts her load. Love links her to her task and multiplies her power. Love is the only possible explanation of motherhood.

Perhaps many of you can recall the days when you used to walk hand in hand with her in the garden back of the house, while she talked to you of precious nonsense and laughed at your swarming fancies. All the fancy boxes of American Beauties or expensive candies do not connote that sort of the thing. Perhaps you do not remember much about her views of voting nor her social prestige; and what her ideas were as to child training, diet and such things, these you cannot recall. The main thing that comes into your mind and the most important of all those memories is that she loved you. She may not have known how to bring up children according to the Dairy book, or according to some systematic rules and regulations, but she knew how to be a play-mate with you. She could be happy while reclining on the grass with you and there tell you stories of fairies and also beautiful stories of the Bible. She could run and play with you. No voice was ever as sweet as mother's. For myself I am never happier than when I am sitting alone thinking over childhood days, and recalling the old, old song that mother used to sing to me.

Thinking of this, I sometimes wonder if the woman of today, with all her tremendous

notions and plans, realizes what an almighty factor she is in the shaping of her child for weal or woe? I wonder if she realizes how much sheer love and attention count for in a child's life? I wonder if she knows what it means to create memories that are going to stay green when life's present impressions are gone.

This mother was prompted by this mother love that I have just been speaking of. No doubt she had tried all the physicians in the neighborhood, had done every thing any one had suggested to her, her last hope is then the Great Physician, the one who can heal all diseases, and bind up every heart wound. Had she told others of her plans they would no doubt have discouraged her. She a Gentile, a Heathen in the eyes of the Jews going to this great Jewish leader to ask for help? But this mother has a mother's courage. I mean by this that she had reached the state of the "affirmative intellect." It was not a factor with her what others would do, she had the courage to do what she thought was right. Her conduct had gone beyond the point of being swayed by her associates. Duty was the goal, and love led the way.

She was a sympathetic mother. Sympathy so identified her with her daughter that she asked mercy for herself. Isn't that just like a true mother. Always ready to shoulder the burdens of the family. Nothing can change the mother's sympathy. Her son may fall into mischief, go

astray, become entangled in some lawless crime, be cast into prison; he can be changed, but mother's sympathy remains unchanged. She can reach her hand through the bars of the prison and touch her boy's hand, and while an agony like that of death may grip her heart, her eyes can still look into his as they did in cradle days. Nothing could change her, however much he may have been changed.

I have known her to lie for hours without closing an eye wailing for her boy to come home. When everyone else had ceased to think of him, and were resting peacefully, she had ceased to think of everything else. I have heard of mothers singing their crooning cradle songs, when the child for whose soothing she had learned it, had long since been listening to the songs of angels.

What is it I am trying to do? I am just trying to keep you from forgetting, if I can. Perhaps if I can make you remember some of these things which were characteristic of your mother, the fact of your remembering may mean something to her. Possibly I may help you smile at her more often. I am thinking she might be hungry to feel your arms around her neck and that if you are away from her you might send her a message. Some of you would possibly have to send it to the throne of God and thinking of her there may stir up within your heart the desire to take the message in person. But if she is still with you on earth, please remember her more often. I don't want

your neglect to be piled on top of her already heavy load.

"Nobody knows of the work it takes  
To keep the home together.  
Nobody knows of the steps it takes  
Nobody knows, but mother.

Nobody listens to childish woe  
Which kisses only smother.  
Nobody's pained by naughty blows,  
Nobody, only mother.

Nobody knows of the sleepless care  
Bestowed on baby brother,  
Nobody knows of the tender prayer,  
Nobody, only mother.

Nobody knows of the lessons taught  
Of loving one another.  
Nobody knows of the patience sought  
Nobody, only mother.

Nobody knows of the anxious fears  
Lest darling may not weather  
The storms of life in after years,  
Nobody knows, but mother.

Nobody kneels at the throne above  
To thank the Heavenly Father  
For the sweetest gift—a mother's love,  
Nobody can, but mother.

Many times a mother's desires and efforts for her children are met with discouragement, but if it is the true kind of love it is hard for it to be denied.

The mother of James and John came to Jesus, beseeching Him that He might grant to her two sons the chief place in His kingdom which she thought would be established on earth materially. She desired that one might sit on his right side and one on his left. This request was prompted by a selfish love. She felt that position would give to her sons power and renown. Many a mother makes this mistake by feeling that, if her child can just get into some high position that it will make him a big man. This mother's request was selfish and could not be granted.

But when the Syrophenician mother came to Jesus, here was a mother that could not be denied. At first Jesus remained silent. "He answered her not a word", but this did not turn her away. She besought Him all the more earnestly that He come and cast forth the demon out of her daughter. Her beseechings were so great that they disturbed the disciples and they requested of Jesus that He send her away. They wanted Him, if needs be, to grant her request for his own sake—not for mercy or pardon, but merely to be rid of her.

The narrative indicates that Jesus had left the house where the conversation started and was now moving on. The mother's love was so great that it was urging her along and she was following after Him and she came and fell down at His feet and worshipped Him, saying "Lord, help me."

By this time Jesus had come to the place

where He saw that here was a mother possessing rare faith, such that could not be denied and in order to test her faith further and give her an argumentative handle, He answers her in a sort of a rebuking way, with a cold and stern answer. "Let the children first be filled; it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs."

Such an answer might well have struck a chill into her soul, and had Jesus not foreseen here was a rare faith which can see mercy and acceptance even in apparent rejection, He would not so have answered her. Hut not all the snows of her native Lebanon could quench the fire of love which was burning on the altar of her heart; and prompt as an echo came forth the immortal answer.

She accepted the truth of the Lord's words. It was right, she owned, that the children should first be filled; it would not be meet to cast their bread to the dogs; and she admits that the Gentiles were as dogs compared with the chosen people. Hut she understood the word in its milder application, of the little dogs which play with the children and lie under the table. She was well pleased to be regarded as a little dog. for it gave her a claim to the Master's kindness. The Jews were wayward children; they had rejected the Bread of Life. The Gentiles would Hock around the board. The Jews called them dogs; they would gladly receive the bread which the Jews had rejected. This mother is only pleading for a portion, or

even a slice, she is willing even to be satisfied with the crumbs which fell from the table. They were the children's crumbs she knew but the children had let them fall. Might not she—no child, but a Gentile: no better, she owned than a dog—might not she have her portion of those most precious crumbs? This was a beautiful humility. This Syro-Phoenician woman was poor in spirit; she felt her spiritual poverty, and acknowledged it; and she obtained her share in the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, though not a child of the kingdom. Her prayer is a model for us. So ought we to pray with the same humility, urging our request in earnest continual supplication, though the Lord be silent and seems to hear us not. Sooner or later. He answers the prayer of faith. How did He answer this prayer? "O woman," He said, "Great is thy faith." Here was a true mother's faith. We may turn away from our mother's teaching, go to the very bottom of sin and waywardness, but the true mother's faith lingers on. The Lord admired the faith of this woman, He had marvelled at the faith of the Gentile centurion. Such faith is entitled to the fullest share of His gift. She takes her place alongside the Gentile Centurion as the two showing faith worthy of mention. Sometimes those who have the fewest privileges, fewest opportunities are never the less rich in faith and live very near to Christ. Such shall receive their reward even as this Gentile mother. It had seemed as if He would give nothing; but He ends by giving all, putting the key of the

store house into her hand, and bidding her take not a crumb, but "as thou wilt." Her daughter was healed by the power of Jesus working at a distance. Her prayer was answered.

A mother's life is tilled with heartaches, with trials and tribulations, but there is one source of comfort. That fountain from which all comfort flows. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." A true mother can always find comfort in Jesus.

But what response can we make to mother's sacrifice? Can a younger child help her to carry her load of love? One the regrets of my childhood days is that I did not help my mother more. We do not realize these things until it is too late. How we could lighten her burdens. How many steps we could save her willing feet. Yet, it is not so much, what can be done with the hands as what can be done with the heart.

Oh, son or daughter, whoever you are, where ever you are, thank God for your mother. She is the best friend you have on this earth and the best way you can show your appreciation for her is by living the kind of a life she would have you live; a good clean upright Christian life.



## HEAVEN

*Rev. 21:22.*

*Preached at Grant, Ky., Oct. 21, 1929. Constance, Ky., Oct. 27, 1929. Petersburg, Ky., Oct. 19, 1930.*

Heaven is a place that every true Christian is interested in. It is not our intention, in this short narrative to give you a thorough discription of Heaven because that would be beyond any human ability. The informalion that we have about this Holy Place is short, and so dee]) that the best of scholars can not fathom its depth. We are all interested in getting there, but it makes us all the more anxious after we have a vague understanding of what we can expect after we get them.

Most of our information about heaven is derived from the bok of Revelation. This book is styled the "apocalypse" that is, the revealing or unveiling of that which had been hidden. It was written by John, the youngest apostle, and the last to pass from this earth. It was written while he was on the Isle of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea, where he was banished, about the year 94 A.D. It was published soon after his release from exile.

Where Heaven is, is a question of comparatively no importance, the important thing is to get there, but where is heaven, is a question of

curiosity. The scripture speaks of it as above. Job. 3:4. "Let not God from above seek for it" Deut. 4:39. "The Lord he is God in heaven above." Acts 1:10-11. "And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as He went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was received up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven." There are some who hold that if heaven is up from one point on the earth; it is down from a point on the opposite side of the earth. But if it is true, as seems to be the teaching of numerous passages of scripture that heaven, or the spiritual world, completely encircles the earth, then it is true that it is up from any point on the earth. The revelation of the spiritual forces, to the young man as they are recorded in I. Kings 6 "Where his eyes were opened and he saw, and behold a mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha," the visit of the heavenly messengers to the earth, the appearance and disappearance of our Lord between the resurrection and the ascension and many other things, indicate that the spirit world is much nearer than we are accustomed to think.

What is heaven? Is it a condition or place? The scripture teaches that it is both. It should be born in mind that Rev. 21:1-5 says: "And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away.

and the sea is no more. And I saw the Holy City, flic Now Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven Prom God made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." This city is not called heaven, but is said "to come down out of heaven." Perhaps out of the old heaven that is passed away to become a pari of the new heaven and new earth. "And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying. Behold the tabernacle of God is with men. and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and he their God." Then by reading on in this same chapter we find that John gives a description of the Holy City that is found in the new heaven and new earth. The river of life, the walls of diamonds, the gates of pearl, the streets of transparent gold over a foundation that rests upon eleven other precious stones, and of the other marvelous things of this our future home. The city whose builder and maker is God.

The old Canaan had its Jerusalem in which God's people took great pride, and which they loved with an intense love. The poets sang its praises, and their statesmen gloried in the metropolis of this great city. Willi what joy did men, women and children go steadily to this beloved city to keep their feasts and have a happy fellowship together in the temple and upon the streets of their adorned capitol. They looked forward to those occasions with fondest anticipation, and hack upon them with happy memories. When Jerusalem prospered they

were happy, but when it was desolate they were tilled with the deepest grief. The esteem in which Jerusalem was held by the Jews is set forth by a Psalm, "If I forget thee, () Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not; If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

When Nehemiah heard, in the land of captivity of the sad estate of Jerusalem, he sat down and wept certain days, and fasted and prayed to God in behalf of the wasted city of his fathers. And he bore wine to Artaxerxes, the King noticed that his cup bearer was of a sad countenance, and demanded to know the cause of his sadness, and he replied: "Let the king live forever; why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my father's sepulchers, lieth waste and the gates thereof are consumed with tire?" The man's heart was crushed when he heard the sad account of his dearly beloved city, and he immediately took steps to repair the city and at least restored part of its former glory. And even Jesus, in viewing the coining fate of the city, wept over it. "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her; how oft would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings and ye would not:" Matt. 23:37. The Jews loved their city. Put what was the old Jerusalem, even in the height of its splendor in comparison with

the New Jerusalem as described by John? I can think of no words that would add to the glory of the revelation description of the eternal abode of the righteous. Look at its dimensions for a moment. Twelve-thousand furlongs long, twelve-thousand furlongs, wide, twelve-thousand furlongs high. Reducing these measurements to miles, we have a city fifteen-hundred miles long, fifteen-hundred miles wide, fifteen-hundred miles high. Reducing the city to one-mile in height, and extending its length in proportion, we have a city fifteen-hundred miles wide and about long enough to belt the earth! And then the materials of which the city is made are of the most precious that we know anything about. What flight of imagination can go beyond this picturing? Is this a literal description? Why may it not be? Is there anything too hard for God to accomplish? Couldn't He who builded this great universe build such a city as is there described? Who dare limit God's power? This city is said to have come down out of heaven from God and this may mean that it was built and completed in heaven and handed down to the new earth in its completed form, or that it was conceived and planned in heaven by the Great Architect and built on earth according to His plans. If it is figurative there is one thing we can be sure of, that if is not over estimated. God will not deceive His people. If it is a figurative description the real thing is far grander. In this description he has used everything that is precious to us here. The prophet confirms: "Eye hath not seen, ear

hath not heard, neither hath it entered the heart of man the tilings that God hath prepared for him."

When man sinned and in so doing plunged into ruin, he carried his home, the earth, with him, and involved in it the same misfortune that befell him. I low often do we see similar results following in the wake of transgression. A man committing a crime, not only throws himself personally into suffering and sorrow, but destroys his home as well. "This fact finds illustration in the drunkard, murderer and many other evils that afflict the human race and through which the innocent suffer as well as the guilty. A young man leads a loving, trusting pure girl to the marriage altar, and there in the presence of God and man he pledges her his troth, assuming a most sacred obligation, to love, cherish and protect her so long as they both shall live. He installs her in a neat and comfortable cottage with ample furniture and with vines climbing and flowers blooming about the premises. He has a beautiful and attractive home which is to him the dearest and sweetest spot on God's footstool. Presently the patter of little feet and the prattle of childish voices are heard in and about the home and it is a fit type of heavenly bliss. A fond mother and loving wife glides about the home, keeping it as neat as a new pin, and the noise of the children is music akin to that of the "choir invisible." "When the father comes home in the evening from his day of toil it is like a ship

coming in from a stormy billowed sea and entering a quiet peaceful harbor, a heaven of rest. This home "is a thing of beauty and joy forever."

Hut by and by the husband fakes to drink, and in due course of time his face is red, his eye blurred, his temper soured, his cash-savings gone and his reputation ruined. The cottage is going to wreck, the vines and flowers are neglected, the wife and mother wears a sad countenance. The children are half-clad, and halt-starved and there is evidence of ruin, desolation and sorrow on every hand. The man has brought ruin upon himself and his home and turned that which was a blessed place of joy and happiness and plenty into a veritable Hell! But now comes the Women's Temperance Union. They take that man in hand. They break the shackles with which the demon of intemperance had bound him head and foot, restore his sobriety, industry and thrift. Soon the old home begins to assume some of its afore time appearance, happiness and plenty. The cottage smells of new paint, the vines and flowers once more adorn the premises. The step of the wife and mother has the old time spring and her countenance has received its wreath of fascinating smile. The children have plenty to eat and wear, while the father returns from his work with his warm embraces and kisses. What a regeneration! The Temperance Union had redeemed the man and his home and filled his life again with happiness and

bliss. Just so God in Christ proposed to redeem both man and his ruined home, and restores both to the condition they were in before desolation come through sin.

The greatest question in the minds of people today is, shall we know each other there? Those who raise this question, strange as it may seem in the majority of instances, hope they will not be able to recognize any one, and in order to sustain this hope they grasp at any sophistry that squints in that direction.

For instance they ask: "How can a formless, featureless spirit, recognize another formless, featureless spirit?" That is a difficult question. Where do we get the impression that a spirit is formless and featureless? Certainly not from the Bible. It is true that the spirit world is not visible to the eye, but that does not prove that a spirit is formless or featureless. It is true "the Methodist Episcopal Discipline says: "God is a spirit without body or parts." It is true the Presbyterian confession of faith says: "God is a spirit without body part or passion," but the Bible does not so teach.

The Bible speaks of the hands of the Lord, of His arms. His feet, His nostrils, His Mouth, His Ears, His face, and tells us that Moses saw His back. Call this anthropomorphism if you like, but such reference certainly teach that although God is spirit. He has form and feature. Paul in I Cor. 15.44 says: "This is a natural body, there is a spiritual body." A



body whether it is natural or spiritual certainly must have form and feature.

The one main object of people wanting to know whether or not we will know each other in Heaven is the fear of missing their loved ones who may not be there, and as a result will be unhappy.

When loved ones that we know die out of Christ and have no hope or promises, we are disturbed about the matter, but in time our unhappiness passes and we go about our work apparently unmindful and unconcerned about their fate, yet we know full well in our hearts what that fate is. If it does not rob us of our happiness and pleasure here, why do we suppose for one moment, that after we are released from earthly association and are conformed to Christ's glorious image, we will be unhappy in the new association. Again God is our Father, and He loves us more than any earthly parent can love his children. Does God know us? If He does how can He see His lost children and yet be happy? If a brother is saved, how can he be happy when another brother is missing? Christ is our brother. Will He know us? If He shall know us what will be His feeling regarding a missing brother?

Man possesses mind. Mind is composed of intellect, sensibility and will. Intellect is composed of being, space, time, number personality, resemblance. Heath does not destroy any of these functions of the mind. Rather the clogs and imperfections are removed and memory

is quickened and perfected. We never really forget anything. What apparently is forgotten is simply stored away, crowded back by other things, but will bob up some time. The indelible records that we ourselves write will be with us in the next life. The only thing that can change the sling of memories is the power of God. Acts 3:19 is one of the sweetest verses in the Bible. "Which promises that our sins will be blotted out." Those who do not come under this promise, will not only remember the sins committed in this life, but a fire that cannot be quenched will be their fate. The rich man remembered, his brethren, and the life that he had lived, also the life they were continuing to live. There is no indication here that memory was destroyed.

The transfiguration of Jesus as described in the 17th Chapter of Matt, gives a glimpse of the heavenly life. Peter recognized Moses and Elijah apparently without an introduction. I expect to know not only those I have known here, but also those I have not known here. I feel that I will know them by instinctual spiritual insight. I expect to know Moses, Elijah, Abraham, Paul, all the apostles and all others upon sight. The great cloud of witnesses mentioned in Heb. 12:1 the experience of Paul in Paradise, whose surroundings were so natural he says in I I Cor. 12:1-4 that he could not tell from the experience while he was in the natural body or the spiritual body; all indicates that we will retain all our faculties in

the life to come. The story is told that Raccoon John Smith in answer to a question, "Brother Smith do you think we will recognize each other in heaven?" replied, "We recognize each other here; do you think we will have less sense in heaven than here? No? Then I think we will recognize each other in heaven." Paul says rather than know less, we will know more, we will "fully know" even as we are also "fully known."

The Sadducees were greatly concerned about life after death. They thought they would rid themselves of the problem by denying the resurrection Matt. 22. They came to Jesus about the question of marriage in heaven. They asked about the woman who had seven husbands, which would be her husband in heaven. He told them they were in error on two things. They did not know the scripture and they did not understand the power of God. There will be no human relationships carried forward into the next life. Only one relationship prevails that is; we will be heirs of God and joint heirs with our Lord, Those who were our loved one? here, will they not be more to us than anyone else in the next life. If we are puzzled as to how these things can be, it is because we do not know the "power of God."

The description of heaven given in the last two chapters of Revelations is far greater than I or any human being can relate. All things will be new and how we all love new things. How different it will be in the New Heaven

*and the New Earth. No murderers, no robbers, no cheaters, no prevaricators, no houses of correction, no electric chair, no weeping, no broken hearts, no divorce courts, no sin of any kind. Every man is every man's brother and God is Father of all.*

Think of the wonders of such a place. The wonder of its existence! The wonder of its glorious quality! The wonder of its relationship! The wonder of its existence (for ever), but the wonder of wonders is that more people are not preparing for such a wonderful place.

## CHURCH GOVERNMENT

*Latonia Church of Christ, June 19, 1938.*

One of the most difficult problems of all Christianity is that of Church government. It is upon this subject that the most serious lines of cleavage among the followers of Christ are to be found. It behooves us then as earnest seekers after truth to search intelligently and follow diligently and carefully the governmental precedent of the Church of the first century.

God is a God of order, and we could not conceive of Him forming any kind of an institution without providing for its orderly operation. Every particle of creation speaks of His infinite wisdom on orderly regulation. The rising and setting of the sun, the revolving planets, the regularity of the coming and going of the seasons; the growth and development of the members of the vegetable kingdom; the intricate but most orderly constitution of man speak to us loudly of the governmental and orderly nature of our God.

The Church of Christ, or the kingdom of heaven, offers no exception to this part of God's nature. It was the unmistakable intention of God that this institution of His Son should be governed properly and well, and he does not leave us in doubt as to the nature of

this government. Truly the Church of Christ is in a sense an organism established by our Saviour to show forth the excellency and Glory of the Most High. This organism is more fearfully and wonderfully made than any human body; more firmly cemented than any building or temple; more permanent and powerful than any earthly kingdom; yet resembling all of these when viewed from different standpoints. Like the human body the church has a head, Christ Jesus, and the membership constitutes the various parts. Like a building the church has a foundation which is Christ and the membership are the living stones forming the superstructure. Like a kingdom the church has a king, constitution, subjects, and territory. Our topic today concerns the type of Government of the well ordered institution, the church.

There are in general two forms of government known to man, namely: monarchic and democratic. A monarchial form of government is a government with only one ruler whose authority may be absolute or limited according to its nature. A democratic is a government of the people whose supreme power may be exercised directly or indirectly through a system of representation.

The church of our Lord is somewhat paradoxical in respect to government. It is both a monarchy and a democracy.

Like any army this government must be properly organized for good work and our Lord has seen that it was so.

During His personal ministry upon earth the Lord selected twelve men as ambassadors to carry on His work after Him. After teaching them for some three and one half years concerning His Kingdom then yet to come. He ascended back into Heaven where He was crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. On Pentecost the Holy Spirit came to the expectant disciples, the church was established and the Kingdom of heaven began its march to victory. Starting with three thousand in the church at Jerusalem the movement began to spread, from three thousand to live thousand, ten thousand, millions and today it would be impossible for man to number them.

It was the intention of the Lord that this great body of people be bound together by the indissoluble bonds of love to God and man; and have inter-communion of interests and affections. The Lord knew however that it would be humanly impossible for man to control this large body without involving "ecclesiastical Lordship" and this He did not desire. Therefore He provided a system of organization for each local congregation only, and each local congregation was to act independent of all other bodies in matters of opinion and expedience. In times of trials and stress they all stood together and the stronger churches helped the weaker ones. The Jerusalem church being the mother Church, had a great influence over the other churches, but no authority whatever to force them to do anything. The so-called

council in Jerusalem sometimes referred to as the basis for an ecclesiastical form of government was not, in reality a council at all. It was simply an appeal of one congregation to another for assistance in solving a perplexing problem. It was not a convention of ordained delegates, but a meeting of the entire church of Jerusalem to receive the disputation from the church at Antioch.

The Lord has given the order for congregational organization and if we will follow it and carry it out to its logical conclusion all confusion and disorder can be avoided.

In general there are but two classes of officers so called. Elders and deacons. They are to be men of specified qualifications elected by the people and for the people.

The elders are to be the spiritual shepherds of the flock or congregation. In his touching farewell address to the elders or bishops of the church at Ephesus, Paul, knowing that he would see them no more in this life, admonished them saying "Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock", in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28). These men were to be spiritual overseers of the local flock or congregation. As the shepherd watches over the flock to ward off the dangers.

The office of the deacons was to be more of a temporal nature in that the deacons were to have charge of the business affairs of the con-



gregation. The first record of appointment to any such office was at the church in Jerusalem. As the church of Jerusalem, under the supervision of the Apostles for a considerable length of time, grew and multiplied in numbers, the work became too burdensome for the Apostles to bear, so they admonished the congregation to choose men to look after the benevolent work of the congregation. The record says that the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them and said, "it is not reason that we should leave flu<sup>t</sup> Word of God and serve tables. Wherefore choose ye out from among you seven men, of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom whom we may appoint over this matter." These were chosen and appointed to their work the nature of which was temporal or business; while that of the elders was to attend to the spiritual affairs of the church.

Both groups of men, being appointed and elected by the church are therefore subject to the church. They are to act not as over-lords but as servants which they are. They are to rule, yes, not with an iron will, but with a heart of love and a spirit of humility.

To those who may aspire to a place in either of these positions of honor I wish to read as a word of warning the exhortation of Jesus recorded in Matt. 23:1-12. Here Jesus was against Pharisaic ambition to rule, admonishing all to submit to one who is master of all even Christ. This is a democratic brotherhood.

Had the church down through the centuries

held to this Apostolic precedent and heeded the warning of Jesus and the Apostles about ambitious seeking all would have been well. The church would have remained one as God intended it and as Jesus prayed for it. But in the course of time elders in local congregations became ambitious and dictative and gradually assumed the leadership of local churches. Then came the race among the politicians for greater rule. Rome being the capitol of the great empire, naturally gained the attention of all and the "ruling elders" of the church thus became the ruling pope of the church universal and thus the whole order of Church government was changed. And this spirit prevails even today among the church which claims to be democratic in form. Instead of remaining servants they become masters; instead of being ministers, they demand being ministered unto; and instead of a democratic church, a church of the people prevailing, we have autocratic hierarchies with a few men ruling and the people following without any voice and most of the time without knowledge of affairs in general. Board meetings are held behind closed doors and the business conducted is usually kept secret from the people who pay the bills, and do the work without rejection.

It was this departure from the original simple form of church organization and government that brought creeds, councils, and a multitude of churches and it will continue to do so wherever it prevails upon the earth.

## DERELICTS

*James 1:6.*

*Preached at Petersburg, Ky., July 19, 1931.  
Columbia Church of Christ, Cincinnati, Ohio, Nov.  
29, 1931.*

The people of this modern twentieth century might well be termed a generation of easy-goes. Stop many a man or woman on the street today and ask them where they are going, what answer do you get? In the majority of cases they will answer "No place in particular, just looking around." Going nowhere, carefree, seeing but very little and thinking less, in fact just drifting. They seem to have no set course.

A city man and his family were out riding through the country. After driving along several side roads and not giving particular attention to where they were going, they started for the main highway. The farther they traveled the rougher the road and the more desolate the country became. They chanced to meet up with a young country lad walking aimlessly along the road.

"How far to the next town" asked the driver of the car.

"I don't know" came the reply.

"How far to the main highway?"

"I don't know."

"Which way do I go to get to the city?" inquired the man.

"I don't know."

"Well," said the man somewhat gruffly, "What do you know?"

The lad rolled his big blue eyes up at him and said, "I ain't lost!"

Such cannot he said of the majority of the people today. In the main they are like the driver of the car, just drifting around.

People are picking the easy things of life. (Give the majority of men the choice of two jobs, the one easy and the other hard, and the easy job will be selected.

An investigating bureau of New York State examined 49,000 students in the public school of that state. When asked as to how many were going to be farmers only 767 answered with the affirmative answer. What was the excuse of the balance of the students? "Too much work and too little pay." They couldn't fancy the idea of getting out to work at sunrise and quitting at sun-down.

"Oh it's nice to get up in the morning,  
When the sun begins to shine.  
About four, or live, or six o'clock.  
In the good old summer time.  
Rut when the snow is on the ground  
And it's murky over head.  
It's nice to get up in the morning.  
But its nicer to lie in bed."

The investigating bureau asked this group of

students how many of them intended to be politicians. 552 out of the 49,000 were intending to fit themselves for the political life. What was the excuse of all the others? "Too much work and too little pay." They seemed not to be thinking of the future welfare of the nation. They were not concerned about the social service that they might be able to render to the people. They wanted easy work and big pay. "Pay day every day and no work on payday."

When asked as to how many were going to be religious workers, that is to give all of their time to religious work, 462 out of 49,000 were contemplating entering this field of service. Less than one percent were thinking about the souls of men. What was their excuse? "Too much work and too little pay." Then we wonder what is the matter with the country and where we are going. We will have to say that we are drifting, drifting, drifting.

This spirit has entered the church and today we have men and women coming to church not because their heart and souls are in the work, but because they feel it is their duty to be there. One thing that is hindering the growth of the church is the derelicts that have their names on the church roll. People with unstable convictions. One moment, hope and faith impel them to give all to God; then the mind is at once filled with uncertainty and doubt, and the soul is agitated and restless as the ocean.

James says, in speaking of these kind of

individuals, "He that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed." "He is a double minded man unstable in all his ways." "Mr. Facing-Both-Ways." One whose allegiance wavers between God and Satan, the church and the world, righteousness and evil. We might term him as a man of two souls, if it were possible to have such a freak of nature, one soul for earth, and another for Heaven. He wishes to secure both worlds; he will not give up earth, and he is loath to let heaven go. He is like the wave of the sea—rolling, tumbling, foaming, dashing, against the rocks, driven and tossed by the wind, at the mercy of the elements.

The course of the drifter is always down stream. It takes work and much effort to go up stream, and the derelict contents himself with drifting. When duty calls the drifter A.W.A.Y. When God called donah to go to Nineveh, the wicked city, donah played the part of the derelict. He boarded a ship and sailed in the opposite direction. If you read this story of donah very carefully, you will find that three times in the narrative it tells of Jonah going *down*. The course of the drifter is always down.

The derelict is "unstable in all his ways." He is like the stony soil which Jesus spoke of in the parable of the sower. "There is no inward source of vegetation. When a drouth comes he perishes. He is attracted by the beauties of Christianity, starts to build without counting

the cost. He might be compared to a pond whose waters are stirred by a wind that would have no effect upon the ocean.

The derelict is always making good resolutions but never keeps them. He is like the drunkard who is always quitting but never quits. He is easily deceived and lead astray. He is like the banker who takes a little money from the safe intending to put it hack pay day. The next time he takes a little more and the next time a little more, until finally he gets beyond the point of paying hack. He drifts into danger.

The derelict is a Dr. Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde. As long as Dr. Jekyll had the medicine he thought he was safe but he finally reached the stage where the medicine had no affect. The longer a man drifts the weaker he becomes in his faith and finally his faith is gone entirely.

There is scarcely any peril of the sea so dangerous as the derelict. It is said that there are many such vessels floating about at the will of the currents in the Atlantic waters. They are without pilot, having neither crew nor rudder, are bound for nowhere, and carry no cargo to any port. They carry no light to show where they are in the darkness. Although they carry no guns they are often more deadly than a man-of-war.

80 if is with the spiritual derelicts that are afloat in the world today. More lives are lost through these drifting lives than through the influence of wicked blasphemers. The ship that

steers for no port can have no influence, and is to be a stumbling block in the way, to send other ships to the bottom of the ocean.

A French profligate said to one of his sycophants, "If anyone were to ask me what I had done, what could I tell him? You could tell him that you condescended to be born." came the answer. If many persons whose names are on the roll of the Church were asked the same question, they could not say much more. They condescended to make a confession of their faith and to enter the church, but they have done very little since. I wonder where all the members of this church are this morning? Many of them are drones in the hive. Lots of them could be exceedingly useful, but they are doing nothing. Yes, they are drifting.

There is no place in God's Kingdom for the derelict. God wants men that are steadfast in their faith. Faith in God gives us a goal. Not merely means of directions but destination. To be with God. To do his will. To fight for the faith. The life of Christ is our guide. He is our example. He was steadfast in all His ways. Jesus illustrated this great virtue in His very first recorded utterance. "I must be about my father's business." Even then the twelve-year old Jesus had a glimpse of His life-work which He never lost. Over and over He repeated the same thought. "I must work the work of God while it is day. The night cometh



when no man can work." Never did He change His view of His life work.

Suppose for a moment, the almost impossible supposition that Jesus had at length Forgotten His purpose. Suppose He had proven unstable in His ways. Suppose that opposition had discouraged Him or the cross had been greater than His faith in His Father. Suppose the Devil had gotten the hells of the contest on the mount of Temptation. What would have been the result on mankind? A Saviourless world, unredeemed humanity, a devil-ruled earth would have been the result. All that we are or hope to be depended upon our Saviour's standing steadfastness. His immovable ways, always abounding in the work of the Lord. When our faith wavers it turns us immediately from our goal. We have a fine illustration of this fact in what occurred to the Apostle Peter on a certain occasion.

After the miraculous feeding of a great multitude of people, the Master sent some of His disciples to the boat to depart for the other side, while He dismissed the multitude. After doing this Jesus went up into the mountain to pray. While He was there engaged, a storm overtook the boat in which Peter and his companions were sailing and their lives were in jeopardy. The Lord saw them as He always sees His disciples when they are in trouble. It is a blessed thought that no Christian heart aches but that the Lord knows if. Jesus not only saw the boat as it foiled against

the- wind and waves and knew that its occupants were in distress but He started to them as He always does. He walked down the mountain-side, strode across the narrow plain and encountered the turbulent waters of the angry lake. Did He stop or hesitate? Not for a moment. Neither mountains, plains, rivers, lakes, nor seas present any insurmountable obstacle between him and his people when they are in trouble, He boldly stepped out upon the raging water and walked upon it to go to His frightened disciples lit the boat. When he drew near the disciples saw Him and took him for a ghost and they cried out for fear. But they heard the gentle voice of the Lord saying: "It is I, be not afraid."

Peter in his impulsive way shouted; "Lord if if be thou, bid me come unto Thee upon the water." When the Lord said "Come," Peter walked upon the waters to come to Jesus. He took a few steps successfully but when he saw the wind, his faith wavered and he began to sink. When trouble assails us and we begin to nurse them in our hearts, our Faith weakens and men begin to drift and the drifter goes down as did Peter. But through the help of the Master Peter was restored to the boat and the Master rebuked him Cor his lack of faith.

It is this steadfast faith that is the key to all of Christ's comfort. 'There can be no comfort for the unbeliever. He fails to enter in because of unbelief. Many today are teaching that belief in Jesus Christ is non-essential: that

the "virgin birth", the atonement, the miracles, the claims of Jesus are unimportant. The vital thing is to accept (some of) his teaching. Jesus regarded it otherwise. He urged belief in himself. His church was to be built upon Himself, as the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Who was this Jesus, "a crazy enthusiast" or the only begotten Son of God.' If the former, who has time to read, much less to preach his doctrine? If he is a human Jesus we do not need him. Our needs are far too deep for any mortal man to help. If, on the other hand He is what he claims to be, what God declared Him to be; yea, what even the demons confessed Him to be—Jesus the Christ, the Divine Son of God, then do we need Him above all else in the world.

Without Him this world is shrouded in the blackness of midnight. Without faith in Him, man is adrift upon the uncharted sea of human speculation, without a single star to guide his course, or a harbor of refuge in which he may escape the storms of doubt. If no Christ then no God, no hope, no precious promises, no heavenly reward; in fact no excuse for the world at all.

But with our faith abiding firmly in Jesus *Christ, the shades of night are lifted. All things are ours. God becomes our Father. Heaven is our home. Eternal life is our reward.*

The proving of this "faith is more precious than gold that perisheth." Peter in writing

these words lias compared faith with gold. 1 Pet. 1:7 The choice between these two competitors was not only a test for the rich young ruler, but is being lived over in the experiences of the disciples every day.

We have seen a few ways in which faith prevails in that it gave us a goal; to be like Jesus and to live with him. It gives us power to meet difficulties. Put let us notice that Peter says that if is the *proving* of our faith that is precious. The strength and value of anything can only be proved by being tested. "Faith without works is dead." It is the test that reveals the derelict. "When the occasion comes to prove his faith, he fails in the test. Times come to remember Jesus in the breaking of bread, and the derelict is absent. An appeal is made to teach in the Bible School, support the work of the Lord, or render some other form of Christian service, and the situation arouses no concern in his unresponsive heart.

If there are any derelicts in this audience this morning may God help you, that you might be straightened out in your course.

Think of the way in which faith in Christ has inspired steadfast devotion in His disciples during all the centuries of the history of Christianity. The timid and wavering disciples before the resurrection of Jesus became the bold lions immediately afterwards. We read no more of a vacillating Peter, of a self seeking John but so far as wo know, every one of his disciples remained true to the end. James, was

the first martyr among them. According to tradition, Peter asked to be crucified with his head down that he might suffer an even more dishonorable death than his master; John, lingering to extreme old age and looking across the waves from his island prison in Patmos to his beloved seven churches in Asia. All of these tell us of how their Master's heroic steadfastness had entered their lives.

How many, many millions have since been inspired with the same unshakeable devotion.

In an ancient sea coast town of France called Aigues Mortes is a great stone tower, called the "Tower of Constance." In this tower were imprisoned many Huguenot Protestants after the revocation of the edict of Nantes. Among them was a young girl imprisoned when about twelve years old, because her brother was a Protestant Pastor. For thirty-four long years she was entombed in this stone dungeon, but she would not renounce her faith. While there she scratched with her needle in the stone floor the one French word "resist." That word for two hundred years has inspired other Christians to live a life of steadfastness.

My friends if you are drifting; if you are being tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; if you are double minded, a Mr. Facing-Both-Ways" caused by little faith, lack of courage, or the allurements of the pleasures of sin for a season,

I exhort you to put on a rudder, raise sails, place a new pilot at the helm.

I heard a great speaker tell this little story: The ship on which he was sailing had been making a very successful voyage. Day after day they had heard the thud, thud, of the great machinery dragging the ship swiftly through the ocean. One day, without any warning whatsoever the thud of the machinery suddenly stopped. All the passengers rushed on deck to learn what the trouble might be. The ship had ceased its forward motion and was now drifting about on the troubled waters. A short way to the West was a rocky coast and the ship was drifting in that direction. Ahead of them was a narrow channel to the docks of a great city. Presently their attention was drawn to the side of the boat where some sailors were letting down a long rope. Looking over the side of the boat they saw a man dressed in white setting in a little skiff. He had rowed out from shore. The man took hold of the rope and hand over hand he swiftly ascended over the side of the ship. He climbed upward and without a word entered the pilot room. He took hold of the wheel, the engine began to pound once more, and the ship started through the channel toward the docks. A new pilot had come to steer them into port.

Friends if you are being tossed about on the waves of doubt the only way of escape is to take Jesus into your heart and let him pilot your life.

## THE UNRULY TONGUE

*James 3:1-12*

*Columbia, Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug., 1932.  
Latonia, Ky., Feb., 1937.*

A certain old philosopher king once told his servant that he expected on the morrow to have a number of invited guests, and he wanted him to prepare the very best thing for dinner that he could find. The servant did as he was bidden, and prepared tongue. Of course those tongues were served in the most delirious manner possible. When the master learned what the servant had prepared, he was very much put out, and asked the servant why he had prepared such a dish. The response of the servant was that the tongue was the very best thing in the world. He said that it was the organ of eloquence and the means by which we communicate our thoughts one to the other. He convinced the master that the tongue was the best thing in the world.

The following day the Master told His servant to prepare the worst thing in the world for dinner. He likewise prepared tongue, served as they had been before. The Master was very much offended the second time, and asked in a very harsh tone why he had prepared tongue again. Said the servant "The tongue is the worst thing in the world; it is

the organ of blasphemy; the organ of lying; and the organ of slander." Convincing the master that the tongue was the worst thing in the world, as well as the best.

From a study of these first few verses of the third chapter of the Epistle of James, I find that the servant's philosophy of the tongue is very much in harmony with James' teaching in regard to it.

First of all let us consider the power of the tongue. We will do so by the use of the illustration mentioned by James.

"If any man offend not in word," that is in speech; in the use of the tongue, "The same," says James, "is a perfect man." Perfect in that he is able to keep every other member of his body in subjection. His object is not to present the man absolutely spotless in every respect because no man lives in the world that does not err in word, but he wishes to show that the man who is able to control his tongue, has complete dominion over himself. Illustrating the fact by the use of the bridle on the horse, "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body."

The wild horses that roam at will over the vast prairies of America seem quite unsubduable. Yet how complete is the control which man acquires over the tame horse. By means of the bit—the part of the bridle which the animal bites—he is kept completely under control. The horse is managed literally by the



tongue. Those of us who were raised on the farm can recall to our minds the colt breaking days. How vivid in my mind are the thrills I experienced in watching my father conquer the young colts by the use of a small bit. At first how they would resent the use of the bridle, but later they could be guided by a slight pull of the line withersoever my father willed.

The spirited steed may be compared to the flesh with its lusts and passions. But as the unruly horse is controlled by the bit—even though a small thing—so the body with all its vibrating impulses, coming from within, to do wrong, is controlled by the tongue. He who has a "propel" control over his tongue can govern his whole body, as he who holds the bridle governs and turns about the horse. David, the sweet singer of Israel, felt this and said in one of his psalms, "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my tongue with a bridle, while the wicked is before me." Even Moses the meekest of men, was shut out of the land of promise because he "spoke unadvisably with his lips."

James next uses a very striking and obvious illustration as to the power of the tongue. "Behold also the ships which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet they are turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things."

Both romance and poetry gather around the

idea of the ship. Lucie Sam realizing the romantic nature that inheres in the breast of the young blood of America, has adopted a very catchy poster which most of us have seen in the cities; "Join the navy and see the world." Even the old "galley" with oars was a gallant spectacle; and today there is no sight more picturesque than that of a sailing vessel.

"Behold! upon the murmuring waves  
A glorious shape appearing  
A broad winged vessel, through the shower  
OF glimmering luster steering!  
She seems to hold her home in view  
And sails as if the path she knew;  
So calm and stately in her motion  
Across the unfathomed, trackless ocean."

The merchantmen of the ancients were of considerable size; but in our day naval architecture works on a colossal scale of which the ancients never dreamed and what is it that directs the largest vessel so steadily on its course, and enables it to persevere in spite of furious storm? It is simply that little tongue, or rudder at the stern. The steering apparatus is very very small in comparison to the great bulk of the ship; but how wonderfully great its influence. It not only turns about the body of the ship itself; its action is also powerful enough to counteract the driving force of "rough winds." "The faculty of speech is the rudder of human nature. "The tongue boasteth great things." and well it may, for "death and

life are in its power." If the spirited horse is a symbol of the flesh, the "rough winds" which beat upon the ship are suggestive of the world. The rudder of speech rightly directed, will help us to continue straight on our heavenward course, despite the fierce gusts and gales of external temptation.

James now turns from the preserving power of the tongue which is able to control the body, even when it comes in contact with the mighty derelicts of temptation that are (loafing about to the destruction which the tongue possesses. "Behold how much wood kindled by how small a fire; and the tongue is a fire; the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on (ire by hell."

What a terrific power there is in fire! One tiny neglected spark may kindle a conflagration that will consume a city. The great fire of 1666 in London, which began in a little wooden shop near London bridge, burned down every building between the Tower and the Temple. How terrible are the seas of fire kindled often by a casual spark, which roll along the prairies and forests of North America! We hear often of disastrous fires that sweep villages and threaten cities in our western states. Millions of dollars worth of property have been destroyed by fire which started from the stub of a cigarette or a cigar flipped aside by careless smokers. Vast acres of priceless lumber are

destroyed every year in the great forest regions of America by fire which started from a small flame or a tiny spark left by a careless farmer burning bushes or the unthoughtful hunters and hikers.

The power of the tongue of flame is simply stupendous. For the "tongue is a fire," says flames. Sometimes this tremendous power is exerted for good. What would we do for cooking our meals if it were not for fire? How would steam with all its driving power which sends hundreds of tons of steel rolling from coast to coast be developed without fire? Moreover, however, the tongue fire is contemplated as an instrument of evil. So the tongue is a fire as regarded by its intense energy. Unsanctified speech scorches and consumes. The liar scatters fire brands; the slanderer kindles lambent flames; the profane swearer spits the fire of hell into the face of God. I wish to speak for just a few moments about lying and slandering.

In the first place what is it to be a liar? Lying is made up of three parts—untruth, intention, and deception. A man may tell a falsehood and at the same time appear to be telling the whole truth. The facts may be told in such a way as to deceive the other party. Intention has a great deal to do with lying in order to make it a falsehood. A thing may be a lie and not be spoken at all. One may claim to be a friend but his actions give the lie to the pretensions of friendship. One may claim to be a brother in the church, yet the life of that

person gives a lie to his high profession. Silence may lead to a falsehood and he a falsehood in itself. Suppose you hear someone relating things which you know are not true, of a friend, yet you remain perfectly silent. Your silence under circumstances like this gives consent to the story .

The literal thing may be carried out and yet it may be a falsehood. A certain garrison was surrounded by the enemy. They were promised that if they would surrender not a drop of blood should be spilt. In faith they surrendered. They were all buried alive. Of course there was a falsehood although the literal language of the promise was carried out.

What is the sin of lying.' When Jesus was brought before Pilate, the Roman governor was so skeptical and ignorant of truth that he inquired of Jesus, "What is truth?" It is said that in the great painting which hangs in a certain museum in St. Louis, picturing the scene of Jesus before Pilate, deception is written all over the countenance of the governor; but when you look into the face of Jesus, loyalty and truth is beaming there. He was put to death because of His loyalty to truth, but He rose again.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again  
 The eternal years of God are hers;  
 But error, wounded, writhes in pain,  
 And dies amid her worshippers."

David said "that all men are liars."

There is much social lying. For example: When a woman receives another with a kiss and says, before her children even, "I am so glad to see you," when she really wishes that woman was in Halifax or some holler climate, and so expressed herself before her children. That woman is certainly guilty of lying. If you make promises to your children without any intention of fulfilling them, you plainly lie to your children.

There is a great deal of commercial lying. When a man habitually tells you that he is selling you goods below cost, he certainly knows that he is lying, for a merchant cannot live and sell his goods below cost.

It is said that lying is studied as an art among politicians. There is certainly a great deal of lying going on among political workers. One party will falsify the position taken by the other side. I am satisfied it would be better for the country if neither party existed.

What is the fate of the liar? I think the only redemption for the liar is his conversion to the truth. The habit of lying can become so fixed that the person becomes unable to discriminate between truth and the opposite. When such a condition exists the liar's conscience becomes as hard as a stone. He is then in the position of the Pharisees when they attributed the works of the Saviour to the devil. Even after seeing His works which as Nicodemus said "No man could do except God be with Him." they attributed them to the devil. Jesus said

they had sinned against the Holy Spirit. Listen to John speaking from inspiration in Rev. 21:8, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

What is it to be a slanderer? The person who will, unless it is necessary for the good of the community try to injure the reputation of another, is certainly guilty of slander.

In the Bible looking-glass we have a beautiful representation of the slanderer. I want to place him before your minds tonight.

A good man had been on some mission of charity. He was returning home; and as he passed on we discovered at his back another with a dagger raised high ready to stab him. You find a little further back another man with an arrow drawn tight on his bow, in the act of shooting the good man. You will find also a snarling dog just ready to jump upon the good man. This allegory shows slander associated with murder. "The slanderer is worse than the thief. "He who steals my purse steals trash. But he who steals away my character steals all." The one who steals away my good name steals my all. A stolen purse may be replaced without much difficulty, but it is very hard to repair an injured character.

Let us now turn to the sin of slander. It is certainly one of the greatest of sins. James in his description of the tongue calls it "a deadly poison." There are some poisons that are very deadly; when one drop is injected into the

Mood it produces sure death. There is no chemical method by which it can be separated from the blood. All civilized countries have laws against slandering, but there are some slanderers that are able to evade the law. Their tongues may very properly be compared to the deadly poison.

Let me place another picture before you. Imagine you see a beautiful apple tree with delicious fruit hanging from its twigs. There is a small boy just ready to climb the tree to get some of the fruit. Near the boy is a serpent, which he has not seen. The serpent begins to hiss. The father, standing not far away hears the hiss of the serpent, rushes to grab the son away just in time to save his life from the deadly bite of the snake. But suppose the father had not been there or suppose the serpent had struck the lad without warning—the little boy might have been destroyed. This I feel illustrates the danger in which the victims of the poisonous tongue of the slanderer are placed. The worthiest persons are frequently attacked by slanderers. As birds attack the ripest fruit, slanderers attack virgin purity. Clarence Barrow, the notorious lawyer from Chicago, with his blasphemous slanderous tongue attacking and slandering the virgin that bore the baby boy of the Saviour of the world. Frequently the slanderous tongue is ready to attack the prettiest girl in the community. Can you think of anything more destructive and cruel than the tongue of the malicious slander-



er? The slanderer is the curse of the community in which he lives. He causes the entire place to burn in a blaze. It would be better for him that a great mill stone be tied about his neck and his body cast into the Ohio river, than to be allowed to sit around on the store boxes and corners of the street and slander the good name of men and women. James uses very pointed language on this subject, saying "The tongue is set on fire by hell."

What is the fate of the slanderer? A fable is told of certain cranes. An eagle would pounce down upon them as they were passing near his perch and destroy them. The eagle would hear their cackling long before they reached him and was always ready to pounce down upon them. The old cranes became wise to the eagle's trick and afterward when he journeyed in that direction they put stones in their mouths and were able to pass by unmolested. It would be well for many if they would only adopt the plan of the cranes, when they are not able to control their tongues.

The tongue is powerful enough to corrupt the whole body if it is not properly controlled. People who are always prying into other people's business and talking about it are dangerous characters. When the slanderer goes so far that the entire body is corrupted, then there is no remedy. The fate of the slanderer will be the same as that of the liar. As the liar has his part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone such certainly will be the fate of

the slanderer. Because these two are very intimately related. They are twin sisters. The father and mother of both the liar and the slanderer is the devil. Turn to John the eighth chapter and read the forty-fourth verse. Jesus in His controversy with the Jews said to them. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father thereof." Go back to the third chapter of Genesis, where you have the account of the deception of Eve by the serpent. You will find that the devil, who was the real personality back of the act, not only lied to the woman, but slandered God. He attributed the motives of God himself to envy. Says he, "God doth know that the day ye eat thereof, ye become as gods, knowing good and evil." The word "devil" in the original means slanderer. So you see the intimate relation between the liar and the slanderer.

The tongue is a fire and it is set on fire lured. This fire is devil lighted and hell kindled Satan loaded the human tongue at the fall with dynamite; and every day he ignites the treacherous magazine from the unquenchable fire.

In conclusion let us turn to the untamableness of the tongue as viewed by James. "For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and

hath been tamed by mankind; the tongue can no man tame;" We have here a fourfold classification of the inferior creatures. At the creation God gave man dominion over them. There is not a member of the brute nature that has not yielded in the past and that does not continue to yield to the lordship of human nature. A visit to the zoological garden will show ample evidence of man's power to tame the most, diverse species of wild animals. The horse, the dog, the elephant, the lion, the leopard, the tiger; the partridge, the falcon; the asp; the hippopotamus and many others. But says dames, there is one little creature which human nature in its own strength finds it impossible to domesticate. The tongue of man is fiercer than the most ferocious beast. The rebellion of our race against good is far more inveterate than any insubordination of the brutes. Indeed, the revolt of the lower creatures against man is only the shadow and symbol of man's revolt against the authority of God. Year by year man is subduing the earth and extending his dominion over it; but his natural power to govern the tongue remains as feeble as it was in the days of ('aim "Therewith bless we Lord and father; and therewith curse we man who are made after the likeness of God." The same person may just now by the faculty of speech to its highest good by praising God and almost immediately, wickedly abuse it by cursing his fellow men. Such inconsistency of the tongue is inexcusable and unnatural.

A spring of water says James can not transgress the law of its nature. A fruit tree can only bear fruit according to its kind. How unnatural that in the moral world the same fountain of speech should send forth just now a rill of clear sweet praise, and soon after a torrent of bitter slander. My Christian friends, if there are any of you that consider yourselves children of God and belonging to His kingdom that are falling into this sinful inconsistency, it is because the fountain of the old nature within your heart has not yet been closed up.

WHEN RELATIVES INTERFERE

*Preached at the Capitol View Church of Christ,  
Atlanta, Ga., April, 1935.*

One of the admirable and unique trails that stand out in the character of Jesus is the fact that no human influence, be it that of foe or relative could turn Him from His set purpose in life. He recognized that He had a high and holy mission that set Him apart from the normal regulations of home life. Had He, at all times, consented to the requests of relatives, this mission would not have been fulfilled and He would not have been well pleasing unto God.

In the Temple at the age of twelve we find Him correcting His own mother. She had set forth that He had not been faithful to the obligation of their home. He responded that He had been fulfilling a higher obligation in being faithful to His heavenly Father in His Father's house.

At the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, we have a most interesting dialogue between Jesus and Mary which reveals to us that Jesus let no dictation even though it be that of a mother interfere with His higher obligation of doing His Heavenly Father's will. Mary had simply said, "They have no wine." But that this was an attempt to the part of Mary to give dictation to Jesus is set forth very plainly

in the reply of the Son. "Woman what have I to do with thee?" He was not at all discourteous or harsh in this reply. He simply felt it needful, very tenderly, yet very decidedly, to check the spirit of the mother manifested in her attempt to give earthly direction.

In the Scripture lesson for today we have another manifestation of the attempt of relatives to give dictation and thus interfere with His ministry. The report came to Him that His mother and brothers were within desiring to see Him. Jesus by His miraculous insight saw through the whole situation. He knew why they had come. His brothers, up to this time had not believed on Him as the Son of God. They thought Him delirious, or beside Himself. For thirty years He had lived among them as a carpenter, poor and unknown. Now, at the age of thirty. He had suddenly broken away from this quiet life, abandoned this common employment, denied himself the comforts of life, and set up His claim to be the Messiah. Their lack of faith in Him led them to believe that He was beside Himself. Thus they sought to give dictation and to direct His course in life.

Such interference on the part of unbelievers is not common today. Let any Christian be much impressed with his obligations to God and act as though he believed in eternity and warn His neighbors of their danger and the world will say that He is beside Himself and none

will be more ready to offer such a charge than an unbelieving parent or brother.

The reply of Jesus to the one who had brought the report touched the heart of the whole situation. He replied, "who is my mother?" and "who are my brethren?" Signifying by this direct question that personal and formal relationships do not count. It is spiritual kinship with God that must come first, last and always. "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in Heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother." This spiritual kinship if it be of lasting value to us, must assert itself above all earthly relationships.

How often do earthly relatives interfere with or weaken our required *service* to God and man.

This is done often times by an unbelieving husband demanding personal service above service to Christ from a believing wife. He must have his Sunday dinner at such and such a time and no church service is to interrupt that regularity. What is the difficulty here if not that he is hungering and thirsting after the wrong thing? I like to see a man with a good appetite and eat at regular hours when ever it is possible, but he who manifests a hungering and thirsting after righteousness and feeds his soul regularly, even though he must interfere with his bodily desires to do so, is much more admirable.

The man who has lost all appetite for his daily bread is to be pitied, but how infinitely greater is the tragedy when we lose all desire

for the Bread of Life! It is by no means difficult to find those who have so long and so persistently fed upon the licks and garlic of Egypt that they seem to have lost all taste for the "Heavenly Manna."

Such was the case of the man with the rake of whom Bunyan tells. He was a very busy man. His eyes were fixed upon the earth where he was diligently raking up some sticks and straw. Meanwhile an angel was poised above his head with a crown awaiting to crown him if he would only look up. But he had no interest in the higher things. Such was the case with the crane that was picking up snails on the muddy bank of a pond. A swan alighted by his side.

"Where are you from?" asked the crane.

"From Heaven" was the reply and the swan began to describe the glories of the heavenly home. The crane was not interested. He broke in for one question: "Are there any snails there?"

When the swan answered in the negative, the crane would not listen for a moment longer. He simply had no taste for the beauties of which the swan spoke. Even so we can very easily lose our appetite for those higher values that outlive the ages by cultivating a hungering and thirsting after things temporal.

Again an unbelieving husband or wife may interfere with the others religions service by demanding accompaniment on Sunday visits and pleasure trips. Far too many sacrifice this



principle and neglect their duty to God in order to please the other half. It is much easier to seek the other life. Much easier and perhaps more satisfying to some to go motoring on Sunday, to go visiting, to ride or picnic, or to just slouch around. Much easier to drift than to pull up stream against the current. But after all, it is simply a question of where you want to go, where you want your children to go, which direction—up or down?

How beautiful and commendable was the home atmosphere in which Jesus was reared. We read that "The parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast!" Not once, not every year, but three times a year, every Jewish parent took his male child, after He was twelve years old, to the central place of worship of the Jewish nation. Nor was that all. There was the weekly observance of the Sabbath in the synagogue; a place like the local church and Jesus went there for we read of Him going into the synagogues on the Sabbath according to His established custom. This was a good home because it was headed by sensible, reverent parents. Jesus enjoyed nature, the green pasture, the still waters. Yet, like His father David he was glad when He could go into the house of the Lord. Any Christian parent or Christian husband or wife who neglects the Lord's table to go picnicking or visiting on Sunday just to keep peace in flic family or to please

the other side is not loyally devoted to his Lord and is letting relatives interfere with his spiritual welfare.

Again visiting relatives who do not care for church often interferes with our religious devotion. Every home should be a wide open castle to friends but firmly closed against intruders. Yet it is possible to let our relatives interfere with our church going by seeking to give them a warm and cordial reception. Was not that the failing of Martha which brought forth a rebuke from the Christ? Martha in her attempt to minister to the material needs of the Christ, made an appeal to Jesus concerning Mary which was almost a criticism of Jesus Himself. As Moffatt freely translates it, Martha said: "Lord is it all one to you that my sister has left me to do all the work alone? Come tell her to lend me a hand."

Martha's worry over the dishes and the food was so far overflowed, that she had lost sight of the divinity of her Lord. Martha like many, many of her sisters in all ages, had come to consider her cleverness and handiness in the kitchen as the true standard and pattern of womanhood. That no woman is a true woman who does not serve in the kitchen.

This mistaken idea of Martha brought forth a rebuke from Jesus that needs to be well considered by many gracious and kind hearted women of today. He said, Martha, Martha, thou art mindful of "Many things." You are putting yourself out in order to satisfy my

physical wants, a tiling which the Master never desired. He had come to visit and she was overdoing her hospitality and spoiling it.

"One thing is needful. Mary has chosen the better things." Jesus was not commending Mary's idleness, for He rebuked the idle. He was commending her choice of spiritual above material.

Martha saw herself as the hostess and meant to have a big dinner. Mary saw Jesus as the host and meant to feed liberally upon Him. Jesus is not rebuking hospitality or even a life of energy and good housekeepers. What He is condemning is a life that lets worry concerning temporal things get such a firm hand over it that it loses appetite for belter things—spiritual things. Kitchens are necessary, but the woman who is not more than a kitchen drudge is not the woman God meant her to be. Any woman, who, attempts to prepare a bountiful and appetizing repast to satisfy Sunday visiting relatives (even though they only come once a year) and neglects her own spiritual welfare and church life, is following in the foot steps of Martha and deserves the rebuke which Martha received. In other words she is letting relatives interfere.

Again relative's many times interfere by dividing the household spiritually. An unbelieving husband or wife many times has a tendency to discourage all effort to live righteously on the part of the believer. The pleasure loving husband who persists that his wife ac-

company him to a boresome ball or a drunken party, the husband who refuses to sacrifice in any way for the betterment of the religious atmosphere of the home, these and many more are the ways that relatives may interfere. It is a part of the cross which some Christians must bear.

One of the things that adds to the merits of Jonathan is that while he was true to his bosom friend David who was in many ways a type of Christ, he still bore patiently the affliction and jealous rage of his father who complains of Jonathan's love for David. Even in the very last battle at Gilboa, Jonathan was by his father's side, and fell bravely fighting in his father's service.

There is also a splendid lesson here for children in their conduct toward their parents. It is sometimes very hard to endure the tyranny of blind, stubborn and unworthy parents. Yet Jonathan managed without being untrue to himself or to others, to be reverential and loyal to his father and even to sway a great influence over him for good. This called for much patience, but it (ailed chiefly for a complete devotion to principle. Jonathan's love for David did not lead him away from his duty to Saul, and his love for Saul did not interfere with his faithfulness to David. We should never let any relative be it that of father, mother, husband, wife, sister, or brother, turn us from our devotion to Christ and the observance of His ordinances and acceptance of His way of life.

Yet there is a responsibility to the unbeliever which must not be rejected. But remember always that if you stand firm for your religious conviction you will have a much greater influence over the unbeliever than if you at times compromise with the world in order to keep peace in the family.

Again relatives many times interfere by insisting on going to the Church of their choice, thus dividing the family religiously. God never intended but that our homes should be Christian, founded on Christian principles, united on the New Testament bases, but he did not intend that it should be like this:

A Preacher was invited to a house where the husband belonged to one church and the wife to another. Being seated in the parlor the husband and wife nearby, the preacher was trying to say a few words to interest a sweet little girl of theirs. It came into his mind that he might turn it to some practical account, and he inquired of the child, "when you grow up to be a woman do you intend to join you mother's church?" The child looked toward the father with deep concern, but made no reply. He then inquired, "Do you intend to join your father's church?" The child showed more feeling but made no answer. The preacher then appealed to the father and mother to tell why the child did not answer, but they made no reply. If the child joined the mother's church, it had to leave its father. If it joined its father's church it had to leave its mother.

She could not entertain the idea of doing either. The preacher then made his appeal to the father and mother. "Do you intend to keep this stumbling-block in the way of your child, and thus keep it out of the church, or will you not unite on the Bible and remove the stumbling-block'?" In an evening or two after, when the invitation was given, the husband walked into the aisle and beckoned to his wife to come to him. She instantly came and he extended his hand and said, "I have come to offer you my hand to unite on the Bible." She took his hand and said, "The Lord helping me, I will go with you." Their little daughter could then go with both father and mother. On Ibis ground every home can be and should be united. It is God's will that it should be and there is no reason under heaven why such is not the case in every home of our land.

In conclusion, what course should we take when relatives interfere with our devotion to Christ? The answer is found in the attitude and teaching of Jesus. When His mother complained that he was neglecting home obligations. He said "know ye not that I must be about my father's business." In other words, our obligation to God always comes before our obligation to our fellow man. The first great commandment of the law is that "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength." What shall we do when relatives interfere? Follow Jesus. Did He not say, "he that loveth father or mother more

than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Christ must be loved supremely, or He is not loved at all. If we are not willing to give up all earthly possessions and forsake all earthly friends—which is a thing seldom necessary—in order to follow Christ, we have no true attachment to Him. It is a cross bearing job to follow Christ. We must endure whatever is burdensome, trying and disgraceful in the eyes of the world, to follow Christ. Let the world think or speak what it will, Christ must come first.

If all parents were true to their obligations as parents, and brought up their children in the way that they should go, many of the difficulties outlined in this sermon would be taken away. Too many parents endeavoring to be good to their children spoil them. They give them every thing they desire and let them have their own way about most every thing. Many, many, children are ruined by kindness. We all know of parents who will not insist on their children coming to Bible School and church, simply because they are out late on Saturday night and they therefore must have their sleep on Sunday morning. Others whose children come to Bible School are permitted to leave after the school and absent themselves from the Lord's table and preaching service. Others will not insist on their children coming to evening service, for fear they will think they are expecting too much of them and taking them away

from their play and pleasure. Others instead of accompanying their children to Bible school and Church send them to shift for themselves, taking it for granted that they are behaving like little ladies and gentlemen, not knowing that they are converting the church into a 'whoop and hollar' and become the chief disturbance of the Bible Class. The attitude which some people take toward their children in relation to the church, causes us to tremble when we think of the church of tomorrow. "Bring up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it," is as admonishing and advisable today as it was in the day when it was written.

We could avoid many of these family difficulties and prevent their manifestation in future society by establishing in every home the family altar of worship.

"If there was reason for the patriarch and for the Jews to gather their loved ones about the family altar, how much greater reason is there for us, who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, to come to that sacred place with our children and with the stranger within our gates, there to present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God; thus to make a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Thus to offer the fruit of our lips which make confession to his name."



## WHY I PREACH THE GOSPEL

*Rom. 1:16-17.*

*Preached at Columbia Church of Christ, Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug. 9, 1931. Capitol View Church of Christ, Atlanta, Ga., April 10, 1935. Springfield, Ohio, Revival Meeting.*

Aside from Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul is, without a doubt the most outstanding figure in human history. He was a free born Roman citizen. Raised in Tarsus, the chief city of Cilicia and enjoyed the privileges of citizenship in the Roman Empire. He was fitted by early training and by association with the Gentiles to serve the more acceptably in the field to which Christ afterward called him. He received his higher education in the school of the great Rabbi Gamaliel in Jerusalem.

His first appearance in the New Testament, history was at the stoning of the first martyr. He consented to Stephen's death. Later he "Breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples in Jerusalem; and being exceedingly mad against them he persecuted them even unto strange cities."

This was Paul's first attitude toward the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He was an honest man, sincere in all that he was doing. He verily thought that he was doing God's will, as he so

nobly confessed when making his own defense before King Agrippa. "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth and 111is I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them."

After his conversion,—which I take for granted you are all acquainted with—he became just as ardent a defender of the Gospel as he had been a persecutor of it and so it was that during the later days of his life he could write the words of our text, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation." O, that a generation of preachers would rise up and say truthfully and boldly, *we are "not ashamed of the Gospel!"*

If any one had a right to be ashamed of the gospel, it was the Apostle Paul. He was a Jew, thoroughly trained in the Jewish law; highly educated in Greek culture and learning; could quote freely from the Greek poets: one of the most capable writers and speakers of his day. He could have made a name for himself in the practice of law or teaching. This was what the world offered him.

To be a preacher of the gospel meant shame, disgrace, suffering, separation of family ties and finally death as an impostor. After having experienced many of these things he could write with all sincerity, "I am not ashamed of the

Gospel." Then he goes on to give us his reason for not being ashamed of the gospel, and to this let us turn our attention.

In the first place, Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because "it is the power of God."

The Gospel is good news. Abraham's Gospel was the good news that in his seed all the nations of the world should be blessed. This was the good news of the coming Christ. When Jesus was born, the angels said to the shepherds, "Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people: for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." This was good news to the wondering shepherds, that the long expected Messiah had come to "bring peace on earth and good will to all men."

It was good news about this Christ, which Paul called the gospel and that of which he was not ashamed. The "good news" has power. In speaking of the power of the gospel, Paul is contrasting it with the weakness of the law. This contrast he brings out more fully when he says, "what the law could not do in that it was weak though the flesh, God, sending His only Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." God Himself is powerless to save any one righteously except through the gracious provisions of the Gospel of His Son. Thus it is impossible to merit salvation through good works. That involves absolute perfection and no one is

*morally perfect* "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." John says, "If we say we have *no sin* we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." The law, therefore, being imperfect and unable to lead to salvation is here in the first place contrasted with the gospel which is the power of God and able to save. This forms the first reason for Paul's statement of admiration for the Gospel.

The next important word in the statement of the Apostle's theme shows that the saving power of the Gospel is altogether divine. It is the "power of God." God's powers are many. Water is God's power to quench thirst; food is God's power to satisfy hunger, and these He has placed within our reach. What would you think of a man kneeling on the street and praying to God to send down power to quench his thirst, and power to quell his hunger? Any school boy could bring him a glass of water, and a loaf of bread and fell him God's power is in the bread and the water. We see just as strange a phenomenon—a man praying to God to send down power to save his soul: and even many preachers have not the intelligence to tell him that "*The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.*"

He who wins souls in the presentation of the gospel, the simple truth as it is in Jesus, is wielding a power, not human, but divine; and the resulting justification before God is based, not on the righteousness of man, "but the righteousness of God."

The Gospel may be presented and handled in such a way as to weaken its power. Many of the pulpits of the Churches of Christ of today are filled with false messengers. Messengers that do not preserve the gospel message. They seem not to realize its sacredness. This Gospel is so vital and precious that it must not be destroyed, lost, or neglected.

In the midst of the Spanish-American War, a small pamphlet was issued to the public school students, entitled "a message to Garcia." It told a thrilling story of the search for a stalwart young messenger with the necessary courage and skill to break through the Spanish lines, which surrounded the island and carry to the indomitable Cuban patriot Garcia the glorious, good news, that America was coming to his assistance. Every American school boy received a new vision of the responsibility of being a messenger. One of the most famous war heroes of our country during this period was Colonel Funston. He was captured by the Spanish while carrying a message of supreme importance. In the very presence of his captors and regardless of their baffled fury, he thrust the message into his mouth and swallowed it. They might take his life, but they should not have his message.

The Apostle Paul was always fearful that he might in some way bring reproach upon this sacred "good news." In writing to the Corinthians for the first time he said, "And, I, brethren when I came unto you, came not with

excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling." "Take heed unto thyself and the doctrine; continue in them; for in so doing thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us." "And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith."

One of the greatest hindrances to the power of the Gospel today is the betrayal of its message. A little boy runs to the grocery, arriving exhausted and out of breath. The clerk kindly asks: "What do you want little man?" The boy looks blankly about, and finally stammers out: "I don't know. I have forgotten. I will have to run back home and find out." The only difference between that boy and many preachers, teachers and missionaries today is that the boy had 'gumption' enough to go home when he found he had lost his message.

Paul never betrayed the message. He preached exactly the same gospel wherever he went. To the Jews, he became as a Jew, and to the Gentiles as a Gentile, but not when it came to matters of principle. He could quote the Greek poets to the Athenians, but he preached the same gospel at Jerusalem, Antioch, Berea, or Athens. At Athens he faced the skeptical intellectualists of the Greek world. Yet he preached the Gospel. He threw out a challenging message for his Christ. The crowd scorned it, but succeeding Christian messengers kept on proclaiming the same story, and the day came when it toppled the pagan idols of Athens from their pedestals.

The effect of his preaching was not to be ascribed to method of presentation but to the divine influence that was back of the message. His message was the Gospel of Good News; "the Power of God."

In the first place, Paul says he was not ashamed of the Gospel because it is the power of God *unto* salvation.

Just as it is impossible for man to raise himself by his own bootstraps; so it is impossible for God to save man righteously any other way except through the sacrifice of His own Son, Jesus Christ. You ask me why? I answer simply because God planned it that way. Many today are ashamed of the Gospel to the extent that they deny the fact that Christ died for our sins. As to why they do not believe it, I do not know. Paul never denied or doubted this

fact. In writing to the Corinthians he told them that the central part of his whole Epistle to them was Christ crucified unto Jews a stumbling block, and unto Gentiles foolishness.

The law could not give salvation because it was of the flesh and only temporal. But in regard to the opposite result, condemnation and death, it had tremendous power. It was given to call man's attention to sin. "Where there is no law there is no consciousness of sin. The sin is still there but man is not aware of it. But the law called man's attention to sin and made; him realize the awful realities of sin which is death. "The wages of sin is death." To be saved one must be relieved from this bondage of sin and Jesus Christ broke this bond. We are saved from sin unto eternal life. There was no way for God to forgive sin except by the blood of Christ. All the sacrifices ever offered on Jewish and Patriarchal altars could not and did not, lake<sup>4</sup> away sin; all these were but types or pictures to illustrate the grace of the one great sacrifice about to be offered.

In the fullness of time the Great Antitype of all the sacrifices that were ever slain by Divine appointment a]l]peared on the cross. And as His flesh was torn and mangled for the sins of the world the veil of the symbolical Temple was rent in twain and the way into the Holiest of all was then typically revealed to the eyes of mortals. It was with His own blood that



Christ made an atonement for the sins of the world.

Paul gave up all things and counted them as dung, because of his unwavering faith in the power of God through the sacrifice of His Son bringing salvation to the world.

Again Paul was proud of the Gospel because of the universality of its sweep. "It is God's power unto Salvation to everyone who believes." The Jew, with his legalistic training and his consequent exclusiveness, could not understand the universality of grace.

The Jew felt that if he had kept the law as best he could, he would be permitted to stand before God in the strength of his own righteousness. And because of this belief he naturally looked down upon other peoples and felt that they were inevitably doomed to death without mercy. The whole argument of the Epistle is to wipe away any such false notions and ideas which the Jews held in regard to salvation. Hear the Apostle in Chapter 3:21-23 "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets: even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is not distinction: for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Because of the equality of all in the need of salvation, so has provision been equally made for all "The same God over all is rich unto all who call upon him."

How different would be the attitude of the

Church of Christ in America in regard to Missions if they could only realize that the Gospel is for the whole world. We sometimes get so deeply interested in our own affairs that we forget about the outside world. Paul let nothing interfere with his missionary zeal. When it became necessary for him to work with his own hands in order to eat, he was not ashamed to do so. Yet he continued to preach the Gospel of which he was not ashamed.

He went into strange cities, among strange people, places where other religions had flourished for years, and faced all kinds of opposition to break to them the bread of life which he says is for all people.

Last of all we want to notice the conditionally of the Gospel. "It is the power of God unto salvation to *everyone that believeth.*" The dictum of the law is: "Do this and thou shalt live." The maxim of the Gospel is: "The just shall live by faith." Doing is the ground of legal justice. Believing is the condition of gracious justification.

Just as food is the power of God to quell hunger to the man who is hungry and will eat it, faith is the principle by which we appropriate the blessings of the gospel. We believe the facts. There is power in facts to point out the truth. One fact is worth a thousand theories. There is power in truth. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

This passage does not say that salvation is for everyone but "everyone that believeth."

Why is it that some are going to be lost? No clearer answer could be given to this question than to give our Saviour's touching address to Jerusalem, as He thought of that devoted city and wept over it. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! that killeth the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her chicks under her wing; but ye *would not*." Ah, yes, this is solution of the whole matter. How often would I but ye would not!

We cannot witness the facts of the Gospel as they were a part of the life of Christ. We must walk by faith. We must believe that Christ died, was buried, and the third day arose again.

Paganism is the religion of sins. Rationalism is the religion of reason. Christianity is the religion of faith.

There must be in the first place the organ of faith the capacity to believe.

Have we this capacity? Certainly no one ought to hesitate in answering this question. But strange to say, some men have doubted our capacity to believe. Every man must decide for himself; no one can do it for him. "I believe that I can believe" is not very passable English, and certainly does not sound out with the same assurance as "I know that I can believe." I will illustrate to make my meaning clear. Suppose that for several hours you have been weighing a thousand pounds at a time upon a pair of scales suspended by a rope.

A Gentleman steps up who is one of the know it all kind. He makes a careful examination of the rope and then informs you that he knows all about ropes, what they can stand etc.; that this rope is not strong enough to bear up more than five hundred pounds. What would you think of this man's philosophy? You would not waste words with him because you know from experience that he is mistaken. So say to every man that doubts your ability to believe' the Gospel.

There must be a medium of faith. This medium is provided for by God. Rom. 10:17. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." 'Phis medium is here very clearly stated, it is the Word of God. That Word of which Paul was not ashamed. In what reverence then, should we hold the Word of God, which brings to us such a glorious gift as faith!

Faith must have an object—something upon which to rest. What is this object? Let the Holy Scriptures answer: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "This is the word of God, that ye believe on him who he hath sent." "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life," "Ye believe in God believe also in me," "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Many other passages might be quoted, but these are sufficient to show that the object of our faith is the precious Saviour. The Christian faith is not doctrinal,

but personal; not belief in a theory, but in a divine and glorious character; not the reception of a cold, lifeless dogma, but a hearty trust in one whose love is stronger than a brother's; who is "touched with a feeling of our infirmities; who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust."

What are some of the great facts that are connected with the life of Christ that makes Him worthy of our confidence? The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives us an answer in the opening verses. His is God's Son who is heir of all things through whom the worlds were made. He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the very image of His substance. Who when He had made purification of sins sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. "Whose throne is for ever and ever and whom all the angels worship."

Here Jesus does anything for us that entitles Him to our confidence? Read His history. Follow Him from His birth to the last scenes on Calvary. His life was one of toil, sorrow and self-denial. And He did it all for us.

When we realize these wonderful facts about the Gospel, is it any wonder that Paul was not ashamed of it?

Not only this statement of the Apostle proves his wonderful regard for the Gospel, but the very life that he lived and the things which he suffered established it beyond doubt. He knew no sacrifice too dear to make for Jesus; now was he boastful of his sufferings. When the

Church at Corinth seemed to make more account of false Apostles than of himself, he was forced to commend himself; "Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. . . . Are they Hebrew's? So am I. Are they ministers? Are they seed of Abraham? So am I. I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day in the deep." How many pages of a modern daily paper would be covered by the details of every one of the events here enumerated and many more we might enumerate? What great head lines! Five times forty stripes save one! A night and a day in the dee)]! Hunger and thirst! Cold and naked! Reporters would have found Paul too busy to be interviewed, and withal too little concern about these light afflictions to go much into detail. The full details of his experience, in all the perils of a single verse, would have tilled many columns. He called himself foolish for speaking of them at all.

At the eve of his departure, he had said to his brethren in Phillipi:—"To live is Christ, to die is gain. I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Now he realizes that his mission is ended. Heath to him was but a gate way to life—the grave, the vestibule

where he would put on robes of immortality. Reviewing his life, he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;" and looking forward in hope he said, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the Righteous judge, shall give me at that day," and unselfish to the end, he added, "and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

Are you ashamed of the Gospel? The only way you can show to the world that you are not ashamed of it, is by obeying its commands.

If Paul was not ashamed of the gospel why should we be? Some modernists seem to make light of Paul. Even one preacher is reported to have said, "If we are not wiser than the Apostles we are great fools." Where is your modern preacher that can preach like Paul? Where is your modern writer that can equal him in argumentative skill, rhetorical power? Where is your philanthropist who can compare to him in works of benevolence, in a life of self denial? Surely then, I may count myself a fool if I am ashamed of that in which the Apostle gloried.

How do we show that we are ashamed of anything? In our action. We need but glance about us to see the great host of people that are ashamed of Jesus Christ. So friends why am I here preaching to you at this time? Because I am not ashamed of the gospel. Why am I not ashamed of the gospel? Because it is the

power. Not my power; not any man's power, but God's power. But this saving power is conditional, as we have said before. "To everyone that believeth."

We must believe, and if we believe we will obey, and because of my faith in the gospel I am here this evening.

"Ashamed of Jesus: sooner far  
May evening blush to own a star;  
Ashamed of Jesus: Just as soon  
May midnight blush to think of noon;  
Ashamed of Jesus, that dear Friend  
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!  
No! when I blush be this my shame.  
That I no more revere His name.  
Ashamed of Jesus! Yes I may,  
When I've no sins to wash away,  
No tears to wipe, no joys to crave,  
No fears to quell, no souls to save:  
Till then, nor is the boasting vain.  
Till then I boast a Saviour slain.  
And Oh, May this my glory be.  
That Christ is not ashamed of me!"



## FAREWELL SERMON

*I Cor. 2:1-5*

*Preached at Columbia Church of Christ, Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug., 1931. Capitol View Christian Church, Atlanta, Ga., Sept. 1934. Derby Theater, Latonia, Ky., May 15, 1938.*

Jesus came "not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life as a ransom for many." It was to this class that John the Harbinger was sent, not only to announce the arrival of Jesus, but to prepare the people to receive Him in the proper rank and dignity of His mission. Jesus sent His disciples to this class found among those known as the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Later He commissioned His apostles to preach to the hungry souls. After He received the kingdom, on His return to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit as His "advocate" and minister to inspire evangelists, prophets, pastors and teachers for the edifying of His Church. The church also, sends out her missionaries, or creates her ministers, by the authority of Jesus.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace . . . that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" The beautiful imaginary mind of the prophet suggests the inevitable

joy of humanity in a messenger who brings good tidings. Yonder among the mountain crag that stands in striking silhouette against the setting sun; yonder where the century old olive trees stretch their long, rakish branches over the ancient highway, can be seen the form of the messenger moving swiftly forward on his mission. His flying feet twinkle in the rays of the departing sun like winter stars that dance and gleam over fields of snow. His heart is light and his step eager, for he is the bearer of good news.

Paul selects this revealing quotation from Isaiah as the climax of his incisive argument in the tenth chapter of Romans on God's plan for saving a lost world. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How, then, shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written. How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!" At the very foundation of Christianity and what a broad and powerful base it is! is the picture of the eager and devoted messenger speeding onward with a life and death message.

I came unto you my friends as a messenger sent by the authority of Jesus Christ. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel" is

just as applicable today as it was when Jesus uttered the words.

Paul's experience and manner of preaching should he lived over in the life of every gospel minister, hi writing to the Corinthians he says: "and I brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

This outline of Apostolic preaching I have tried to keep ever before me during the years of my ministry and I hope I shall never depart from it.

When I came unto you, my brethren, I came not with *excellency of speech* or of *wisdom of men*. No one in this audience can accuse me of entertaining with a Sunday lecture on some popular subject, neither have my messages been filled with humor in order that my reward might be the laugh of the audience. I preached no sensational messages that were filled with slang and dramatic. Every message that I have proclaimed from this pulpit was taken from the word of God. I have tried to make it my inspiration, my guide, my sympathy, my understanding.

I came to you weak in experience. I have not been preaching long. Yet, I remember Paul's words, to Timothy, "Let no one despise thy youth." I have been with you in fear and in much trembling. Why was I fearful? Was I afraid of not getting my salary? No, I had faith enough in God to know that He would provide. He has said, "Be not anxious for what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed." Lie provides for the birds and the flowers and man is greater than they. Was I fearful of hurting people's feelings? Yes, but I knew it was my business to preach, not to please the people, but to please Christ. Never did I cut off the keen edge of my message in order to please the public. I trembled for fear that I might not preach the gospel as God would have me preach it. I knew, that as a messenger of God, my first duty was to preserve the message. Why? Because it is a final message. Whereas God spoke unto "the Fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, He, has, at the end of these days, spoken to us in His Son." It is a God given message and the messenger is bound on both sides. The Apostle Paul has said, "Though we or an angel of heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. Gal. 1:8-9. Whenever a preacher

delivers a message, it should be God speaking and not man. Is it any wonder we fear and tremble?

What should be our attitude when God speaks? Should we play the part of Jonah? When God called him to go to Nineveh to preach, Jonah started to run from the job. But God had spoken and it took a big fish to teach Jonah a lesson that when God speaks man must obey. When God spoke to Isaiah in the temple, Isaiah said, "Woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips," and it took a red hot coal to teach Isaiah to obey? When God spoke to Paul on the way to Damascus, Paul Trembled. Oh, for men today that will fear and tremble when handling God's word.

Men are saying today that it makes no difference what you believe if you only do what you think is right. But, suppose I believe that Chicago lies out in the Rocky mountains. I may be earnest and sincere in this belief; I may go out to the Rocky Mountains and spend my life searching among them for Chicago—but will I find it? No, because it is not there. My belief was false. What I needed was to learn the truth about where Chicago is before I attempted to go there. The minister must learn the truth about his message before he delivers it. Not long ago I was talking to a man who professes to be a preacher, but he has had no schooling in the Bible. I tried to induce him to attend Cincinnati Bible Seminary. He said that there were too many souls going to hell

now for him to waste his time studying, he needed to preach. The ignorance of the modern preacher about the Bible is pathetic. If the doctor who answers our calls is versed in poetry and politics, philosophy, art, and music, we enjoy a pleasant half hour while he waits on the sick but if our child is desperately ill, we want a doctor who knows disease and medicine. If he does not know that he has no business pretending to be a doctor and we do not want him. The preacher who does not know his message is an impostor. "How shall they preach except they be sent?" The messenger must be inspired, trained and sent forth.

I also trembled for fear that L might not deliver the message as God would have me deliver it. The tenth chapter of Matthew tells that the most contemptible creature<sup>1</sup> alive is the preacher who sells out his commissions from high heaven for the savory pottage of popularity, a fat salary and personal comfort. How much gospel would have been preached by Peter, John, Stephen, and Paul if they had paused each time to weigh the personal consequence? What would have happened to Christianity if Paul had trimmed his message with an eye to avoiding the criticisms of the ladies' missionary organizations in the churches? Exactly what is happening today! Our prayer should be: "Oh God, give us men who are not afraid to preach the gospel."

The most tragic failure of the church is the betrayal of its message. Many are fairly run-

ning over with zeal to go to fields to preach. They can tell the facts about the field, the customs, and needs of the country and that, but they are indifferent as to the message. Again, I trembled for fear I might not live the message. The simple piety of the New Testament is needed to match its simple faith. Hand in hand with the command "to contend earnestly for the faith," the inspired writer urges the Christian messenger to "walk worthily of the calling."

The great need of this pleasure mad sensual, selfish age, is for leadership which has spiritual depth. May heaven help the church which falls into the hands of preachers who dance, play cards, and drink liquors.

I have ben accused of preaching too much doctrine. Why is it that I have preached the gospel as I have? Because the nature of the theme demanded it. It is a life and death message. "Woe be unto me if I preach not the gospel." Like Paul "I was determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." We are redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver and gold." but "with the precious blood, even the blood of Christ." 1 Pet. 1:18,19.

It is the blood of Christ that speaks of the means of our redemption. There is a tendency these days to look lightly upon sin. It is said that fools laugh at sin, and philosophers explain it away. Both groups are entitled to their opinion and its truths are accepted, however.

we have to recognize sin as a reality, in the teaching of Jesus. He regarded it as so serious in its bearing upon life that nothing but His own blood could save us from its consequences. In this the Apostle Paul is equally emphatic when he says, "the wages of sin is death." Without remission of sins we are separated from God, out of fellowship with him, and without hope. It is when we realize these facts and remember that we are redeemed from sin by Christ's atoning sacrifice, that His blood is very precious indeed. The minister must make known this fact. It is because of this precious nature of the gospel that I could do nothing else but preach it.

What purpose had I in mind when I preached the gospel so earnestly? "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I would rather have people say of me, "He was a gospel preacher," than to have them say "He was a great entertainer." I would rather have it said of me, "He preached the gospel," than have people say "He is a great scholar." I would rather for people to say that my sermons were filled with scripture quotations than have them compliment me on my knowledge of poetry and literature. It is the gospel which is God's power unto salvation and blessed is the preacher that preaches it.

In closing, I would leave this bit of advise. If you want to keep your preacher and have your church grow, cooperate with him. When



he tells you of your mistakes, try to correct them. Protect him. In every church there is some long tongued sister whose tongue the stork should have clipped, who will say cruel and uncalled for things about the preacher. Keep those things away from the preacher. There are also those in every congregation who find all sorts of flaws with the preacher. He does not call every week like Brother 'Soothing Syrup' did; he does not orate loud enough and his wife dresses too well for a preacher's wife. Keep this thing from him.

Remember that the minister carries a burden so big and so heavy that it almost crushes out his life. Only the grace of Almighty God can keep him up under such burdens. So, fill your minister with new courage, new zeal, new inspiration and new aspirations to press forward in the battle for righteousness, and there will come back to you and to your church a victory that will make glad the hearts of God's people.