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COMMENTARY

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

by B.H. Carroll

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THE WAY OF THE CROSS

COMPRISING A LUMINOUS DISCUSSION OF BOTH

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

BY

B. H. CARROLL, D.D., LL.D.

*For Almost Thirty Years Pastor of First Baptist Church, Waco, Texas,
and Founder and First President of
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary,
Fort Worth, Texas*

COMPILED BY

J. W. CROWDER, A.B., D.D.

EDITED BY

J. B. CRANFILL, M.D., LL.D.

TO

REV. L. R. SCARBOROUGH, D.D.

*Former President of the Southern Baptist Convention,
Who for More Than Twenty-six Years Has,
as President of Southwestern Baptist Theological
Seminary, Worn the Mantle of B. H. Carroll,
its Founder, and Who, as Preacher, Teacher,
Author, Financier and Leader in This Great
Task, Has Successfully Piloted the Institution
Through Inexpressible Hardships
and Difficulties, This Book is
Lovingly Dedicated*

FOREWORD

Ever since through sin Adam and Eve departed from Eden, sinful men and women have sought a way back to God. It is a quest perennially upspringing in the human heart. In every land, no matter what the kind or quality of worship, there is in human hearts an aching void that hungers for God. In pagan lands this quest for God is expressed in idol worship, and through varying methods, in varying degrees, wandering, sinning men and women sense a constant need for something outside of themselves, and that ultimate Something is God.

In this book, “The Way of the Cross,” B. H. Carroll, who, in my opinion, was ‘the greatest preacher who has walked the world since Paul, points the way for us. A glance at the Table of Contents will disclose the topics he discusses. It was ever true of him that when he had finished a discussion of any question, there was naught left for any other man to say.

There has been only one plan of salvation. There is only one plan now. All of the ceremonials of ancient Israel pointed to Christ. From the prophecy voiced by our Father above to the first sinning pair, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head,” on through the entire canon of Scripture, there coursed the crimson thread denoting the blood of our Redeemer. Old Testament saints looked forward to the coming Messiah, who was to be a suffering Savior. Christians contemporaneous with Jesus himself, while only vaguely realizing the lofty meaning of His life and death, yet understood quite enough of the plan of salvation to find Jesus precious to their souls in the forgiveness of their sins.

In this, the thirty-first volume of Carroll’s works I have been privileged to publish or cause to be published, the great preacher points the way for sinful men. The way to salvation is the way of the cross. It has ever been so. It still is so. “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”

I take pleasure in making due acknowledgment for help in my work on these Carroll books of Professor J. W. Crowder, A.B., D.D., of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His kind hand compiled the present volume, and his devotion to B. H. Carroll, and his intimate understanding of his messages are both comforting and heartening.

And now this volume is sent forth into our dark world to aid in saving men and women from their sins. As this foreword is concluded, my heart is uplifted to God in prayer that through the long after years this book may still be performing the mission

whereunto it is sent-the mission of revealing to eyes blinded by sin the way of the cross-the only way through which lost souls may find rest and peace.

J. B. CRANFILL

Dallas, Texas

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1. THE WAY OF THE CROSS

TEXT: Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. - ~~601~~Romans 10:1-3.

My mind has been wonderfully impressed with the appropriateness of this scripture for this night's service, from a very touching conversation that I have had this evening with one who for years has been trying to be a Christian, and in that trial has been baptized, and has been confirmed, and has partaken of the Lord's Supper, and has studied the Word of God, and taught in the Sunday School, and yet, all the time, has been afflicted with a sense of deep dissatisfaction with the attainment reached. And *every* now and then the darkest doubts have come into her mind: "Is there anything in this? Why is it that I do not get any personal enjoyment out of it? Why is it that I have no sense of sins forgiven, no peace, no rest? I try very hard, and I pray and I double my duties, but I do not make any progress, and the thought has come to me that I might just as well quit the whole thing."

Now, that is the substance of the conversation held today. I felt an intense longing to offer a prayer for that one, just as Paul felt it here — "My heart's desire." O, how keenly I felt the desire that she should be saved, for I saw that she was unsaved. And how earnestly my spirit spontaneously prayed, "Lord God, may not this one be saved? See what a zeal. See what a disposition to do. See what a long-continued effort and how zealously she has busied herself to establish a righteousness that would be acceptable to God. And every time she builds her house up, it falls down; and she tries it again, and rebuilds it, and it falls again; and her religion is full of holes, and there is nothing personal in it."

Unfortunately this is not the only case. But a week ago an inquirer came to me in great trouble. Our conversation was about as follows:

Pastor: "What troubles you?"

Inquisitor: "I have been attending this meeting. I cannot fail to see that there is some great power here at work. But what troubles me most, I see plainly these people have something I never had. What is it? Why cannot I feel it, too?"

Pastor: "Tell me your Christian experience."

Inquisitor: “Well, about sixteen years ago I joined the church and -“

Pastor: “Excuse me, you misunderstand; I knew you were a prominent member of one of the city churches. Tell me what exercises of your mind led you to join the church?”

Inquisitor: “Oh, as to that! When I began to be a young man I had some thought about religion. It seemed to me people ought to live right. So I made up my mind to live right, and thinking I could best live right in the church, and by taking hold of church work, I joined the church and commenced earnestly to try to save my soul. I soon became a very active church member and was naturally put forward when any one was needed to lead. That was sixteen years ago. In all that time I have been honest, earnest and persistent in my efforts. But while people praise my zeal, I have no comfort inside. What so many of your people show in their very faces is a stranger to me.”

Pastor: “My dear friend, you are all wrong. You started wrong and have been going wrong ever since. Let me show you the way.”

Let me say to you tonight, and in all solemnity, that there are a great many people here in Waco in that condition. They have a zeal toward God. They are willing to do a great many things, and they do a great many things; and if, in order to attain the peace of mind that they desire, it should be necessary to get up before sunrise, go down to the church, kneel on the floor, and pray one hundred prayers in succession, they would do that. They are very much like the poor Hindu, described by one of the missionaries, who set out from a far distant point to reach the sacred Ganges river, believing that if ever that river could be reached, and the devotee could bathe once in its waters, that peace could be found for the troubled conscience; and in order to invest the journey with all possible merit, the shoes were filled with little spikes, so that every step that was taken was full of pain, and the blood flowed from the pierced feet; and when he could no longer walk he got down on his knees, and when his knees were bruised by the stones in the way, he crawled-”I will do anything in the world just to get to that river, and bathe in it and find peace to my conscience.”

It is a distressing thing to see people in that condition; with that will-worship; with that busying of themselves to establish some sort of a meritorious ground upon which they can receive from God forgiveness of sins and the salvation of their souls.

Sometimes under this desire, if any one in whom they have confidence, will prescribe it, they will fast for ten days, eating just a bare crust, and drinking only a little water; and then if it be necessary, they will scourge their bodies every night. And not only that, but they are willing to devote any part of their property, if by that means they can obtain a ransom for their souls. How full of zeal! How full of sacrifice!

We will look at the, case mentioned in this particular context. Here were people that had before them a law, which says, “Do and live.” Here are the commandments written on tables of stone: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me; thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image; thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; thou shalt remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy; thou shalt not covet; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not lie.” They look at them; they memorize them; and they say, “Here is the standard of life. Whosoever doeth these things shall live by it.” And not satisfied with that they cover these commandments with traditions of men, rites and ceremonies and ten thousand little things. They tithe, not the great part of the property only, but with the greatest niceness and scrupulousness, go into the garden and take a tenth part of the mint and of the anise and of the cummin. They will even tithe to the ninth part of a hair, lest by leaving out some little thing the chain of obedience shall be broken and the soul shall be lost.

Now that was the condition of the people for whom the apostle felt this great desire that they should be saved. “O, that they might be saved.” And his prayer, “Lord God, let them be saved.”

I want to speak to you tonight very earnestly and very clearly about God’s method of saving souls, and show you that the method that has been described in no sense, in no case, attains unto salvation. It is imperfect in its motives; it is imperfect in its deeds; it is imperfect in every part of it. It can never justify any soul in the sight of God. And let us see why. In the first place these people, though they live in our towns, though they hear the gospel preached (or at least what is called the gospel), every Sunday, are very ignorant. I do not mean it offensively-I speak it plainly, as dealing with questions of salvation. They are- profoundly ignorant, and it requires one a long time to realize just how ignorant *they* are. They have knowledge about a great many things, but as to God’s method of saving souls, they are as ignorant as a babe. They are ignorant of God’s righteousness, of the kind of righteousness that shall justify a man at the judgement bar. They know nothing about it and hence, religion, after a while, becomes wearisome to them.

What a weariness it is! How tiresome! How long is this to last? How many more pilgrimages must I make? How many more sacrifices must I lay upon the altar? How many more beads must I count? How many more things, piled up already as high as a mountain are necessary to put me in a condition to stand before God justified, and not condemned, in the day when God shall judge the world by the one whom He has ordained? It is like trying to climb to the skies. It is like trying to fathom the depths of the ocean. There is no end to it.

And then, it is bondage. It is the work of a slave. It is serving God with an eye to the Master's scourge; if you leave out one little thing the lash will descend upon you and the thunders of the Law will reach you and your soul will be lost. — And the conscience is continually distressed, and crying out for "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

I want you to pray for such people. They need your prayers. Every good man and woman in this house ought to offer up an earnest prayer to God that any one that has chosen that laborious way, that awfully burdensome route, may be saved. They are going in the wrong direction. They are failing, not only to attain to that which they seek, but are adding thorns and pains of anguish to themselves every foot of the weary pilgrimage that they make. O, that they might be saved!

They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, notwithstanding all that they do, there is one thing that they have not done. They have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. They have not come to God and said, "Lord, what is thy plan of justifying men and women? How may my soul be saved? How can I find in my conscience a sense of sins forgiven so that there shall be a witness in me, and that I may be a personal witness to the fact of redemption, and that I may say, God has forgiven my sins and I am saved? How can this be obtained?"

Paul then presents the true plan. He takes the law of God, and without diminishing one jot or tittle of its claim, but magnifying those claims, making them more exacting than this troubled soul has ever seen, making the commandments broader than they have ever been to the mind and conscience of the one who has trembled before them. There is no diminution of the commandments of God, but he presents as a method of justification, Christ Jesus. He says that Christ is the end of the Law, no matter how long it is. He is the end of it for righteousness to every one that believeth. Whether rich or poor, great or small, if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him, *you* are saved. And you may meet any form of the Divine Law, and hold between you and the claims of that Law what Christ has done, and the Law cannot touch you. Its exactions are met in Christ. Its claims are satisfied in Him and it cannot harm you.

Now I want to see if I cannot get that thought before you, for it is the supreme thought of the plan of salvation. You are not asked to go up to heaven—climb up there. You are not asked to go to the bottom of the ocean. Not that. But you are asked to look at the plan which God has provided, and the person by whom your soul is to be saved. Now listen to this scripture: "I deliver unto you that which I also received; how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He was raised again."

There are three great facts which help to constitute the gospel. It is the gospel, that Christ, according to the Scriptures, died for our sins and was buried, and rose again from the dead. These are the principal facts upon which the gospel rests.

And now let us see if we cannot get hold of these facts and make a personal application of them to ourselves.

First, we are sinners. Do you subscribe to that? I press that question on you. Have you been just? Have you kept the requirements of God's law? Have you fully kept them? In the searching vision of God himself are there not, even with you, some sins against the Lord, your God? When you look down into your heart can you say, "I have kept this commandment, 'thou shalt not kill'?" You say, "Yes, I never killed anybody." Let us see. "Whoever hateth his brother is a murderer." God's law looks at the thought which precedes the act of the killing. It judges the intent of the mind. It goes to the bottom of things, so that it deals with the springs of things, the germs out of which they grow into action; and if you have in your mind, not in deed, but if you have in your mind longed to do anything that is forbidden in that law, you have violated it. You stand, then, before that law a sinner, and your conscience tells you that you are a sinner. You come with that plea on your lips, "I am a sinner against the Divine Law."

Now I ask you: What is your plan of making atonement and satisfaction to that violated law? Is it by anything that you can do? Think! What can you do that will put back again the broken law? I want to use a very familiar illustration, and one that has been used oftentimes before, but it aptly expresses the precise thought here that I wish to impress on your minds. A child was sent to the city, trusted with money, to buy a very costly and fragile vase, and carefully charged to have it packed safely in a basket, and to bring it back very carefully; without stopping by the way. But on his way home he meets another boy, who has a new ball, which he commences to bounce in sight — the eager sight — of the boy with the basket, and saying, "Don't you want to bounce my new ball?" And he says, "I would like to, but I am charged here with a trust and I have promised not to stop; but I will bounce it once." So he puts down his basket and bounces the ball, and becomes absorbed and forgets, and directly the ball strikes the basket, knocks it over, and breaks the vase all to pieces. It is broken.

He looks at the disaster. He is filled with regret. He begins to weep. He realizes the damage has been done, and the first thing he tries to do, is to take those broken, pieces and put them together again. And there he is, taking it, piece by piece, in his fingers, and trying to adjust them, and he gets the bottom of it right, and then he puts one piece up and holds it with his left hand, and adjusts another piece, but when he

turns that loose to get another, the first falls; and he tries again, but cannot make the shattered edges fit. It is so badly broken it cannot be put together again; and as the fruitlessness of the undertaking strikes his mind he weeps in despair, "What shall I do?"

His father comes along and finds him in that condition, and says, "Son, what is the matter?" So he tells his father the whole story. The father asks, "Why don't you put it together again?" "I have tried but I cannot." "Well, what are you going to do about it?" "I don't know." And he begins to cry again. And the father says, "If you stay here and cry all night will it put that vase back again? Can any amount of tears that you can shed ever put that back again?" And at once he sees that no drops of grief that he can shed can replace what is broken. The father takes out his check book and draws a check for the amount of that vase and hands it to his son. "Now will you take this and go down to the bank and present it? You need not say a word. Just put it in at the teller's window and he will pay you the money on it; then go and buy another vase." "What, this piece of paper?" "Yes, that piece of paper."

The boy looks at it earnestly and directly begins to believe what his father has said. His mind begins to take in that there is something written on that paper that will replace the damage which he has done. And as he trusts to that he dries his eyes; his burden is gone; he weeps no more. He rushes with rapid feet down to the bank, presents the, paper and draws the money and buys another vase and comes home rejoicing.

Now, that substituted work of another is the end of the damage. It replaces everything. He paid nothing for it; he could do nothing toward it; and he might have wept and cried for a year and it could not have touched the question of putting back the broken vase.

Well, now, that is the way people come to the law of God, broken in a thousand pieces, broken a thousand times, and they say, "I am sorry; God will forgive me because I am sorry." How can He? How can sorrow make atonement? How can any amount of contrition of any kind meet the claims of a law that has been violated? There must be satisfaction rendered, and that satisfaction must be complete; it must meet the case.

And so, when Paul saw these people busying themselves, going about to establish their own righteousness, and their houses toppling down as fast as they built them up, crying and striving, weeping and groaning, adding burden to burden and labor to labor, and never reaching unto the end desired, his soul was filled with deep concern that they were wasting their lives in a profitless undertaking. And hence he presented to them the Lord Jesus Christ after this manner: God saw you were lost. He saw that

the vase of your happiness was shattered in fragments. He saw that you were under the condemnation of His violated law, and He loved you, not because you were good, for you were bad. He did not love you because you were righteous; He loved you as sinners. He did not love you because you were going to be Godly, and while you were ungodly and utterly powerless to justify yourself in the sight of God, Jesus came.

And He says, "Put that to my account. I will pay that." How will He pay it? "I will come into the world just as that man came into the world; I will come as a little babe. I will grow up as a boy. I will become a grown man. I will keep every iota of the supreme law of God without failing in one single particular, and my righteousness will be spotless; there will be no infraction, and when it is finished, my life is ended and the microscope of justice is put upon the most minute thought of my life, upon the most insignificant action of my life, there shall be found no flaw in it."

Holy - holy as God is holy - was the life of the Lord Jesus Christ here upon the earth. There it was, completed, finished - not an additional stitch needed. No man living could add anything to its perfection; in every part of it, it was perfect; and the law of God, looking at it, could find no lack of absolute conformity to the most scrutinizing requirement of the law.

That is one part of it. And now there is a righteousness that is perfect, that comes up to the standard. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." There it is. Look at it. Can you find anything wrong in it? As He himself said to His enemies, "Who of you convicteth me of any sin? Did I sin against my Father? Did I sin against my mother? And even back of that, when I came into the world, did I come into the world with a depraved nature? No. I was not of the seed of man. I was born holy, as no man is born. 'That Holy One, born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.'"

The Holy Ghost overshadowed His mother and He started holy, and lived holy, and died holy. It was an absolutely spotless righteousness. There it was.

Now comes this question: You want to have that put to the credit of a sinner, who stands guilty before the Law; that will make him righteous; but how is that going to pay the penalty of the Law? The Law has said: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

Now, if Jesus Christ had sinned in thought even; any one time in His life, then His death, in our stead, could not have atoned for us, because the law of God required that the victim offered should be without spot or blemish. If He had ever violated one jot or tittle of the law of God in thought, or word or deed, He would have been rejected as an offering to be presented in the place of a sinner. But His life having been perfect, the Lamb having been examined and having been found without spot

or blemish, then, that One having no sin of His own to atone for, having been perfectly righteous himself, He can come in and take the place of another if He chooses to do it, and as a vicarious victim, die for him. According to the Scriptures, Christ died for our sins; the iniquity of us all was put on Him. God made Him to be a sin-offering, who, himself, knew no sin, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Then how am I to be saved? Am I to be saved by saying ten prayers a day, by counting a thousand beads, by paying a thousand dollars, by endowing a school, by building a church, by inflicting chastisement upon my body? How am I to be saved? If I am to be justified in the sight of God, I must be justified in this righteousness imputed to me and in no other way. Therefore it is said that “by the works of the Law shall no man be justified.” No man, no woman. Coming to us He says, “Take what I have done for you and what I have done shall be to you the end of the claims of the Law against you, all of them.”

There are some people who think they can take Christ, but that He doesn't meet all the requirements. They must add a little; they must pay somewhat toward the price; they want to help God in some way, in order to preserve something of the pride and conceit of having wrought out a salvation for themselves. But He will have none of it, none of it. He says your sin can be covered in Christ and in no other way. “Blessed is the man unto whom God imputeth not iniquity. Blessed is the man whose sin is covered.”

Man started unholy. He was shapen in iniquity. He inherited depravity. Christ did not. He was born holy and His holy birth covers your unholy birth. As a little child you did wrong; as a little child He did right and that covers you. As a man you sinned; as a man He did not sin, and that righteousness covers your unrighteousness. And thus you take it and spread it all over the whole length of your guilty life, and it covers all of *your* life; it does not leave any of it exposed to wrath. It is broad enough to cover it all. The sin is covered completely and forever-covered by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

“Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

If that is true, then to be saved requires no great element of time. If that is true salvation, its attainment does not come from afar. There is no descent to the bottom of the ocean for it. Now, some people do that very thing. They say, “I want to be baptized to be saved.” Shall you descend into the deep to bring up Christ? Are you going to find Him by that method? You believe unto righteousness; you trust unto Him, and that is why the Scripture says, “The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with

thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Now, whenever you do trust Him, whenever your soul takes hold of what Christ has done, whenever you come to Him and believe in Him and rely upon Him, there should come to your conscience a sense of freedom from responsibility to that law which you have violated. And when your realization takes hold of the facts; when the subjective equals the objective, you will say, it is met; it is paid; it is all paid; it is paid forever. It needs no repayment; I take it; I accept it; I envelop myself in it; I clothe myself in it from head to foot, and I can do that in a minute just as well as I can in ten years — better.

Zaccheus climbed up a tree a lost man; he came down saved. The jailer at midnight was lost; at daylight he was saved. Three thousand men stood up lost men when Peter began to preach, and at the close of that sermon three thousand men were saved. “They gladly received the word that he preached unto them.”

Now I want to invite you to that righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ as your only hope of justification before God. Do you take it? Will you do it? Think carefully. What better can you do? How can you expect to stand in your own miserable attempt at justification? Well, you say, “If I do that then am I to go on sinning?” I tell you that if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior you will hate sin and you will begin to do right, not to be saved, but because you are saved; not from a principle of fear, but from a principle of love. And you will be willing to lay down your life for Jesus; and you will be willing to keep His commandments; and you will be willing to honor Him in your thought; you will be willing to glorify Him in your eating and drinking and whatever you do. But it will be from the constraining principle of love to One who has saved you, and not that by doing it you may save yourself. Will you come to it? Will you take it?

I now invite every one here dissatisfied with his own method of justification, realizing that you do not attain to anything; that you never find any ease in your own mind, no peace; you have tried that and you see that you do not find it; now I ask you to come, and without any sort of effort at self-justification, absolutely relying upon what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for you.

But you say, “My heart is hard.” I tell you that your heart is melted by looking at Jesus. When you look at Him and His wounds and His death throes, then you begin to groan and weep and cry out, and feel your sinfulness as you never did before. Take Him. My voice is so broken I cannot plead with you, but that is God’s method of justification. I beg you to come tonight. Just come and fix your mind on this one

scripture. Jesus says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." I will give it to you. You are charged nothing for it. You pay nothing for it. Come to me and I will give you rest. The gift of God is eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a gift. O, take it as a gift, and not as something purchased by your tears, or your resolution, or anything upon the earth that you can do. Take it as a free gift and be saved. And when saved and because saved, and from a principle of love, then do good works as much as you please-and you will do them.

The awful sin of this day is that men make a savior out of an ordinance; they make a savior out of the church; they put the church between a sin-sick soul and the Lord Jesus Christ. Never join the church, never be baptized, never partake of the Lord's Supper, never in any way come to anything of this kind as a means of salvation. Come to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus first, then the water. Jesus first, then the church. Jesus and salvation first; then as saved, come and join the church, and in the church glorify the Savior by your life.

It is a stupendous sin for any man, preacher or what not, to put before a lost soul a church as a savior, saying to him, "Here, you come and join the church and be saved in the church. You come and be baptized and be saved in baptism. Come and partake of the Lord's Supper and be converted right in the act of partaking of it." Never! Never! Never! I would not bow down to a wafer and call that God. I would not bow down to any church on the earth and say, "My savior!" Men cannot save you; ordinances cannot save you; Christ first, the Lord Jesus Christ first, and when saved, and because saved, and never until you are saved, join His church.

I invite you to Jesus Christ. He is the Savior. The Lord God drive away from between the sinner and that Savior any office, any ordinance, any institution on the face of the earth, that offers itself as a savior. The church itself is accursed when it assumes to be a savior. An ordinance is a sin when it assumes to be a savior. It is an awful sin; blasphemous sin. Come to the blood of the atonement and let that blood be sprinkled on your soul. Trust in what the Lord Jesus Christ has done, and then when your heart is glad because of this salvation, it will say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do? If thou sayest, 'Be baptized,' I will. If thou sayest, 'Join the church,' I will. If thou sayest, 'Partake of the Lord's Supper,' I will. If thou sayest to preach my gospel to sinners, talk to them, pray for them, I will." But never, never attempt to put on the form of Godliness without the power.

I give it as my deliberate conviction before God, that souls are being lost in this town, and in every other town in this state, by having presented to them something else as savior rather than the Son of God Himself. The church is not the end of the Law to

you. Christ is. Baptism is not the end of the Law to you. Christ is. The Lord's Supper is not the end of the Law to you. Christ is.

***“On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.”***

Even if it is church ground, it doesn't make any difference to me. If you do tonight, thoughtfully, lovingly, trustfully, receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, neither height, nor depth, nor present nor future things, nor principalities, nor powers, nor any other creature can separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

O, the completeness of that salvation; the thoroughness of it! It meets the demands of God's law when nothing else ever does.

I ask you to come to Him. My heart's desire and my prayer to God is that you may be saved, but you cannot be saved, except as you come to the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in Him. And if you will take a step towards it; if you will honestly try this night to lay everything else down; everything in the world; just drop it and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior; if that is what you will try to do, come and give me your hand tonight, and let us kneel down here together and offer up a prayer, such as Paul felt burning in his heart, for salvation through Christ and no other. “For there is no other name known among men under heaven, but that name, by which you can be saved.”

2. SALVATION THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

TEXT: The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and Godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. - ⁵¹²¹Titus 2:11-13.

The object of the theme today is to show the origin, end and the means of salvation. The very term, salvation, implies that men are lost, and so lost that they can not save themselves.

Two things are distinctly affirmed in this context, that salvation is not by works of righteousness which we do ourselves, but that it flows from the grace of God. As Paul expressed it in another context, "By grace are we saved, not of works," putting the two things over against each other again, so we, in determining the first thought of this text, are showing that the origin of salvation is God's love.

The Apostle John expresses the epitome of the gospel when he says, "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." We sometimes allow our conceptions of certain doctrines to limit the range of our thought and the scope of our comprehension of the love of God. Sometimes, it is presented to us as if that love had been superinduced by the work which the Savior did-that the Savior having died for us, secured to us God's love. But that makes the Savior's work the origin of salvation, and contradicts the statement that the Savior was given because God loves us. It is the love of God that caused the Savior's work, and not the Savior's work that brought about God's love.

Again, in our construction of certain passages of scripture, such as "God is angry with the wicked every day," we seem to limit the love of God to the good people. We say He loves the good and hates the bad, which is equivalent to saying, "By works of righteousness which we did ourselves." That not only puts the condemnation of a man on the ground of his evil deeds, but it puts our salvation on the ground of our good deeds and it supposes not that Jesus Christ by His works secured the love of God, but that we by our works secured the love of God.

The Apostle Paul asks the question, "Whoever did first give to him that it might be recompensed again?" Where is there in the annals of history to be found the name of

a man whose own goodness superinduces the goodness of God, so that God's favor to him was an obligation, a debt arising from the piety of the man?

Again, we are disposed to place a limit upon the love as to nations, or as to congregations or sects. But not so the record: "God so loved the world." "The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men." "God willeth (that is, desireth) not the death of any man." Indeed He swears by His own eternal existence that He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked; that His pleasure rather, is that they should turn and live.

The origin of salvation, then, is the love of God; that love not brought about by what the Savior did, but bringing about what the Savior did; that love not brought about by our piety, but our piety brought about by that love; not limited to Jews, but including Gentiles, barbarians, Scythians, bond and free, i.e., the world.

"The grace of God hath appeared." It was often before dimly foreshown. It was adumbrated, i.e., the coming event cast its shadow before. It was obscurely hinted in types, but our Savior Jesus Christ hath brought life and immortality to light. "The grace of God hath appeared," that is, made itself manifest.

No sun that shines in the skies is more apparent and conspicuous. No truth has ever been so demonstrated and published. No proclamation has ever been written in larger letters and carried to greater lengths and extents than the grace of God.

It hath appeared. It appears in the declarations of angels. It appears in the revelation of this Book. It appears in the commission of Jesus Christ. It appears wherever church spires point to the skies. It appears wherever missionaries go. There is no voice nor language where the word of this grace is not heard. It means, to quote the exact meaning of the Greek, for this term is an adjective, and the only time that it is used in the New Testament, "bringing saving to all men." Wide as is the advertisement, wide as is the proclamation, so wide is the proffer of salvation to all men.

Now we are on questions today, of both doctrine and life, not of life versus doctrine, nor of doctrine versus life, but of the doctrine that there may be the right kind of a life, the right kind of a life growing out of the doctrine, the sound doctrine. And it is sound doctrine that the origin of salvation is God's love, and that that love is now made manifest.

Angels once desired to look into the mysteries that today the Sunday School child is familiar with. Prophets themselves forecast things concerning salvation, that they were unable to comprehend, but it is now apparent, brought out of all original

mystery and put in simple and plain language, so that a little child can understand it. The fundamental thought of it is that God, loving all the world, and every man in the world, offers salvation to every man in the world. "I would, therefore, that prayers be offered, supplications and giving of thanks for all men." "Who will have (or desires to have) all men to be saved."

Therefore we ought never to allow any view that we may have of an isolated doctrine to hamper our thought, to restrain our conception of the broadness of God's love, and of the wideness of the offer of salvation.

It is a matter of divine sincerity. Suppose you, as a preacher, open the Book at your commission. You read it: "All authority in heaven and on earth is vested in me. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations." Does God mean that? Do I myself believe that? When I preach must I preach for the salvation of all men? Have I the spirit of Jesus Christ, or have I the spirit of Jonah? When God said to Jonah, "Go and take my message to that great city, Nineveh," Jonah refused to take it. Why did he refuse to take it? He himself says that he refused to take it because he knew God, and that if he took that message and the Ninevites repented, that God would forgive them and save them, and as he did not want them to be saved he would not bear the message.

Jonah did not misunderstand. He did not think God was insincere. He believed that if God sent even a threat to Nineveh, the fact that He sent the threat was an intimation that if they would regard the threat, and break off their sins, and repent of them, and implore His pardon, that He would forgive them—every one of them. But I heard a preacher say that there were men for whom he had no message; that he never had a sermon to preach to a man until there was some proof to his mind that the man was a child of God.

Now, let us consider the next thought in this text. The origin of salvation being God's love, what is the procuring cause of salvation? It is distinctly stated in the text and context, and all through the Bible, that there is but one procuring cause. We need not try to think of a great many things. There is just one thing, and it is the work and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who came on account of God's love and grace into this world.

If any man be saved he is saved on account of what Christ has done and not because of anything that he has done or promises to do. The meritorious basis of salvation is the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now we have gone a long step toward the comprehension of salvation when we settle these two points: What is its origin? What is its meritorious ground? Starting in

God's love, a love revealed, a love bringing salvation and hope, it finds expression and merit in the work of Jesus Christ—that “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” It is not, “Do and live,” but it is, “Live and do.” Moses describes the righteousness which is of the Law, that they which do those things shall live by them, but Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Perhaps you do not always understand the purport of certain persistent questions addressed to candidates for church membership: “On what ground, on what account do you think you are saved? Do you think you are saved because you are sorry for the wrong you have done? Do you think you are saved because you are good? Do you think that you are saved because you have now promised to do good and think you are going to be able to do good, and do you think you are going to be able to do good, and do you think you are saved because of your emotions of joy or peace? What is the basis upon which your hope of salvation rests?” These questions are intended to fix the mind exclusively upon the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, embodied in the act of dying vicariously on the cross for men. Hence we have made, I say, a long step when we settle these two points clearly.

Now comes the next point. Men in their low estate by nature are children of wrath. Their mind is enmity, against God, not subject to His law, neither indeed can be. While Christ's death is the meritorious ground of salvation, the question comes up, “How is this saved man now to be fitted for the heaven which is his home, and for the service into which his salvation proposes to introduce him?” Hear the Scripture again: “Not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but by His grace through” — through what? — “the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

Well, from what flows regenerating grace? It is a question of order here. “Which He shed on us abundantly in Jesus Christ.” As God's love is the origin of Christ's sacrifice, so Christ's sacrifice is the origin of the Spirit's regeneration and cleansing power, put forth to change the nature of men and fit them for the kingdom of God, for service here and for enjoyment hereafter: “The washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” That then is the third thing.

Now what does it mean? If we go back to Ezekiel's time we find that there is involved in the saving of a man, first, a cleansing and then a renewing. To cleanse him by itself would not suffice, for unless he is renewed, as to his nature, he would be like the sow that had been wallowing in the mire. You might wash her with fuller's soap, and yet she would go and wallow in the mire again, because not renewed, being still

a hog. So two things are involved. One is the washing or cleansing, and the other is the renewing.

Ezekiel says, “Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you and you shall be clean. I will take away your stony heart and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit within you.” That is, I will not only wash you and make you clean from all past defilement, but I will renew your nature, so that it will love God where it had hated Him, and desire holiness where it had preferred unrighteousness. That is exactly what is meant in the third chapter of John, “born of water and of the Spirit”

There are two things in the Spirit’s work, a cleansing by the application of the blood of Jesus Christ, symbolically set forth in the water of purification. “Then will I sprinkle clean water,” water of cleansing, water that represents the blood of Christ. “Born of water and Spirit,” is equivalent to saying, “Born of the blood of Christ and of the Spirit,” that is, the Spirit applies the blood of Christ for cleansing purposes, and then by His own power renews the nature, what is called here the “washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

Here arises a question: As the washing here is the washing that does the cleansing, is it not referred to in Zechariah, “In that day a fountain shall be opened in the city of David for sin and for uncleanness?” To this, Cowper in his song alluded when he said,

*“There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.”*

This is the clean water of Ezekiel, the clean water that typified the blood of Christ, not meaning pure water, not clean in that sense, but cleansing water — water for cleansing — which consisted of the ashes of a heifer, mingled with water, typifying blood. Hence Paul says, “If the sprinkling of the ashes of an heifer sanctify to the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ purge your consciences from dead works to serve the true and the living God.” Then, “born of water,” in the third chapter of John, refers to the blood of Christ, set forth in the image of cleansing water, water of purification, which also shows the connection between regeneration and the Word of God. For we get to that cleansing through faith, and faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, and therefore Paul says, “By the washing of water through the Word.”

Then to put it in plain English, whenever I hear the gospel preached, whenever Jesus Christ is held up before me in faithful preaching, and I in my heart believe it, there has

taken place in me that part of the work of the Holy Ghost, which is called purging the conscience from dead works by the application of the blood of Christ — that part of the work which in this text here is called the washing of regeneration, and is called the washing by the Word, and hence it makes the Word of God an instrument in the salvation of men, and therefore it is said, “Of His own will begat He us through the Word.”

Whatever may be the view of it from the divine side, a man comes in touch with this wonderful love of God, which produces this wonderful sacrifice of Christ, from which flows this wonderful work of the Holy Spirit — a man comes in contact with that when the Word of God is preached, and in his heart he believes it.

It is on this wise. It does not say, “Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down here so that I can get at Him in person.” It does not say, “Who shall descend into the deep and bring Christ up so that I can get at Him in person.” But what does it say? “The Word is nigh thee, even in thy month and in thy heart, the Word of faith which we preach.” “If thou shalt believe in thy heart that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead thou -shall be saved.”

Now we see that salvation originates in the love of God, that from that love of God comes the wonderful sacrifice of Christ, that from that wonderful sacrifice, in order to make it efficacious, there is the Spirit’s work of two kinds, the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, the cleansing and the renewal, and that this cleansing part is apprehended on our side when we believe.

It comes by faith, and that solves the very question propounded by Nicodemus. When Jesus said that a man must be born from above, that he must be born of water and of the Spirit, Nicodemus says, “How can these things be?” What is the *modus operandi*? Jesus says that “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life.”

That is how it is done. That is how a man is born of the Spirit. That is how he comes in touch with the salvation which God has provided. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

So, if from your heart you accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you need not waste any time over the question as to whether you are regenerated, because you could not be regenerated if that thing had not occurred. The washing of regeneration is through the Word, and the Word is apprehended by faith, and I need not puzzle a child’s mind about but one thing. Here is Christ set forth before your *eyes* as crucified for you. Do you accept Him? Does your soul receive Him? Do you say,

“My Lord and my God?” Then you need not bother about election and predestination and regeneration.

How then can these things be? They are just that way. That is the Savior’s own explanation of it. I prefer His method of explaining it to all of the obscure and the endless metaphysical discussions of the subject in more than eighteen hundred years by the learned doctors of divinity who have spent scores of years to put their thoughts beyond the understanding of the people.

Now let us come to the next point. What is the end of all this? I am going to make an application of it directly that ought to startle some members here. Here is the end of it: “Who gave himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works.” “The grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men.” The origin, the merit, the efficiency, the instrumentality, have all been set forth. Now what is the end of it? That He might redeem us from all iniquity.

Now to redeem means to buy back. You cannot use that word redeem in its etymological sense and exclude the idea of purchase. You cannot use it and exclude the idea of a purchase under an execution. That is to say, if a property is sold under a tax law, you redeem it and buy it back from under the execution. If a man has been captured in battle, you ransom him—you buy him back for a consideration given by you. He is bought back from captivity—from under the execution of his situation.

Redemption involves in its very etymology not only the idea that the thing redeemed had been lost, but that it was a lawful captive, and that it is purchased back. Purchased back how? Upon what consideration? Not gold and silver and precious stones, but the precious blood of Jesus Christ, says Peter. That was the price paid.

But the end? When you bought it back, when you redeemed this man, when God’s grace appeared flashing its light over the darkness of this world, when God’s merit in Christ astounded the world, what was the object? What was the end? “That He might purify unto himself, for His own possession, a people zealous of good works.”

So you understand what Paul meant when he says, “I want you to speak the things that befit sound doctrine.” If a man has the form of Godliness and denies the power of it, he is a heretic. If a man professes the faith of the gospel and in works is reprobate, his life is — a lie. It is more than that. It is awful blasphemy and sacrilege. Why? Where is the sacrilege in it, the blasphemy in it? It says this to God: “You love me. You gave the Savior to die for me in consequence of that love. You paid a tremendous price, and on account of that price, to make it efficacious, you sent forth the Holy Spirit, and He cleansed me from past iniquity and renewed me within, and

though I am cleansed and renewed within, being a new man, my works are just like they were before. Your good fountain sends out impure water.”

You have heard the instance of a man’s being indicted before his church. Charges were preferred against him for heresy. The specification was that he was a heretic on the doctrine of election and predestination. “Why,” he says, “I don’t think about anything else, and I don’t preach anything else but that.” “Yes, but you don’t preach the Bible doctrine of election and predestination. The election of God is unto good works. The predestination of God is that you may be conformed to His image. But the kind of election and predestination you are preaching and illustrating is. an election and predestination that work no reformation in the life, and does not make God’s own possession zealous of good works.” Now you can see how easy it was to convict him of heresy, and he was a heretic — the worst kind of a heretic.

The grace of God instructing us-instructing us what? A denial, which is a passive form, and a doing, which is an active form. The grace of God hath appeared bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, that we should deny ungodliness and worldly lust, the negative part; that we should live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world, the active part, and “looking for the glorious hope and appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.” That is the attitude toward the other world. In this present world denying certain things and doing certain things, and as to the other world, looking, hoping, longing, anticipating, moving toward it, and expecting to enter into it.

Oh, immortality, immortality, what a thought! The man that believes in it, the man that believes that he is deathless, that death makes no break in the continuity of his being, that this world is but a stepping stone to another world, that this is temporal and that eternal, that here he denies one thing and does another thing, and looks to the appearing and glorious hope of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ!

I say to you today, brethren, that when I turn my mind toward that glorious hope, toward the nearness and certainty of that appearing of the great God, our Savior Jesus Christ, when I think how fleet are the days that belong to the temporal, how eternal that which belongs to another world, my heart glows as I hear His grace say, “Be faithful a little while. Do not become discouraged. Do not become weary in well doing. Do not lose heart. Do not give up. Do not run away. Do not skulk. Do not go into the brush. Fight the good fight of faith, looking for that glorious hope and the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Now, that is salvation in its entirety, commencing at the fountain, God’s love, going to the stream that flows from that fountain, Christ’s meritorious sacrifice, down the stream to the lake which is made up of the streams representing the work of the Holy

Spirit in cleansing and renewing, and then the life that results from that denial of ungodliness and worldly lust, the active part of it, living soberly and righteously in this present world, which is a little while and will soon pass.

Ah, me! If our ship, storm-tossed and tempest-shaken, if the ship could but realize that we do not cast the anchor on an earthly bottom, but send it to yonder eternal shore, and fasten it to the coming of Jesus Christ, then would our hope be an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. That is Paul's argument The anchor of your hope cast forward, and *every* day you pull on the cable you come nearer, nearer to the port, nearer to the landing on the other shore, nearer to the light which has no night, nearer to the joys which have no sorrows, nearer to the body which has no aches and pains, nearer to Jesus and the spirits of the just made perfect. Pull on the cable and bring the ship nearer to the future, looking forward and hastening unto that great hope end appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

3. WHEREFORE THEN THE LAW?

TEXT: Wherefore then the law? - ~~RBB~~ Galatians 3:19.

The “wherefore” is based upon the preceding statement that the covenant of grace antedated the law by 430 years; and another statement that no man can be justified by the law; and another statement that ye are not under the law but under grace; and yet another statement that you received the Spirit through faith and not the words of the law. Hence the pertinence of the question, “Wherefore then the law?” What purpose did the law serve?

Try to get, first of all, a scene before your minds. The Arabian Peninsula has about 22,500 square miles. It is a triangle. The Southern part of the triangle is a high table land, 4,000 feet above the sea, and the mountains tower 2,500 feet still higher. Now, in that triangle of the Arabian Peninsula, there is a place perfectly level, two miles long and half a mile wide. On three sides of it this level place is enclosed by a mountain, rising somewhat abruptly, and at the far end of it, a solitary, tremendous peak uplifts itself 6,500 feet above the sea. That was the scene of the giving of the law.

On that level place, two miles long and half a mile wide, the millions of Israel were gathered. On that mountain peak at the end of this plain, the cloud and pillar of fire settled to indicate God’s presence there. God on the mountain, Israel on the plain — and that mountain has always been an historic one. There Moses was prepared for the ministry of the leadership of Israel for forty years and in its neighborhood the next forty years of his life were spent. There Elijah came after he was driven away by the threats of Jezebel, and, like Moses, fasted forty days and nights. And there, I believe, our Savior fasted forty days and nights in His preparation for His work. And certainly there the Apostle Paul spent three years of his life in preparation for his work.

The Crusader and the Saracen fought around the foot of the mountain. Mistaken piety erected convents on that mountain, and there, not a great while ago, was discovered an ancient manuscript of the Bible, in that old convent on the mountain. Such the scene and such the history of the mountain.

The time when that law was announced I can give you a date that you will have no trouble recalling 1491 years before Christ, God gave that law on Mount Sinai; 1491 years after Christ, Columbus discovered America. Thirty-four centuries ago, what

we call the law was given-the law concerning which the question is asked, “Wherefore then the law?” Why was it given?

The people of Israel had been wandering from the time of the faith of Abraham unto the time of this giving of the law, 430 years, and now being delivered from Egyptian bondage, and having been trained in hunger and thirst, and sickness and war, and being made to feel that in any of these trials God was sufficient, He now, while great clouds gather over the top of this mountain, mighty thunderings are heard, and the blackness is gored by the vivid flashes of lightning, in a voice that every man could hear distinctly, the most penetrating voice that ever fell upon human ear, made an overture to the people, and that overture was this: “Will you enter into a covenant of life with God? God will announce, so that you can hear every word He says, just what you will do on your part to carry out this covenant, and He will announce on His part what He will do to carry out this covenant. Now, will you do it?” And the people said that they would. The overture was accepted.

Then He said, “Take three days to prepare. Let every one wash his body and wash his clothes, and come clean before God; and do not come until you hear the sound of the trumpet. No earthly lips will blow it, but the sound can not be mistaken. It will be the sound of a trumpet, and when you hear that trumpet, come up and stand before that mountain, and God will come down on the mountain; but don’t touch it, and don’t let a beast touch it. You won’t see any similitude of God. You will see evidences that He is there, and every one of you will hear what He says.”

And so on the third day the people came, as prescribed, and when the mountain began to stagger like a drunken man, when it began to shake and tremble, when the blackest clouds covered it from summit to base, when the thunder reverberated through all that peninsula, suddenly, clearer than the thunder, rang out on the air the unearthly sound of a trumpet, and the record says it waxed louder and louder. There will be no other trumpetsound like that until the archangel blows the trumpet and wakes the dead.

And from out that cloud came a voice, and that voice pronounced ten words-the Ten Commandments, we call them. He announced, one after another, the ten words of the law, and the people became more terrified at the voice than at the trumpet, and Moses himself said, “I do exceedingly quake and tremble.” And the people said, “Don’t let us hear that voice any more. You go and commune with God and hear what He says, and you come and tell us.” And so Moses sent the people back and he went up and communed with God. God told him the ten words and then God took two pieces of granite, about 27 inches long by 18 inches wide, perfectly smooth, and on them, with His own finger, He wrote in the Hebrew language the ten

words. But in the meantime Moses had written them. It was Moses' copy that the people had. God's copy was for an entirely different purpose.

Moses wrote the Ten Commandments and then wrote all of the elaborations of the Ten Commandments that God announced to him during forty days, the Ten Commandments being the constitution, the elaborations being the statutes evolved from the ten, harmonious with the ten, and all of the enactments in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy (and there are hundreds of them) are but statutes derived from the constitutional law, the Ten Commandments.

Moses wrote the first constitution, the ten sections; then he wrote what he called the judgments—that is, the judgments derived from interpreting the Ten Commandments — and on a day appointed, the people again came before God; and Moses read from his copy (not from God's copy) both the constitution and the statutes, and an altar was erected, and sacrifices were slain, and the blood of the victims was sprinkled first upon the altar, and then upon the Book of the Covenant, and then upon the people; and by this solemn religious ceremony the covenant of life records upon the part of the people with God was ratified.

This covenant they shall keep - every one of the ten words - and all of the subsidiary legislation growing out of the ten words. They agreed that if they violated any one precept, the covenant was broken. They admitted the solidarity of the law, that he that is guilty in one point is guilty in all. It was only necessary to put in the evidence that he had failed at one point, that just one link of the chain was broken, and he must die.

The law is spiritual. The commandment is exceedingly broad. It relates not merely to the overt act. It takes cognizance of the heart, of its desires. Thou shalt not covet thou shalt not desire — thy neighbor's goods, anything that thy neighbor has. Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not hate with the malice to kill; whosoever hateth is a murderer. The law is spiritual.

When that covenant was read and blood was sprinkled upon the Book and upon the people and upon the altar, all the parties to it were bound. God is bound by the blood on the altar. The people are bound by the blood sprinkled on themselves, and Moses tells them plainly, "They that do these things shall live by them. Whosoever faileth to do any one of them shall die. I call heaven and earth to witness that in this Book of the Covenant I have set before you life and death. To *obey* is life. To disobey is death."

The capital thought, the governing thought in the whole matter, is that the Ten Commandments constituted a covenant, a covenant of mutual obligation, and that it

was a covenant of life and death. It was solemn engagement, ratified by blood, and the people said, "We will do this and we invoke on our heads the penalty of not doing it, and we take the oath of the covenant, made sacred by the witnessing of blood, that we deserve, and upon us and our children may come, all the recompense of reward in the way of penalty, if we do not comply with every jot and tittle of this law."

Well, what then did God's copy amount to? He wrote His, as I told you, on tables of stone. The people broke the covenant, and the covenant being broken, Moses broke the copy, which was a witness, and then Moses came and pleaded: "If thou wilt, forgive these people-if not, blot my name out of thy book." He meant everything that he said. He did not mean, "Kill my body." He did mean, "Exclude me from the land of Canaan." He meant all that is involved in the word death, and banishment from God. He was the type of the Redeemer, in that he offered to die for his people.

God forgave the people that breach of the covenant, and the covenant was renewed and God wrote another copy. Moses wrote a copy for use among the people, but God wrote a copy for A witness. The Ten Commandments that God wrote were deposited in the Ark of the Covenant. *They* were not read by the people. They were in God's handwriting. They were the witnesses of the compact. And when the nation ultimately and permanently violated the covenant, then there went away God's copy, and no man knows what became of it, and it is utterly immaterial. It would serve no purpose if we had it. We have Moses' copy. God's copy was a witness of the compact, and the compact being broken, broken is the tablet of the witness.

Now comes up this question of our text. Before this law was given was there not a way of life, through mercy, held out to the people? Yes, 430 years before. And was not that way of life to be through faith? Yes. Wherefore then the law? Why was that law enacted? Why were the people permitted to go into that covenant? God knew they would not keep it. God knew that on account of the weakness of the flesh they could not keep it. You could not now. Only one man ever did, and that is the man Jesus Christ. Wherefore then the law?

Now I ask your patient attention to the following thought: When we say the law, we mean that law as then promulgated and written. Why promulgated and reduced to writing? That is what that meant. But the promulgation of these ten words, and the writing of them by Moses and the writing of them by God himself, did not create the obligations they imposed. The obligation of that law did not commence with its announcement and was not dependent upon the people's knowledge of it for validity.

Law is law, not because it is put in the form of a statute, but it is put in the form of a statute because it is law.

Law is not law because you know it, but you should know it because it is law. The intent in the mind of the Creator when He brings a being into existence, is the law, at the last analysis, that governs. Whether it shall afterwards be expressed in a statute depends, but when it is so expressed and so published, that expression and that publication do not originate obligation. Obligation arises from the nature of the being and his relation to God.

So then, the question I ask, “Wherefore then the law?” means, “Wherefore the written law?” Not law *per se*, not law as embodied in the mind of God, but wherefore put that law in writing, and announce it, and make it known to the people? What is the object of that? The intent of the Creator when He makes a being, is the law of that being, whether that being knows anything about the law or not, and if that being is one who propagates his species, then that intent, as the primal law, is binding upon that posterity to the remotest generation, and that posterity is under that law, entirely regardless of environment.

Environment may be favorable or unfavorable. If it be favorable, nothing is added to the commandment; if it be unfavorable, nothing is taken from the commandment. It is a fixed quantity, being the intent of God when He made man. If some of that posterity, through an ancestor, however remote, has inherited certain vicious propensities and tendencies to evil, that does not modify the law an atom. Over that child, inheriting from an ancestry a predisposition to evil, weak through the flesh, the law of God, in its unclouded serenity, shines just as bright as it does over an angel in heaven. No jot of it, no tittle of it, at any time, or under any circumstances, upon any descendant of the original man, is for one moment mitigated.

Now, as man has fallen, as his posterity are weak through the flesh, as now they cannot keep that law, wherefore write it out, accompanying its promulgation with thunder and lightning and trumpet and voice? Why ratify it solemnly with blood? Well, the answer is that the object is to bring out in a written code, clearly expressed, the original intent of the Creator in making man.

That written code was added because of transgression. Now what does that mean? It was added because of the transgression. It was added to discover the transgressor. Paul said, “I had not known sin except by the law,” i.e., when that law said, “Thou shalt not covet,” and he had that in writing, as he had that statute of God before him, why that revealed to him how much he had been transgressing. The law was added then because of transgression — that is, with a view to disclose transgression.

Here were the fallen descendants of a fallen ancestor, continually crossing the path of rectitude, now to the right hand, now to the left hand, not knowing they were in sin; and their knowledge did not affect the question of sin, not knowing that they were continually going against the law. The law now was added in order that these transgressions might be made manifest; as if men in the dark had been continually going out of the path, and light comes and shines down, revealing a straight and narrow path, revealing the pitfalls and quagmires to the right and to the left.

The object of the law was to disclose, to make known, the sin of which the man had been guilty; not only to disclose it, but to disclose it as exceedingly sinful; that sin might be made to appear as sin—that it might be stripped of its disguises, that it might stand in its own naked reality and deformity and beastliness and ghastliness, as odious and abominable in the sight of God.

A standard was brought and placed by the side of men to help them to walk and follow a light, and that straight rule would instantly reveal any deviation, as that plumb-line, let down from the top of the wall going up, would show whether that wall had been going up straight. It was judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet. The object of the law was to bring out the inequality, the deviation, the irregularity, the sins of men, and make them appear to be sin.

Now, the real law was there all the time, but the man did not know it. Wherefore then serveth the law—that is, the written law, the promulgated law, the Sinaitic law? It was to show that all mankind had gone astray—that there was none that did good, no, not one. No man loved God with all his heart. No man loved his neighbor as himself.

The shining of that light upon the lost world brought out the startling fact that among the descendants of Adam there was not one — no, not one — that could expect to be acquitted at the judgment bar of God on his own righteousness. Wherefore, says the Apostle, “The law was our school-master to bring us to Christ.” How that? If a man who has no clear light, and has no conception of the broadness and spirituality of the commandment, whose standard of righteousness has been lowered to his own life; if that man is under the delusion that when he comes and stands before the judgment bar of God, he will be acquitted and not condemned, I am sure you can never induce him to look to a Savior; but if you can take that man and drag him to the mountain that smoked and was crested with fire and shaken with thunder, and if you can turn that mountain over on him, with its denunciations and penalties, if he can hear that trumpet and hear that voice, and see how exacting is law, how undeviating is law, how holy and just and good is law, then he will know that he is a lost soul in himself. He will know that. He says, “The case is already against me. It is already adjudicated. I am gone. Who will deliver me?”

By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. On account of the weakness of the flesh, on account of a fallen nature, the mind cannot be in harmony with God. The carnal mind is enmity against Him and not subject to His law, and neither, indeed, can be. The revelation of the law is a revelation of death. "I was alive without the law once," said Paul; that is, "I did not know it, but when the commandment came sin was made apparent and I died. I saw myself a dead man, a lost man."

Prior to any looking toward Christ, must come the conviction that you are lost. Conviction of sickness precedes an appeal to a physician; conviction of death precedes an appeal to a Savior; conviction of bondage precedes appeal to a liberator. "Wherefore then serveth the law?" "The law is our schoolmaster unto Christ." It, by showing us the utter groundlessness of any hope of salvation in ourselves, our unworthiness, our fallen nature, our utter and hopeless condemnation, makes us see our ruin, when a voice says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Now, I come to a thought that you may not be willing to accept, but it is true. If, then, God knew man could not keep that law as a covenant of life, when a man becomes a Christian, is he under that law? The Apostle says, "Wherefore you are not under the law, but are under grace." Does that mean that when it says, "Thou shalt love God," I am not bound to do it? That when it says, "Thy shalt honor thy father and thy mother," I am not bound to do it? That when it says, "Thou shalt not kill," that I am under no obligation to restrain a murderous hand? No sir, it does not mean that. Well, what does it mean then?

It means that I am not under the law as a covenant of life. That is what it means.

The writer to the Hebrews says that we are not come to that mountain, that smoke, that fire. We do not enter into an obligation that if we fail in any particular that we are lost. We are not under it as a covenant of life, but as a standard of righteousness we are under it, and if we go to hell we will be under it. In hell that law, that original intent in the mind of God, as to its *oughtness* will be just as when God first made man. But if we go to heaven, in heaven, brought there by grace, the *oughtness* of the Ten Commandments will be our standard of righteousness there.

There never will come a time when it will be right for us not to love God. There never will come a time when it will cease to be wrong for us to dishonor our parents. There never will be a time under any economy when it will be proper for us to covet anything that is our neighbor's.

Well, what follows then? Now, here is the thought that I said that you might not be willing to accept-that as the law was the schoolmaster unto Christ, so Christ is the

schoolmaster under the law. I mean to say that Christ's work, all of it — the obedience — part of it, the dying-part, of it, the sacrificial part of it, the intercession, the whole of it, from His birth to His glorification is designed to bring us ultimately into a state of conformity, in heart, life and action, with that unchanging law; and He is a schoolmaster under that law.

How does that operate? You are not under the law as a covenant of life, but you are under the law to grace, and the first thing that grace does for you, of which you have any consciousness, is the work of the Holy Spirit upon your heart, convicting you of sinning against these very Ten Commandments. That is the first thing. Then when your nature, by regeneration is changed, what is the object of the change? It is to give you a disposition to keep the law, or the Ten Commandments, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself. That is the object of it. That is the work of grace.

You do not by faith make void that law. It is the object of faith to bring you into conformity with the law. By your regeneration a new nature is given, a new life is implanted, and the outgoings of that life are longings after conformity to the law. You no longer say, "I hate God," but "Oh, how I love Him!" You no longer say, "I hate my neighbor," but "I love him. I am grieved that I do not love him more. I am grieved that I fall short in my duty to my neighbor."

So Christ is the schoolmaster under the law. He is reversing the process now. You are doing it imperfectly. You are falling short in loving God and in loving your neighbor. You are falling short on every one of these Ten Commandments, but your mind, your inner man, is in harmony with Him. Your mind approves it. You wish you could do it. You want to do it. You try to do it.

Now comes in the next work of grace, and that is the work of sanctification. What does that work do? That makes a man love God more and more. That makes him love his neighbor more and more. That process continually goes on and on, until he comes to the last lesson of death, and then the soul goes into the presence of God.

And what is the state of that soul in the presence of God? John says, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that had been slain for their testimony to Jesus." Paul says, "Thou art coming unto the spirits of the just made perfect." What is made perfect? Why, that soul up there loves God supremely. That soul keeps the Ten Commandments.

When Christ was the schoolmaster under the law, the object of what He did was to bring that soul back into conformity to that law, and when that body sleeps and rots and moulds and decays and turns to dust, and ages elapse, and that voice of the

trumpet is heard again, unlike anything else on earth, and those dead people wake up, they wake up in what condition? They were sown in weakness. The law could not be performed on account of the weakness of the flesh. *They* were sown in weakness. They were raised in power. They were sown in dishonor. They were raised in honor. They were sown in corruption. They were raised in incorruption. They were sown mortal. They were raised immortal. And now that body like that spirit is in complete conformity with the law.

Sinai may thunder on the portals of hell; it may frown in clouds of ominous blackness, and growl in thunder and glare in lightning; but the raised body, reunited to the soul, can come up in front of it and say, "O Sinai, I am in perfect accord with every requirement you make."

I say that the object of Christ's death is that you may escape the penalty of the law broken, but not intending to turn criminals loose; not intending to snatch murderers and liars and adulterers from the jaws of death and let them remain liars and thieves and murderers, to the great confusion of the universe, but to remake them, that they may be, not murderers, not liars, not thieves, but pure and holy men. That is what Christ does.

Now you see the truth of what I said, that the law is the intent in the mind of the Creator when He made the man; that the subsequent expression of that intent in a statute did not originate obligation, but that it was subsequently expressed in a statute to bring out lack of conformity, to make it appear that conformity had not been, and to drive the nonconformist to a Redeemer, and then, through the power of that Redeemer, working through the Holy Spirit, to refit him inside and out, until he is at last in full co-operation with every requirement of that law.

So faith does not make void the law. It conforms to it, and the law is not against the promises, and the promises are not against the law. And I will tell you that you deceive yourself with an antinomian delusion if you think that because Christ was made the curse of the law for you, that therefore you can go on and love sin. If that work has been efficacious in you, you have now a mind that hates sin. You have a mind that loves God. You have a mind that wants to do right.

I tell you, brethren, you could not do any better than to go and get that old Presbyterian catechism on the Ten Commandments and study it and teach it to every one of your children. I tell you those Ten Commandments constitute the standard of righteousness in heaven, and they will remain the standard of righteousness over the lowest hell. There never, never will be a time when any of those ten words will lose any of their obligatory force. That is why, all over this earth, rulers and statesmen lift their hats when *they* go to Matthew Sinai, when they look at those Ten

Commandments, as the sublimest expression of the principles of law the human ear ever heard, the human eye ever saw, the human heart ever conceived of.

It is true that you are not under the law in the covenant of life. It is true that the law as a standard of righteousness never changes. It is true that the object of grace is to make you square with that standard ultimately. It will put you there. But there is the sin of unbelief. There is the justification of hell, that men are not able to keep the law, and their inability not disproving its righteousness, for it is holy and just and good, and it cannot be lowered, not an atom, not a jot, not a tittle.

Law is law, and those men that cannot keep it, and with an unrenewed nature turn away from Christ, who removed the curse of that law through His death on the cross, and who by the Spirit renews the fallen nature, giving a love for God and man, and by sanctification perfects the love for God and man, they, by unbelief in Jesus Christ, have earned and richly deserve and certainly will receive the eternity of hell.

That man is a rank anarchist, that man is an advocate of confusion, for social rottenness and world destruction, that says, "I do not need Christ. I do not need my nature renewed. I need no atoning blood. I need no Holy Spirit to regenerate and sanctify." And all his life he walks high-stepping through the world, and he says, "I believe in law. I believe in a man's bearing the penalty of wrong doing, and I stand on my record."

Well, let him stand on it, and if that law does not show him to be exceedingly sinful, if it does not show that he has broken every one of the Ten Commandments, if it does not show that he has broken them in spirit and in letter, if it does not show that he has broken them in all of his life, if it does not show that he has broken them in nature and in practice, then there is no such thing as the manifesting power of light.

And God could not — I speak reverently of Omnipotence God could not save a man and leave him a bad man.

He could not pardon a man and turn a criminal loose on society, on the universe. If he saves him, He must save him by works of grace, bringing him back into perfect correspondence with every requirement of the law of God.

Ever since my mother took my childish hands and held them while I knelt at her knee and repeated those ten words, "Thou shalt have no other God before me; thou shalt make no graven image to fall down and worship it; thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; honor thy father and thy mother; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet anything that is thy

neighbor's," from the day that my mother taught me those ten words they have been to me as the one unvarying standard of real righteousness, and all that Christ has done for me so far has been in the direction of bringing me into conformity to it.

When His work is ended and my soul is sanctified, being now regenerated; when it is made perfect, and when my body is raised from the dead, and sanctified soul and body I stand before God, then I will love God with all my heart, and I will love my neighbor as myself, and the commandments of God will show clear through, ten thousand times more powerful than an X-ray, and find nothing in me at variance with its requirements. That is my answer to the question, "Wherefore then the law?" Let us pray.

4. THE BEWITCHING POWER OF SATAN

TEXT: O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? - ~~xxx~~ Galatians 3:1.

I wish to make a few statements before discussing the text. The first relates to peoples. There is a difference in the characteristics of peoples. "Galatians" — that is what a Greek would say. A Latin writer would have written it "Gauls." A modern writer would have said, "Frenchmen, O foolish Frenchmen." That is to say, the people to whom this letter was written were French people, or Gauls.

The history of their migration from France to Asia Minor is a wonderful history. Some time look it up and read it. But in their wanderings they always retained their national characteristics, a mercurial people, easily excited, easily cooled off again; now way up yonder and now way down there; fired one moment by enthusiasm and suffering deep mental depression another day. You will find that to be the character of these people, whether you read Caesar of Thierry.

The second statement which I wish to make is one of philosophy. This text speaks about the presentation of a great tragedy, and the statement I wish to make is that nothing ever deeply influences the human heart but tragedy.

It is utterly impossible for comedy to strive against tragedy in attracting human attention and in holding it. A comic speaker pleases the first time you hear him, but woe to the man if he tells his jokes over a second or third time. You can go to the theater and listen one time to Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors," but you cannot go and hear it three times in succession. But you can hear "Richard III" or "Macbeth," or any other in which there is some tragedy, a thousand times.

Hence the great sculptors and painters have found their immortality when their subjects have represented some mighty tragedy, such as Prometheus chained to the cold rocks of Mount Causasus, the Last Supper with the shadow of the coming tragedy resting upon the brow of the Son of God, Laocoon around whose body and the bodies of whose children the serpents from the sea have wrapped themselves and are crushing them to death.

These and other great masterpieces show that if you want to attract the attention of mankind, you must present to them a tragedy and not a comedy. It is a pity that public speakers do not pay more attention to this. It is an exceedingly small ambition, the ambition to be a witty speaker.

There was presented a tragedy to these mercurial Galatians nearly two thousand years ago. Christ Jesus crucified was evidently set forth before them, and the effect of it was wonderful. That same tragedy presented now has a wonderful effect, and it will have until the subject of the tragedy shall come the second time, without sin unto salvation.

Now my third statement is this: One of the most ordinary incidents of religious life is the lapse, from an early profession of religion. We hold a meeting of many days and by varied service, of sermon, song and prayer, we seek to convert our hearers. An interest is awakened, crowds attend, and in the course of time quite a number profess to be converted. Time passes on and there is a lapse on the part of many who profess to be converted.

A second meeting comes, and not all — never all — of those who had lapsed, but a considerable number of them come back and are restored again, some of whom lapse again.

A third meeting, and not all of those who were restored that second time — never all of them — but a considerable number of them are restored a third time. And so the matter goes on, meeting after meeting, and each period of falling away that follows the meeting eliminates some of the number who originally made a profession of faith. The sifting process that follows a protracted meeting eliminates some forever and ever. They never do come back.

Now, did you ever think of this, that there is never any lapse from an intellectual profession of faith, never any lapse on the part of a ritualistic professor of faith? Never. The lapses always take place in those denominations which insist upon a supernatural faith in Jesus Christ, and who insist upon what is called regeneration.

There are these two distinct elements in the profession of faith: I not only profess to personally believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is my Savior, but I do profess that I have been changed internally in my disposition and spirit. Now the lapse indicates these two distinct elements. Generally it is on the second element; that is, the evidence that relates to the internal change and it comes in this way: The reason that I professed to be a Christian was I had certain emotional evidences — evidences that touched the affections. I had certain peace of mind. I had certain joy of heart. I had certain fervor of spirit. Therefore I professed to be changed. Now in the course of time that peace seems to be gone and that fervor seems to be gone, and that joy seems to be gone, and as the original profession of the change was based upon their presence, so their absence leads me to doubt my conversion.

I say that the lapse takes place oftenest on the second element of the profession, that which relates to an internal change, whose symptoms or evidences are of an emotional kind. Hence that song,

*“Where is the blessedness I knew,
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word?”*

*“What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still;
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill.”*

Now this text has to do with the question of falling away. The Apostle Paul, on his way through Asia Minor, in a very disappointing way to himself, was taken very ill, and while suffering great bodily illness and from the interruption to his journey, he commenced to preach in Galatia, and he preached so as to establish quite a number of churches, the churches of Galatia. And he was astounded at the warm reception of the gospel and how gladly the people heard it; how they stood and listened to every word.

And he held up before them as a plan of salvation a tragedy, Jesus Christ on the cross, and he pointed to them the blood that flowed from the veins of the dying Son of God as the basis of eternal life. He pointed them out a salvation which was by grace through faith, and assured them that faith in that dying Redeemer would bring them internal evidences of peace and rest and joy, and they had it.

Now, Paul went on his journey and soon word came that there had been a fearful lapse all over that section of country. They had turned away from that gospel which he had preached unto them, of salvation by grace through faith, of salvation through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had turned away from that and had taken up the Old Testament ceremonies as a basis of salvation. Now this provokes his letter and this brings out his question, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you ... before whose eyes Jesus Christ was set forth evidently, crucified, among you?”

Notice that to change from the gospel that he preached to them to the ritualism that they adopted after he left, was a marvel to him. He says, “I marvel; it is a wonder to me; it is a phenomenon. I marvel that you should so soon be removed from the gospel which was preached unto you unto another gospel which is not a gospel.” He says it was not only a marvel, but it was a folly: “O foolish Galatians!” There was something irrational and illogical in it.

Now let us very briefly consider the elements of the folly. What are the things that made it an extremely illogical and irrational thing to do? First, he says, “You are fallen from grace. I presented unto you a plan of salvation by grace and not of works. It comes from the favor and mercy of God. And now you have turned back to a system of salvation by works. That is foolish. You don’t commence with grace and end in works.”

Not only this, but he says, “When I preached unto you salvation by grace you received the Spirit. Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? And if you receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith then let me ask you, what is the reason that you should go back to the works of the law that never could confer the Spirit? It is unreasonable. It indicates that you are fools to think that you could commence in the Spirit and make yourselves perfect in the flesh. It would be as if you had commenced to fly and then turned back to crawl.”

He says it is foolish in that it is the voluntary surrender of freedom for bondage. “You have replaced a yoke on you your fathers could not bear and which no man was ever able to bear. You were freed from that yoke, and now, when I left you as free men, shouting and rejoicing in the glory of that freedom, I hear that you have voluntarily put on yourselves the chains of bondage again. It is wonderful that men would do that. It is foolish that they would do it. Not only does the folly consist in this, but you have gone back from the older covenant of God to the younger. That covenant of grace which antedated the giving of the law, that covenant of grace which reaches back to the Garden of Eden, you have laid aside, and have left Calvary to stand under Mount Sinai. It is foolishness.

“Not only this, but you have given up the estate of sons in order to go back and be servants, to be under tutors. Those ceremonial requirements served their purpose in their day and time. They were to be kept up, even by those who saw through them, and had true faith, until the object of faith should come, the Lord Jesus Christ.” For Paul says in the context: “The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come (i.e., Jesus, the object of faith) we are no longer under a schoolmaster (i.e., of types and shadows).” Then, indeed, “the heir” being a child, “differed nothing from a servant *but* was under tutors and governors.” But now to go back and observe the days and months, and new moons and seasons and years, that pertain to a ceremony of types and shadows, after the Substance has come, is profound folly and stupidity.

Not only this, but your folly is manifest in the waste of your sufferings. You suffered a great many things in order to believe in Jesus, Christ as your Savior. It was not

popular. You were persecuted for becoming Christians. All that suffering was in vain, if your present course is the right course.

Finally he said their folly consisted in this: If your object in going back to that practical and personal plan for salvation is to secure practical and personal righteousness, then you have made yourselves bigger fools than in the other particular. Perfect righteousness is only to be attained by faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. But if you want to be more nearly conformed to the Ten Commandments in your own actual life, you can do this more readily by starting from the standpoint of a regenerated nature than you can by any covenant of works.

The idea prevails even in this time, as is evidenced by an evangelist calling upon a congregation to leave the gospel of Jesus Christ and go back and stand upon the Ten Commandments. If you want to rightly perform the Ten Commandments the best and only way for you to keep them is after your souls have been regenerated by God's Spirit, and after your sins have been washed away in His blood. First, make the tree good.

Now all this is introductory to my main question. Here is a phenomenon, and it is not an extraordinary one, but an ordinary one; it happens every day; it happens right here in this congregation; it happens after any meeting anywhere and by whomsoever held. You see people who profess to be Christians, and they give credible evidences that they are Christians, and who ultimately prove to be Christians, who yet temporarily fall away and seem to, seek other methods.

I surmise that some of these people in this case were genuinely converted. All of the professions made by these Galatians were not false professions. Therefore you have to assume that genuine Christians who were led to Christ by Paul's preaching did lapse from that profession and go back to seeking peace of mind through a different method.

Now my question is: How do you account for such a phenomenon? An effect is bound to have a cause. If you see only one incident of a strange kind, and that is an isolated case, you are not especially called upon to explain it. But if you see in a whole province, like Galatia, a wide-spread profession of religion, and then in a very short space of time you see a lapse that corresponds in magnitude with the original profession — you see men by the' multitude doing things that are so utterly stupid and irrational and illogical that it marks them as fools, how do you account for it?

Hence Paul's question: "Who hath bewitched you?" I tried for a long time to get rid of that word, *bewitched*, but there it stands, and it means the same thing in the Greek as it means in the English. It means an irresistible spell cast upon one by

another, what is called “smiting with the eye.” It means bewitched in the old fashioned sense of that word. It means that a power had intervened, casting an irresistible spell over the minds of these people. And this question tries to find *him!* “*Who* hath bewitched you?” *Who* hath done it? Here is a wizard’s work. Where is the *wizard*? Here is the witchcraft. Where is the *witch*? Who is it?

Some of you were startled two Sundays ago when I stated that the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ could be as sensibly felt and realized as could the presence of a friend to whom you were talking. Now I say to you that there is another presence which can be as vividly and as sensibly felt as any earthly presence can be realized and felt. I stop at no halfway explanations. I go for a solution of the problem to the father of witchcraft, the devil, and I say that this lapsing work in Galatia, was the work of the devil; that a hallucination was cast over the minds of the people. Such folly is not otherwise explicable. Such consequences cannot otherwise find an adequate cause.

“Who hath *bewitched* you?” Why, I venture to say that you older Christians have almost unconsciously used the very words of the Apostle Paul in looking at some case or a profession of religion, where there had been a speedy lapse: “I marvel! It astonishes me! How is it to be accounted for?” You say, “Why, I sat there and heard that young man tell about God’s dealings with his soul. I saw the tears roll down his face. I felt the tremor in his tone, the vibration of intense feeling in every expression that fell from his lips, and I marvel that he is so soon removed. What on earth is the explanation of it?”

When you go home today read Webster’s definition of “bewitched,” and when you get the Greek word and in all of the best lexicons read the definition there, and you will see that this means here just what it says. Who hath cast a spell of fascination, an irresistible spell, over you, that you should do a thing so incredibly foolish as that which you have done?

Every intelligent man is bound to take notice of marked phenomena that occur around him; especially is he bound to notice such things as I have just told you. Now you are also bound to account for them, and your explanation must be commensurate with the fact. But I defy any man to give an explanation of many of the lapses from a profession of faith in Jesus Christ except upon the hypothesis of a devil.

Incidentally, this leads to a cognate thought. There is here in Texas some preaching of a kind, as expressed in the last Baptist Herald. I quote that to bring out the thought. The writer of an article says, “There are in Texas two families of the Baptists, the assurance-family and the anti-assurance-family.” He closes his article

with this tremendous statement: “These two families cannot stand together on earth or in heaven; in this world or in the world to come.”

If he would read the Philadelphia Confession of Faith or the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, he would very easily see that at least his part of the family is not Baptist.

But what I want to say is this: Suppose such a theory as he advocates was applied to this case of these Galatians. Here is a vast number of people that with remarkable evidence of genuineness make a profession of faith. Now here is a sudden lapse and they go back for a while at least from a plan of salvation by grace to a plan of salvation by works. They go back from a commencement in the spirit to a consummation in the flesh. They go back from a state of spiritual freedom and seem to prefer a state of spiritual bondage. They turn their backs upon the splendid light of the New Testament and seek to hide themselves in the mists and shadows of Old Testament times. And you want to account for that fact. According to his theory none of them were ever converted. In that case there was no necessity for bewitching to take them back. There was no room for marvelings or astonishment. There was no phenomenon at all. But Paul does not treat the case that way.

It shows this, that when one is converted, he is not a full grown Christian; that when one is regenerated he is just a child in Christ Jesus, just a baby, and that this babe must be developed into spiritual manhood or womanhood, and it is in the power of an enemy, where the means of spiritual growth and development are neglected, to cast a spell over the mind of that babe in Christ. Such an explanation harmonizes with Paul’s effort to restore them and with all our own observations of the facts concerning religious meetings.

Now, I have very carefully avoided today discussing the question of a permanent lapse from a true profession of faith in Christ. That is outside of the subject before me, and you know well enough what would be my reply to such a question as that. I am just taking a large group of professions, such as are made in ordinary meetings, and I am calling your attention to the fact that a considerable number of these lapse after the meeting is over, and that not all those who lapse are restored in the next meeting, and that not all of those who are restored in the next meeting are restored in the third meeting, and that each sifting of restoration eliminates some of the original number who are eliminated forever. They never do come back. Those that never do come back, I am not discussing at all; but I am discussing those who do come back, who are restored, and who afterwards show that the root of the matter was in them; that they were, when they professed originally, God’s children — God’s children for a while under an eclipse, under a spell. An enemy had come in and seduced them for

the time being from the beauty and holiness and simplicity of the plan of salvation in Jesus Christ. That is the class I am talking about.

The conclusion of it all is just this: That our people have managed, by some sort of intellectual legerdemain, to sidetrack out of the sight of human consideration one of the mightiest factors in human life. I mean the devil, not thinking of him as a personality, not thinking of him as once an angel of light, not thinking of him as having power, where a Christian is unwary, to bewitch him, to cast a spell over him, to lead him temporarily from the truth.

I am afraid that I cannot get quite close enough to you the thought that I am endeavoring to impress upon you, and in order to do it, I will tell you a dream. Understand, it is just a dream. I am not telling it as Scripture. The sole object of the dream is to be an illustration of a thought. I had this vivid dream. I dreamed that I was on the cone of a vast mountain range, back of which was a higher cone, whose summit was lost in the clouds of heaven, and looking down from the edge of that mountain range was no horizon. In my dream, I tried to see a horizon. I could not see it. It was ever and forever a stretching away of space without a boundary. While sleeping I seemed to hear a voice which said, "Open your eyes and see from what you have been guarded." I opened my eyes. I saw nothing. I kept looking all around seeing nothing but feeling a presence. At last a shape outlined itself, and if a painter could paint that shape as I saw it I think he would win immortality. It was a shape, something human-like, whose height could not even be guessed at. It seemed to be of porcelain, translucent but not transparent. But even in that translucent state there seemed to be a hint of having once been transparent, and also a hint that it would ultimately be entirely opaque. In other words, it had a prophecy of becoming darker and denser, as well as a memory of having been brighter and purer. It was the most beautiful form I ever saw. As my eye went up and up the symmetry of that strange figure, I saw the eye looking at me sideways, and it was in the eye that the thought of the devil came into my mind. It was the eye of despair, the eye of malice, the eye of cunning, the eye of undying hate, the eye of the murderer. It all flashed into my very soul from just one glance of that eye as I shivered that this was what the voice meant when it said, "Wake up and see from what you have been guarded." The basilisk gleam of that eye made the blood run cold. The look seemed to say, "I would destroy you, if I were not hindered."

Now, that was just a dream, nothing but a dream, but it serves as an illustration; that just as sure as there can be a presence of God that we can feel, so there can be a presence of the devil that can influence us; so there can be a power of an evil one that can cast a spell over the mind and cause the subject of the spell to do irrational, illogical and foolish things.

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, you who saw Christ on the cross; you who received the Spirit; you whose hearts have been made to throb and dilate with the internal presence of the divine consolation? O Christians, what can be the power that could in a short while, sidetrack you to go grovelling in the dust again?

Oftentimes I have seen joyous young Christians, oh, how happy, how precious the light in their faces, how inexpressibly sweet the melody in their hearts! How every old Christian in the house would have his heart melted when some dear loved one for whom he had prayed, for whom he had labored, would stand up and say, "I have found favor, and my heart is glad and there is peace in my soul." O, the joy of it! And then, maybe in a month, in one short month: — O, the marvel of it the marvel of it to have to say, "Where is the blessedness you spoke of? Where is the soul-refreshing view of Jesus and His Word?" Somebody has intervened. Some power has come in here and eclipsed the bright day and made it night.

The Apostle Peter says, "Beware of the devil." The Apostle Paul admonishes Christians to beware of the devil. The Lord Jesus Christ admonishes Christians to beware of the devil. He is back of all the sinister instrumentalities that are employed to weaken the usefulness, to dim the light of hope, to minimize the preciousness of the peace which you had when you professed that you were a child of God. Your war is not against flesh and blood.

Now, you may talk about the weakness of the flesh. There is a good deal in that. We have in our members a law that wars against the law of our minds. We know that. But there is a force so much higher than this that when you go to think of this higher force you scarcely mention the other. We rear not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers in high places.

There is a Satanic, a diabolical malice that seeks to worry the child of God, to handicap him in his usefulness, to throw a spell over him, to have siren songs divert him from the path of his life, to lead him away where he will live unheeding the boom of the artillery of the great war that is going on, not seeing the dark clouds that are gathering over him, and the bright vistas that are opening up to brighter and heavenly light. It takes a spell like that to account for the fact.

Now you can understand in the light of Paul's question the earnestness of those old Puritans on the subject of witchcraft. They were wrong, as they dealt with the subject, but under the phenomena of that day, and under similar phenomena in the Old Testament days, there is a stupendous truth without which such things would never have marred the fair page of American history as the witchcraft days in New England.

Who hath bewitched you? and you? and you? I am inquiring for the wizards. I am looking for the witch. I am not looking at the spell itself. I am not looking at the web of the spider, but where is the spider? Where is the one that wove the web? Who hath bewitched you? Now, do you go home and say right down to the very depths of your heart, “There is a devil, and he goeth about and he seeketh evil, and the track of his march can be traced just as plainly in the records of the past as you can trace the hand of God in history.”

You can stand in the ashes of ancient cities, and look where a broken column falls and mingles together in historic dust, and you say, “Surely I can read the handwriting of God in history.” And I will stand in these same ruins and I will say, “Surely I can read the handwriting of the devil in history.”

Are any of you today feeling the power of this old song,

*“Where is the blessedness I knew,
When first I saw the Lord?”*

O, thou bewitched Christian, let me ask you to go back to the Spirit and not trust in the flesh to consummate the Spirit. As it was salvation by faith in Christ that gave you that spiritual evidence, so it will be the cross of Christ, lifted up all the time, that will give you the continued life that is to be manifested by your conduct here in this world.

There was a devil that worked in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and the magistrates said, “Who hath bewitched these people?” and they made an inquisition for the witch and left out the wizard.

It is the object of this sermon today to call your attention to the devil. It is the purpose of this sermon to impress upon your minds today that there is a power, not flesh and blood, that will walk around you, and consider you, as he walked around Job and considered him, and that your eyes ought to be opened to it, and that the consciousness of that presence ought at all times to make you desire to feel a nearness to God and reliance upon the divine help.

5. THE WAY OF CAIN

TEXT: Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. - <small>6811</small> Jude 1:11.

The author of this letter was a half brother of our Lord Jesus Christ, as was also James, author of another New Testament letter. In His lifetime the half brothers of our Lord did not believe on Him as the Savior, but were converted by the cross and the resurrection and later became very prominent in the church. Paul refers to them and their standing. One of them became the pastor of the First Church at Jerusalem, and presided at the famous conference recorded in Acts 15; the other is the author of this letter.

The object of the letter is thus stated: "When I was giving all diligence, to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that you should contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The letter then is an exhortation to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

The occasion of it is thus stated: "There are certain men crept in unawares who were before ordained unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our Lord into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God, our Lord Jesus Christ." Mark well this occasion. There had crept into the church men who denied not merely the divinity of Jesus Christ, but the necessity of the death of Jesus Christ as the ground of redemption.

Now as the author of this letter had obtained his salvation through faith, excited not by the life but by the death of our Lord, as he himself found salvation in Jesus Christ dying upon the cross, he regarded that as the faith once delivered to the saints, and held it needful that he should himself contend earnestly for it and exhort others to like contention, evidently regarding it as fundamental and vital, in both its doctrinal and practical form. It was treason to deny His divinity and His sacrificial purchase-it was slander and sacrilege to turn this grace into lasciviousness.

But note particularly that to deny the divine purchase as a doctrine, or to wrest its grace into an excuse for lawlessness, is here called "going in the way of Cain." The passage, therefore, flashes great light upon the brief and obscure Old Testament record of Cain. In this light we see the life and sin and ruin of Cain, and by contrast, the life and righteousness and glory of Abel. It is first of all worthy of remark, that

Jude's comment makes the Genesis account of Cain and Abel a simple, straightforward historical transaction. Indeed it seems impossible to credit any man with any proper respect for the New Testament who persists in regarding the book of Genesis as an allegory, myth or poetry.

The New Testament treats Cain and Abel as real persons, actually doing what is attributed to them in the Genesis narration. They were sons of Adam and Eve, the first human pair. They did, according to revealed law, come up before God with offerings. There must have been a law prescribing it, obedience to which was righteousness. One offering was accepted — the other rejected. God himself discriminated and testified. Because of the divine discrimination, Cain was exceedingly angry. His anger burned also against his brother, even unto murder.

I suppose there were many children and grandchildren at this time—thousands, doubtless; there could have been easily half a million — and this transaction made such a solemn impression that in the fifth generation after, we find a descendant of Cain quoting what God says about Cain: that whosoever slew Cain should be avenged seven-fold. And this wicked man was drawing a deduction from it. His deduction was that if God would avenge seven-fold one who slew Cain, who without provocation killed his brother, then He ought to avenge seventy-fold anybody that slew him for killing one who had grievously injured him, and wounded and bruised him. That was the argument of Lamech.

The first impression then that ought to be received by our minds is, that the account in Genesis is a simple, historical transaction, or you simply reject both Testaments. You adopt an arbitrary method of interpreting the Bible which has no fixed boundaries. Turn away from the simple, straightforward story of fact and begin to treat it as legend or poetry, and you break down all barriers in your treatment of the Bible, and leave nothing certain concerning anything that is in it. It is infidelity to treat the Bible that way, even though the man be president of a theological seminary.

The next thing necessary to an understanding of this transaction is what is called the right of primogeniture. It has had a great deal of influence in this world. There is scarcely a nation upon the face of the earth but has today the impress of the ancient law of primogeniture. By it kings rule and dynasties are established.

To get at it a little more clearly, in the early days of the world's history, in what is called the patriarchal dispensation, the first-born was the head of the house. All authority was vested in him. He was, first, the ruler, just as Abraham was ruler over all his household. The second point is that by the right of birth he was the priest of the family. It became him to make the offerings for the family. The book of Job refers to patriarchal times, and Job says that he made an offering for his children lest even

unthoughtedly they should have committed a sin against God. The power of ruling men, the power lodged in the priesthood, for the head of the family was both head and priest and ruler, was so great a power that some of the most remarkable struggles mentioned in the Bible have reference to this primogeniture-business.

What was the trouble between Ishmael and Isaac but this? Hagar fondly imagined that Ishmael should have the right of primogeniture, and when Isaac was born, born of the true wife and not the bondwoman, and his birthday celebrated as being the birthday of one who was the head of the house and the future priest, just as a king celebrated the birth of the prince who is to succeed him, Ishmael mocked at the whole proceeding, and persecuted the infant child whose title to the primogeniture was thus publicly recognized.

You remember the story of Jacob and Esau. What was the issue between them? They were twins. The issue was, who should have the right of primogeniture? Who should be the head of the house? Who should have the right to rule? Who should be the priest of the family? Esau irreverently sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. God, however, had predetermined that the birthright should vest in Jacob and not in Esau.

This brings us to the third and greatest point involved in it. The original significance of the primogeniture was this. That in that line the seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head should come, and this office became important on account of the expectation that any firstborn son might be the one appointed of God for the redemption of the world, and he was to have sovereignty, not only over his own immediate family, but over the whole world. The seed of the woman should become earth's future deliverer and Savior.

I mention one other historical incident to illustrate it. Reuben was the first born of Jacob, and the Scriptures show us when, where and how he lost his birthright. By that great sin which he committed against his father the birthright was taken away from Reuben and vested in Judah.

Now let us read again in order to see what the issue was between Cain and Abel: "And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, and Abel, he also brought the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering."

Literally, the Lord kindled; as it is implied in other places, he sent down fire to consume the offering; or, as it is expressed in the letter to the Hebrews, God testified; He tested by fire that this was the right kind of an offering, an offering of the

firstlings of his flock, an offering which pointed to the redemption that should come from the blood of the Lamb. “By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.” “But unto Cain and his offering He had not respect.”

There were the two offerings. Fire was burning that Abel made. The offering of Cain was disregarded. He stood there and looked at it. Why was he angered? Why did his countenance fall? Let us read the next verse and see: “If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?” Or, rendered according to some of the best Hebraists in the world: “If thou doest well, shalt thou not have the excellency? That is, shalt thou not have the right of primogeniture, and unto thee shall be thy brother’s desire and thou shalt rule over him.”

When God said that to Cain what did He mean? He meant to show Cain that he had misconceived what followed from that transaction of God’s accepting one and rejecting the other. Cain understood the preference for Abel’s offering to indicate that he had lost the right of primogeniture; that he was not to have the rule over his brother; that he was not to be the priest in that family. His countenance fell, and he was very angry.

God said to him, “If you do well, you shall not lose this position of rule. If you do well, you shall retain the priesthood in your family. And if you do not well, a sin-offering lies at the door. You have brought me the fruit of the ground. I have required a sin-offering. I have required the firstling of the flock that shall point to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Here in the presence of your rejected sacrifice, and when your right of primogeniture is hanging in the balance, and is about to be taken away from you forever, I show you how it may be retained. Go, bring the right offering, and the desire of thy brother shall be unto you, and thou shalt rule over him.”

Cain refused to do it. There had come an eventful time in his history. He had determined in his heart that he would not seek the forgiveness of God as a sinner whose sins were to be expiated vicariously. What does it mean? It meant that he denied the Lord. It meant that he stood as a deist. He denied the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. He denied that he needed any atonement, but he stood upon his own record before God, and not as a sinner at all.

Now, says Jude, the author of our text, “When I was about to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary that I should exhort you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.” Why? “Certain men have crept in unawares that deny the Lord Jesus Christ, that deny the necessity for any atonement for sin, and they have gone in the way of Cain.” Which shows that there in

the first family Cain went the way of the deist. Cain denied the necessity of an atonement. Cain would not offer of the blood of the firstling of the flock unto God.

And there was also the way of Abel. By faith in the coming Messiah, in the seed of the woman that was to bruise the serpent's head, in the One by whose shed blood the remission of sins should come, by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and God testified of his gift, and by that sacrifice Abel being dead yet speaketh.

Now that we have before us the reason of the hatred of Cain for Abel, to what purpose does one read the history of royal families if he fails to note their jealousy of each other, and how, when one stands nearest in the line of succession, he becomes instantly the object of hate, of stratagem, of every kind of conspiracy? How often has the assassin's knife sought to win the way to a place of rule, of power! How, like a mounting devil is this ambition to rule, to have supremacy! And when that man stood before God's altar and saw the right of primogeniture being wrested from him; when, like Reuben, unstable as water, his birthright goes to Judah; when, like Esau, irreverent and profane, it was sold for a mess of pottage; when, like Ishmael, the son of a bondwoman, that yet coveted it and persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so in this case Cain determined to kill the one that was to have the rule, the one that was to be the priest unto God.

We now come to a sad thought. What is it? That whenever a man is out of proper relation with God, that man gets out of proper relation with his brother, with his fellow men. And I Wish to say here today that no scheme of socialism that leaves God out can succeed in its object. Herbert Spencer may write on the subject until his pen drops from his pulseless fingers, and John Stuart Mill and other humanitarians may attempt to devise their schemes of even justice to our fellow men until Gabriel blows the trumpet that announces the judgment, and it will yet always remain true that there can be no right feeling toward our fellow men when our feeling toward God is lost. Bottomed upon harmony with God is all hope of harmony with our fellow men.

Whoever in his heart turns away from the offering of Jesus Christ may seek cheap fame by telling how he will work for the amelioration of the human race, but the fact remains that into the thinnest air vanish all such vain dreams of benefiting men when we reject the gift of God. Cain, being astray from God, hates his brother.

Mass together the regular and disciplined armies of the Old World; let the million of Russia join the million of Prussia, and the million of France and the possible 750,000 of Italy; add to them the standing army and navy of England; and you never can by bayonets coerce humanity. You plant your cannon on a thin crest of a volcano and

each jar that comes may break the crest and precipitate an eruption that shall sweep down every barrier that human might interposes against the excesses of a maddened populace. There is no hope for government nor for society when you break the bonds that unite to God.

Mark you, how God deals with this man before he is forever rejected. He expostulates with him and points out to him how he may retain his high estate. As if He said, “I will not send the fire of acceptance upon the mere fruits of the earth when you deny the Lord God, who is to purchase your salvation. When you turn away from expiation for sin you cannot come into my court. But if you do well you shall have the excellency. I will not depose you. The desire of your brother shall be unto you, and you shall rule over him. The sin-offering lies at the door.”

And see him turn and look upon the firstling of the flock and hesitate in the presence of one sacrifice smoking, and one unaccepted, and the whole future of his life resting upon his decision: “Shall I bring this lamb and offer it upon the altar and say I am a sinner? If I come before God, I come as a sinner. If I come before God I must come seeking remission of my sins in the blood of the Lamb that is offered. Or shall I thwart God?”

Well, he made his decision. The record says that he told Abel about it. Now imagine that conversation! “Abel, God tells me that if I will do like you do — if I will offer a lamb I shall not lose my right of primogeniture; I shall be the priest; I shall have rule over you. He intimates that if I do not do this you will have the rule over me. Now I see a way out of it — I will kill you. When I have smitten you down, how can you rule over me? When I have taken your life, how can you enjoy any right of primogeniture? Here is a way to evade God’s requirements. I will not offer the lamb. I will not submit to Abel. I will not be deposed. I will fight for my rights. I will kill the usurper who would take my place.”

Who told him that? Who suggested that move? “He was of that wicked one.” The same serpent that beguiled his mother spun his fine web of sophistry around the feet and hands of Cain and entangled him in a net of delusion that by a short road of murder he could defeat the purposes of God and hold on to his primogeniture. And so he rose up against his brother and slew him. Now imagine him dragging him into some thicket and washing his hands and saying, “Who is the priest now? Who has the rule now? I will go back and make an offering. Who saw me do this? I will go back and see if there is another altar to gather the fire of acceptance to my offering.” So he comes up before the Lord to make his offering by himself. There is just one man this time, not two. And he builds his altar, puts his fire on it and from out the Shekinah God speaks: “Where is thy brother?”

As has been said by a distinguished minister of South Carolina, “If there was anything on this earth that Cain did know it was where his brother was. If there was one spot more localized in his brain than any other it was that bloody spot that was sucking up his brother’s blood. If there was one place on this earth that never left his sight, on which more light blazed than any other, it was the place where the dead body of his brother lay.”

But listen at him: “I know not.” The bold, brazen liar! “I know not where is my brother. You have made him head of the house. You have appointed him as my priest. Now, am I my brother’s keeper?” You see what his object was. His object was that when he came to offer again, and not again offering the lamb, with his brother being nowhere, and he not being responsible to produce him, God would be bound to accept his primogeniture.

And thus are men today, thousands of men, who have just that kind of light; that really believe, or at least persuade themselves that they believe, that they can go contrary to the plain teaching of God’s Word and yet be saved, and that they can remove the obstacles out of their way with a high hand. Now let us see if he gained the primogeniture. God said to him, “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth out to me from the ground. You have been a tiller of the ground. Now I tell you that you are accursed from the ground. The earth has been made sick with the blood of thy brother. That earth shall not yield her fruit to thee. Thou shalt cultivate it in vain. Thou thoughtest to usurp the rule and the priesthood. Thou shalt never come into my presence again. Thou shalt never establish an altar. Thou shalt be a fugitive. Thou shalt be a wanderer.”

See the two thoughts: One fleeing and one wandering; always on the wing; always at unrest; never having a fixed habitation, and “my face no more forever shall you see. Go out from my presence.”

Now let us see what Cain said to that: “My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground. I had been making a living as a farmer. Thou hast cursed me from the ground. My brother’s blood on the ground has dried up its fertility toward me, and from thy face shall I be hid. I will never be able to pray again; never to go where God dwelt eastward of the Garden of Eden between the cherubim and kept the way to the tree of life. Never to approach the place where prayer is wont to be made and sacrifice for sin is offered. From thy face I shall be hid and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth, and it shall come to pass that whosoever findeth me shall slay me.”

You remember the tribal law, that if one killed another there was an avenger of blood, the next of kin, and that avenger of blood could smite the murderer wherever

he found him. And there was not yet appointed a city of refuge unto which the murderer could fly. And Cain reasoned, "I can never be still. If I lie down at night I can hear the barking of the dogs of pursuit. If I rise up in the morning, I shall hear the shouts of the huntsmen of man. Wherever I go I shall expect to see the sword drawn to smite me and the avenger on my track, shouting, 'Blood! Blood! Blood! Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed!'"

And God says, "No, not that. That does not apply to your case, not your case. No need to summon the sheriff when the unpardonable sin is committed. No need to invoke the puny arm of human law when God Almighty smites. I will put such a mark on you; I will establish such a sign, that the most indignant man on the earth that will see you will sheath his sword and say, 'Let him go. God hath smitten him. He is in the hands of the Almighty. See him fly. See him wander. See the traces of despair in his face. See the man that cannot pray, and is not allowed to come into the presence of God. Banished forever! Oh, who will attempt to put one drop in the cup of wrath that God has mixed and pressed to those pale lips of despair? Let him go. He has God's mark on him.'"

And as the brand in the French courts fastened upon the flesh the stigma, the ineffaceable stigma of shame, that told to every one that looked upon it, "This is a convict doomed to the galleys and outcast from men," so this mark of God announced, "Whosoever shall attempt to kill Cain, I will avenge his death seven fold." Kill him! Why, who would raise a gun to shoot at the rich man in hell? What orphan that he ever defrauded, what poor man whose hard labor was unrequited, what weak man that he had ground under his tyrannical feet, would come up to the precipice of hell and look where the flames wrap him and behold the scorpions stinging him and the undying worm devouring him, would shoot at him? He is in the hands of God.

I speak to the young people here today, and particularly to the young people who are fascinated with the intellectual attainments that have startled the world; who are disposed to pay the tribute to mere human genius, and because a thing is smart, because it is well said, because it is grammatical and rhetorical, because it is daring, you admire the authors, be their names — Tyndall, Huxley, Spencer, Darwin, Ingersoll, or what not, though they deny the Lord Jesus Christ and the necessity for an atonement.

O young people, see the first man that went that way! Will you go in the way of Cain? I ask you, go and stand where that road forks. See where Abel's feet led to a Redeemer. See where Cain's turned aside to wander in endless despair. Hear him cry out, "My punishment is greater that I can bear. Earth has spewed me out of her

mouth. Man turns away from me. God's face is hid from me. Deep and dark and endless hell waits for me. I am accursed from above and below and all around." Oh, see the way of Cain! That way whose steps take hold on death and hell. I ask you if you want to walk in it.

The brother of Jesus, the brother who himself for a while walked in the way of Cain and did not believe in a Redeemer, yet who was converted as he looked upon Christ as the Lamb of God, with the sins of the world on Him and found Him to be his Savior, says, "I exhort you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Beware of those who have crept in unawares and that deny the Lord Jesus Christ, and that have gone in the way of Cain. Follow them not. Follow them not."

It may be fashionable, but it is deadly. It may give you an air, of singularity and oddity. It may call forth the plaudits of the thoughtless and the foolish and the scornful and the ungodly, but it is the way of Cain. It leads down to eternal death.

Jude, our Lord's brother, piled up image on image in warning, as in the fiery stream of exhortation he appealed to men not to take that road. Look at his images; a tree, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; ocean foaming out her shame, in vain trying to batter down the granite barriers with which God stayed her encroachments and said, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther." See these waves dashing out their own shame. See yonder brilliant meteor flashing across the sky for a moment and going out into darkness; wandering stars, look at them. Clouds without rain; wells without water. Oh, walk not in the way of Cain!

I close with this application of the exhortation of Jude: That if you do not wish to be a fugitive and a wanderer, if you do not wish to have God's face hidden from you forever, if you do not wish to perish utterly, then do not go that road at all. Count these men as the enemies of God and the enemies of their fellow men, that under the guise of learning or philosophy would beguile young men to walk in the way of Cain; Satan's advocates, Satan's advertisers, Satan's couriers, Satan's panderers. They stand at the forks of that road and say, "Young men, walk in the way of Cain. Deny the Lord Jesus Christ. Deny the necessity of the atonement. Deny that you are a sinner. Deny that you need any blood shed for the remission of your sins; walk this road."

Now, these men, with all their high sounding claims, are themselves as blind as a bat. Satan has put thick bandages around their eyes. They are the blind leading the blind. They pride themselves on the fact that they offer you liberty when they themselves are the slaves of corruption. What man in bondage can make another one free? What slave can confer freedom? The truth of God alone can make you a free man in Jesus Christ.

Turn away from them. I tell you their shadows are baleful. Their communications are corrupt. Their beguiling came authoritatively from the wicked one himself, and they are but the plagiarists of the devil's doctrine when they ask you to walk in the way of Cain. They may call it nineteenth century light. It is not light at all, but darkness all over. It came from the devil. It was whispered in the ear of Eve. It became the guiding influence of Cain and led him to become a fugitive and a wanderer, and it will make you a fugitive, and your lips one day will be parted with this despairing cry, "My punishment is greater than I can bear."

Oh, may God, in tender mercy to you, lead you to walk where Abel walked, a better path. He being dead *yet* speaketh. Cold is the corpse where the murderer shrouded thee, thou younger brother; all still and pulseless thy dead body lies; but Abel spoke, and not only God in heaven heard his voice when it cried to him, but ever since that time men hear the voice of Abel: "To the right! To the right! Keep to the right! Walk up to the altar of sacrifice, where the blood of the Lamb is shed, and heaven's approving fire comes down, and find peace and redemption and remission of sins." Oh! hear the voice of Abel! Let us pray.

6. PAUL'S GOSPEL OF JESUS

TEXT: But I went into Arabia. - ~~<XIII>~~ Galatians 1:17.

The harmonists are accustomed to place in parallel columns what are called the four gospel narratives of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They ignore the greatest and the completest of the gospels-the Gospel of Paul. No harmony of the life and teachings of our Lord may be regarded as at all complete that does not place parallel with the other gospels what Paul had handed down of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

In comparing these different histories of our Lord we are much impressed with the way in which the several authors received the information which they impart in their respective histories. We know that Matthew and John were eye-witnesses, being of the twelve, being with our Lord for three years of His earthly life. But Mark was not one of the twelve. He can not write as an eye-witness. According to tradition he gets his facts mainly from Peter, and hence, it is called the Gospel of Peter by Mark. Luke, who was not an eye-witness, in the beginning of his history of our Lord is careful to state with what painstaking care he gathered up the historical material from authentic sources and embodied it in his treatise.

The Apostle Paul received his gospel, not as Mark did, from Peter's teachings; he did not know the Lord Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh, and hence can not give His history as Matthew and John gave it. He does not attempt at all to write a history after the method of Luke. But he expressly declares that the gospel which he received from our Lord as to its facts and as to its doctrines was by direct revelation from the risen Lord. No angel, as in the case of the giving of the Law, was the medium of communication.

Matthias was nominated by the other apostles to take the place of Judas, and hence, instrumentally, men had something to do with his being put into the apostolic office. But the Apostle Paul declares that he did not receive his office from men. He did not gather it from histories. He was not taught it as you are taught it. But directly, immediately, face to face with God, he received every fact which he records, and every doctrine which he teaches.

Our Lord stated to the twelve just before His crucifixion that it was impossible for Him to give them a complete revelation, because they were not able to receive it. There were many additional things concerning His kingdom that needed to be set forth, but they, in their state of mind, were incapable of appreciating and

understanding the full revelation of God to man. It was not a matter of accident, therefore, but of the divine prevision, that the complete revelation of God's will to man should be made through another and independent apostle.

When we read the ninth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, with that text only before us, the natural impression is made upon the mind that just as soon as Saul of Tarsus was converted he entered into Damascus, and after the three days of darkness and his baptism, he straightway commenced to preach in Damascus. That its the natural impression, but we must compare scripture with scripture, and when we read the first chapter of the letter to the Galatians we are perfectly sure that he did not preach in the city of Damascus until after his return from Arabia. It was three years after his conversion before he began to preach. And why? He had nothing to preach. He was ignorant as yet in every true sense of the matter of the gospel, and wholly unprepared to state it in its final and complete revelation.

We now get at the object of his going into Arabia. As the twelve companied with our Lord Jesus Christ for three years to gather from His lips what He taught and how they must teach it, go it was necessary for Paul to be segregated from his fellows, to go alone in nature's deepest solitude and there meet his Lord, and in lesson after lesson gather by direct revelation what he was to preach.

It was not only necessary that there should be time for the communication of the matter of his ministry, but according to human nature as it is, there must be time for him to assimilate the new doctrine that burst upon his mind with the suddenness of a clap of thunder out of a cloudless sky. He must think through it. He must compare this new revelation with that which had seemed to him to be the very perfection of Law. No man by sudden wrench, by abrupt transition, passes from one state of life into another state of life. He had to receive the discipline from his Master before he could go and preach His gospel to others.

But why should he retire into Arabia? He had been, as he tells, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. The most sacred event of Jewish history to him was the giving of the law on Mount Sinai through the ministration of angels; and the highest embodiment of human excellence, in his judgment, was Moses, who received the law and who gave it to the chosen people. No name under heaven had been to him as the name of Moses. The creation of the world itself was regarded as inferior to the giving of the Law.

The deluge that swept over the earth in devastating power, was not comparable, in his judgment, to the desolation that would follow the infraction of that law upon Mount Sinai. He saw it now in all its true relations. He saw it as a covenant to which there were two parties — God upon the first part and the children of Israel as a

nation upon the second part, and they jointly and severally entered into this covenant, which was announced upon Mount Sinai. This law was not merely a standard of right. It was to them the way of life. They took on themselves its obligations. They admitted that they forfeited its privileges and incurred its penal censure, subjecting themselves to all of the depths of its condemnation, if they failed by one jot or tittle to observe all the things that are written in the law to do.

Now, this man, more than any other man of his own or any preceding or succeeding age, was profoundly convinced that Arabia, on Mount Sinai, while that mountain trembled and smoked and was illumined by the flashes of lightning accompanying the storm that rocked the entire plain, was the scene of earth's greatest transaction.

I say that Mount Sinai was to him the most sacred spot on earth. And if an entirely new conception is to enter into his mind; if an entirely new way of life is to be presented, not merely for his acceptance, but that he might preach it to the whole world; if a way of life that disregarded the national distinctions established at Mount Sinai; a way of life that leaps over all barriers of race and caste and custom and age and sex and condition, and touches the whole wide world upon the plane of its simple humanity—if that way of life was to be preached, the place for him to learn was at Mount Sinai.

We hear him saying, "Oh! must I never again preach Moses? Must I go before my own people and tear down the sacred wall of partition that shut out the Gentile world from them, and on whose top *they* had delighted to stand, wrapping the mantle of their exclusiveness about them, and looking down with scorn upon the 'Gentile dogs' upon the outside? If I must do this, let me go to the very place where the angels came, where Israel stood before God. Let me listen again to the lingering echoes of the mighty thunderings of that eventful day. Let my imagination bring up before me as a living thing the enormous events of that great transaction. And let the Lord Jesus Christ tell me what it all meant "What is the significance of Mount Sinai? What means the law? Wherefore serveth the law? If I must go out and preach a new gospel that overturns every cherished and fond recollection of my heart, let me see it plainly; let me think it through, and then I will be prepared to preach."

I am just as sure as of my own existence that the Apostle Paul could not, three days after his conversion, have set forth the gospel which he afterwards preached with so much power. There must be a place for the change. There must be a revelation of the matter which he is, to present to the world.

When we read through this letter to the Galatians, he tells us some of the lessons that he learned there in Arabia: that Mount Sinai corresponds to Hagar the bondswoman, and that it gendereth to bondage as her condition gave bondage to her children, and

that it answereth to the Jerusalem which now is — that Jerusalem in which he had gloried, that Jerusalem whose feasts he had attended, and in whose celebration he had rejoiced, was even then under the impending doom pronounced upon it by the Son of God.

He learned further, that within the lifetime of a man not one stone of its temple would stand upon another; its streets would be ensanguined with the blood of a million of its citizens; desolation would come upon it without any mitigation for age after age; how long he himself could not exactly tell., But he saw all that under Mount Sinai, and that what had seemed to him to be the very perfection of religion was a system designed of God as a transitory matter, as educational in its nature in order to accomplish certain particular things.

It was added because of transgressions; that is, that written law on Mount Sinai was given in order to discover sin, and not merely to discover it, but to develop it, to incite it, to bring out whatever latent force there was in it, lest people looking at the germ only-not considering the extent of its potentiality — might not be aware of the extremes to which it would go when developed to its logical ends and consequences; in order that sin, under the light of the law, might show itself to be not some innocent and beautiful thing, but uncoil and stretch out its long serpentine length, and grow to its full stature and secrete its poison under the fangs of the serpent and glitter in the basilisk eye of that snake, and when it stood out before men in all of its beastly and ghastly and horrible and devilish form, it would be seen to be sin and exceedingly sinful.

That was the object of the law: to discover sin, to develop it, and then to condemn it; to pronounce sentence upon it. There was no way of life in it. It gendered to bondage. It gendered to death. What a message to put into this man's mouth! What a message to carry back to Jerusalem! To say that this Holy City, with all of its services, with its sacred temple, with its feasts and its ceremonies, with its imposing ritual, with its offering up of sacrifices, with its incense going up like clouds to the sky-that the Holy City, the whole of it, and in its most sacred relations, is no more than Hagar, the bondwoman, gendering to bondage, and that it must be cast out, and then it can net bring by any certificate of its own excellence one single child into the true covenant of God — not one.

There never was such a battle fought in the world as Paul fought on that subject. There were those that still clung to the flesh, and now they prided themselves that *they* had seen the Lord in the days of His flesh! We hear them saying, "We talked with Jesus. We ate with Jesus. We handled Jesus. We had a personal acquaintance with the Son of God as He walked by the shores of the Sea of Galilee, as He

traveled through the villages and cities of Samaria, as He stood upon the streets of Jerusalem, and in its Holy Temple. And here, according to the flesh, is His brother James. Now because he is the brother of the Lord let us make him the bishop of the church at Jerusalem. Let us make him the first pastor in Christianity, and let his be the deciding voice in any conference concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

In my judgment there never was a greater danger in the young and rising Christianity than from the pastorate of James at Jerusalem — that James who was the brother of our Lord according to the flesh, and *who* never did, to the end of his life, get completely out of the Jewish swaddling clothes that wrapped him, *who* never did see the height of the divine glory of the gospel of his Divine Brother, whom he had never recognized as the Son of God until after His resurrection from the dead.

Now Paul must meet those people and say to them, “I did not know Jesus according to His flesh, and if I had known Him I would forget it. I would put it out of my mind. Henceforth I would no longer know Him according to the flesh. But I have seen my risen Lord. I have seen my glorified Redeemer. I have seen Him no longer with the limitations of Jewish blood, but as crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, and I have received from Him direct the gospel which I preach unto you.”

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? What wizard with his enchantments has been able to beguile and seduce you so soon from the true gospel of the Son of God, to induce in you desire to stand again under Mount Sinai and cower there as bondmen under a law which can discover and condemn sin, but cannot blot out sin? O foolish Galatians! I marvel, I marvel that so soon you are turned away.”

An invasion swept from Gaul, what we now call France, over into Rome, led by Brennus, and captured the city, and later another tribe of this mercurial population crossed the Hellespont into Asia, and there established themselves as a permanent power for many ages; the same people, exactly, from which the Irish and Welsh of the present day are descended; Celts, Gauls, Galatians, quick of apprehension, lively in imagination, soon to see a thing, rapidly to adopt it, and just as speedily to turn away from it. O ye unstable people! Ye mercurial population, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was set forth as evidently crucified before you, why do you turn back to the obsolete and beguiling elements of the world?

The gospel of Jesus Christ is meant for man as man, for the barbarian, for the Scythian, for the cultured Greek, for the Roman, for the Jew, for all men. Tear down the walls of the partition that separates the nations and scatter its dust, and bring the long parted, long alienated members of the family of man into one commonwealth of Jesus Christ, and on one broad plane of humanity. That was Paul’s mission.

He says, "Now, I did not learn it from Peter. He never had opportunity to tell me that. I never saw him until three years after my conversion. I was only a fortnight in Jerusalem with him at that time. I did not then go up to get any information from him. I wanted recognition on the part of the apostles in Jerusalem, of my gospel and my mission, but not a shred of its authority, not one fact of its history, not one item of its doctrine, came to me through any of them. I got it direct from my Lord. I went to Arabia."

Elijah went there once. He went to that mountain once to study its problems, and I am inclined to think our Lord Jesus Christ went to that mountain; that He, too, looked upon the mountain, when He went into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and from that mountain in Arabia, that stood for the Mosaic covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ came back to preach an entirely new gospel.

Now, watch this man when he comes back from his retirement. There is no longer any hesitation. He knows what he is going to preach. He has been three years learning it. He has been receiving revelation after revelation. It was just as clearly mapped out to his mind on his return from Arabia as it was at any later period of his life. You see it in the first letters that he wrote to the Thessalonians, and then to the Corinthians, and then next in order comes this letter, the letter to the Galatians, which Martin Luther made the very sword of the Spirit in bringing about the Reformation in Germany; and then immediately followed his letter to the Romans, in which he embodied the full plan of the salvation which he preached in all of its departments and respective relations. But it was a terrible battle.

He finds when he comes to Jerusalem a chilling reception. Only after Barnabas relates his Christian experience is Paul permitted to go in and out among them. And there in the temple his Lord speaks to him and says, "This is not thy place. I send thee far hence to the Gentiles. You must carry my gospel to the-nations that have never heard this Word, to all of the outlying populations of the earth, and as you go you must tell them who is Jesus. He is God manifest in the flesh; though veiled in the flesh, authenticated by the Spirit; though veiled in the flesh, recognized by the angels; though veiled in the flesh, preached unto the nations; and though veiled in the flesh, believed on in the world, and finally received up into glory." "Yet have I set my King upon the holy hill of Zion." "The Lord saith unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

He tells them that he came to preach that Jesus of Nazareth was the revelation of the Father; that He was the express image of His person; that He was the radiation of His glory; and that by Him the world was created, and that because He condescended to be a bondman, stooped from high heaven to the slavery of earth

and became obedient unto death, that God had highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every other name. That at the name of Jesus every intelligence should bow, whether Jew or Gentile, on earth; whether demons in the pit or angels in heaven through whom came the ministering of the law. Every intelligence of the earth should bow to Jesus of Nazareth as King of kings and Lord of lords.

I never got the right conception of the gospel of Jesus Christ until I studied Paul's life and teachings of Jesus. Then I understood why it was that He looked upon the disciples with such sadness, and complained of blindness, and hardness and slowness of heart to believe, making it impossible for Him to set forth the gospel in its fullness and in its power and in its glory.

We see Paul pass to Antioch, and there, under his ministrations, for the first time after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, an impression was made upon the outside world in a certain direction. I am sure that many people miss seeing how much there is in the fact that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

I say that in Jerusalem Christ's people never could have been called Christians-never, because under the leadership of James they kept up the observance of all the temple laws. Under the leadership of James, Christianity was but a Jewish sect, only one of its many schools. But over yonder where Paul went, over into Antioch, the world on the outside saw a strange thing by watching the followers of Paul and Barnabas. They said, "There is a difference between the Jews and these people." And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

Now, if they had been at Jerusalem, they would not have eaten with the Gentiles. There would have been nothing in their external observances that would have created any impression that they were anything but a sect of the Jews.

But look! Here at Antioch is a man who has never been circumcised; he has never even been a proselyte of the gate, much less a proselyte of righteousness, and by the power of God he has been converted, and Paul admits him into the kingdom of heaven, without submitting to one Jewish ceremony, and then sits down at the table and eats with him. And just look at them there when they gather and have their love feast! There they all are eating together their common meal, and when they come up to the Lord's table, every member of that Antioch church, without regard to nationality, partakes in common fellowship of that memorial or ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ, and those descendants of the kingdom of Antiochus say, "These are not Jews." These outside people say, "These are Christians. Here is something different from anything we have ever seen before in the world."

And that very difference evoked the sleeping prejudices at Jerusalem, and deputations came down and wanted to undo the work that had been done, and make these Christians just Christian Jews. They wanted — and as well might they have attempted to dam up the Nile with bulrushes—they wanted to run the great, broad current of eternal life for all men into a narrow Jewish channel.

And Paul stood there and said, “You can’t do this. I have seen the Lord. I was at school under Him for three years. I stood under the Mount Sinai, which once rocked with the presence of the angels and thundered with the storm of that great enunciation, and I tell you the law was transitory. The law was but an educator. The law was but a slave to lead you to Christ, and in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, neither Scythian, bond, nor free, but you are all one in Jesus Christ.”

And that terrible battle followed, as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, and James, the brother of our Lord, and John and Peter, the apostles, acknowledged that Paul had received an independent gospel, and was sent upon an independent mission that they had no right to supervise it, the proof of whose sermons never had to be submitted to them for revision and emendation, whose statements of life came from inspiration in its perfection. They admitted it and gave the hand of fellowship on it.

But that did not end it. Wherever he went the battle had to be fought—in Syria, in Cilicia, in Phrygia. And when from Troas he had crossed the intervening sea in response to an appeal from Europe, and when at night he slept and in a vision looked across the sea, and way over yonder on the European shore there stood up a man and beckoned and pleaded, “Come over into Macedonia and help us,” and when he went into Europe and in the Roman colony at Philippi established a church upon the broad principles of humanity, there also he had to renew this fight, and when he passed from Philippi to Thessalonica, and from Thessalonica to Berea, and from Berea to Athens, and from Athens to Corinth, and from Corinth back again to Antioch and all the succeeding tours, everywhere he had to fight the same battle: “I received my gospel direct from the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a complete gospel. Peter is not my pope. It is for all men, and the terms of eternal life are simple enough for a child to understand them.”

One man said not long ago, “A proof that your Scriptures are not inspired is this: The best part of them, the most interesting part of them, are the books written by Paul. He wrote about half the New Testament, and nearly the whole of it is based upon a conflict that ended within a few years, with the destruction of Jerusalem. Now if it had been intended as a revelation for all time, why take up so much space to tell

about this battle between the law and the gospel which ended with that sensation? What do we care about it now?"

Ah! God is wiser than this questioner, and Paul's battle was not won when he died. When he was martyred, over his *very* grave came the same enemy, and in the succeeding ages superimposed upon Christianity the rites and ceremonies and liturgies and priesthood of the Old Testament, and every foot of Christendom today is under the shadow of Mount Sinai. More than half of the professing Christians of the world today look to Mount Sinai rather than to Calvary. That is why so much of the New Testament is given to it. Then again, it is there because it is to be made the instrument of the culminating act of redemption.

The last battle that is to be fought, when Israel shall be saved, when the descendants, the children and the kindred of Montefiore and Zangwill, when all of these are to be brought to see, as see they will, that Mount Sinai is the bondwoman, they will turn to the Lord, and the veil that is on their eyes will be taken away, and they will see Jesus, their Messiah. The gospel of Paul is to be the instrument under God for the salvation of the Jewish race.

So, then, the world not only needed that gospel in that form, in the beginning of Christianity, but it was needed in the Reformation; it was needed in the days that brought about the dark ages; it is needed now. And you can seldom now find a man who will get up in the pulpit and preach the gospel that Paul preached; that will allow God by His Spirit to reach the heart.

You may see churches now gathered for a meeting of days, and they will begin to prescribe: "O Lord, we have picked out this man for you to convert. He is worth a half million dollars, or a million. O Lord, we want you to convert this man. He is a great scholar. He is a mighty teacher. His intellectual influence would be worth so much to the church of Jesus Christ. And this lady, Lord - she is a leader of fashion. Her influence among the prominent women of the city is so great. Lord, convert her."

When Paul preached he left it to God, and if God chose to convert the hostler instead of the owner of the horses that the hostler curried, Paul took the hostler. And if God converted the servants, Paul took the servants. If God converted those whose chains jangled as they walked, he took those convicts, for he said to them, "Such were some of you. You were thieves. You were liars. You were adulterers." He preached the gospel to the poor, and did not for a moment suppose that Lord Chesterfield was the author of the gospel instead of Jesus Christ.

When Paul organized a church, he organized it for the capturing of the cities, and we have fallen short on that. We have turned back from Paul on that. He could go to

Ephesus, the capital of Proconsular Asia, with its Temple of Diana, with its festivals, with idolatry fastened on the business interests and tradesmen's guild; he could go to that city and could call out 10,000 converts in a meeting. And when magic, with her books and other evil literature attempted to overturn the simple gospel that he preached, he saw those books piled in the street and burned, and their sparks going up to tell the stars that the Book of God was prevailing and that the books of the devil were burning.

Something is wrong, radically wrong, with our present method, or else we would not fail to reach the cities. Paul reached Ephesus. He reached Corinth. Paul reached Thessalonica. Paul reached Rome, the imperial city and capital, and the empire was captured by the gospel which he preached.

I think that it would do some of us good to take a trip to Arabia, to go into the wilderness a while for retirement, to learn that repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ is the gospel of life and of eternal salvation to Jew or Gentile. I am glad he went. I am glad that on Paul's gospel there does not fall the shadow of any other man. I am glad that he had to submit his interpretation to no Jerusalem clique, but that he got it fresh from the Master and gave it to us as our heritage.

One thing I know, brethren, that when God converted me that was the kind of Savior I met — the Lord Jesus Christ — and from that time until now it has seemed to me the highest honor under heaven to hold up before all men, irrespective of their past habits of vice or virtue, irrespective of race, or age, or sex, the Lord Jesus Christ as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes in Him.

Jonah went to Nineveh at last. The reason that he refused to go the first time was that he knew that God was long-suffering and gracious and forbearing. He knew that if he went and preached and a single man repented God would forgive him, and he plainly told God so. We can almost hear him saying, "That is the reason I would not go. Now, if you had sent me to preach them into hell, I would have gone joyfully, because here in your Book is the prophecy that Nineveh is going to overthrow my people, and I want Nineveh to die, but I knew that if you sent me to preach, they would repent, and then you would forgive them."

Oh! We want to get into the spirit of Paul, that man who by day and night hungered for the salvation of men, of all men, of any man, of any woman, any child, anywhere, no matter how crimson with sin, scarred all over with its defacing marks, groaning under its bondage, bound hand and foot by its fetters.

O imprisoned and imperiled soul, God in Jesus Christ, in one moment of time, can turn you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Oh! If you will go and preach that way, if you will read what Paul said to the elders of the church at Ephesus (let the city churches put that on their walls), and carry out that method, we will capture the cities as Paul captured the cities.

I bless God for the five gospels. I bless Him most of all for the fifth, the last, the complete gospel. I commend it to you, brethren. I commend it to you not only as a lamp to shine on your pathway in the valley of the shadow of death, but as your comfort, your consolation when your heart is riven with sorrow.

I commend it to you as God's culminating revelation of His unspeakable love, intended to lift you up from the depths of wretchedness and mire of your sin, and to plant your feet upon the firm foundation, the everlasting rock of eternal salvation, and to put in your mouths a new song—a song of praises, that can no more be hushed than you can hush the babbling of a fountain which God has unsealed—a fountain of praise that will seek heaven in its upward trills and in its *rhythm* and melody, though you may be in a dungeon, and your back covered with stripes, and your feet in stocks, and give you a joy that all outside sorrows in the world can never eclipse.

God give it to you to take into your heart the gospel of Paul!

7. WHAT SHALL I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE? PART 1

I am fifty-three years old today. I desire to celebrate the anniversary by a discussion of the plan of salvation in answer to the momentous question: What shall I do to inherit eternal life? The discussion will be predicated on two paragraphs of Luke's gospel, one in the tenth and one in the eleventh chapter. The two together outline one great subject in its several parts.

Commencing with the twenty-fifth verse of the tenth chapter, I read: "And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted Jesus." "Lawyer" here does not mean a pleader before a court, but an expounder of the Jewish law, which was both civil and ecclesiastical. The word, "tempt," may have a good or bad sense. My judgment is that the sense here is good. It means, "to try." "And behold a certain lawyer stood up and tempted Jesus, saying, 'Master (that means teacher), what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' And Jesus said unto him, 'What is written in the law?' i.e., you are a lawyer and your business is to expound the law. "What is written in the law? How readest thou?"

"And he answering said, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.'"

Well, that is written in the law. It is a summary of the Ten Commandments-not a New Testament summary, but the synopsis given by Moses himself, not all in one place, but in two different books of the Pentateuch.

Here it is a quotation: "It is written in the law that thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind and thy neighbor as thyself." "And Jesus said unto him, 'Thou hast answered right. Do this and thou shalt live.'"

Mark that answer: "Do this and thou shalt live." "But he, desiring to justify himself said unto Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus made answer and said: 'A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and he fell among robbers who both stript him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead.'"

That road from Jerusalem to Jericho was down hill all the way, the grade very steep and in certain parts of it almost a canyon through the mountains; a very narrow passway, with dangerous rocks on each side, honey-combed with caves. From time

immemorial robbers have harbored in those caves and attacked travelers passing over that road from Jerusalem to Jericho and from Jericho to Jerusalem.

In the time of the Crusaders an organization was formed called the “Knights Templars” for the sole purpose of establishing their headquarters on that road and protecting travelers, keeping robbers off. That organization of the Knights Templars increased and changed its original form until it became the mightiest organized power of chivalry at one period, and of rascality at another period. Kings found it necessary to the peace of their realms to banish them. The romance readers will recall Scott’s vivid description in “Ivanhoe” of their expulsion from England by Richard the Lionhearted. In modern times we have the Knight Templars, a continuation of the old organization, but with different objects.

Here it is well to note in passing that the illustrations of Christ, while always supposititious, are always natural. His illustration is always a verisimilitude of real life; the thing could have actually happened just as He stated.

“And by chance a certain priest was going down that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two pence and gave them to the host, and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.’ Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor to him that fell among the robbers? And he said, ‘He that showed mercy on him.’ And Jesus said unto him, ‘Go, and do thou likewise.’”

So says the paragraph of the tenth chapter.

The paragraph from the eleventh chapter, continuing the subject, commences with the thirty-seventh verse: “Now as He spake, a Pharisee asketh Him to take breakfast with him and He went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not dipt himself before breakfast. And the Lord said unto him (replying to his thought), ‘Now do ye Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter; but your inward part is full of extortion and wickedness. Ye foolish ones, did not He that made the outside make the inside also? But rather give for alms those things which are within and behold, all things are clean unto you.’ “Do you recall how the King James version reads on that?” “But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.” “But this reads:” “Give

for alms those things which are within and all things are clean unto you.’ “There is no doubt in anybody’s mind as to the words in the original Greek - *ta enonta*. The same word was before the King James translators and the Canterbury revisers, but that word grammatically can be derived from either one of two words, *eni* or *eneimi*. If from the first word it means “such things as ye have,” but if from the other it means “those things that are within.” Now, where the grammatical construction favors one derivation as much as another, you go to the context to determine the true word from which it is derived; and the context here unquestionably shows that the Canterbury revisers derived it from the right word.

I recall many books which I have read and hundreds of things which I have heard, predicating an awfully false theology upon the King James rendering, “Give alms of such things as ye have and all things are clean unto you,” that is, if you are benevolent, if you are open-hearted, why the Lord will forgive everything else; and the way to get to heaven, the way to inherit eternal life, is just to give alms. But that is far from the meaning of Jesus.

To resume the reading:” ‘But woe unto you Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and every herb, and pass over judgment and the love of God; but these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you Pharisees! for ye love the chief seats in the synagogues and the salutations in the market places. Woe unto you! for ye are as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not.’ And one of the lawyers answering said unto him, ‘Master, in saying this thou reproachest us also.’ And He said, ‘Woe unto you lawyers also! For ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe unto you! For *ye* build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. So ye are witnesses and consent unto the works of your fathers; for they killed them, and ye build their tombs. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send unto them prophets and apostles; and some of them they shall kill and persecute; that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zachariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary: Yea, I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.’”

What an awful thing is God’s dealing with a nation or with a race! Just as He deals with an individual, so with a nation or the whole race. And how the long treasured wrath that has been massing up from the beginning of a nation’s history until its iniquity is full, bursts over the barriers, and on that last generation falls all of the accumulated woe. Instance the French Revolution. Louis XVI was about the most moderate, the most amiable, of all the Bourbon kings, and yet on him and in his day came the doom that the predecessors of his dynasty had garnered up. “Woe unto

you lawyers! for ye took away the key of knowledge!” Not the key that unlocks knowledge, but the key, knowledge; knowledge itself is the key. “Ye took away the key.” What key? Knowledge. “Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.” So ends the second paragraph.

The subject, of discussion today is vital and fundamental; indeed, the most important ever presented to human consideration, and I would deal with it in the simplest and clearest form possible, but I want to discuss the whole subject. I want to show you that this paragraph from the tenth chapter of Luke and the paragraph from the eleventh chapter of Luke, are but parts of one whole subject, and that subject is a question concerning eternal life — what a man shall do to inherit eternal life. Taken together they disclose the ways by which men seek to obtain eternal life, and how any plan to which a man is wedded, necessarily influences his own character either helpfully or hurtfully, and is bound to influence his own community helpfully or hurtfully. But such extensive discussion is impossible within the limits of a half or three-quarters of an hour, and hence my proposition is to devote to this subject both the morning and evening services, and I invite all present now to come tonight and hear the end of it. I want you to have the whole subject before you.

I ask you to note first our Lord’s method of dealing with men. He always addressed himself to the man’s own standpoint in such a way as to awaken thought and produce self-conviction. Here was an expounder of the law relying upon his conformity to the law for eternal life; an expounder of the law who wanted to call out and try Jesus on this standard. Hence he comes with this most important of all questions: “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Oh, what a question! What a question for you, for me, for anybody, for everybody! “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Or, “What shall I do to escape eternal death?”

Jesus says to him, “What does the law say?” You are a lawyer. It is your business to expound the law. “What does the law say?” “Well, the law says this: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength and with all thy mind and with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself.’” Jesus replied to the man, “You have answered right. That is what the law says. That covers the scope of all the commandments. That summary comprehends every detail, not only of the decalogue but of every other statute, civil, ecclesiastical, ceremonial, or of any other kind. That is the whole of it. On these two hang all the law and the prophets.”

What was the question? “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Mark the answer — “The law says thou shalt love God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself. Do this and thou shalt live.” Do this and thou shalt live. You are standing on the law. You are an expounder of the law. You are seeking justification before the law from your

standpoint. Here is your chance. Do this and thou shalt live. Fail to do this and thou shalt die.

Just here comes up a question. As men now are — I am not talking about how Adam was, but as men now are — is this a practicable way of life? That is, is it possible for eternal life to be obtained this way? And the answer to it is prompt and clear: “By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God.” That makes it absolutely impracticable. There is God’s inspired declaration, that while it remains true if a man will do what the law requires, that he shall inherit eternal life, yet under present conditions it cannot be done. No man can obtain eternal life that way.

And here arises a question in morality. Why then did Jesus say, “Do this and thou shalt live?” Why did He answer the question that way? For this reason — it was the object of Jesus to convict that man. That man did not think he was a sinner. Jesus knew he was. The Bible says that by the law is the knowledge of sin. And Paul says, “I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came sin revived and I died.” Now that man stood before Jesus without any consciousness that he was a lost soul, and there in that delusion, he was going along a road that he thought would certainly land him in heaven, and the only way on the earth to cause him to turn from his hopeless and doomed path was to produce the conviction in his mind that he was a lost sinner. Hence Jesus says, “This is what the law says. Do it. Come and look in this mirror and let it, as you look, reflect back yourself to your sight, that you may see that you are not loving God with all your heart, and with all your strength, with all your mind, and that you are not loving your neighbor as yourself.”

In other words you turn Mount Sinai, trembling with the touch of God’s foot and crested with the fire that shows His presence, and throbbing with the thunders of His power, you turn Mount Sinai over on a man not to save him, but to bring him to Calvary. You see Moses as a schoolmaster unto Christ. When he stands there and says, “I am for the law. I am going to stand on my own record. I am going before the bar of God at last, and according to what I have done I will seek justification.” Now the sooner you get that man to see what is the heart, the spirit, as well as the exceeding broadness of the divine commandment, the better for him. That is the object that Jesus had.

We notice the next point. What sort of a man seeks justification that way? Let us take a look at him. Paul describes him. He says he is a man, busying himself to establish his own righteousness; an exceedingly active man, going to and fro, concerning himself exceedingly much, to establish his own righteousness. Now, when you know that it cannot be done, when you know that if he persists in walking in that road that he is lost, what ought to be the attitude of your mind toward him? What

feeling in your heart, you that are better informed, should be excited by a contemplation of this man's hopeless quest, of this man's despairing activity?

There ought to be excited in your mind something kindred to what was excited in Paul's mind when he looked at such a man. Well, how was it with him? He is a good example because he was once right there himself. There was a time when he was exceedingly zealous after the law, trying to establish his own righteousness. There was a time when he thought that from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet there was not a spot in him. And when the awful revelation came to him it so impressed his heart that when he looked on anybody else in that same dangerous condition, how did he feel?

Let his own words speak for him: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh." (~~500~~Romans 9:1-3.) "Brethren, my heart's desire and supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved." (~~500~~Romans 10:1.)

Such a picture as that is enough to excite in the mind of one who is better informed the deepest commiseration. It is enough to put him down on his knees and induce him to cry out unceasingly, with an importunate supplication, "O God, open that man's eyes; there is death in that road. There is no life in that road. I pray for him."

Now, why is it that a man cannot be saved that way? Let us see if we cannot get right to the very bottom of it. Why is it? I cite three insuperable difficulties. Any one of them is insuperable. If there were just one of these three it would be impossible for him to inherit eternal life that way. What are they?

First, the carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to the law of God, neither can be. What is this way of salvation? It is to do what the law says and live. And what does the law say? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." But here is a man trying to live that way whose mind is enmity against God and not subject to the law of God, and cannot be subject to the law of God. What is his chance? With his fallen, unrenewed nature how can he love God, love him with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his strength, when that heart is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, and cannot be subject to the law of God? That difficulty then is insuperable.

What is the second? The second difficulty is this: The man is already a sinner and the wages of sin is death. God looked down from heaven to see if there was just one that did good, just one. No, not one. They are all under condemnation. Now, just as

he stands right there he is a sinner, a condemned sinner, a sinner already obnoxious to the extreme penal sanction of the law. How is that man to inherit eternal life by keeping the law? That difficulty is insuperable.

What is the third? I want to read that to you. Some people, you can get to appreciate the force of it, but it takes education to get even the few to ever fully realize its deep significance, and therefore I want to read it to you from the Bible itself. This I want you to hear in the very words of God: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point he is guilty of all. For He that said, ‘Do not commit adultery, said also, ‘Do not kill.’ Now, if thou commit no adultery, if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.” (⁵⁰⁰James 2:10-11.) Again, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.’” (⁴⁸⁰Galatians 3:10.)

What does that mean? There is a big word used a good deal now, “solidarity”—the solidarity of the law. It means that if a man is to seek justification by the law, it will avail nothing that he has obeyed 999,999 of its 1,000,000 precepts if he has broken one, just one time. To live by obedience means not partial, but total obedience; not obedience temporarily but universally; not obedience last week and this week and next week, but from the beginning of his life to his death; absolute obedience, not only to every divine requirement of God, but to the full spiritual power of that requirement.

Now, if a man can think — if he has the germ of analysis and logic in him — and he looks at these three obstacles in the way of keeping the law; first, an unrenewed nature that is hostile to God; second, to the fact that he is already a sinner and guilty of death; and third, that if he were not now a sinner that the obedience must in future be perfect to every commandment, at all times, then I ask you, in view of these three things, if any man under present conditions, can be saved by the law.

This suggests three other questions: How are these three difficulties to be removed? The first one is removed by regeneration, what is called the new birth, taking away the stony heart and giving the heart of flesh. But let us hear the Scriptures themselves: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.” (⁴⁶⁶Ezekiel 36:26, 27.) “Jesus answered and said unto him, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God... That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’” (⁴⁸⁸John 3:3-6.) “Not by works of righteousness which we

have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” (~~30B~~ Titus 3:5.)

But you seeking justification by law, where is your right to demand regeneration? If you get regeneration, it must come outside of any claims you have upon the law. I admit that regeneration would remove that first difficulty, but deny that regeneration comes by the law.

How is the second difficulty removed? This difficulty arising from the fact that the man is already a sinner and the wages of sin is death — how is that to be removed? I venture to say that there is no way to remove it except to find a propitiation for the sin, such a propitiation as the law-giver will accept. It is to find some substitute upon whom that penalty can be inflicted and which will be acceptable to the one whose law has been violated. The Scriptures teach that. They teach that the law-maker must set forth a propitiation and that the substitute must expiate the offense, and as expiation means death, He must die. He must die under a curse. Hear the Scriptures themselves tell how this difficulty is removed:

“Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” (~~40B~~ Romans 3:24, 25.)

“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all... Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief; when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.” (~~25B~~ Isaiah 53:5-10.)

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” (~~40B~~ 2 Corinthians 5:21.)

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, ‘Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.’” (~~40B~~ Galatians 3:13.)

“Who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (~~30B4~~ Titus 2:14.)

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (~~1~~1 Peter 1:18, 19.)

“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.” (~~1~~1 Peter 2:24.)

Unquestionably such expiation is able to remove this difficulty, but if you are seeking salvation by the law, how can you claim that anybody should do that for you?

But how shall the third difficulty be removed? That difficulty lies in the solidarity of the law, requiring the perfect keeping of every commandment in all of its parts at all times. I know of but one way in the world in which that can be removed, which is, that a substitute be found whose obedience of the law is perfect; so that by the obedience of one many sinners may be justified. So testifies the Scripture: “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.” (~~1~~Romans 5:19.)

But you, seeking justification by the law, how are you to claim the benefit of anything of that kind? Here arises another question, a question that goes right to the heart of a modern agitation. Let us suppose that two of these difficulties are removed, two of them—that a man is regenerated and, being regenerated, now has a heart that prompts him to love God, and has good motives to prompt his good deeds, and let us suppose that he has received forgiveness of past sins through the expiation of his Substitute. Now why must that other difficulty be gotten out of the way by a substitute?

“Surely,” one of these agitators may say, “the regenerated, forgiven man, can keep the law perfectly.” I will tell you why he cannot. This regenerated man — this forgiven man $\frac{3}{4}$ falls upon the remarkable discovery that when he would do good evil is present with him; that what he allows not, that he does, and what he allows, that he does not, and that while with his mind he consents to the law that is holy, just and good, yet how to perform he finds not. He finds in his members another law warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to sin. Isn’t that so, brother? After you were converted, after you were justified, did you not find it so? So that before there is personal capability of perfect obedience another provision must come in, a provision that shall eradicate the last remnant of the carnal nature and complete what had commenced in regeneration.

In other words, there must be another exercise of divine grace that shall take this justified man and sanctify him wholly, body, soul and spirit; make his spirit perfect, and glorify his body. But it is a hard job when you attempt to glorify the body. How can it be done? It can only be done when mortality puts on immortality and corruption puts on incorruption. It can only be done by the power of the resurrection.

So that before any man is even in condition personally to love God with all his heart and strength and mind and his neighbor as himself, he must have been regenerated; he must have been justified; he must have had a Substitute to keep the law for him; he must have been sanctified; he must have been glorified.

Well now, that disposes of a good many questions. Let us go on with this: If that man is saved — now here is a question for you—if that man is so saved, what kind of salvation is it? Is it law-salvation? Here is God's answer. I do wish you could take it right down into your souls: "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast." Grace provided the regeneration. Grace provided the propitiation. Grace provided the perfect obedience. Grace provided the sanctification of the spirit. Grace provided the resurrection and glorification of the body. It is all of grace, from turret to foundation stone, without any mixture of human merit, so much as the thickness of a spider's web—that is the kind of salvation.

But here comes in with perfect coolness a man who looks over his spectacles at you and tells you that his objection to this grace — business is its tendency to immorality. But how can it tend to immorality? Right after the "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast," it adds, "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (⁴²⁰Ephesians 2:10.) And also it says that the "grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that we should live soberly and righteously and Godly in this present world." If this grace teaches anything, if it has any trend, that trend is in the direction of morality.

Here, then, let us answer a great question. I have turned it over and over in my mind. I have had occasion to do it and to think the thought clear, out, and to think of it in its several connections and to co-ordinate its parts, and that question is: Does not grace through faith make void the law? I want to show you how it does not. It honors and magnifies the law, first in its precept by the perfect obedience of the Substitute. It honors and magnifies the law in its penal sanction by the death of the Substitute. It honors and magnifies the law in that the beneficiaries of this grace have implanted in

them a principle of holiness that shall cause them to love God and give them good motives to obey God, though imperfectly.

And then it provides for the sanctification of that regenerated spirit, that the soul may love God perfectly. And then it provides for the glorification of the body, so that being put in heaven at the resurrection day, there is now at last a man who in himself, not in his Substitute, will love God with all his heart and his neighbor as himself; so that personally and not through a proxy, at the end of it, the outcome of it, the subject of this grace fulfills the law.

Finally, this grace does not make void the law, because all the time that this regenerated and justified man is being preserved by it until the full work in him is accomplished, he is under the law. But no, you say, that is not scriptural; he is not under the law. Yes, he is under the law. He is indeed under the law as a rule of conduct, and no thoughtful man can deny it. Do you mean to say that the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” is not over a Christian; and the commandment, “Thou shalt not steal,” and the commandment, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” and the commandment, “Thou shalt not covet” — do you say that the Christian is not under that rule? The answer to it is: He is not under it as a rule of life, but he is under it as a rule of conduct. So on these five points there is nothing in salvation by grace through faith that makes void the law at any point, but in every point it honors it, in every point it magnifies it. As Paul says, “The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, out of a good conscience, out of a faith unfeigned.”

But perhaps some of you say, this is getting a long way from that lawyer. No, it is not. We come right back to that lawyer, for the concluding part, so far as this morning’s service is concerned. I wanted to show you why Jesus told that lawyer to do this and live, that He wanted to convict him, jostle him off of that platform he was on and turn his attention to the true way.

Pursuing the discussion our next question is: What is the constant attitude of the mind of a man who is trying to get to heaven that way? Our lesson says of the lawyer, “He desiring to justify himself.” There it is. The constant attitude is a desire to justify himself. But what does that desire to justify himself prompt him to do? Look at it. Here is that high, broad commandment of God: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself.” And here is a man trying to save himself by obedience to that law, and very anxious to justify himself. What result follows? He lowers that law to suit the grade of his obedience. How does this lawyer manifest that? By the question, “Who is thy neighbor?” He is saying, “O, yes, I am seeking salvation by the law. The law says I must love thy neighbor as myself. Now,

in order for my obedience to that law to be practicable, I must so limit the meaning of that word 'neighbor' as that my obedience will be co-extensive with it."

The very first thing that it induces is the lowering of the divine commandment to suit the grade of the obedience. The lawyer in his mind was saying, "My neighbor is a Jew, and a Jew of my own sect, a Pharisee; of course, not a Sadducee. He is not a neighbor of mine; a Samaritan, pah! I would not even look toward a Samaritan. I love my neighbor as myself, but you must let me say who my neighbor is, and it means my' brother Pharisee."

Now you can see why Jesus gave him that answer, and to expose that man's profanation of the divine commandment, and the sophistry with which he sought to justify himself, He tells the parable of the good Samaritan. As if He had said: "I will throw a sidelight on that subject of neighbor, and I will throw such a sidelight as you yourself with your own mouth shall condemn yourself." Didn't he condemn himself? What does the record say? When Christ got through with the story of the good Samaritan He put the question now to this lawyer: "Which of these three thinkest thou proved neighbor to him that fell among the robbers?" And out from his very lips the answer had to come, "He that showed mercy to him." But where does this answer land his law-righteousness?

If that is what the word neighbor means, looking back over your past life, O Pharisee, where is your justification? How have you loved your neighbor as yourself? You that seek to be justified by the law, in the light of this parable defining neighbor, you are a lost soul and you know it. You know it. You know you hate a Sadducee. You know that you hate the Gentile. You know that you have wrapt the mantle of your exclusiveness about you, lest you should come in contact, and by contact, receive defilement from other men, and you have kept narrowing the law, narrowing it until you have got a little bit of a circle here, described by the word neighbor, that confines only you and your wife and your son and his wife, and nobody else in the world.

You never saw a man on the face of this earth that stood on the basis of his morality, that stood on his own record, either before or after his conversion, that did not lower the divine law in order to make his obedience fill what the law required. A sliding scale! A sliding scale! I can keep the law perfectly if you will let me reach up and slide it down to fit what I do.

The parable of the good Samaritan disposes of the lawyer's quibble on the second commandment, but our second paragraph deals with a whole class under both commandments. It shows that what that man did as an individual the Pharisees did as a class; that in order to obtain justification by the law they were sliding God's law

down on everything. How? Well, the law requires us to be clean, clean, clean. But they said we will slide: the law down so that it just mean on the outside — that it only means to keep the outside of the cup and platter clean. That is all. Inwardly full of rottenness and dead men's bones. Ye foolish ones! Did not He that made the outside make the inside also? Does not the law of God require truth in the inward part? Does it not say that the inward part shall know wisdom and righteousness? And now you will slide it down until it only means obedience in little things, but not the great things; tithing mint and rue and herbs and leaving undone love and judgment and mercy. Ye hypocrites! It says, honor thy father and thy mother, but you do not want to honor your father and your mother; so you slide that law down, so that it says, that if I take some of my property and write, "Corban," on it, and say it is a gift, then I am under no obligations to take care of my old worn-out father; I am under no obligations to support the last days of my infirm mother. Thou hypocrite, sliding the law down, and it must be slidden down to get any justification.

How shall I be clean? How shall I keep clean? "Give alms of those things that are within and all things are clean unto you." Here is a question of how to be clean and how to keep clean. You say, "Wash externally." Jesus says, "Wash inwardly," and let the soul be made clean. What a man has on his hands, the little dirt on his hands, that when he goes to eat may get into his mouth, that does not defile him, but defilement comes from within. "Out of the heart of man proceed murder and blasphemy and adultery and every foul and loathsome thing." That is where defilement comes from. And they are right here in Waco, people sneering at your grace, people sneering at your salvation by faith, people telling you that your doctrine tends to immorality, because desiring to justify themselves.

Ah me! Look at the other man. Are you a Christian, desiring to justify yourself? "O, no! God be merciful to me a sinner." Look at him as he stands before you, a sinner saved by grace, imperfect in doing right; he knows it, but striving to go on under the promptings of divine grace, and ultimately by that grace to be altogether clean.

O thou supreme question, thou paramount interrogation, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Before thy burning point I bare my guilty heart.

Tonight we will conclude the discussion. Tonight we will find the true answer—the answer toward which our Lord was driving the lawyer. The way to which He ever sought to shut up the Pharisees, the only way, known under heaven and among men whereby any man can be saved.

8. WHAT SHALL I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE? PART 2

SCRIPTURES: ~~<416>~~ *Acts 16:29-31*; ~~<501>~~ *Romans 10:1-10*;
~~<414>~~ *John 3:14-18,36*; ~~<415>~~ *Luke 11:37-52*.

It has been said that our Savior in the Sermon on the Mount and in the conversation with the lawyer recorded in ~~<415>~~ Luke 10:25-37, discussed this morning, taught one way of life, but that Paul at a later day taught a contrary way of life; and it has become a fashionable thing with those who make such a statement, to contrast our Lord's theology with what they are pleased to call Pauline theology.

Of course, if it can be established, that Paul's theology is at variance with our Lord's teaching on the same subject, the apostle's doctrine must fall and with it the inspiration of all the books containing it. Paul himself claimed that he received his gospel direct from the Lord.

Bearing on this statement and in refutation of it, I now cite three passages of scripture, the first two embodying Paul's conception of the plan of salvation, and one containing our Savior's epitome of the gospel-way of life preached by himself. In the sixteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we have this question and answer, which is the true question and answer with reference to eternal life: "Then he called for a light and sprang in and came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas and brought them out and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' And they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house.'"

The second scripture is from the tenth chapter of the letter to the Romans: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved, for I bear them record that they have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge; for they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise: Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ up again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from

the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” This is the Pauline theology.

Now let-us hear the Savior. I read from the third chapter of John; “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Our question this morning was, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” “He that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

In the discussion of the subject this morning under the question, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life,” I found why it was necessary for the Savior to answer the question in that instance as He did; that He answered it in that way in order to suit the standpoint of the man who propounded the question, and with a view to bring about a conviction of sin in that man’s heart, and in order to extort from that man’s own lips the virtual confession that in attempting to justify himself he had lowered the requirement of God’s law concerning “Who is my neighbor?”

The discussion this morning closed at this point: “Howbeit, give for alms those things which are within and behold, all things are clean unto you.” This presents the subject in another phase and under the question, “How shall we be clean and how shall we keep clean?” The Pharisee said that the way to be clean and to keep clean was by external ablution, and the Savior’s plan was by internal ablution.

The proposition embodying the plan of salvation, speaking from the standpoint of cleanness then, is this: The way by which a man shall become clean and remain clean in the sight of God, is by internal, spiritual cleansing, cleansing by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In support of this proposition as bearing upon the true way of life, you have but to consider the following things: First, there is only one thing in the world that does defile, and that is sin; whatever transgresses the law, that is sin and that defiles the man. Second, all sin is without the body, to put it in somewhat plainer language, all sin must be spiritual. The body can not sin. It is without the body. There must be the action of the mind and of the will and of the judgment, the powers within. The outer man can not commit a sin. It is the inner man only that can commit a sin. Third, and therefore the law of God constantly requires truth in the inward parts, in the inner

man. These three thoughts alone establish the position in the Savior's statement, that if you give for alms the things that are within, all things shall be clean unto you.

Leaving out the figure of alms-giving employed, the substance of the thought He designed to teach, as the context shows, was this: You are very much concerned, if you go out into the market place, lest by outward touch with some publican you contact defilement. You are concerned if you go to eat, lest certain kinds of meat shall defile you. You have concern about everything you touch and everything that you eat. You wash your hands lest you should be defiled by dirt going into your mouth. Contrary to all of that is the doctrine of God that if you are clean inside, if you give alms of the things that are within, that is, repentance, which is internal, and faith, which is internal, and you receive regeneration, which is internal, then everything is clean to you, i.e., nothing external can defile one internally clean. That is what it means.

We come now to consider then what the true question is if a man wants to be saved, and that question and its answer I have read to you; that if you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ you have and shall have and forever have eternal life; that you now have eternal life so far as justification is concerned; that you shall have eternal life so far as the purification of your spirit is concerned when sanctification is complete; that you shall have eternal life when your body is raised from the dead, a spiritual body that can die no more, that you shall have moral, spiritual life when you are made conformable to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ in your sanctified nature and powers, so that you, in heaven, can and will perfectly obey God, which salvation comes, some of it instantaneously, as justification, and all of it ultimately, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

I now read but do not discuss, for I have other things to present, the links of this chain of salvation by grace, through faith. Listen at it. I read from the eighth chapter of the letter to the Romans, beginning with the twenty-ninth verse: "For whom He did foreknow," that is the first, the foreknowledge of God, "He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." That is the second link of the chain. "Moreover, whom He did predestinate them He also called." That is the third link. "Whom He called them He also justified." That is the next link. "Whom He justified them He also glorified." And so the chain is complete. The object in reading you these connected links in the plan of a salvation which is purely by grace and not of works, is to show that from its conception before the foundation of the world to the consummation at the end of the world, it is all of God.

Now I read but do not discuss, the four pillars upon which such a salvation abides without any shaking. Here they are:

First, "It is Christ that died." There is the expiation of the sins which we commit, the death of Christ. As long as virtue in that cleansing blood remains, as long as that propitiation is acceptable unto God as a sufficient atonement for sin, that pillar upholds the superstructure - salvation.

The second, "Yea, rather that is risen again;" the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, for if He be not risen our faith is vain. I say that Christ, bursting the cerements of death and emerging from the grave, and thus being demonstrated the Son of God with power, is the second pillar upon which our salvation rests.

The third is this: "Who is even at the right hand of God." By virtue of what He has done, and as a consequence of His resurrection, He is placed at the right hand of the Majesty on high, enthroned and invested with the sovereignty of the entire universe. All power in heaven and on earth is in His hands.

And the fourth is this: "Who also maketh intercession for us." There is perpetuity of His priesthood, that King who is Priest upon His throne.

Now with these links in the chain and these four pillars upon which salvation rests, let us look, but not tarry in looking, simply look at the security of the salvation, and here let us read again: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

My only remark on that is this, that when the momentous question is propounded to me, as to how I shall inherit eternal life, and when, my soul seeks a solution of that question, the conclusion which I reach in order to comfort my soul in all of life's vicissitudes and emergencies must depend upon the character of the foundation, and if it be an unshakable foundation, then I can rest; I am at the end of my investigation. I have reached peace. I do not disturb my mind any more on the thought that I shall be lost.

I want to look back and see how each link in the chain has been fused and welded together, in the secret chambers of eternity by the divine Architect himself, whose hand forges and gives eternal strength to each part of the chain. I want to see that. I do not want to feel that unless I myself look out here and look out yonder, and keep this little point secure and that little point secure, that after all I am going to be lost. I

do not want to feel that I am under obligation to go into the garden with a microscope and ascertain the smallest herb there and tithe that, or else have the feeling in my heart that by overlooking some infinitesimal portion of duty that my soul will be lost.

We come now to what I want to discuss tonight. I promised to show you the awful consequences that flow from an attempt to seek life in any other way, and the demoralizing character of a doctrine which avows that a man can keep the law of God perfectly either way before or after his regeneration at any time prior to glorification. No man who ever seeks to enter heaven on the score of justifying himself by his own righteousness, and no man, who after he has been regenerated and forgiven of all past sin can from that time on expect to perfectly keep the law of God, without falling into grievous and hurtful errors.

The whole theory or any part of the theory, is based upon three false conceptions, the first of which is, as indicated this morning, that the law of God is not a fixed and unchangeable and universal standard, but that it is a sliding scale of requirement that must be lowered to suit different conditions in different places and different grades of obedience — that it may be one thing in one place and quite another thing in another place. This conception of law, when it is followed to its logical consequence, is after all, a simple denial of law at all. It logically says there is no such thing as law outside of special circumstances. It is equivalent to the position of the infidel that law is only custom.

The second false conception is in regard to sin. The modern holiness man, the perfectionist, has in his mind, a very limited view of sin. Take what Mr. Wesley writes on the subject, that sin is only a voluntary act of disobedience; that a man can not unconsciously sin, unintentionally sin. Here must you lower the transgression in order to suit the degree of the knowledge of the subject of the law, and all you have to do to make him entirely innocent of any disobedience to any moral law of God by such process, is simply to make his ignorance supreme. If his ignorance be supreme, his innocence is perfect.

But God's Word teaches that it is the dark places of the earth that are the habitations of cruelty and that the people perish for lack of knowledge. That is the very charge brought here against the Pharisees, that they have taken away the key of knowledge; and every principle that is inculcated in the New Testament is predicated upon the fact that knowledge must underlie faith, and that not to know is to die, and to die is to be lost.

This false conception of sin, which confines it wholly to voluntary transgression, also loses sight of what are called states or dispositions; a man may be naturally as averse

from God as possible; the ruling bent or disposition of his mind and heart may be whatever you desire to state it; that state of mind and that disposition of heart is not sin according to this theory; there must be a certain act and that act willed, before any sin may be committed. It is equivalent to saying that the moral law of God does not reign over the heathen world. It logically denies that the law of God is written in the human heart.

In the next place, it is based upon a false conception of the human will. It assumes that the will of the unconverted man, and the will of the regenerate, the imperfect man, is at all times able to choose the right thing, and denies that that will is enslaved and corrupted.

Now these three misconceptions—the misconception of the law, the misconception of sin, the misconception as to the power of the human will, belong to this system as a whole, or to any of its parts.

What else? It is directly contrary to the teachings of the Scriptures. There are passages in the Word of God that speak without any sort of equivocation and leave no just ground for caviling, that there is not upon this earth a just man that liveth and sinneth not that if we say we have no sin we make God to be a liar and the truth is not in us.

Then it is contrary to human experience. I mean the experience of the race as well as of the individual. In all hours when the moral atmosphere is clear enough for us to get a clear view of things, and the spirit of proper insight and candor is on us, we know we are sinners. The rebukes of conscience teach us so. The apprehension of some sudden evil proclaims it. The dread of going into the dark that may be peopled by some indefinable phantoms is a demonstration of it, and all human experience falls into line with the teaching of God's Word.

But I come now to the capital point and the closing point, and that is that the seeking of eternal life in the way that this lawyer was seeking it or the profession of sinless perfection in life after regeneration, for it is all based upon the common ground, makes hypocrites, Pharisees. It is the Pharisee question with which we are dealing in this whole discussion. I say that the doctrine in any of its parts, or as a whole, not accidentally but inevitably and irresistibly, brings about a product, and that product is Pharisaism.

Now in order to see whether such a result is disastrous or not, let us outline a Pharisee as he is presented here in this context. What is it? If a man lay stress on the seeming more than the real, if a man attends more to external than to internal cleanness, what do you call him? What word is the first stroke of the outline? The

one word, hypocrisy — hypocrite. A child knows it. No mind removed a hair's breadth from imbecility, or idiocy, but what can somewhat recognize hypocrisy and hypocrites. You seem to be, rather than you are. You are whited sepulchres, beautiful without but inwardly full of rottenness and dead men's bones.

What is the next word employed in this outline? "Inwardly full of extortion," is a characteristic, but what one word expressed it? Covetous! I venture to say that the history of this world has produced no greater examples of greater and downright and outright idolatry in the shape of covetousness, than has been found in the Pharisee, whether of ancient or of modern times. A man by keeping clean outside, being externally obedient to God's law, may reach out a stealthy hand and snatch the heritage from the orphan and the widow, extort and extort, pile up and pile up, while a world perishes, until the heart becomes as hard as the nether millstone, granite, cold, impenetrable granite, that never permits a tear of mercy to fall, nor extends a helping hand to the suffering. The stingiest man that this world has ever known is the man of this very kind.

What else? "Full of extortion and wickedness." Cruel, is the term I use. Cruel! A Pharisee is cruel. How else could he take a widow's house by fraud? How else could he rob her and devour the orphan? Cruel? Oh, how pitiless! How unmerciful! Our parable illustrates: Yonder lies the man whom robbers met and stripped and beat and left half dead, and here comes this man whose righteousness is external and cruelly and coldly he walks around him the other way.

What is the next stroke of the outline? Scrupulosity about little things while neglectful of greater things. You never saw one of them in your life that did not do it. I never saw a man yet who was seeking to justify himself in the sight of God on his own record, that did not magnify some little thing into a mountain and minify some mountain into a molehill. The form, more than the power of Godliness, the shell, the shell, even if it shall so harden as to prevent expansion and thereby bring death to the life in the shell. The shell on the beach never sings until it is empty and dry.

Why, you see a touch of it going on in the papers now, where it counts for nothing that the commandment of God, "Go and carry the gospel to every creature," is neglected. It counts for nothing that the ear be closed to the pleading cries for help that come from destitute places. It counts for nothing that the cold waves of infidelity are inundating the land. The great thing is to be parliamentary and to preserve church sovereignty; to be able to say at the judgment, "O Lord God, I hindered when need held out her emaciated hand and gasped with swollen tongue, swollen with thirst; I helped not because the method was unconstitutional. The world was lost but I

preserved the form of church sovereignty!" It is just as downright Pharisaism and hypocrisy as that which occurs here in the text.

And you ask what is the moral effect of such a teaching on the world? Let us notice this character yet more. Spiritual pride! They loved the chief places in the synagogues and the salutations in the market places. There never was one yet who attempted to justify himself before God upon his own record that was not eaten through and through with the cancer of spiritual pride; not one. You may take him in the form of an infidel and it is there. You may take him in the form of one who claims to be religious after that fashion, and it is there. You may take him after he claims to be religiously perfect and it is there, a spiritual pride, and towers up to the very heaven and that will not say, "I am a sinner." "Through pride the angels fell."

Notice the next point. They are always cheap-glory people. What does the record say? "Ye build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers slew." Now that is a fine point. I want you to see it for it touches the whole question. You remember it is said,

***"Seven cities claimed a Homer dead,
In which the living Homer begged for bread."***

What is the point of the sarcasm? It would cost something to be kind to the blind old bard of Scio's rocky isle while he was alive. It did not cost a cent to shelter under his glory and claim him as a fellow-citizen after he is gone.

You remember how the mother of Robert Burns, with aching heart and quivering lips stood and looked at the cold towering monument erected over her son, and remembering his poverty and his want and his need in his lifetime, said with a pathos that is indescribable,, "Ah, Robbie, you asked them for bread and they gave you a stone." Oh, it is cheap to raise a monument to a dead hero, far cheaper than while he is living and the issues of the hour are on him and he, is facing them, to stand by him. "Ye build the tombs of the prophets."

Yonder in England, what is that crowd gathering? You can scarcely look to its outskirts. Who are they? They are the titled ones of Great Britain. There are dukes and marquises and knights, and there are long-robed ecclesiastical dignitaries. What ought them together? They are going to erect a monument to John Bunyan and bask in the cheap glory of admiring him, gone. When he lived they put him in jail. They said he should not preach. Now that is Pharisaism again, and all on the same line.

I want to show you the hideousness of the character when it is drawn out fully. There are men today who will get up before an audience and with a declamation that is amazing in its elocutionary power and rhetorical force, speak concerning William

Carey and Adoniram Judson, but when you go to them and say, "Do thou likewise," they close their purse strings, because it is cheaper to glorify a dead missionary than to help a live one.

What else? Pharisees are heaven-shunners. Jesus says, "You do not go in yourselves." Oh, ye men that are seeking eternal life on, your own merits, you heaven-shunners, you do not get in-no, never. You do not enter the kingdom of God here in the practical form in which it comes to your door. You do not enter its spirit of pity and mercy and love. How can you expect to enter it in its glory phase up yonder?

Now comes the very climax of it, as to what is the moral effect of Pharisaism. If that way of seeking eternal life through a man's own personal justification is based upon three false conceptions, to wit: of law, of sin and of the human will; if it be contrary to express declarations of the Scripture; if it run athwart universal human experience, and if it makes Pharisees such as have been described, now what is the moral effect on other people? That is the part that I want to speak to you of in the climax.

First, "Ye are tombs which appear not, and men walk over them and know it not." If a man under the Levitical law touched death, it defiled him. Therefore, when anybody died the dead body had to be put in an isolated place, a sepulchre, and a mark put upon it, "This is the realm of death. Whoever touches death is defiled." Hence there could not be a more hurtful means of disseminating defilement than to have a tomb that did not show, and men walking over it and did not know it; coming in touch with it, because there was nothing to tell that it was there.

What is the principle involved here? If some workmen under a city contract go to digging up the streets and digging down to the sewer, and when night comes are unable to close the pit they have dugged, and the stranger comes along, as 'he has a right on the public highway, and falls into the pit that does not appear, no piece of timber put across, no warning red light to say, "Don't come here, here is danger," nothing of that kind-it is a criminal offense. It is a criminal offense to leave near a road an old well that is uncovered, lest unthoughtedly, not knowing it, a man should fall into it.

Now, the Pharisee is a tomb which does not appear, a death trap that has no mark to designate it, and every day, and every hour of every day, thoughtless thousands are coming along and falling into that trap where no sign, has been put, "He who comes here dies." That is the character of Pharisaism. That is the character of it even if an infidel speaks it, who superciliously says, "You church people are saved by somebody else. I stand on my own record." And the little boy does not see the

death that is there, and he walks into it without knowing it. Just as far as that influence goes it is death, and it indicated no warning.

What else? A Pharisee is an oppressor of men. “You put heavy burdens on men and you do not touch them with your little finger.” There never yet has been placed on human conscience such a burden as the law and the traditional requirements by which a man shall be justified along that line. Why, you can just think of it and it will run you crazy as to its details. You are all the time apprehensive that you have forgotten something. The mind is on a stretch, a strain, lest perchance some little formality, some little external ceremony, has been omitted.

Look at the land where salvation by such forms is the dominant theology. Burdens! It comes to the laborer and stops not at one day in seven as a holy day, as God requires, but plucks nearly every day in the week from the privilege of honest toil and puts it in the calendar as a holiday. Burdens! It puts a burden on birth, on the cradle, on the barefooted boy, on the stripling going to school, on the young man when he marries, and the grave of his baby, when it dies; a burden that mortgages life after death and says, “You must pay me this and that, or that soul can never get out of purgatory.” Burdens! Oh, who can live under them?

Behold a picture: An honest man, honestly striving after righteousness, striving to attain unto it, reaching up, after self-justification — went to the city of Rome and thought to find a high degree of righteousness if he would only come to that famous marble stairway, and on each step, crawling up, stop and on naked knees recite a prayer, and go up another step and kneel down, and recite another strain of supplication, and half way up that man (Martin Luther) received a flash of light. The Word of God came down to him. What word? “The just shall live by faith.” By faith, the salvation that we are talking about tonight, and he leaped to his feet. The whole world was bright to him. Oh, that made salvation attainable and precious, and he became. the great apostle of salvation by grace through faith.

Let us look again. “Persecutors.” “I sent the prophets to you and you persecuted them. I sent others and you killed them.” Now I want to ask a question, and I do not care whether you have read just a hundred pages of history or a million pages. I want to ask you this question! (If you have read any history, you can answer it.) Judging from the statements that are recorded upon the pages of history, what power has persecuted men most? It is the Pharisaical power. That power built the dungeons. That power invented the rack and the thumb-screw. That power will say, “Outwardly conform, Never mind about what you think. Never mind about your soul’s individual sense of responsibility to God in secret. Just simply submit to be

baptized and conform on the outside.” And the fires of persecution have glowed and martyrs have died on account of Pharisaism all along down the ages.

What else? “Nation destroyers.” On this generation shall come all the blood that was shed from righteous Abel down to Zachariah, that was slain between the porch and the altar. I have looked at that many a time and I could understand how upon the Jews, considering the nation as an individual that had its birth and youth and maturity and old age as a nation I could understand how, the sins committed in the early days of the nation would have to be atoned for somewhere, and how they would come on the last generation, but this goes back to Abel. That is the part of it that puzzled me. Abel was before the Jews. How then does it leap over that long period and get back to Abel? I will tell you. It is the responsibility of an idea. What were the two ideas that crossed swords at Abel’s altar? The idea of self-righteousness as embodied in Cain and the idea of salvation by faith through the blood of the lamb in Abel. And there the believer in one way of getting to heaven persecuted the believer in the other way, and there self-righteousness struck its first murderous blow that has been perpetuated from that day until now.

Now the last point is the effect upon other people. It bars heaven. “You will not go in yourself and others that would go in, you hinder.” Oh, how many times, in some great meeting where Jesus has been lifted up as the only hope of the world, somebody in the audience deep down in his heart has felt, “I am a sinner; I am a lost sinner,” near the kingdom of God, close up to the line; but when he steps out of the house there comes a Pharisee and takes away the key of knowledge and hinders him from going in; comes with his scorn of salvation by Christ and plucks that man from the very threshold of eternal life and hurls him to the deepest depths of eternal death.

Is it any light matter then that this view should be propagated among our children; anything which ministers to hypocrisy, to covetousness, to cruelty, to extortion; anything which ministers to oppression and not to helpfulness; anything which causes one to shun heaven; anything which makes a man an unmarked source of defilement, a hidden source of death, and that, too, right in the path where children walk, that right on the highway where men must go, there is death and no sign to tell that death is there, and then a destruction, that saps the foundation of the nation, that masses a great flood of future woe and holds it in reservation until a generation comes on whose unsheltered head it shall burst in one awful, overwhelming deluge?

The sin, the awful sin of self-righteousness, whether held by the men outside of the church or in it, is the sin of this world. And that is why Saul was the chief of sinners. He was the embodiment of self-righteousness. He hated Jesus. He persecuted that way unto the death and it made him the chief of sinners.

So I have presented this subject to you, and I think there will be no harm in my telling you about an impression made on my mind this morning. Just at the close of the sermon, when my own soul, with every finger of it, was touching salvation by grace, salvation by Christ, I sat down there. The choir sang that old-time hymn with that old-time tune, that I heard when I was a little child, and it melted me down. I never thought about its being any fine display of singing. I didn't think of the choir, but their song made me think of Jesus and heaven and precious grace. I would to God we had more of those songs that touch the soul.

Away back yonder some of you sitting here used to be in meetings, where ministers preached the gospel and not philosophy. They held, up Jesus as the only way of life for sinners, lost sinners, and somehow, old-fashioned as they may have been, homespun backwoodsmen, there was something in the power of those services to touch the heart, to break down the barriers of fictitious distinctions between classes, and bring all together as brothers and sisters, until tears flowed down their faces and they would take each other by the hand and bless God for the power of grace. And that old-time religion is good enough for me. I do not ever want any other. I would not give a snap of my finger for another kind. I have tried this right in the presence of death and it is very sweet.

O Waco church, when I came here this morning, while I was sorry for you on account of your having as worthless a pastor as you have, I rejoiced that I had such a church. But I do want to see you have one more old-time meeting, a meeting when salvation will come from God, grace, all of it grace, and men under the power of it shall feel and acknowledge that they are lost sinners. I want to see that come. I hunger for it. I thirst for it. My soul stretches out its hands in supplication to God that one more time before I pass away I may see this house full of the glory of God, and I know that it won't fill that way with anything but that old-time religion and preaching. So I have celebrated this anniversary.

Fifty-three years old today, and I have been very happy all day long, and I do testify here that if I never see another birthday, that the thing that has made me happy today is my personal and conscious touch with the power of the Christian religion. That is what it is. As Brother Cole, my old friend said, "I would not give fifteen minutes of its joys for the world."

Sinner, what shall you do to inherit eternal life? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall have eternal life. God help you to hold out the hand of faith and receive the gift of God, which is eternal life.

9. CHRIST THE END OF THE LAW

SCRIPTURE READINGS: How readest thou? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast answered right - this do, and thou shalt live. - ~~2016~~ Luke 10:26-28.

I read a passage from the tenth chapter of the letter to the Romans beginning, “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For *they* being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

Without taking a text at all tonight, my purpose is to present to you two plans of salvation in the very simplest way that I know how.

When you read the Bible, have you not been struck with the difference between the direction given by our Savior as recorded in the paragraph of Luke, and the direction given by the Apostle Paul as recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Acts?

A certain lawyer stood up tempting the Savior saying, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

Jesus said, “What saith the law? How do you read it?” And he quoted the law.

Jesus replied, “This do, and thou shalt live:”

But when the jailer propounded the question to the Apostle Paul, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Paul replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

There is a great difference between doing the commandments of God in order to inherit eternal life, and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved, and the two plans are presented by Paul in the tenth chapter of his letter to the Romans.

Now I want you to listen as carefully as ever you listened to a statement in your life, to certain things which I wish to say on these two plans of salvation.

The first statement is that man is a creature, a moral creature, and under law. The law which he is under is expressed briefly in that paragraph in Luke: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul and all thy strength and all thy

mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Now, in a few words, that is the law.

Mark you that the law takes hold of the disposition, of the affections. Thou shalt love. Thou shalt love God. Thou shalt love thy neighbor. Mark you how comprehensive it is: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart; with *all* thy soul; with *all* thy strength, with *all* thy mind.” Notice how comprehensive it is in the other: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Now that is the moral law under which a man lives — to which he is subject.

Let us notice in the next place when a man is righteous under this law. Moses describes the righteousness of the law thus: “That they which do these things shall live by them.” A man is righteous under the law when he keeps it. He is unrighteous if he does not keep it. That law is the measure, the standard, of our thoughts, imaginations, being, work or words; of all that’s in our minds, in our souls, in our strength, in our heart, and to be righteous under that law, you must comply with the requirements of that law.

Let us see what is the scope of that requirement, how far it goes. Let me read a passage on it. The Apostle James says in the second chapter of his letter to the twelve tribes, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ said also, ‘Do not kill.’ Now if thou commit no adultery, yet thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.”

Take another passage: In the third chapter of the letter to the Galatians, the Apostle Paul discusses the scope of the law, where he says, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

What, then, is the scope of this law? What must you do to be righteous under this law? You must comply not only with every requirement of it, but you must continually comply with every requirement of it. You must not only love God with all your heart, but you must love God with all your heart all the time. Cursed is every man that continueth not, and if he ever violates it in one particular, then he is guilty of breaking the whole law.

What kind of a defense would you call it if a man was indicted before our courts for murder, and when the question was propounded to him by the judge as to what he had to say as to why sentence of death should not be pronounced, he should get up and say,

“I admit that I have committed this murder this one time, but I want to call your attention to the fact that it is the only offense I ever committed. I never stole any money, never committed adultery, never bore false witness, and this is the only hour in my life when I have broken the law. Therefore, in view of my conformity to the law all the rest of the days of my life, and in view of the fact that this is the only one of the statutes which I have violated, I think I ought to be acquitted?”

What would the judge say? The judge would tell him that the committing of that crime made him a transgressor, and that when he had complied with the law all the rest of his life he was entitled to no credit for it, for it was what every citizen was required to do.

Now that is what James means when he says, “The same God who said, ‘*Thou shalt not steal,*’ said also, ‘*Thou shalt not bear false witness.*’” In other words, that part of the law which says “love thy neighbor as thyself” is just as much violated in one of these directions as in the other direction. So that we understand now what is meant by this law under which all the people are subjects. “Thou shalt love God with *all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and for all the time, and thy neighbor as thyself.*”

Well, suppose a man violates one of the provisions of this law, either with respect to God or with respect to his fellow man, then what is the penalty? The penalty is declared in two scriptures with great solemnity and plainness, “The soul that sinneth it shall die,” and the other scripture which says, “The wages of sin is death.”

Now, having gotten these points clearly before your minds, viz: first, that man is under the law; second, the law which he is under; third, the scope of that law; and fourth, the penalty of the violation of that law—having gone thus far in these statements, let us ask a question: Is there on this earth a righteous man? Would any of you this night stand up before God and lay your hand upon your heart and say, “I am a righteous man; I have never violated that law; I have always with my heart loved God; I have always loved my neighbor as myself; I have never in thought or word or deed, violated at any time any one of the provisions of this moral law under which I live?”

I do not know what answer you would give, but I want to give you some answers that are contained in the Word of God, on that subject, and the first one is a statement made by Solomon at the time the Temple was dedicated. At the dedication of the Temple he made a prayer and the prayer looked to a certain way by which sins committed against God might be forgiven and in that prayer,

parenthetically, he says, “For there is not upon the earth a just man that liveth and sinneth not.”

Listen to what the Apostle John says: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth it not in us.” Again he says, “If we say that we have not sinned, we make God to be a liar.” Wherein does it make God to be a liar? Let us read and see, Psalms 14, as follows: “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good; no not one.”

God looked down from heaven to see if there were *any*. Not occasionally one, -not if *all* men were doing right, but God looked down from heaven to see if any of them were doing right, and His solemn declaration is that not one of them was found to do right.

Now, take these three declarations of Scripture: That of Solomon that there is not a just man upon the earth that liveth and, sinneth not; the declaration of the Apostle John that if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, and that if we say we have not sinned we make God to be a liar; and then God looked down from heaven to see if any were doing right, and He found that none were doing right.

Where, then, does this subject — this statement — bring us? To what conclusion have we arrived? That by the deeds of the law shall no man be justified in God’s sight — that is, so far as the righteousness that comes by personal obedience is concerned. All of us are sold under sin — Jew and Gentile. Not one that ever lived upon the earth can be found that kept this law at all times and at all points, and whenever any one of them breaks any point in the law, violates any provision of the law, at that time that soul comes under the condemnation: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

Therefore, when that lawyer tempted the Savior and put that question, “Master, what good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus answered, “What does the law say? What is required in the law in order that a man may live-may have eternal life?” And the lawyer quoted it. Then Jesus said, “If you want to know what great thing you are to do to inherit eternal life, go and do those things,” showing what He wished to bring about that He wanted to shut this man up and show him that he was already condemned, that there was no way by which he could be justified in the sight of God by the law, by his own personal righteousness.

What, then, can be the solidity of the hope that any man has in his heart of being justified in the sight of God by self-righteousness? Take any kind of a man. I am not talking about the worst classes of men — the out-breaking sinners-men who are confirmed drunkards or red-handed murderers. I am not even talking about the good citizen merely, but I mean that you may take the loveliest and purest woman that ever lived upon the earth. You may take the noblest man that ever lived upon the earth, and, with these select specimens, bring them up before this law of God which says, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor *as thyself*, and at “*all times thou shalt do this*,” and that woman and that man would come under the condemnation of the law. You know you never saw a woman who could escape under that law. You never saw a man that could. It follows, then, that so far as that plan of getting to eternal life is concerned, if there be no other way than that way, men are lost.

Just here we look at another statement. Jesus comes into the world. God loves this lost world, and He so loves it as to give His Son in its behalf; and when Jesus comes into the world, for whom does He come? We shall let Him answer. He says, “I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” He did not expect to find any righteous people. He knew before He left heaven that there were none such. He came after the sinners-transgressors-under the condemnation of the law.

Take it again where He says, “The whole need not a physician,” — that is to say, “I did not come to seek well people. My visit to earth was not to find men or women who were spiritually well. I came to find sick people-people whose souls were sick. I came as a physician, but not as a physician to a hospital. I came as a physician into a country over which the pestilence had blown its breath, and you men and women and children in it were subject to that pestilence.”

Another scripture: “This is a faithful saying, and *worthy of all acceptance*” $\frac{3}{4}$ worthy for you to accept, worthy for me, worthy for your father and mine, worthy for our children. “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.” What is it? “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” Sinners! If He came into the world to save sinners, and the way of salvation is blocked by their own personal conformity to the requirements of the law, how does He propose to save them?

Mark you, these people are condemned. *They* have been tried. The sentence of death has been pronounced upon them, and the interval of time that intervenes between the pronouncing of the sentence and the executing of the penalty and the fact that they are alive, is evidence only of the forbearance of God in the suspension of the penalty until there shall be submitted unto them another way of life.

Now what is that other way of life? There must be in that other way of life some sort of satisfaction to that violated law. Jesus Christ cannot come and save any one of those who have been condemned to death, and allow God's holiness to remain unsullied unless what they owe He pays—unless the penalty which has fallen upon them, falls upon Him.

That leads us to a word. The word is “vicarious” — in the place of another. And when we say Jesus suffered vicariously, we mean that He suffered in the place of somebody else and hence, if Jesus makes an expiation for sin and He not being a sinner, it must be a vicarious expiation; that is, it must be an expiation for somebody else. Now, in order to save those who are under the penalty of the law He must suffer vicariously, in their stead. When did He suffer so?

Now, I want to get you to fix your mind on a certain event — a certain transaction, a definite thing in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. When was it? By what deed upon His part was this expiation made? Was it when He was born? No. Was it when He worked miracles? No. Was it when He rose from the dead? No. When He ascended into heaven? No.

It was when He died on the cross.

We are to be saved by the death of Christ. If we are to be purchased we are to be purchased by the *blood* of Christ.

But what do the Scriptures say about that? The Apostle Paul says, “The gospel that I preached unto you, how, that according to the Scripture, Christ died for our sins.” How does he express it in his letter to the Romans? “Whom God set forth to be a propitiation for our sins.” *Set forth*. When? What part of the setting forth was efficacious? It was when His blood was shed.

What does Peter say upon that point? He says, “Who bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” What does Paul say about it in his letter to the Corinthians the second time? He says, “God made Him to be sin who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” What did Isaiah foresee? He says that “God laid on Him the iniquity of us all,” and “by His stripes we are healed.”

Now we are coming up to the plan of salvation. We are coming up to that plan that stands over against the first plan presented a while ago. In his letter to the Romans, Paul says, Moses described the righteousness which is of the law that they who do these things shall live by them. That is one plan, but the righteousness, which is of faith—how is that? He says that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; that the word was nigh them, even in their mouth and in their heart—the word of faith which they preached: “That if thou shalt confess with thy

mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

Now, I want to get before you as a conclusion from what has been presented heretofore the shallowness of the hope upon which any man rests who is trusting to any kind of self-righteousness as a means of justification when he comes to stand before the bar of God. I know some people that are good people, humanly speaking-good citizens, debt-paying men, outwardly, at least, moral men — who affect to reject the idea of being saved by a vicarious expiation by the righteousness of somebody else, and these men are passing through life, going on toward death and soon will be at death, and after death come to judgment, utterly discarding any hope of eternal life from the righteousness which is in Christ, and they do not feel that they are very great sinners.

Now, I want to quote some scripture to them. The Apostle Peter says, “There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,” except the name of Jesus. He means something by such a broad statement as that. Take what our Savior says in a certain parable of His, that whosoever climbeth over the wall and cometh not in by the door of the sheepfold, the same is a thief and a robber, and He says, “I am the door, and whosoever does not come into the sheepfold by the door is a thief and a robber.”

Now it is a very difficult matter to make that moral man believe that he is a thief and a robber, but that is just what he is. That is God’s declaration with reference to him—that any man who tries to get into the sheepfold in any other way than through Christ as the door is a thief and a robber.

Take this scripture: “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha,” that is, let him be accursed when Christ shall come. Here is a man that does not love the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior, a moral man. We look at him and see in him a great many things to commend him, humanly speaking, and we know he is near death, and after death is the judgment, and that Christ comes at the judgment. Here is the solemn declaration of God’s Word that if that man does not love the Lord Jesus Christ he shall be accursed when Christ shall come. He comes to the judgment — to the final judgment — to be accursed. That means to be accursed forever. It means to bear an eternal penalty.

Now hear this scripture: The Apostle Paul says that if we hear an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than this gospel that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that we are to be saved by faith in the blood of Jesus, that this is the only way a man can be saved—he says that if an angel from heaven come to this earth and preach any other doctrine that that, that angel would be accursed.

Then take this scripture: Jesus said it himself. He said it upon the memorable occasion just before He ascended into heaven. He had been upon the earth and these are His last words. Listen: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,” *every one*. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned.” That is His own declaration.

Then this scripture: “He that sinned under Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the everlasting covenant an unholy thing?”

Now this moral man, this self-righteous man, in assuming to stand upon his own righteousness in the sight of God, has declared that he did not need a Savior—that he was not a sinner, that he did not need a physician. He has trodden under foot the Son of God — he has counted that blood that was shed upon Calvary an unholy thing; he has done despite to the Spirit of grace. And this scripture: “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that He hath risen from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

These are the two plans of Life, and it seems to me that the way is so plain that there can be no mistake about it. Here’s the law. You cannot deny that it is holy; that it is just; that it is good; that if God made you, you are a moral, dependent creature and under law, and that law says that you are to love God; you admit that law to be holy and just and good, and that you are to love God with all your heart. Certainly you would not leave out a part of your affections that could be fastened with love upon God. And that if you are under obligation to love Him at one time, you are under obligation to love Him at all times and to love Him supremely at all times. And that if you are under obligation to love your neighbor today, you were yesterday and you will be tomorrow, and if you are under obligation to love him at all, you are under obligation to love him as you love yourself, because he is entitled to what you are entitled to, and if you love him you will not hate him at all you will not tell lies on him, nor steal from him, nor bear false witness against him, nor covet anything that he has—if you love your neighbor as you love yourself you won’t do any of those things. Now then, the supreme question for you to answer is, “Have I done this?” Have you complied with this law?

I close with this: With all men, white and black—with all people that you have ever known or heard of or of which this scripture gives any description — there is a sense of right and wrong. They do know some things as right and some things as wrong. But says one, “The heathen that have not the law, Paul says that their hearts and their

consciences convict or acquit them with reference to some things, as to whether they are right or whether they are wrong.”

Now it follows that wherever there is a right and a wrong there must be a law which makes one thing right and another thing wrong. And it also follows that where there is a law and a law-maker and subjects of law, there must be responsibility to the law, and wherever there is responsibility to law, and a violator of the law, there must be a judgment. There must be a trial. There must be an arraignment of the guilty before that bar — that tribunal of justice — and when he comes to stand before that bar then the supreme judge is just.

Now what hope has he that he will be acquitted and not condemned? What reasonable hope? What one that can give sleep and rest when he thinks about it? Do you feel satisfied about it? Why is it that you are disturbed at times with fear and apprehension? If you are satisfied about it, why is it that when you have been alone you have condemned yourself?

“And if our hearts condemn us (and this is the Word of God) God is greater than our hearts.”

One question only. Is there any chance for you of escape by way of your own righteousness? Can you come under that plan which says, “Do and live?” Can you stand up before God and claim that you have kept the law and that you are righteous in the sight of the law?

If not, then, I do ask you how do you expect to be acquitted? How do you expect to escape from the penalty, if you reject Jesus Christ? What name under heaven known among men, can you trust, if you reject vicarious expiation — that personal expiation? If you reject Jesus, what can you obtain by faith in another? If you turn away from this, you furnish a righteousness for yourself, but hear the declaration of the Savior, describing the man without the wedding garment at the wedding supper. The man that came in was in his own righteousness and when the king came in he said to him, “Friend, what doest thou here without the wedding garment?” And the man was speechless. The king said, “Take him and bind him hand and foot and cast him forth into outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

If my mind ever reached a conclusion, with all the earnestness with which I ever believed in a proposition and with all the assurance with which I ever rested my soul on any foundation, I do rest it upon the declaration that whosoever believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved. That other way is closed. It’s barred. We are lost under that.

This is the only way of escape, and now I want to implore you tonight to do what you have never, perhaps, done before in your life. Fasten your mind upon the two roads that open before you. One or the other take. Do you take the road that will make you stand at the last in your own righteousness? Or do you take the road that will make you stand in the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ? Two ways open out before your feet. Death is in both and after death the judgment.

May God's Holy Spirit impress upon you with an impression that can never be effaced the vast importance of a speedy settlement of this question. The Lord says, "Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth."

Jesus says that God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son to die for sinners, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. The blood falling from the Cross flows to you — flows in its saving power — and tonight will you count it an unholy thing? Will you tread under foot the Son of God? Will you do despite to the Spirit of, grace?

Let us unite in prayer, that at the parting of these two roads, the way of life and the way of death, every person in this house may decide this question forever.

10. IF THINE EYE OFFEND THEE

TEXT: If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. - ~~1097~~Mark 9:47, 48.

What is briefly the meaning of the word, “offend?” If thy hand offend thee, if thine eye offend thee, if thy foot offend thee; what is the meaning of this word? We find it in the English in the word “scandal;” that is, “scandal” is the Anglicised form of the Greek word here used. But the word “scandalize,” as used in the English, does not express the thought contained in this text, since that is a modern-derived meaning of the word. Originally it meant the trigger of a trap that trigger which, being touched, caused the trap to fall and catch one — and from its original signification it came to have four well known Bible meanings. An instance of each one of the four meanings, fairly applicable to our text today, will be cited.

First, it means a stumbling-block, that which causes any one to fall, and in its spiritual signification, that which causes any one to fall into sin. If thy hand causeth thee to fall into sin; if thine eye causeth thee to fall into sin; if thy foot causeth thee to fall into sin, cut it off, pluck it out. It is more profitable to enter heaven maimed than to have the body cast into bell. The thought is as you see it in connection with a stumbling block, that you fall unexpectedly into the sin, as if you were going along not looking down and should suddenly stumble over something in your regular path, where you usually walked. Now, if thine eye causeth thee, in the regular walk of life, to put something in that pathway that, when you were not particularly watching, will cause you to stumble and fall into sin — that is the first thought of it.

Its second meaning is an obstacle, or obstruction that causes you to stop. You do not fall over this obstacle, but it blocks your way and you stop. You do not fall, but you do not go on. To illustrate this use of the word, John the Baptist, in prison, finding the progress of his faith stopped by a doubt, sent word to Christ to know, “Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” evidently showing that some unbelief had crept into his heart that had caused him to stop. He was not going on in the direction that he had been going and hence, when Jesus sent word to John of the demonstrations of His divinity, He added this expression, using this very word, “Blessed is the man who is not offended in me.” Blessed is the man who in me does not find an obstacle that stops him. Anything that is an occasion of unbelief fulfills this meaning of the word. If thine eye causes something to be put in thy path that suggests

a doubt as to the Christian religion, and by that doubt causeth thee that had been going steadily forward to stop, pluck it out.

Let me give another illustration. In the parable of the sower, our Savior, in expounding why it was that the grain that had fallen upon the rock and came up and seemed to promise well for a while, afterwards, under the hot sun, withered away and perished, says, there are some people that hear the word of God and, for a while seem to accept it, but when tribulation or persecution cometh they are offended — they are stopped. That is the meaning of the word strictly. Persecution and tribulation cometh and an obstacle is put in their path that causes them to stop. Now, if thine eye causes an obstacle to be put in thy Christian path, that causeth thee to stop and not to go forward, pluck it out.

Yet another illustration: You remember that our Savior, who had announced a great many doctrines that people could easily understand and accept, suddenly, on one occasion, announced a hard doctrine, very hard, and from that time it is said that many of His disciples followed Him no more. They stopped. Now, there was something in them, in the eye or the hand or the foot, that found an occasion of unbelief in the doctrine He announced, and they stopped.

I remember a very notable instance, where a man, deeply impressed in a meeting, and giving fair promise of having passed from death to life, happened to be present when the scriptural law of the use of money was expounded, and he stopped. He stopped. Some obstacle stretched clear across his path. It was the love of money in his heart. He couldn't recognize God's sovereignty over money. As if he had said, "If you want me to cry, I will cry; if you want me to join the church, I will join it; if you want me to be baptized, I will be baptized; but if you want me to honor God with my money, I stop."

Now the third use of the word: It is sometimes used to indicate, not something over which you stumble and fall into a sin, and not an obstacle that blocks up your pathway, but in the sense of something that you run up against and hurt yourself and so become foolishly angry. As when one at night, trying to pass out of a dark room, strikes his head against the door, and in a moment flies into a passion. Now, if thine eye causeth thee to run up against an object that when you strike it offends you, makes you mad, pluck it out and cast it from thee.

These three senses of this word have abundant verifications in the classical Greek and a vast number of instances in the Bible, in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. But there is a fourth use of the word to which I will have occasion to refer more particularly at the conclusion of the sermon, in the climax; that is, where the eye has caused a man to turn aside from the right path and to reject the wise

counsel of God, and to indulge in sin until God has given him up; then God sets a trap for him right in the path of his besetting sin. In the eleventh chapter of Romans and in the ninth verse you will find that use of the word: "Let their table be made a trap for them." That is to, say that God, after trying to lead a man to do right, if he persists in doing wrong, the particular sin, whatever that may be, whether it be of pride or lust or pleasure, whatever it may be, that particular besetting sin *which* has caused him to reject God shall be made the occasion of his ruin, and in the track of it God will set the trap, and the man is certain to fall into it and be lost.

Now, these are the four Bible uses of this term, "offend" Greek: *skandalon*, the noun, and *skandalizo*, the verb. If thine eye causeth thee to offend, that is, if your eye causes you to put something in your path over which you will unexpectedly fall into a sin; if thine eye causeth thee to put an obstacle clear across your path, so that you stop; if thine eye causeth thee to put some object against which you will unthoughtedly run and hurt yourself and become incensed; if thine eye causeth thee to go into a sin that shall completely alienate you from God, and in the far distant track of which God sets a trap that will be sure to catch your soul, pluck it out.

The next thing needing explanation: People who look at the shell of a thing may understand the text to mean mutilation of the body. They forget that the mutilation of the body is simply an illustration of spiritual things. Take a case that you will understand. One of the most beautiful and sweet-spirited girls in this city, before whom there seemed to stretch a long and bright and happy future, was taken sick, and the illness, whatever the doctors may call it, was in the foot and the blood would not circulate. The doctors could not bring about the circulation and that foot finally threatened the whole body. Then the doctors said, "This foot must be cut off; it must be amputated." And they did amputate it. They amputated it to save her life. They cut off that member because it offered the only possible means of saving the other foot and both hands and the whole body and her life. It was sternness of love, resoluteness of affection, courage of wisdom that sacrificed a limb to save the body.

Now using that necessity of amputation as an illustration, our Savior says, "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off; if thy foot offend thee, cut it off. If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out." But that He does not mean bodily mutilation is self-evident from this, that if you were to cut off your hand you could not stop the spiritual offense; if you were to pluck out the eye you could not stop the spiritual offense on the inside of the soul; no lopping off of external branches would reach that.

But what our Savior means to teach is this: That a wise physician who discovers seated in one member of the body a disease that if allowed to spread will destroy the

whole body, in the interest of mercy cuts off that diseased limb so, applying this to spiritual things, whatever causes you to fall into sin, cut loose from it at every cost.

One other word needs to be explained-the word Gehenna. I have explained it a number of times, but will explain it very briefly again: It is a little valley next to Jerusalem that once belonged to the sons of Hinnom. It came to pass that in that valley was instituted an idol worship, and there the kings caused their children to pass through the fire to Moloch, and because of this iniquity a good king of Israel defiled that valley, made it the dumping ground of all refuse matter from the city. The excrement, the dead things, the foul and corrupt matter were all carried out and put in that valley. And because of the corruption heaped there worms were always there, and because of the burning that had been appointed as a sanitary measure, the fire was always there.

That was used as an illustration to indicate the spiritual condition of a lost soul, of a soul that had become entirely separated from God and given up to its own devices; that had become bad through and through; that had become such a slave to passion, or lust or crime that it was incorrigible, and the very nature of the sin which possessed it was like a worm that never dies. There was a gnawing, a ceaseless gnawing going on, referring to the conscience, and there was a burning and a thirst going on. Now those images our Savior selected to represent the thought of hell.

Having explained its words now look at the text: "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out." What is the principle involved in that extortion? First, that it is a man's chief concern to see that he does not miss the mark, that he does not make shipwreck; that he does not ruin himself. That is the chief concern of every boy, of every girl, of every man and woman, to see to it that you do not miss the mark of your being; that you do not shipwreck; that you do not go to utter ruin.

The next thought involved in it is that in case you do miss the mark, in case you do make shipwreck, in case your soul is lost, then there is no profit and no compensation to you in anything you ever had. For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? If he misses the main thing, if he makes shipwreck of his own soul, then wherein does the compensation come to him that in his life he had this or that treasure, this pleasure or that, that he was able to attain to this ambition or that; that he for such a while, no matter how long, was on top in society or fashion in the world? What has it profited him if the main thing worthy of supreme concern is lost?

The next thought is this: Whatever sacrifice is necessary to the securing of the main thing, that you must make. That is what this text means, and no matter how dear a treasure may be to you; no matter how much you esteem it, if it be necessary that

you should give it up or that your soul should be lost, this text calls on you to give it up. A man may have in a ship a vast amount of money which he idolizes, but in the night he is alarmed by the cry of fire; he rushes upon the deck and he finds that the ship is hopelessly in flames and that the only way of escape is to swim to the shore. Now he stands there for a moment and meditates, "I have here a vast amount of money, in gold. If I try to take this gold with me in this issue in which the main thing, my life, is involved, it will sink me. My life is worth more than this money. O, glittering gold, I leave you! I strike out, stripped of every weight and swim for my life." It means that he ought to leave behind everything that would jeopardize his gaining the shore.

A ship has a valuable cargo. It has been acquired by toil and anxiety and industry. It may be that the cargo in itself is perfectly innocent, but in a stress of weather, with a storm raging and with a leak in the vessel rising, it becomes necessary to lighten that ship. Now whatever is necessary to make it float, to keep it above the water, that must be done. If there be anything which, if permitted to remain in that ship will sink it, throw it out. They that do business in great waters know the wisdom of this. Why? It is a question of sacrificing the inferior to the greater and better.

The next thought involved in this text is this: Whenever it says, "If thine eye offend thee pluck it out," I do venture to say that it is a demonstration, by the exhortation addressed to you personally, that if ruin comes to you it comes by your own consent. I mean to say that no matter what is the stress of outside seduction, nor how cunningly the devil may attempt to seduce and beguile you, that all the devils in hell and all the extraneous temptations that may environ a man can never work his shipwreck, if he does not consent.

What is the next point involved in this text? That whenever one does consent to temptation, whenever the ruin comes to him, it comes on account of some internal moral delinquency. Out of the heart are the issues of life. Out of the heart proceed murder, lust, blasphemy and every crime which men commit. I mean to say that as the Bible declares that no murderer shall inherit eternal life, that external incentives to murder amount to nothing unless in him, in the man, in the soul, there be a susceptibility or a liability or moral weakness that shall open the door to the tempter and let in the destroyer.

Now if that be true we come naturally to the next thought in this text, that if God saves a man, and if God can save a man, He must save him in accordance with the laws of his own nature. That is to say, that God must, in order to the salvation of that man, require truth in the inward part; that nothing external will touch the case; that God's requirements must take hold, not of the long delayed overt act, but of the lust

in the heart which preceded the act and made the act. And therefore, while a human court can take jurisdiction only of murder actually committed, God goes inside of the man and says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." From hate comes murder. If God saves you He must save you from the internal hate. Human law takes hold of a case of adultery. God's law goes to the eye: "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." God requireth truth in the inward part. And I tell you if you are saved you must be saved internally; you must be saved not only from the guilt and penalty of sin, but you must be saved from the love of it and from the dominion of it.

Now, the next point: With that law looking inside, looking at your thoughts, looking at the springs of action, the question comes up, "How shall one keep from making shipwreck? How shall one save his soul? How shall one so attain to the end of his being as that in the main thing he shall not miss the mark?" Well, he has got to look at it as an exceedingly sober question. There is no child's play about it. You must not rely upon the quack remedies of philosophers and impostors, or rely upon any external rite, upon joining the church or being baptized, or partaking of the Lord's supper.

The awful blasphemy of calling that the way to heaven! God requireth truth in the inward part, and if you are saved, you must be saved inside. As a wise man, having as my chief business to save my soul, I must scrupulously look at every thing with which I come in contact.

Some men's weaknesses are in one direction and some in another, but the chief thing for me is to find out my weakness — what is my besetting sin, where is the weak point in my line of defense, where am I most susceptible to danger, where do I yield most readily? And if I find that the ties of blood are making me lose my soul, I must move out of my own family, and therefore in the Mosaic law, it is expressly said, that "If thine own son, if the wife of, thy bosom, shall cause thee to worship idols and turn away from the true God, thou shalt put thine own hand on the head as first witness, that they may be stoned." Thou shalt not spare. It is a question of your life, and if your family ties are such that they are dragging you down to death, O boy, O girl, I tell you to strike out for your life. And that is why marriage is the most solemn and far-reaching question that ever came up for human decision. More souls are lost right there, more women go into hopeless bondage, more men are shipwrecked by that solemn tie, than by anything else.

Look next at your associates. With whom do you associate? Knowing your weakness, knowing the point upon which you are most easily led astray, what is the moral effect on you of the company you keep? Does it tend to strengthen you against

that susceptibility? Suppose your inclinations, your weak point, is distrust of the truth of God. Faith is hard for you. You have to battle on that. Now, as you value the salvation of your soul, turn from the man or from the woman whose influence continually leads you to distrust God and His promises. You ought to move away from that kind of an association if that is, your weakness; if that is your danger point you ought to move away from it sooner than you would move from the edge of a precipice, from a den of rattlesnakes, and as you run stop your ears and cry, "Life, life, life! I am shunning you, O companion, that I may have life."

There are men in this town — I know them and you know them—that have caused hundreds of weak Christians to stumble, to fall into the sin of unbelief, by the eternal suggestions of doubt and cavilings and besmirchings, that they cast upon the holiness of religion, the divinity of Jesus Christ and the uncertainty of hell. A devil to you is such a one, a devil to you.

Consider books! Maybe your tendency is to lust. Maybe you are like a young man that came to me in tears and said, "I am a slave, bound hand and foot, without powers of resistance!" Then in the name of heaven never read one of those foul books that excite lust. Never look on obscene or indecent pictures that beget it. Never go to dances that suggest it, Stay away, as you value your life. "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out. If thy foot offend thee, cut it off. It is profitable to thee to go into heaven with one eye and one hand and one foot, rather than to lose thy body and soul in hell."

I tell you that a very large proportion of the realistic novels of the present day are written with a view to shipwreck souls. And as a man cannot touch pitch without being defiled, as no man can put fire in his bosom and not be burned, no man can read them without being injured by them. You may think you are too strong, and you may prate about nude art. And yet, if art comes to you in the guise of a harlot, if art comes to you, for instance, like the Stella of the Cotton Palace, that had been exhibited in saloons as an enticement to death, don't look. It is a matter of life with you, my boy. Your soul's salvation is dependent upon it.

Now it is a desperate case; and it is a desperate remedy that it calls for. I know it is bad to lose the foot or the hand or the eye, but you had better lose all your members and save your soul than to keep your members and go to hell. For into hell you go in that path, as sure as God reigns. There is no hope for you.

Boys, if your business calls upon you to sell whiskey, if *your* business calls upon you to desecrate God's holy day, then quit the business. Starve rather than live that way. I would no more make money by selling whiskey by which men's souls are lost, I would no more support my family by working on Sunday, than I would by robbery

and stealing. "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out." It is a question of life and death with you. That is all there is in it, and you can make your own selection. I tell you, if anything in the ties which bind you, in the comrades which are about you, in your business, in your pleasures, if these games and dances (and you are a good judge on that), if they tend to deaden your moral sensibilities, if they tend to cool your religious fervor, if the trend of them is to lead you away from God, if they are foes to Christ, then in the name of God, turn your back on them or you are lost. That is all there is in it. You are lost.

Here are the things by which the loss generally comes: First; the lust of the flesh. That man makes himself a beast, that is all you can say about him. He counts himself the brute that perishes who is the slave of animal passion. His case is piteous. Oh, to be the slave of such a debasing, rotten thing! I tell you, you are lost, lost, if you cannot by some means effect your freedom. And of all the degrading deaths to die, the idea of a soul dying on account of lust!

The next is love of money. Oh, you know and I know, that there are some men on the church book whose love of money raises the question whether they are saved. You are bound to raise the question, "Is that, can that be a child of God?" Oh, the love of, money! That is a root of all evil. If you hang on to your money, if you let that love of money dominate your soul, it will wreck your soul. That is all there is in it. It is, cut off or die, pluck out or die, one or the other. Desperate case, desperate remedy.

The next is the pride of life. Just do look at him. You can see the smirk of conceit on the face. You can see the self-complacency and the evident consciousness of superiority over the lower classes. Pride of life! Proud when morally rotten, proud when the seal of condemnation is on that face; pride of life, when the devil already has your quarters prepared for you. Pride of life, when you go out of this world a bankrupt and when your associate shall be that prince of pride, who himself fell from heaven by pride.

The most helpless species of pride is intellectual pride — the pride that comes to a man because he is a philosopher, because he is a scholar, and the pride that will not come down to the humility that is required in the gospel. Oh, how he puffs out his cheeks, how he scorns those that are following after the things that are well enough for women. and children and idiots, but an intellectual man — oh, yes, an intellectual man! Very seldom is such a man ever saved, very seldom indeed.

Now, to close this matter: Right in the track of your besetting sin when you have yielded to it, when you have refused to use the remedy that has been pointed out, right in the track of it God sets His trap. What does He say? "I warned that man. I

warned that woman. I showed them plainly that that path led to death and hell, and they would none of my counsel. They turned away from me. I called: they would not hear.” They go on, until at last God says to His Spirit: “Give him up. Give him up to his own devices. Let him eat the fruit of his own way and set a trap that shall catch him right in the track of that besetting sin; you are sure to get him. Now when you get him here is his picture.”

I do wish you would listen to Bunyan’s Pilgrim:

“The Holy Spirit led Christian into a house and says, ‘I will show you a picture.’ So He took him by the hand and led him into a very dark room, where there sat a man in an iron cage. The man seemed very sad. He sat with his *eyes* looking down to the ground. His hands were folded together as if there was no hope. And he sighed as if his heart would break.

“Then says Christian: ‘What does this mean, this dark room, this iron cage, these folded hands, these awful sighs of despair? What does it mean?’ The Holy Spirit says: ‘Ask the man himself.’ Christian said: ‘What art thou?’ ‘I am what I once was not.’ ‘What wert thou once?’ ‘Once I was a fair and flourishing professor of religion, (mark that) both in my eyes and in the eyes of others. I thought I was fair for the Celestial City and I used to have joy at the thought that I would get there when I died.’ ‘Well, what are you now?’ ‘Now I am a man of despair. I am shut up in this iron cage. I cannot get out. O, now I cannot get out.’ ‘But how did you come into this condition?’ ‘I left off to watch and be sober. I laid the reins on the neck of my lust. I sinned against the light of God’s Word. I sinned against the goodness of God. I have grieved His Spirit and He is gone. He is gone, and I have admitted the devil and he is here. I have provoked God to anger. I have so hardened my heart that I cannot repent.’

“But there is hope; O Holy Spirit, is there no hope for such a man? ‘Ask the man,’ says the Spirit. ‘O man, the Son of God is very merciful. Is there no hope for you?’ ‘None in the world. I have crucified Him afresh. I have despised His person. I have despised His righteousness. I have counted His blood an unholy thing. I have done despite to the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, God has shut me up in here. God shut me up in here and there comes to me in here nothing but threatenings and horrible apprehensions and awful memories of what might have been.’

“For what did you bring yourself into this condition? What did you get by it? What did you have in view to get into such a fix?’ ‘For the lusts, pleasures and profits of this world, in the enjoyment of which I did then promise myself

much delight, but now every one of these things is an undying worm and a tongue of flame.’ ‘But can’t you now turn and repent?’ ‘God’s Word gives me no encouragement. God has given me up to eat of the fruit of my own ways. Oh, eternity, Oh, eternity, Oh, eternity, how shall I spend eternity! Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched?’”

I do call heaven and earth to witness this day that I put before you life and death. I say you must turn from your sin or you are lost, wholly, absolutely and forever lost. And you ask me what is the remedy? Blessed be God, I can give it to you. I can show you the remedy. There is no use in saying there is no remedy. There is. There is an adequate remedy. What is it? In the first place, settle it right now that the chief thing you have to do in this world is to save your soul, that everything else is subordinate to that, and that whatever tie of family or association, or books, or business, or pleasure, or fashions, God helping you, whatever of them has a tendency to lead you to death on your weak point, turn your back on them for your life. Use every means of grace that God has provided for your escape. Accept now, from the heart, the Lord Jesus Christ as your righteousness.

Then remember that you cannot cast evil out of the heart and leave it empty. Put something in it. Fill it up! Fill it up! Then these pleasures cannot come back. Fill it up with what? This is the crisis of it, and I stand on this, even if I go to judgment on it. In the fifth chapter of the letter to the Galatians and sixteenth verse, “Be ye filled with the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.”

And I say today that God has made provisions by the power of the Holy Ghost to crucify the lusts of the flesh and the pride of life and the love of money, and everything that is noxious and hurtful and that has a tendency to wreck your soul. Be filled with the Spirit.

I would not risk it by simply saying you will quit sin, quit doing the evil thing. You cannot do it; no, you cannot do it. You cannot with an empty heart keep the devils from coming back. Your last, state will be worse than the first. Fill it up with the Spirit of God. But you say, I have not the Spirit. Ask for Him. Whatever of the Spirit’s power is necessary, get that much; get that much; don’t stop at less. I do say that it is possible for a man to be so filled with the Spirit of God that, while he cannot be sinlessly perfect in this life, yet sin will not have dominion over him. He will not be the bond slave of it. He will keep his soul on top. He will keep his body under. Ask for it. Ask for it — the blood of Jesus first to wash you, the Spirit of God to fill you and guard you. That is the remedy.

Will you take it? Will you accept it? Do you hear anything? Listen! Can you not hear the sound of the breakers on which ships are wrecked? Do you not hear the dash of

the waters? Oh, soul bestir thyself! If anybody here is in earnest today — I do not say a word to triflers, not a word-but if anybody here will make his salvation the chief concern, if anybody here regards the whole of the body as more than a part, if anybody here regards eternal life as preferable to eternal death, and you are willing to be in earnest, then close the eventful transaction here today and kneel down, kneel down, not to me, not to an angel; come up and show in the presence of men and angels and devils, your sincerity, and that you are not ashamed, and that you are not afraid, and that you come because God tells you to come. I ask you to kneel down here and pray that God's Spirit may be with you and abide in you.

If you are a backslider, under the dominion of sin, come along like any other sinner and ask for that infilling of the Spirit of God that will enable you to pluck out the right eye, to cut off the right hand, to cut off the right foot, if necessary.

11. SOWING WILD OATS NOT CONDUCTIVE TO SALVATION

TEXT: Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.

- ~~400~~ Acts 10:34, 35.

It is almost, if not quite impossible, in preaching, to emphasize one truth of a system without disparaging some other in the mind of the hearer. And oftentimes, either through an imperfection in the preacher's method, or from an infirmity of the hearer, the accentuation of the peculiar truth under discussion results in monstrous error in the opposite extreme. It is a good thing, therefore, for the preacher to ascertain in some fashion what impressions are being made in the minds of his congregation by his pulpit ministrations.

I cite three instances which sufficiently account for the selection of my theme today. The first occurred many years ago, when, in my early ministry, I was preaching to Old Providence church in Burleson County. At the conclusion of the service in which I had emphasized salvation by grace through faith, and described the impossibility of salvation by works of righteousness which we may do, I was invited to dine with a lady member of the church who seemed greatly troubled in mind. When the opportunity for conversation arrived she amazed me by propounding, pointblank and solemnly, these questions:

“Brother Carroll, do you regard it as a positive disadvantage to a woman seeking salvation that she has lived a chaste, modest, pure life; that she has been a good daughter, a good sister, a good wife, a good mother? Are a harlot's chances better than hers? And is it an advantage to a man seeking salvation that he has been a prodigal, a reprobate, an outrageous, outbreaking, shocking sinner, familiar with all unclean things? And ought we, who are burdened for the salvation of our children, to encourage them to hasten to the depths of unrighteousness because a rise from the bottom is more probable than from a position half-way down?”

I was horror-stricken by these questions, evidently propounded with all seriousness and anxiety of mind, and I said, “My sister, is it possible that you derived these impressions from my preaching?” “Well,” she replied, “I don't know what to think. I am perplexed. But it seems to me, that the gospel, as you preach it, offers a premium to the worst cases, and that the comparative probabilities of salvation give all the

advantages to exceedingly vile sinners.” Of course, I made clear her misapprehension of the gospel, but the incident made me more cautious in my methods of presenting single truths.

The second incident occurred some ten years ago. In a conversation with a skeptic, he charged that the trend of the average preaching was virtually an encouragement to gross immorality in order to conviction of sin sufficient to lead one to a Savior.

The third incident was quite recent, a youth justifying himself in sowing a crop of wild oats by the plea that only prodigals stood any showing of salvation. The last incident revived the memory of the preceding ones and led to a serious reflection on the comparative effects of morality and immorality on the probabilities of salvation by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

The conclusion reached by the reflection may be stated in the form of a proposition: Scripture, reason and experience, unite in teaching that the probabilities of one's believing in Christ and thereby being saved by grace are enhanced more by previous morality than by previous immorality. But even here in the very statement of this proposition, great caution is necessary.

Let it be carefully noted that the only salvation contemplated by this proposition is salvation by grace and not of works; that this salvation finds its only meritorious ground in the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ; that we come in touch with the merits of His atonement by faith in Him; that no antecedent good works in us, and no foreseen repentance and faith on our part is the ground, or reason of God's election of our souls unto eternal life.

If the proposition can not be maintained without surrendering all, or even one of these clear teachings of Scripture, then its position is conceded to be untenable. At the outset, therefore, it is maintained inflexibly that on no part of the ground does man first give to God that it may be recompensed unto him again. It is also disclaimed with equal emphasis not only that the morality of any fallen being is perfect, but that it can be morality at all, except as superinduced by divine grace.

It may then be asked what remains of the proposition? Much, every way. This much at least we may affirm—that one who walks in the light perceived is more apt to reach fulness of light than one who turns his back on it and walks the other way; that one who yields to the Spirit's motions however given, and one who uses the appointed means of salvation, will more likely attain the salvation, than one who turns a deaf ear to the former or wilfully declines to avail himself of the latter; that indulgence in known sin blunts the moral preceptions, sears the conscience, hardens the heart, increases the evil environment, decreases opportunity.

For example: The fourth commandment of the moral law is, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Among the beneficent objects of this law we may reckon these:

- (1) To give time to think of our relations to God;
- (2) To give time to learn of these relations and their consequent duties.

Now on this day Christ is preached and the word of life is taught. And since faith, the faith of our proposition, comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word' of God, how can they believe except they hear, and how can they hear, if through the immorality of Sabbath desecration, they forsake the assembling of themselves together? How can the immorality of secularizing the Lord's day be conducive to believing?

These reflections lead me to select a subject today as set forth in the tenth, eleventh, and fifteenth chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. Let us get the whole case before us:

"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, 'Cornelius.' And when he looked on Him, he was afraid, and said, 'What is it, Lord?' And He said unto him, 'Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.'"

Omitting a part, I read again:

"Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends. And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshiped him. But Peter took him up, saying, 'Stand up; I myself also am a man.' And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. And he said unto them, 'Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore I came unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?'"

Cornelius then goes on to recite the visitation of the angel directing him to send for Peter, and concludes by saying,

“Immediately therefore I sent to thee: and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded of God.”

To which Peter replies,

“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.” Then he goes on and presents the gospel to them, and they are all instantly converted and the Holy Ghost is poured out on them.

This transaction excited attention in Jerusalem, and they called Peter to account for it. In his defense of his conduct, he said this,

“And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man’s house: and he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, ‘Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.’ And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, ‘John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.’ Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, ‘Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.’”

Now in the fifteenth chapter, in the council at Jerusalem, we have these words by Peter, referring to the same thing:

“And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, ‘Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God which knoweth the hearts, bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.’”

Now, having read these scriptures, I select as a text the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses of the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles:

“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.”

The salient facts in this case are obvious. Here is a man who feared God and wrought righteousness, and yet he was not a saved man, because the object in sending for Peter was that Peter might “tell him words whereby he should be saved;” and because after he heard Peter, “God granted him repentance unto life;” and because after he heard Peter, he believed in Jesus Christ, and “God purified his heart” by that faith; because the Holy Spirit bore witness to his faith just as He did to the faith of Peter himself. Peter, being a believer on the day of Pentecost received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that gift of the Holy Ghost, which was to be given unto them which believe in Jesus Christ. It was like the gift that Cornelius received, and it was given to the apostles who believed; so it was given to Cornelius who believed.

It is evident then from this scripture that Cornelius was not a converted, a saved man, before he met Peter. No man with the record before him can fairly take that position. And that being true, we have another view of the case, which is that he was under the Spirit’s injunction, and so he feared God and continually prayed to Him and continually offered up alms.

Whatever you may think about it, that is the scriptural statement of the case. He feared God. He was endeavoring with all the light before him to honor God; to do what under this light seemed to him to be the will of God. Then we have this statement, that these alms and prayers of this man came up as a memorial before God; they memorialized heaven and they were received in heaven as an indication of the attitude and character of the man who offered them.

It is also stated that God accepted what this man had done; that it made an impression on the divine mind; that it made a favorable impression on the divine mind, and that it did not count anything against him that he was not a Jew. And that is the tremendous truth impressed upon the mind of Peter. Under God’s dealings with him concerning this case, he said, “I perceive (I did not see it before; I did not understand before, but now I perceive; from the evidence which has been brought to my mind, I now perceive) two things: first, that God is no respecter of persons as to nationality; second, what God does have respect to is character, shaped under His guidance, whether in a Jew or a Gentile.”

“Whosoever feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.” Not accepted in the sense that he is saved; not accepted in the sense that he has become a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, but it yet teaches a tremendous truth, and it is a truth which I feel constrained to press upon your hearts and consciences today. And what is that truth? It is not to the credit of any man; it never will be to the credit of

any man; it never will be regarded as anything but loathsome and shameful to any man that he commits sin. It will never be an advantage to a man that he was an outrageous sinner. It will always be to the disadvantage of a man that he had been vile. It does not increase the probabilities that he will be a saved man that he has gone out sowing wild oats. It decreases the probabilities that he will be a saved man, that he has gone out and sowed wild oats.

It never will be to the credit of a girl or a woman that she was sinful. There never will be a time when it will be an advantage to a woman that she was a harlot. There never will be a time when it will be a discredit to a woman that she was a good daughter, that she was a good wife. It was God who said, "Thou shalt not steal," and who also said, "Believe on Jesus Christ." Disobedience to one does induce disobedience to the other.

Now unless these positions are true God goes against His own nature which led Him to inscribe with His own finger the Ten Commandments on the tables of stone. "Thou shalt not have any other god before me." Now, how can it be creditable, with that commandment there, that a man would become an idolator? "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Under that law, how could it ever be to the advantage of a man that he was noted for profanity? How could heaven ever have pleasure in that as an inducement to accept Jesus Christ, or increase the probabilities that he ever would accept Him?

The New Testament gives us an account of very many thousands of people being converted, and mentions the conversion of but a few harlots. Thousands and thousands of women who were not harlots were converted. A few harlots were converted, and so vivid an impression did this make upon the public mind that the attention was fixed more upon those than upon the many. There were hundreds and thousands of harlots in the time of Christ, but the life they led was not conducive to an acquaintance with Him, and but few of that great number ever found Him. And those who did find Him did not find Him because they were harlots and were not recommended to Him on that account, and their shame was not put to their credit.

Not only this, but whenever a bad man, an outrageous sinner, was saved, really saved, it never was a matter of glory to him afterwards that he had been so vile. It was a matter of shame to him. Paul never gloried in his crimes. Whenever he referred to them it was with deep, profound shame that *yet* oppressed his heart, that he had been so vile. It is a bad sign, it is a sign arguing a doubt as to the conversion of one who has been an outrageous sinner that he rolls that fact under his tongue as a sweet morsel; that he counts it a feather in his cap; that he parades it before men as something to rejoice in, that puts upon him special honor. No, young man; sin is sin,

and in all eternity it can never be to your advantage that you were extraordinarily vile; sever, never.

If God in that first commandment requires men to seek Him and to believe that He is, it was not to the discredit of Cornelius that, under the dim light, he had groped after God and prayed to Him. When God's law commends mercy to man and pity and sympathy, it memorialized heaven of the character of Cornelius that he gave much alms to the destitute. It was always then, is now, and will be at the last, an advantage to Cornelius that he had never been as vile as some.

Now, there is a tendency in sin to debase, and there is a law in sin that the wicked wax worse and worse; and that is true always. God says, "Thou shalt not steal." Is it a commendation to be a thief? God says, "Thou shalt not kill." Does it increase a man's probabilities of becoming a Christian that he has been a murderer? God says, "Thou shalt not lust." If one has become so corrupt that his eyes can not cease from sin, and loathsome and slimy thoughts, like unclean worms, writhe and twist in his brain, and his heart has become like a cage of unclean birds-does all that, think you, increase his probabilities of salvation?

Now, we ought not to make a mistake in either direction. Here is the truth; that is, what the preacher aims at-what he means to say is, that no man can have a morality perfect enough to save him, and that if he relies upon his works of righteousness for salvation, he will miss the mark as this scripture teaches. It said to this moralist, Cornelius, it said to this man, comparatively a good man, it said to this worshipper, "You send for Peter and he will tell you words whereby you can be saved; there is sin with you and God will grant you repentance unto life; there is skepticism in you and God will grant you faith unto life; though you are a good man, as men call goodness, if you had to stand before God in His immaculate purity and be saved or lost upon your record, you would be lost. But yet it is well-pleasing to God that you honor Him as far as you do; it is more acceptable to God that you are an honest man than if you were a thief; it is more to be approved by the divine mind that you should tell the truth than to tell a lie; it is better for you that you should remember God in your younger days than that you should put off seeking God until you are old, and though God's grace is so great, His mercy so abounding, that even an aged sinner may be saved, and a vile aged sinner may be saved."

It always will be true that it would have been better if he had found God in his youth. Now there never will come a time, it is impossible even in eternity that there should come a time when a man can say, "It is better that I was a spendthrift, and that I was disobedient to my parents; that I was a bad sinner, that I was a thief and a drunkard, that I brought sorrow to my mother's heart and anxiety, and that I debauched my

person and became loathsome.” It never can be that it was best that he should have lived that way.

I wish we could get that into our minds. I am sure I did not intend to make that impression on the mind of that good sister at Old Providence church; she misunderstood me; she misconstrued what I said. How could she think that I would teach that it was an advantage for a girl to be sinful; that it was a feather in a young man’s cap that he was a prodigal and a spendthrift? Unrighteousness is sin; it is never good; it is always abominable and vile. It never can be made a matter of glory; it is always a matter of shame.

And yet it is true that the grace of God is sufficient for the salvation of the vilest on repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a restful thing, it is bound to be considered a restful thing, to see salvation coming to a man like Cornelius. We must not count it against him that he was reputable. We must not count it against him that he was honorable. We must not count it against him that he loved the truth. We must not count it against him that he was merciful. We must consider that any approximation in his life and conduct to the moral law under the monitions of God’s Holy Spirit was such as God would approve and not condemn.

I have given some attention to the statistics of this subject, and they show that the probabilities are that the less vile you become as a sinner, the more, humanly speaking, is the prospect of becoming saved through the blood of Christ. Is that true? Let us look at it carefully. Is that true? Is it a scriptural idea? I stated it once, and a man said, “That cannot be true.” “Why?” “Because it is against the Scripture.” “What does the Scripture say?” “The Scriptures say the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before you.” “Before whom?”

I admit that publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of heaven before some people, and that it was more probable that they would go in ahead of that other crowd. But what was that other crowd? Compare the two classes—was that a better class than this one? Our Lord said that for a pretense they made long prayers; that they were whited sepulchres, inwardly full of rottenness and dead men’s bones; that they lived by extortion and devoured widows and orphans. They were as loathsome sinners in the sight of God as these harlots. They were worse sinners than these publicans. They had only an external sanctity, which was itself an abomination to God.

Hypocrisy is no more conducive to acceptance of Jesus Christ than idolatry and extortion is no more to the credit of a man than to be a spendthrift, and on the whole I am inclined to the opinion that the probabilities are, humanly speaking, that the spendthrift will go into the kingdom of heaven before the miser does. But I do not

say that he will likely go into the kingdom of heaven before what is called the average man — honest, reputable man. The miser is viler than the spendthrift. He is a meaner character than the spendthrift. His soul is shriveled more. He is guilty of more heinous offenses than the other.

It remains true-is bound to remain true if God is God, if His law stands good, if the Ten Commandments constitute the rule of human life, it must always be true — that it is better to have been honest and truthful and fair and merciful than to have been the opposite. If I see a young man disrespectful to his parents; if I see him weak as water, yielding to dissipation by night and by day and undermining his health and weakening his mind, I know that it does not increase his chances of salvation. I know that if he is ever saved, it will be nothing to his credit that he had gone as far down in degradation as he did; that it always would have been better if he had been more upright, temperate, respectful and obedient to his parents; it always would have been better.

Do you know that very few gamblers are saved, very few drunkards are saved, very few harlots are saved? The grace of God is rich enough and deep enough for their salvation, but it is a very small number of them that are saved. But if it were true that living a life of that kind increases the chances of one's being saved, we would not have such statistics.

Let us take the history of this church. I venture to say that ninety-nine per cent of those who have been converted since God established this church were not extreme cases of lawlessness; and yet you know that since this pulpit was erected, every preacher that occupied it has declared the fulness of the grace of God as sufficient to save any man, even though on the very brink of hell, if he would only turn to God for mercy through Jesus Christ.

Having made that point plain, I suppose, I want now to make another point plain. I want it to be just as plain as the first, that if a man shall say within himself, "I am reasonably truthful; I am reasonably temperate in my life"; I pay my debts (which some members of the church do not, to their shame); I stand in the eyes of the community in which I live as a man whose word is as good as his bond, and therefore I am good enough; I do not need any Savior" — when he takes that position — I am bound, in view of the truth, in view of the teaching of God's Word, to say that he is very nigh to hell, whoever he may be.

I know Cornelius did not act that way. I know that- he walked in the light that he had and was not satisfied with it. He wanted more. He prayed to God for clearer views of truth. He stood ready to welcome the truth. Listen to this one sentence describing him and see how it is: "And Cornelius said, 'Immediately therefore I sent

to thee (just as soon as it was made plain to me that there was clearer truth than I had ever received, immediately I acted on it) I sent for thee and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now, therefore, we are all present here before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.”

That readiness of mind, that docility of spirit, that teachableness, that the man who relies upon his morality has not, but he has made a god of his imperfect righteousness and has put that up as a savior. Hence, Paul teaches that if you are raising this question about putting a bridge across the chasm that separates God and man there is no difference between a truth and a lie, or your short bridge and your longer bridge, since neither can reach the other shore. Now, it was in that sense that Paul said there was no difference. He did not mean to say that there is no difference between a truth and a lie; he did not mean to teach that it makes no difference whether a girl is pure and modest or sinful in speech and life; he never meant that. But he said as touching the question of salvation by one's personal righteousness, in that respect it made no difference.

Let us discriminate. Let us not apply a sense to words that the apostle never applied to them. He did say, in effect, that a moralist who thought to enter heaven in his own righteousness, and a vile man, an immoralist, would both alike fail of heaven. Didn't he declare all under sin and as for pure and perfect righteousness, there is none righteous — no, not one? They are all under condemnation and guilt, and Christ is offered as a means of perfect salvation to all men, whether Jew or Gentile.

There is something here to think about. Let us suppose that the judgment day with its decisions has come and gone a thousand years, and up there in heaven is Lydia, and Dorcas, and that nameless woman who kissed the feet of Jesus. What I mean to say is that even that long after the judgment day it will never be a matter of congratulation to that woman that she had been so vile a sinner, and that it will never be a matter of regret to Lydia and Dorcas that they had lived purer and more useful lives. Let us not mistake on these points.

We have an illustration in point: A few days ago I was invited to conduct a meeting in Baylor University. That meeting has been going on about ten days. I never in my life saw a meeting commence at the start with such power and continue with such power. On a number of occasions I saw a greater per cent of the unconverted people in that audience express an interest in salvation-their own salvation-than I ever saw before in my life but once. Now, I maintain that even if I had an equal audience of hardened sinners, town-bums, political ward-healers, men steeped in iniquity, that the same proportion of -the unconverted would not have been moved to Christ.

But antecedent to that, when will any preacher have so great an audience of the hardened classes? And how can they believe except they hear? Their life is not conducive to a hearing. Think about that.

You are on a question of probabilities. I say the same proportion of them would not have been as easily reached. And why? Because of the trend of sin to blind the eyes and harden the heart, and make the soul impervious to the reception of the truth, and to increase skepticism more and more. And speaking of probabilities, there would not have been so many, and I take pleasure in telling these young people that it never can be to their disadvantage that they have not become vile; it never can be a discredit to them that they have refrained from drunkenness and debauchery and a shameful life in the sloughs and sinks of iniquity. But yet if I saw one of them very near the pit of hell, on the edge of it and he would listen to me, I would try to lead him to Christ, whose grace is sufficient for the salvation of the vilest sinner.

Suppose one is not in the habit of going where the gospel is preached-does it increase the probabilities that he will be converted? Suppose he does not go to church more than once in six months or a year, what are the probabilities in his case? Use common sense to decide the question. If it is to the advantage of the man not to come; if his chances are increased by staying away; if he is more likely to be saved by forsaking the assembling of the people of God, then we are making a mistake in urging the people to come up every week to the services of God. I say that but few people whose habit is to stay away from the place of worship and the means of grace, may hope for accidental opportunities of eternal life. Law is law either in the kingdom of grace or in the kingdom of nature.

When I look in the face of my own child, I would, God knows that I speak the truth, I would rather she would, give her heart to the Lord Jesus Christ when she is young and the younger the better, if it be a genuine surrender to Christ I would rather that her childhood, like Timothy's, should be devoted to the service of God than that she should wait and bring only the remnants of life to be laid on the altar of God, and it will always be better if she is saved at ten years of age than if she waits to be saved at fifty years of age. If that is true, then it is not true that one is under obligations to honor God at ten years of age; that there was no law obligating us to accept Christ at twelve, at fifteen, at twenty, at thirty, at forty, and the obligation came only at fifty. You know that is not true.

Then it is better to "seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call- upon Him while He is near." I say it is better to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness before you seek the things of this world. I say it is better to bring the child-heart to Jesus than it is to bring the aged heart to Him. And yet, as men in a life-boat go out

to a wreck whose minute guns and despair mingle with the roar of the breakers, so I would strive to save the aged sinner and preach to him that even in the eleventh hour, on his repentance, God will save him.

I have felt constrained to present these things to you today in the interest of righteousness. There are boys in Waco who glory in the fact that they are vile; who count it a feather in their cap that they have despised their mothers; that count it a special mark, a peculiar distinction, that they are becoming drunkards; that they are sowing a big crop of wild oats. Not so. Not so. Not so. "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."

I mean to say that because you are an American or an Englishman or a Spaniard or a Hottentot, that signifies nothing so far as commending you to God is concerned. He is no respecter of persons as to nationality. God being just, does hold it as a memorial of a man whatever he does in the direction of truth and righteousness. It is bound to be so. True, He will not count that imperfect righteousness sufficient to justify him at the judgment bar. Tell me why it is that when Jesus looked upon that young man who had such a respect for law and order, such a regard for God and His commandments, why is it that Jesus, looking on him, loved him? It is true that God loves all sinners. But that is not the thought expressed here. It means that there was approbation of whatever of right there was in him.

I have endeavored to present these two truths side by side, that it was better for Cornelius that he had followed what light he had, and yet, even Cornelius had to repent toward God and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved. I want us to unite in prayer that the whole truth of the gospel may be seen in its symmetry, so that in looking at one view of it we do not lose sight of other views of it; that we may ask God to give us full and clear conceptions of divine truth as a system. Especially should we pray God to remove the impression that it will be any advantage to you that you should be an infidel for a while.

O, how many thousand times I myself have regretted that I ever did distrust God; that I ever was skeptical about revelation; that I ever did turn from the Bible! There never will come a time when it will be of advantage to me, when it will cease to be anything but a shame to me, that I did not from the first with a full heart, receive all the truth of God. Let us hate with unspeakable hatred a sham, a hypocrite, a whited sepulchre, but also hate that flaunting of sin in its tawdry rags, of shame, as if there was glory in it. Both are abominable in the sight of God.

12. THE CASE OF SIMON MAGUS

SCRIPTURE READING: ~~40R3~~ Acts 8:5-24.

TEXT: Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. - ~~40R3~~ Acts 8:13.

We have presented to us here the conflict between the miracles wrought in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the so-called miracles wrought by sorcerers and necromancers. I do not know anything so silly as the supernatural claims of those who deny Christ, and yet go around pretending that they are able to work miracles, through spiritualism, or through sorcery, or magnetism, or anything of that kind. But here you find the gullibility of the people. You would hardly think that if a man should come and claim to be a divine healer that the people would run after him, and yet they did run after this blasphemous man, Simon Magus. And right here in Waco, if a man were to come and claim he could do supernatural things, they would pay money to see him and quite a number of them would believe it.

“Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.” Now if he had been performing real miracles it would not have excited any wonder that another man could perform miracles, but he evidently saw that Philip was doing things that he knew he could not do, and it excited his astonishment.

During this last week I have read over two or three volumes of matter written by Alexander Campbell, and particularly containing his views upon the Holy Spirit. His theory was that the demonstration of the Spirit that precedes baptism was merely the miraculous display of divine power that accredited the Word, that after a man believed and was baptized, that then he did receive the Holy Spirit, but that the only work of the Spirit on the man or in the man prior to his baptism was the miraculous display of divine power that accredited the Word; and that as the Word was sufficient to confirm, and that anybody had the ability to believe, that it was a metaphysical delusion to talk about being enabled to believe by any Spirit-power.

Well, here we have a case. Simon Magus himself believed also. He believed upon these miraculous displays which confirmed the evidence, and there was no other touch of the Spirit in his case. Now let us see how his case is distinguished from the others.

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”

The Holy Ghost which they here received was the power to work miracles themselves, to speak with tongues, to do supernatural things. Now Simon had not yet seen anything like that. He had seen Philip working miracles and heard him speaking with tongues, but he had not seen that power communicated by any sort of a process to anybody else. Now he witnesses the apostles communicating the powers they had to other people, and communicating it by a kind of rite, or ceremony, or laying on of hands, and when the apostles laid their hands on them they received this gift of the Holy Spirit. That suggested an entirely new thought to Simon: “And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, ‘Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands he may receive the Holy Ghost.’”

Here seemed to this man to be an exceedingly lucrative power; that if he had the power, by just putting his hands on a man, to make that man speak with tongues, or to make that man work miracles, or to make that man have the gift of discerning the Spirit — if he just had that power, what a good thing he could make of it. And so it instantly occurred to him to buy that power. And he offered money for it, but Peter said unto him, “Thy money perish with thee.” The original here shows that there is only one verb, and it means, “Thy money and thou perish,” that is, “You will perish and your money will perish, and may you perish together, because thou hast thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money.”

Here I want to say two or three things. The world is running wild on money, more than on everything else put together. There is more worship today of Mammon than perhaps at any previous period of the world’s history. But there are some things that money cannot buy, I do not care how much of it you have. “Thy money perish.” It is a perishable thing. “Thy money perish with thee, because thou didst think that the gift of God could be purchased with money.”

There is nothing that God gives us that we can buy. That is a sweeping statement, but there is a more real, substantial joy in the Christian’s heart than ever could have been obtained *by any* outlay of money.

Let us look at some of the things. What a great thing it would be to rich people if, just before they die they could buy repentance; if instead of having to repent themselves they could buy it. The church so-called, which has encouraged rich

people to believe that, and that by great donations made in their wills, or just about the time that they are passing away, that there is some value in these good works in securing the gift of God, has helped to perpetuate the thought in the world that while you cannot buy repentance outright, yet by a sufficient outlay of money you can indirectly get in. The whole of it is false.

Take the thought as it is presented in the question of indulgences. You know that indulgences were advertised and auctioned, sold openly in the market, in Germany. A man would want to commit an offense or he would want absolution for an offense that he had committed. Now, by purchasing an indulgence he would secure the gift of God absolutely, for God only can forgive sin. "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God can be purchased with money."

There is no way to purchase anything that relates to religion. You cannot buy a substitute. You may hire a substitute in the case of war, human war, but you cannot hire a substitute in religion. You cannot have a proxy. Your father cannot stand for you, your mother cannot, your wife cannot, your brother or your sister cannot. If your brother were to die, you could not buy one hour of life for him. No man can ransom his brother from the grave, and the redemption of their souls is precious and it ceaseth forever.

Such is the testimony of God's Word, showing the limitation after all, that there is in the power of money. How narrow its scope! How few things it can purchase! And, after all, how immaterial these things are! They do not count for much. You cannot buy faith in Jesus Christ. If you were to propose tomorrow to give a million dollars to endow an orphanage or a school, or to build a church, *you* could not purchase one hair's breadth of the divine favor with that million dollars. And so far as obtaining that favor is concerned, you are just as near to getting it by standing in absolute poverty, and not even able to give one nickel. That is one place where the rich and the poor meet together-when they touch the divine privileges, the privileges of God, the gift of God.

I was in a church once, I won't say where because I do not desire to be too personal, and do not desire to wound any one, but I was in a church once, a very large, fine city church, every bit of it given by one man. He gave every dollar of it, and the idea in his mind that prompted him to give it was this: He had a wayward son. That son had died in his dissipation under circumstances that left no reasonable hope of his salvation. Now this man built that church with the superstitious idea that if he took all of that son's part of the property and put it in the church, that in some way it might affect his condition in the other world. That was a great mistake. No money given to such a thing can accomplish such a result.

We now come to look at the case of Simon Magus. He had everything that Alexander Campbell said is needed. He had the miraculous display of divine power that confirmed the Word, and on that confirmation of the Word he believed. But he was not right. Now what was the matter with him? What was it that he lacked? Let us see! “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter.” The word “matter” here in the Greek is “word.” “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this word,” that is, the gospel which we preach. Thou hast no part in it. Thou hast no lot in it. You believed it with such faith in you as you had, and you were baptized upon that faith, but there was no virtue in it and you have no part nor lot in this word that we preach. Why? “For thy heart is not right in the sight of God.” *Thy heart is not right in the sight of God!*

This leads us to the solemn thought that to have a part, to have a lot, in the Word of the gospel, there must be rightness of heart in God’s sight. Now I put out a question. What is it that makes any man’s heart right? What power is it? “I will take away your stony heart. I will give you a heart of flesh,” saith the Lord; that is, a heart that can feel. “And I will put my Spirit in you and then you will keep my commandments.” Our Savior says that out of the heart proceed evil thoughts and blasphemy and murder and everything of that kind. They come from the heart.

Paul says — I am not going to quote the precise words—he says that there can be no bodily sin, no sin of the body. There cannot be any sin of that kind. He says that all sin is without the body. What he means is, that the body in itself possesses no intelligence—that sin is a transgression of the law, and that the body cannot transgress the law. The mind, the heart, the soul of man, must commit whatever sin is committed. It is true that he may make his body an instrument for sin, but the sin must come from the inside. It must come from the thinking, rational part. It must come from that spiritual essence which was communicated when God breathed into man’s body the breath of life and he became a living soul.

Now, unless the inner man is made right in the sight of God then he can have no part or lot in this matter. As our Savior says, “Except a man be born from above, except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Now that was a matter which Simon lacked, and just one scripture, if there was not any other scripture, answers everything that was ever said upon that subject by Mr. Campbell. It says that in order to believe, in the gospel sense of that word, that the man’s belief must be from the heart: “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” That it must not be simply an intellectual conviction based upon the testimony; that there must be a transformation in the mind.

Let us look at the case a little further. Now comes an exhortation: “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be

forgiven thee; for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.” Now when he offered to buy the gift of God with money it revealed to Peter his true condition. He was a member of the church, but that was a revelation to Peter showing his standing in God’s sight, and Peter described that condition by two phrases, “the gall of bitterness” and “the bond of iniquity.”

According to all the ancients the gall was supposed to supply the venom of serpents and beasts, and as you all know it is exceedingly bitter; the bitter gall, the gall of bitterness. That refers to the principle in the man, but the “bond of iniquity” refers to the habit of life. “I not only perceive that in thy heart there is all the malice and venom of opposition to God, but I perceive that in your life and practice you are in bondage. The fountain is impure and the stream is impure. The source of your thoughts and of your motives is all corrupt, and the thoughts that are the fruits of those motives and desires are also corrupt.”

That being his dreadful condition he gives an exhortation, and while it seems that there are only two thoughts in the exhortation there are really three. “Repent of this thy wickedness.” Every scholar, judging the original language, knows that there is more in -that expression than “repent,” for the word “repent” does not take an “of” after it. It is equivalent to this: “Repent and turn from thy wickedness.”

In other words, it expresses both conviction and repentance, and conversion in its etymological sense, conversion meaning to turn around; just as if he said, “Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,” and just as is expressed in the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. There is just one verse of it. I want to read it to you because it presents that thought so clearly, about repentance: “Let the wicked man forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. Seek ye the Lord while He may be found. Call ye upon Him while He is near.”

Now there is in this exhortation in Isaiah precisely the three thoughts that are in Peter’s exhortation. One is a change of mind, of the thought; another is a turning away from the wickedness, and the third is a calling upon God for forgiveness. These are the three things that he calls on Simon Magus to do: “Repent and turn from your wickedness and pray God.” Pray for what? Why should he pray? “If the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.” We cannot understand his going to God and asking for anything else but forgiveness. “God be merciful to me, a sinner. God forgive me for this misunderstanding of thy gift and of thy religion. I repent. I turn from my wickedness, and I pray God to forgive me.” That is the thought, that is the critical thought.

Why then does Peter put in this word, “perhaps?” The Apostle Paul brings it in in a somewhat similar connection, although not in quite so intensive a form, in one of his letters to Timothy. He is giving directions to preachers how to bear with certain incorrigible cases. He says, “If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth,” that is, a man who goes out after a case of this kind does not go out with the certainty that he does in some cases of wickedness. Here the wickedness is so extreme, it has taken such an extreme form, that an element of uncertainty attaches to it. But as you don’t know the power of God you go out, thinking that peradventure God will give that man repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Now, Peter struck just such a case as that in Simon Magus. This sin which he had committed seemed to be a sin against the Holy Ghost. It was a question in Peter’s mind whether it amounted to that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which has never forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come. You know there are some things forgiven as to the next world which are not forgiven here. For instance, David’s sin was forgiven as to eternity, but he had to bear the consequences of it in time. “But the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness.” It is different from any other sin in this, that from the time it is committed He is gone forever; gone here and gone yonder. “It hath never forgiveness.” Chastisement won’t reach the case. So Peter did not know, but thought maybe this man had committed that sin. It seemed to him at least possible that that unpardonable sin had been committed, but as he was not clear in his own mind that it was a case of unpardonable sin he gives him the direction that all preachers should give to every sinner, “Repent, turn from thy wickedness and pray God to forgive you.”

Now let us see how that affected Simon. Here was evidently a power displayed by Philip that he (Simon Magus) never had, and it was evidently supernatural. Here was a still greater power displayed by Peter, by which he could not only himself work miracles, but by the laying on of his hands he could impart that power to others to work miracles. And when this man said to him, “Thy money and thyself perish; thy heart is not right; thou art in the gall of bitterness; thou art in the bond of iniquity”-that awful denunciation hurled against his guilty soul made him tremble, but it did not make him pray. Here is what he says, “Then answered Simon and said, ‘Do ye pray to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.’”

Right there the man’s history stops. I mean the Bible part of it. Right there, on that “perhaps.” We can only conjecture as to the ultimate fate of this man. It does seem that if he had gotten down right there and cried to God for mercy, that there would have been something said, there would have been some intimation of it. There would

naturally appear some record that would lead us to hope that this man was saved. But it stops and draws a veil over the case and makes it inscrutable to our sight.

While the Bible does not refer to him again, Josephus does describe a sorcerer named Simon, that has led many men to think that it was the same man and if the Simon the Sorcerer whom Josephus tells us about is this man, then we know he is lost, for there was present, working his evil ways and endeavoring to thwart all the purposes of God, and one of the great instruments that led to the destruction of Jerusalem not a great many years afterwards, a certain Simon the Sorcerer. I do not know that it was the same man. History does not make it right clear, but it does make it probable that he was the man, and if so, then this profane history flashes a light on this case that supplements the testimony of the Word of God.

Now you have before you this lesson on prayer: that a man must repent; that a man must turn away from his sins, forsake them; that a man must pray that God should forgive him. And how can I enforce, any more than the mere presentation of the thought has enforced itself, this sublime exhortation of the prophet? I, do not ever know what to tell anybody more than that-that he must repent, that he must forsake his sins, and that he must pray to God, through the virtue of the atonement, to forgive his sins.

If you cannot get a man down on his knees, I do not see how you are ever going to get him up into heaven. If the spirit of grace and supplication never comes upon him, I do not see any hope for him.

Do you pray? Particularly when you feel your sins, do you pray? Do you pray that God, who puts His power and His omniscience and His love where the blood is, do you pray to God to meet you there, at the mercy seat, and take the burden and the guilt and the defilement of that sin off of you?

I venture to say that a work of grace never obtained in any community that did not have this accompaniment, and the sinners prayed. You hear me sometimes, when people come up to join the church, ask them an occasional question, "Did you feel that you were a lost sinner in the sight of God?" "Yes." "What did you do then?" That is the next question, "What did you do when you felt that?" Now if there has been a genuine conversion you may rest assured that whoever felt that kind of a conviction, prayed, and *they* nearly always answer, and always do in the case of a true conversion, if they understand the object of the question, "I prayed to God for Christ's sake to forgive me." As Paul says, "Forgive ye one another as God also for Christ's sake has forgiven you."

Now when they do pray for forgiveness, and pray for it through Christ, that sort of praying has in it the element of faith, for while the word, “faith,” is not referred to by name in the case of the publican, the word, “justification,” is. Jesus says, “That man went down to his house justified.” The Bible says, “We are justified by faith.” It is through faith that we reach justification. If I come up to the place where the blood of the atonement has been sprinkled, I feel that my only chance for forgiveness is through the virtue of that blood of my Substitute, I look at that blood and I say, “O God, for Christ’s sake forgive me,” then have I not faith in that blood?

So we find what our Articles of Faith state, viz: that repentance and faith are inseparable graces. Wherever you find true repentance, you find true faith, and sometimes *they* shade into each other so that it is difficult to analyze as to the order of their coming, as the whole exercise of the mind is sometimes merged into such a short space of time that it is hard to distinguish the order of the exercise. But wherever there is true penitence, true penitential prayer, then there is salvation.

I close by giving one other scripture: “How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” So you see that the calling upon Him is intimately connected with faith. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the Word of God. Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, but how shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?

That publican looked to that. He did not ask pardon outside of Christ, but in Christ. He did not ask pardon on account of any good in him, for he was all evil, but he asked ‘pardon on account of the good in Christ, for He was all good. The sinner’s prayer is, “In Christ, have mercy on me.” And so then Peter tells this man to repent and turn from his wickedness and pray God for forgiveness, which is equivalent to saying, “Repent and pray and have faith,” for they are all involved in it.

Now I submit this case to you. It shows to what particular object we should address ourselves in dealing with sinners. What is it? When Philip went down there among those sinners, what did he do? The Scriptures say that he held something up before those people. What was it? He preached Christ unto them. And that connects back with what Luke says, that through His name repentance and remission of sins should be preached.

Let us hold up Christ before the sinner, because if he is to be saved, he is to be saved in Christ. If God’s power reaches him, or God’s omniscience reaches him, or God’s love reaches him, it reaches him where that blood is and nowhere else. Hold up Christ then as the object to which he should look.

Then we should preach repentance and turning from sin, producing works meet for repentance, or reformation; faith in the divine Redeemer, that faith evidenced by calling upon the name of the Lord, by asking God for Christ's sake to forgive sin. That is the order of the gospel.

I don't know who of you here are not converted, that have perhaps mere nominal church connection, or maybe you don't belong to any church. I do press this thought on you-that if your heart is not made right in the sight of God, nothing avails you; that no man can see the kingdom of God that is not born from above; that no man can find forgiveness of sin outside of the atonement made by Jesus Christ, and that no man can get that who won't ask for it. You have got to ask for it. The Word of God declares that the wrath of God is poured out upon all men that call not upon His name.

Now this is a question of your needs. Do you, as a sinner, not as a righteous person, get down on your knees and ask God to forgive you? You say, "Yes, I do that." On what account do you ask it? I press that question on you. Why should He forgive you? I assure you that unless your faith takes hold of the blood shed in the atonement by the Lord Jesus Christ though you should pray until doom's day, your prayers will avail nothing. Your prayer should be, "God be merciful to me a sinner, through the propitiation for sin, for Christ's sake."

13. THE WAR BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT

TEXT: And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. - ⁽¹⁸²⁵⁾1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Here is a remarkable prayer which Paul offered for the Ephesian Christians:

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” (⁽¹⁸⁸⁴⁾Ephesians 3:14-19.)

And here is a wonderful statement:

“Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (⁽¹⁸²⁵⁾Ephesians 5:25-27.)

And here is a wonderful voice:

“The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.” (⁽¹⁶⁰⁷⁾Revelation 19:7, 8.)

These scriptures serve to introduce our text, which is a prayer of the Apostle Paul for the Thessalonians — a prayer that they may be completely sanctified; that the sanctification may touch the spirit, the soul and the body, and that it be so complete as to secure absolute blamelessness and holiness.

You will understand at once, then, that what I wish to talk to you about this morning is sanctification. I am led to discuss this theme from various conversations reported as held upon the streets of Waco recently, participated in often by young people, and sometimes those who are little informed upon the subject of sanctification. It has been presented to you on the streets and variously and oftentimes in such a way as,

in my judgment, to do incalculable harm. And because I so strongly believe this, and because I do believe that there is a sanctification which the Scriptures teach, I have been led to discuss the subject now.

The first thing — always is to know what a word means, and this word, like almost every other word, has a variety of meanings, and the particular meaning has to be determined always from the context. You take a passage of Scripture in which it occurs and you determine from that connection which one of its meanings belongs to that particular place. But any one who takes the concordance and groups every place in the Bible where that word occurs, without examination of the connection in which it occurs, will find himself confounding its various meanings so as to have a very unintelligent conception of the word. While it has a great many meanings, I want to call your attention now to two of its most prominent meanings. The first is where it is applied to inanimate things. In that application it means to set apart.

For instance, God sanctified the seventh day. He set it apart, separated it from the other days. He sanctified the altar. He sanctified the Book. Wherever the word is applied to any inanimate thing that has no soul, no intelligence, it always has that sort of a meaning. Where it is applied to a moral and an accountable being, the other important sense is that it means to make holy. And that is the meaning upon which what is called the “doctrine of sanctification” rests, and that is the meaning which the apostle has here — “I pray God that you may be made completely holy” — holy in your spirit, holy in your body—that is the meaning of the word.

The next thing to be determined is, when it starts. It is always best to have the beginning point clearly established. I shall not elaborate anything today, but shall try to speak very plainly and so everybody can understand me.

It begins in regeneration. — A principle, or germ of spiritual life, is imparted to us in regeneration. Our articles of faith say that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind. Well, now, in regeneration is implanted this germ of life, and sanctification is the unfolding and developing of that principle of life. You may say that it is regeneration in its consummation. It is the unfolding and developing of the principle of life put in us when we become children of God, when we are born unto God. This is so well understood by all who have ever made any sort of a study of the Bible that I shall not stop here to present any proofs of a proposition so very plain.

The next thought is that as it is an unfolding, developing, a bringing to a consummation of the principle of life that is imparted in regeneration, it is necessarily progressive and not instantaneous. Progressive — that is a capital point. When people come to you and claim a sanctification received like justification, that is, instantaneously, you may know that it is not Bible sanctification, no matter what they

tell you about it. Justification is instantaneous, because it relates to our legal state. It is a declaration of the law that we are acquitted. But sanctification relates to our internal and spiritual state.

Now, the regeneration may be instantaneous. It takes place at some particular time. But the unfolding and developing of that must be progressive. Therefore, from the days of the Lord Jesus Christ until now, our Baptist people have always held, without any swerving, even a hair's breadth, that sanctification commences in regeneration and that it is progressive; that it is the unfolding and the developing of the principle of spiritual life imparted when we become the children of God.

Now, having made those general statements, I want to call your attention to a state of the Christian in this life. That state is represented by two scriptures — ~~<KNT>~~Galatians 5:17, and ~~<KNT>~~Romans 7:14. If you will have the patience, and I think you ought to have on such a subject as this, suppose we read those two scriptures very carefully. ~~<KNT>~~Galatians 5:17: “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” That is the first scripture.

From the very moment that this principle of spiritual life is put in us, a war commences between the spirit and the flesh. They are contrary to each other and they are continually fighting against each other. Now it is the work of sanctification to carry on that fight of the spirit against the flesh, so that, as it is expressed in another scripture, “By the Spirit ye do mortify (that is, crucify) the sins of the body and put them to death.”

The other scripture is in the letter to the Romans, the seventh chapter beginning with the fourteenth verse: “For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin, for that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good (because I say I do not wish to do that). Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

Now it is utterly impossible for that language to come from the lips of one who is sanctified, soul, body and spirit. And it is equally impossible for that language to come from the lips of one who is not a Christian at all. Why? Because it says, “I consent unto the law that it is good.” No unregenerate sinner could say it. It says, “I delight in the law in the inward man.” No unregenerate man can say it. He knows he does not delight in it. I would do the Spirit’s commandment, I would obey it. There is not that will in the unconverted man.

So, then, these two scriptures represent a state in which sanctification has not yet been consummated, but in which regeneration has taken place, in which a war is going on of the flesh against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. As sanctification progresses the spirit triumphs more and more over the flesh.

Now, let us look at another point. How is the process of sanctification carried on? It is carried on by the growth (mark the expression), by the growth of our spiritual graces. I will not speak of all of them, but I will take some of them to illustrate what I mean. Faith is one of the Christian graces.

Now, if our faith is weak our progress in sanctification is slow, but if our faith is strong, and keeps getting stronger, then our progress in sanctification progresses as our faith develops.

In the second letter to the Thessalonians, in the first chapter and third verse, the Apostle Paul says, “I thank God that your faith groweth exceedingly.” Notice that — “your faith groweth exceedingly.” Now, compare that with the prayer once offered to Jesus: “Lord, increase our faith.” Not only by the growth of faith, but by the growth of hope, which rests on faith. If our faith is weak our hope will be weak; if our faith is strong our hope will be strong.

Now, in the fifteenth chapter of the letter to the Romans, and in the thirteenth verse, the Apostle Paul *says*, “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.” Now, here is an expansion of our hope. It gets clearer, brighter, broader and stronger as our faith gets clearer, and brighter, and broader and stronger. Not only, then, with reference to the grace of hope, but with reference to the grace of love.

Take the passage in the third chapter of First Thessalonians, and the twelfth and thirteenth verses:

“The Lord make you to increase and abound in love, one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you, to the end that He may

establish your hearts, unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father (listen at this), at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.”

Now here is an unblamable state of holiness referred to, just like in all the other passages I have read, and the apostle declares one of the principles by which you continuously approximate that state of unblamableness in holiness, and he says that that principle is love — love which grows and abounds, and gets stronger and broader, and by the power of that increasing love you go toward that state of unblamable holiness. In his prayer for the Ephesians he had in his mind a mighty consummation, which was that they should be filled with all the fulness of God, and hence he offered that remarkable prayer that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith, that they might be rooted and grounded in love, that they might be led on to know what is the height and breadth and depth, and to know the love of God, which passeth knowledge.

That is the process by which they were to reach it, and hence the Apostle Peter at the close of his second letter says, “Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,” showing that it is a growth, that it is a development.

Then take what he says, which you have often heard me quote: “Add to or supply with your faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, Godliness, brotherly kindness, charity,” and then he goes on to show that this marvelous development is consummated by an abundant entrance into the kingdom of glory. From these scriptures (for it is not at all my purpose to talk at any great length), I think you see by what process sanctification is carried on.

Now, very plainly, I want to answer a question: Is sanctification consummated here, so that a man can say, “I am completely sanctified?” So that a man can say, “I am unblamable in my holiness, in spirit, in soul, in body?” That is the question.

I am exceedingly sorry that anyone should ever have presumed to say “yes” to that question. I am sorry because it directly and flatly contradicts the most positive declarations of God’s Word.

In the first letter of the Apostle John he states two distinct propositions: “If we say we have not sinned (with reference to the past), if we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar and the truth is not in us.” But there is another proposition. He *says*, in the same connection, “If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” That is a very positive declaration. If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves. Now, whoever is completely sanctified is already in the heavenly state, ready to be presented to the Bridegroom, without spot, or blemish,

or wrinkle, or any such thing. I will show you directly how awfully presumptuous such a statement is.

Take another scripture, in the first book of Kings, and in the eighth chapter. Solomon, in offering that wonderful prayer at the dedication of the temple, a prayer that was evidently inspired, for God answered it at its close by a visible manifestation of His presence, and filled the temple with glory - in that prayer Solomon says, "If they sin against thee." And then he adds, "For there is no man that sinneth not." Mark it: There is no man that sinneth not. Then in the seventh chapter and twentieth verse of the book of Ecclesiastes, the language, is much stronger. Here it is: "There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not."

Take the declaration in the third chapter and seventh verse of the letter of James, "In many things we offend all." In many things, and the truth is, whoever talks about being sinlessly perfect advertises to the world his ignorance of the exceeding broadness of the divine commands, advertises the fact that he is not near God, for no man can be near God without being overwhelmed with a sense of his unworthiness and sinfulness.

I take some scriptures to prove it. Isaiah was the saintliest man of his time. If any man could claim to be a sinless man Isaiah could have made that claim, but on one occasion God permitted him to get close to Him. Listen at the record: "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

Take Job. In the common acceptance of the word, the ordinary worldly acceptance of the word, God has said that Job was a perfect man, and he was a better man than any that I have ever known who claimed sinless perfection. And yet Job was not sinlessly perfect. He contested with pride anything that his friends could say to him, but when the Almighty spoke to him out of the whirlwind, and he stood face to face with infinite holiness, he said, "I abhor myself and repent in sackcloth and ashes."

And that is one of the marks that you are becoming sanctified. It is that feeling of deep humility, that sense of your unworthiness, that absence of all proud assurance, arrogance, boastfulness; that lowliness of mind and heart that would enable Paul, the nearer and nearer he got to holiness, to say, "I am the chief of sinners." He would see his own littleness and unworthiness the nearer he got to God.

But to meet an objection, consider another scripture. It is alleged that the scriptures which I have cited are all balanced by this scripture, where John says, "Whosoever

is born of God doth not commit sin.” Well, if we take that language absolutely in the sense they allege, then it means that there is no such thing as sanctification in contradistinction from regeneration at all, and that not simply one man is sanctified, but every Christian is sanctified. It would not mean that one here and one yonder has attained to a sinless perfection, but it would mean that everyone is sinless and perfect who has become a child of God at all. That is self-evident. Now then, as it would mean too much in that it would destroy the very distinction that those who claim to be sinlessly perfect are seeking to establish, and wipe out all lines of demarcation between the children of God-therefore it cannot be used in this connection.

In that connection, John speaks of sinning unto death, and he says, “There is a sin which is unto death and there is a sin which is not unto death, and whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” Hence it may mean that whosoever is born of God cannot commit that sin that is unto death-that is, the unpardonable sin-but he may commit sin which is not unto death.

But you are not forced even to take that interpretation of it, but you may take the interpretation held by many pious men, that when John says that whosoever is born of God cannot sin, it means that the inward spiritual man, though a sin is committed, that the inner man never consented to it. It may mean that, as when he says, “It is no longer I that do it, but sin that remaineth in me.” It is susceptible of that interpretation, or as others plausibly allege, it may mean that whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin habitually, i.e., as a rule of life. So that there are many ways of explaining that particular passage of scripture without putting it in the pathway of the unmistakable declarations which I have read.

To recapitulate: First, I answered the question when it started. Then I showed what it was an unfolding and developing of the principle of life imparted in regeneration, then how it is unfolded, and what principles operated in the unfolding.

Now, in conclusion, I squarely meet the question as to its consummation. When is it consummated? For that every one of God’s children will one day be wholly sanctified, I haven’t a shadow of doubt, but the question is, when? I will ask Paul to answer. He says: “Brethren, I have not yet attained it, neither count I myself yet perfect. Not yet. But there is one thing I do. I forget the things which are behind, and I press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I am going after that.” What is that high calling? What is the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? It is that your spirit is to be made absolutely perfect, and that your body is to be made absolutely perfect, and that the united and glorified spirit and body, so made perfect, shall be without spot, or blemish or wrinkle, or any such thing, in the presence of God.

Now, then, when? In the twelfth chapter of the letter to the Hebrews we find an answer to a part of it. Paul says to these Hebrews, "You are coming (you are not there yet, but you are coming) to God, the Judge, to an innumerable company of angels, to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the spirits of the just made perfect." Where? Yonder. You are not there. Yonder the spirit of the saint is made perfect.

I mean to say that when the soul of the Christian is separated from his body, that spirit is then perfected and so enters heaven. This side of death you cannot find it. The other side of death you see it and you are invited to approach unto it.

But this is only a part of sanctification. The marriage has not come yet, and the marriage will not come until the whole man is without spot, or blemish, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Well, when is the rest of it consummated? Paul says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." Here is the change that takes place in the bodies of those that shall be alive when Christ comes. Those who live at that time, the Christians who are alive when He comes, instantly experience a change, a marvelous change of body. Corruption puts on incorruption, and mortality puts on immortality. Death is swallowed up in victory, and the body is glorified and made like unto the glorified body of our Lord.

At the same time, the bodies of those spirits made perfect the spirits perfect in heaven and their bodies imperfect in the dust-then the omnipotent power of God passes upon the realms of death, and wakes the sleeping saints. They rise; they go forth; they put on immortality and glory; and there is the sanctified body. Now Christ brings with Him, says the Scripture, the sanctified spirit when He comes, and puts the sanctified spirit into the glorified body, and then, and never until then, is sanctification completed. Then ring the bells of heaven. The marriage is come and the bride is made ready. There is now no blemish in her. There is no spot in her. She is unblamable in holiness, then, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then presented. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that He might present it to himself as without blemish, or spot or wrinkle or any such thing, unblamable in holiness.

That is the Bible doctrine upon that subject, and it is a glorious and a wonderful doctrine. But it is a sad thing that the minds of children should be poisoned with a view that would make a sinful man, yea, even while he is lying, claim to be sinlessly perfect. It is an awful thing. Brethren, I do think that there ought to be a waking up

such as has not been in our history, upon the subject of teaching the true doctrines of God to our children.

The older I become, the more the importance of the Sunday School rises in my sight. You ought not to permit one single child that comes to the Sunday School to be ignorant of what is sanctification. He ought not to have to go out without armor to meet an adversary on the streets or anywhere else. He ought to be taught what is sanctification, when it commences, how it is unfolded, what are the principles by which it is accomplished, and when it is consummated in spirit, and when it is consummated in body.

What a grand lesson would that be, and yet, how few of our young people know anything about it! To me sanctification is one of the sweetest and holiest doctrines of the Book of God. Spiritually oftentimes it makes me almost faint with desire. Lord Jesus, I want to be perfectly holy. I want to be pure in my heart and in my body. I want to get rid of all defilement, all sin. I want the war between my spirit and my flesh to come to an end in which victory shall be counted with the saints of God.

14. THE EVILS OF RELIGIOUS COMPROMISE

I wish to illustrate the evils of religious compromise by considering the four consecutive propositions submitted by Pharaoh to Moses, and will read them in the order in which they were proposed. God through Moses had demanded of Pharaoh that His people should be allowed to leave Egypt and go three days journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to Him. Pharaoh peremptorily refused. But after four plagues in succession had fallen on Egypt, he began to propose compromises.

Compromise 1.

“And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.” (Exodus 8:25.)

Which Moses rejected.

Compromise 2.

“And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away.” (Exodus 8:28.)

Moses rejected it and brought on Egypt three additional plagues.

Compromise 3.

“Go now ye that are men; and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire. But let your little ones remain.” (Exodus 10:8-11.)

Moses rejected it and brought two plagues more.

Compromise 4.

“And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; let your little ones also go with you; only let your flocks and herds be stayed.*** But Moses said, Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind.” (Exodus 10:24-26.)

These four propositions may summarily be expressed thus:

1. You may serve God, but it must be here in Egypt.
2. You may leave Egypt to serve Him, but you must not go far away.
3. You may leave Egypt to serve God and you may go as far away as you please, but you must leave your children in Egypt.

4. You and your children may go out of Egypt and as far as you please to serve your God; but you must leave your property behind.

The devices of Satan in endeavoring to prevent a clear testimony to the truth on the part of God's people, are remarkably alike in all ages. The first device of Satan with reference to the truth is to persecute; to see if it cannot be destroyed by persecution. If that fails, his next device is to imitate the powerful works of the truth, and to make it appear that his servants can do similar things; and when that fails, then he falls upon his last expedient, the expedient of compromise. And there are presented here the four compromises with which he usually attempts to seduce the people of God from perfect allegiance, from complete obedience.

I want to examine these four compromises. The first one is this: God had commanded His people to separate from the Egyptians and that the separation should be an actual and a complete one. They were commanded to come out from among them. They were commanded to go to a place that He would give them.

Now, the compromise proposed is this: Worship God as you choose, but don't separate from us. Offer your sacrifices here in the land. Fairly translated, this proposition means about this: We are willing to acknowledge that Jehovah is one of the gods, but we have gods also, and now let there be a mutual recognition of the claims of these several gods. We are willing that Jehovah shall be one, but ours must also be recognized among the number. Be charitable. Don't monopolize.

Put the several gods of the several nations upon an equality, and let us meet in a Chicago World's Fair -parliament of religions, and let this quasi acknowledgment of equality be general. Here is Jehovah and there is Buddha, and there is Confucius, and here Mahomet. All religions are good and any religion is good and it doesn't make a great deal of difference. Indeed what is the difference?

It was the device of the ancient Greeks and Romans. They were perfectly willing to give Jesus Christ a niche in the temple of their gods. They were willing to recognize Him as a deity, but He must also recognize Jupiter, Pluto, Mercury, Saturn, Venus, Bacchus and all their other gods. This was the proposition.

And just here it would be well to answer a question: Did the representatives of the Christian religion do right in that parliament of religions in placing Christianity in an attitude of receiving the other religions as guests and upon terms of equality, and receiving them as guests by a host so polite as not in any way to reflect upon their claims, but allow them on the hearth of the Christian religion and at its own hearthstone and altars to reflect upon the Christian religion? My deliberate conviction

is that it was the most disgraceful and treasonable surrender of the truth that this world has ever known.

Consider its effect on the false religions. The followers of Buddha went home and said to their disciples who had been shaken by the missionaries of Christianity: "You are foolish to be so shaken by these missionaries. We have just returned from their home and our religion was put by the side of theirs, and if anything, we had the advantage, and they are much more ready to accept ours than theirs." Never since Christ gave the great commission has there been such a backset to the work of the missionaries in the land of Buddha as there has been since the return of these men who were received into the United States in this parliament of religions upon the footing of equality with Christians.

That was exactly the proposition of Pharaoh: "Sacrifice to the Lord your God in Egypt. Do not invidiously put one over another. Be broadminded. Be charitable. Don't run in a narrow groove. We acknowledge your divinity and you acknowledge our divinity."

What if Elijah had been present! He would have stood up and said: "How long halt ye between two opinions; if Baal be God, follow him. But if Jehovah be God, follow Him." Both cannot be. The claims are fundamentally antagonistic and subversive of each other. There could much more readily be a dozen suns in the solar system than there could be a dozen deities governing worlds. There could much more easily be a dozen different and conflicting laws of gravitation than there could be a dozen deities governing the world.

Suppose Paul had been present, what would he have said? He would have said, "The things which these people sacrifice to their idols they do not sacrifice to God, but to demons, and you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons; you cannot take the cup of the Lord and the cup of the devil."

When Washington said in his farewell address to his people, "Beware of entangling alliances," he condensed in that short saying supreme earthly wisdom, and it is heavenly wisdom when applied to questions of religion.

There can no way be selected by which the witnesses of the truth of God can more readily sacrifice the power of their testimony and divest themselves of any practical and important influence over the world than by putting themselves in a position that will make the religion which they represent only one of many and a matter of indifference as to which one the people shall choose.

Moses said, “What you propose we cannot do; our command from God is to come out and be separated. Egypt is not our place. We cannot obey the Lord half way. It is impossible for us to receive any blessing from Him while we trifle with plain and specific commandments which He hath given us.”

Then Pharaoh said, “If you won’t separate here in the land; if you won’t sacrifice here in the land, then we offer you this compromise: Don’t go very far away; let it be a little separation. Let the line that defines between us be a dim one. Don’t be invidious, representing yours as clear light and ours as solid darkness. Take a twilight position on it; that is, you are neither all light nor all darkness, but you are mixed light and darkness.”

How many tens of thousands of people are caught at the present day by this compromise? “Don’t separate too far. Let it be a matter of some difficulty to determine whether you have separated at all or not. Just a little way.”

Allow me to enforce some maxims that will apply to other things as well as to religion. There is no weakness comparable to the weakness of taking a half way position on any matter. You are deprived of all of the power that would accrue to you from a clean cut and decisive stand, and you are subject to all the harm that will result from slightly leaving the camps of either hostile party. In other words, neither the one nor the other can regard you as a friend; both must look upon you with distrust. Neither will put any confidence in you, neither God nor the devil. You are where you have deprived yourself of any benefit from either side and where you have brought upon yourself the suspicion of both sides.

Now let me illustrate the feebleness and folly of all such methods. In the beginning of the Revolutionary war, it was not proposed that there be complete separation from England. Many thought it wiser to fight as British subjects. But after their struggle had gone on for some time, it at last dawned upon the minds of thoughtful men that they had put themselves in a position of exposedness to extreme danger, and a position of unusual weakness. They said:

“If we are not separated from England, then we are rebels. We are in arms against our sovereign. We are not even entitled to the position of belligerents in the sight of the nations of the world. We cannot expect any recognition from foreign powers. We have not the courage that comes from taking a clear, well defined position. We are deprived of potent incentives with which to stir up our people. We cannot offer them the rewards of true and complete independence.”

And at last this conviction found utterance in the speakings and writings of the leaders. They came out openly and fearlessly: "There is for us not one atom of hope except in complete severance, entire independence, and when we take that position, we may send to any foreign power representatives from our government and expect recognition and help." That is one of the most familiar lessons of the Revolutionary war.

The history of Texas is another illustration. When it was proposed to strive against the tyranny of Mexico, what they called a consultation was held-not a convention, but a consultation. This consultation declared for the old Mexican constitution of 1824, and appointed a provisional government, a provisional council, a provisional army, and the object stated was: "We are not endeavoring to separate Texas from Mexico, not at all; we simply ally ourselves with one of the parties in Mexico, and we are fighting for the re-establishment of the constitution which prevailed when we were invited to come here and settle." That was their position.

The weakness of it was manifest to many minds. Wise men spoke out against it: "By our own confession we are in arms against the central government." The troops that captured Goliad and that captured San Antonio, all of them, were without regular commissions or any regular authority. They could not in any way be held together. And then they were continually subjected to this possible calamity-that any defeat would put every captive at the mercy of the government of Mexico, and they could be shot down, and legally shot down as traitors and rebels. This lame method was followed to a ridiculous and ruinous extreme. Every letter they sent out, every man they commissioned was with reference to continuance with Mexico.

Even this feeble provisional government, for such a feeble purpose, was rendered more impotent by divided jurisdiction - a governor and a council with vaguely defined and conflicting powers. It was through the unwisdom of this council that so many precious lives were fruitlessly lost-every man whose life was lost under Grant, or in the Alamo, or under Fannin, or under Ward, or under King, making an aggregate larger than the army with which Houston won the battle of San Jacinto.

Thoughtful men inquired: "Why should we send commissioners to the United States? They will say, 'We can't help you while you occupy that position. It would, be interference with the internal affairs of another nation. If you expect sympathy in the United States; if you expect recognition by the American government, you must put yourselves in a different attitude. You must, through the voice of the people in convention assembled, sever forever your connection with Mexico. Come out from them and be separate; locate yourselves, be somewhere; then we will come and help you.'"

That is the precise thought involved here. Israel cannot accomplish anything by separating just a little way, and Pharaoh knew it, and that is why he offered to compromise. Neither can Christians accomplish anything by separating only a little way from the world, and the devil knows it. Hence his offer to compromise. Your religious convictions stir within you. You feel impressed to turn toward God, and if the devil cannot restrain that, he says, "That's all very well; have those feelings; pray a little; come out a little; separate a little; but don't go very far; hold on to the world and don't take any clean-cut, decisive position." That is the very compromise upon which the usefulness of over half the Christians in this world today is wrecked.

I will make a plain statement. You may regard it as an audacious one. I stand upon it anyhow — nine-tenths of the professed Christians in Waco today are powerless as a testimony for God, because the line of separation is a dim one; because they go not very far away from the position occupied by the devil. They get no internal enjoyment; they bask in no smiles of God; they are not able to break down the bulwarks of Satan because they cannot ask God's favor, nor can they ask the devil's favor. They are just a little separated; they are in a spiritual twilight that is neither day nor night. Their whole condition is an anomalous one. They may easily be counted both as traitors to God and traitors to the devil.

When Pharaoh found that Moses could not be seduced by any such offer and the plagues descended upon him hotter and hotter all the time, he, still fighting for every inch of ground, makes his third proposition of compromise, which is this: You grown people go into the wilderness; separate as widely as you please, but leave your little ones here with us.

Wherever a man's treasure is, there is his heart, and it would amount to but little for men and women to go off and draw a line of separation between them and the devil and then let the devil educate their children. That was the very compromise which brought on the flood, the very one. The song of Seth married the daughters of Cain. The children followed the mothers. They remained in the devil's camp.

He now says to you church members: "If you think it best to be a Christian, be that, but don't worry your little ones with Sunday School. It is well enough for men of mature minds who are converted—it is well enough for them to go to church and worship God, but don't worry the children. Wait till they are grown; wait till they are converted; wait till they occupy the position that you occupy; but leave them with me in the meantime. You go on now, but leave your children here with me." That is his proposition. He knows that he who educates the children of the people is the master of that people.

I do not know of a more seductive form of compromise the devil's ingenuity could devise than this—never say anything to these little ones about God; just leave that out; hands off of childhood. And mark you, how plausibly his agents put it. They say, "Don't preoccupy the child's mind; let him grow up, and then when he is grown, decide for himself." Which is equivalent to this: "Religion, you let this child alone; irreligion, you preoccupy him. We will take possession of that pliant mind; we will educate it; we will fortify it; and when we have made a Gibraltar of his heart, and when we have blinded his eyes and deafened his ears and hardened his heart and bound him hand and foot, why, then you may turn your batteries loose on him." That is the proposition.

And occasionally you find a Christian, or a so-called Christian, who occupies the position taken by the too chivalrous French Count d'Estaing at Savannah. He came upon that town with a formidable army of both French and Americans. It was easy to take immediate possession of it. The wily British general said, "Give me twenty-four hours to consider your proposition of surrender. I want to sleep on it." And the Frenchman allowed it. The British general did not sleep on it; he stayed awake day and night; he brought up his reinforcements; he strengthened his fortifications; and when the twenty-four hours had expired he was ready to meet any assault that could be made upon his impregnable works. When too late, the assault was made. — It was a butchery—twelve hundred killed and wounded men paid in their blood for the Frenchman's folly.

Well, now, that is just exactly what the devil says to us: "Let grown people be Christians, but don't interfere with the little ones; don't you establish Sunday Schools; don't you try to lead them to Christ; leave them in my school, and when I have fortified, then you may assault if you choose."

Let us proceed with our lesson. When the plagues still descended heavier and heavier and hotter and hotter on Pharaoh, and God's stern and inexorable word relentlessly repeated itself, "Let my people go," he said to Moses, "I will consent to let you go, grown people and children; let them go as far as they choose, but leave your property behind." Which being translated is: "All I ask you to do is, after you have acknowledged God's sovereignty over your person and over your child, don't acknowledge it over your purse. Take this maxim: 'Religion is religion and business is business.' We will let God have Sunday, but not the other six days; we will let Him be Jehovah in the church, but not Jehovah in the counting-house; not Jehovah in the office; not Jehovah in our property. Let your property stay behind."

There is no doubt in the world that the devil successfully works this compromise on many professors of religion; people who willingly concede that they are under obligations to the

Lord Jesus Christ as to their person, as to their wives, as to their children, but draw a line of demarkation when it comes to the question of money or property. "This is mine; I deny that I must give it to God, and I deny that the Lord Jesus Christ has a right to sit over my treasure and watch it. I deny that He is king over the money that I have made."

Well, if you grant that much to the devil, that is enough. He will destroy your usefulness. He knows that God will not occupy a part of the throne. He knows that God will not occupy three hundred and sixty-four days in the year if you deny Him the three hundred and sixty-fifth. He knows that God will not occupy eleven chambers of your heart if you deny Him entrance into the twelfth. He knows that if you take away one hair's breadth from the total of God's sovereignty, you destroy the sovereignty.

In other words, if He is God at all, He is God over all, and if He be not God over all, He is not God at all. That is to say, any God whose sovereignty you deny over your property, you may, by parity of reasoning, deny His sovereignty over your person. And if you deny Him Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and Friday and Saturday, you may, by the same reasoning, deprive him of Sunday.

What was the reply of Moses to this? He says, "Our cattle shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind us, not a hoof. We are the Lord's, our wives are the Lord's, our property is the Lord's, and the Lord commands us to come out and be separate and to be wholly separated and to bear undimmed testimony to the sovereignty of Jehovah." It resolves itself into this: Never acknowledge any being as God unless you are willing to acknowledge Him as God over everything. You injure yourself, you put yourself in a position of weakness, you deprive yourself of the benefits of the position you do take if you have a reservation of any kind whatever.

Now, that makes the difference between men; that makes the difference in their success. Let me illustrate this thought by a preacher. Here is a preacher who says that he is called of God to preach; that he is the servant of the Lord; that he is purchased with a price and that he claims nothing as his own. That is his original position. But after such a declaration he begins to reach out and make some kind of alignment with the world, the flesh and the devil. He attempts some kind of compromise, and then wonders why he has no power; he wonders that somebody else, not his equal, is succeeding where he is failing. The truth is simply this: the man never did burn the bridges and ships behind him; the man never did come out and

take a clean-cut and decisive position absolutely, wholly and forever committing himself to the service of God as God's minister and relying solely and wholly upon the divine power, and God will not be with him, and will not bless him.

I mean just this: that whenever God calls any man to preach, whatever may be his natural ability, whatever may be the fulness or the deficiency of his acquirements or education, whatever may be the poverty of his purse, if that man will absolutely trust God and will rest on His promise, and will go out fearing neither the world nor the devil, and will preach the truth and rely wholly upon the Spirit's power, then all the powers of hell cannot keep him from being a success. But whenever he begins to put on Saul's armor, whenever he begins to make alliances, whenever in his mind, in his heart, in his secret moments, he leans upon any earthly broken staff, he is like Samson shorn of his locks, and is as any other man without knowing that he is as any other man. It is the easiest thing in the world for the devil to put out his eyes and take away all his strength, or utilize it by making him blindly grind in his own mill.

The Apostle Paul, who had profoundly studied this question, and who had been instructed from heaven, addressing the Corinthian people in the language of one of the scriptures that I have read to you, said,

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.” (1st 2nd Corinthians 6:14-18.)

Here, then, is a lesson that every Christian can very safely apply to himself. Look at these promises: “I will be your God, I will be a father to you, I will be in you and dwell in you; no weapon that is fashioned of hell will prosper against you; when you lie down you will lie down in safety; the angels of God will camp about you; your heart shall be full of gladness even in the days of sorrow, and when you come to die there shall be no bitterness in death to you, and I will take you home triumphantly to myself.”

These are the promises, and having these promises, as says Paul, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Here is Christian power, just as much for a private member of the church as for a preacher. Nothing on earth that you may gain by any compromise will

compensate you for the loss of God's presence; for the loss of the power that He confers upon you.

Then, as Christians, be decisive; occupy a definite position; be somebody. Don't be a wandering star. Don't be an erratic meteor. Don't be a restless, roving wave of the sea. Don't be a well without water. Don't be a tree twice dead, plucked up by the roots; but come out and be separate and testify bravely for God, and whatever may be the portion of any other man or woman, you shall have power from on high and a conscious realization of the divine presence while you live and when you die.