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COMMENTARY

JESUS THE CHRIST

by B.H. Carroll

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JESUS THE CHRIST

*A Compilation of Sermons Concerning Our Lord
and Saviour, and Touching upon the
Mountain-peaks of His Ministry, His earthly
Life and His Messiahship.*

BY

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TO DR. J. T. HARRINGTON

the beloved physician, who knew and loved B. H. Carroll, and who has done more kindly deeds, in more generous ways, than any doctor I ever knew, and who knows the meaning of love to God and of a lofty and loyal friendship, this book is most lovingly dedicated by THE EDITOR.

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FOREWORD

In this volume of B. H. Carroll's lofty utterances, the great preacher, scholar, theologian, Bible interpreter, Kingdom builder and Christian leader lives again. His vibrant messages thrill with pungency and penetration in the sermons contained in this book. Read them all, and then read them all again. You will thank God and take courage as you sit at the feet of the man who, I verily believe, was the greatest preacher and expositor of the Bible since the Apostle Paul.

The present volume of sermons is the twentieth Carroll book I have been privileged to give to the world. The first was *Sermons*, a volume of thirty discourses, and this was followed by *Baptists and Their Doctrines*, *Evangelistic Sermons*, *The River of Life*, *Inspiration of the Bible* and *The Day of the Lord*. Contemporaneous with the issuance of these books of sermons, there began to appear *The Interpretation of the English Bible*, consisting of thirteen volumes. Strangely enough, the first volume of this *Interpretation* to appear was *Revelation*, which was followed by *Genesis*, and on through a golden galaxy of the most luminous discussions of the English Bible known to me.

I am yet hoping for the appearance of the twelve additional books of Doctor Carroll's sermons, the manuscript of which I now have in hand. If we can complete the Carroll library and add an Index volume, it will be the greatest and most helpful compendium of thoughtful and edifying discussions of the Word of God ever produced by one man.

In the fifteen sermons found in this book, the great author discusses the vitalities of the Christian faith and the verities of the life and mission of Jesus the Christ. I have, of course, not read all the sermons of the great preachers of the world, but I can confidently say that in my reading I have found no discussions of our Saviour quite comparable to the sermons found in this volume.

It is proper to say that these sermons were not preached as a series, but that some of them were delivered to Doctor Carroll's congregation in Waco, where for thirty years he was pastor of the First Baptist Church, and others were preached at various points throughout the country on special occasions.

The crowning work of B. H. Carroll's life was his founding of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Fort Worth, Texas, of which he was first president and teacher of the English Bible. He was president of this great institution when he passed into rest, and while his *Interpretation of the English Bible* and other printed works, including the present volume, were monumental, it may be that his greatest monument was this Fort Worth School of the Prophets.

Professor J. W. Crowder, of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, compiled these sermons, and his order of their arrangement in the volume has been preserved. In much of the work I have done in compiling and editing other Carroll sermon books, Professor Crowder has been of great assistance to me.

Through the kindness of the American Baptist Publication Society, the publishers of *Sermons*, a book to which reference has already been made, I am privileged to reproduce here "My Infidelity and What Became of It" and "A Sermon to Preachers," together with a portrait of the author. All the readers of the present volume will join me in voicing grateful thanks to the Publication Society for their gracious courtesy.

Dallas, Texas.

J. B. CRANFILL.

1. MY INFIDELITY AND WHAT BECAME OF IT

This account of B. H. Carroll's conversion was first given in an address at Nashville, Tennessee, and by request of J. M. Frost, then Secretary of the Baptist Sunday School Board, was reported for the *Teacher* of the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Series. It later appeared in Doctor Carroll's book with the title, *Sermons*, published by the American Baptist Publication Society, and through their courtesy is reproduced here.

I cannot remember when I began to be an infidel. Certainly at a very early age—even before I knew what infidelity meant. There was nothing in my home life to beget or suggest it. My father was a self-educated Baptist minister, preaching—mainly without compensation—to village or country churches. My mother was a devoted Christian of deep and humble piety. There were no infidel books in our home library, nor in any other accessible to me. My teachers were Christians—generally preachers. There were no infidels of my acquaintance, and no public sentiment in favor of them. My infidelity was never from without, but always from within. I had no precept and no example. When, later in life, I read infidel books, they did not make me an infidel, but because I was an infidel I sought, bought and read them. Even when I read them I was not impressed by new suggestions, but only when occasionally they gave clearer expression of what I had already vaguely felt. No one of them or all of them sounded the depths of my own infidelity or gave an adequate expression of it. They all fell short of the distance in doubt over which my own troubled soul had passed.

From unremembered time this skepticism progressed, though the progress was not steady and regular. Sometimes in one hour, *as by* far-shining flashes of inspiration, there would be more progress in extent and definiteness than in previous months. Moreover, these short periods of huge advances were without preceding intentions or perceptible preparations. They were always sudden and startling. Place and circumstances had but little to do with them. The doubt was seldom germane to the topic under consideration. It always leaped far away to a distant and seemingly disconnected theme, in a way unexplained by the law of the association of ideas. At times I was in the Sunday school or hearing a sermon or bowed with others in family prayer—more frequently when I waked at night after healthful sleep, and still more frequently when rambling alone in the fields or in the woods. To be awake in the stillness of the night while others slept, or to be alone in forest depths, or on boundless prairies, or on mountain heights has always possessed for me a weird fascination. Even to this day there

are times when houses and people are unbearable. Frequently have I been intoxicated with thoughts of the immensity of space and the infinity of nature. Now these were the very times when skepticism made such enormous progress. "When I consider thy Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

Thus, before I knew what infidelity was, I was an infidel. My child-mind was fascinated by strange and sometimes horrible questionings concerning many religious subjects. Long before I had read the experiences of others, I had been borne far beyond sight of any shore, wading and swimming beyond my depth after solutions to such questions as the "philosopher's stone," the "elixir of life," and "the fountain of youth," but mainly the "chief good."

I understand now much better than then the character and direction of the questionings of that early period. By a careful retrospect and analysis of such of them as memory preserves, I now know that I never doubted the being, personality and government of God. I was never an atheist or pantheist. I never doubted the existence and ministry of angels-pure spirits never embodied I could never have been a Sadducee. I never doubted the essential distinction between spirit and matter: I could never have been a materialist.

And as to the origin of things, the philosophy of Democritus, developed by Epicurus, more developed by Lucretius, and gone to seed in the unverified hypothesis of modern evolutionists — such a godless, materialistic anti-climax of philosophy never had the slightest attraction or temptation for me. The intuitions of humanity preserved me from any ambition to be descended from either beast or protoplasm. The serious reception of such a speculative philosophy was not merely a mental, but mainly a moral impossibility. I never doubted the immortality of the soul and conscious future existence. This conviction antedated any reading of "Plato, thou reasonest well." I never doubted the final just judgment of the Creator of the world.

But my infidelity related to the Bible and its manifest doctrines. I doubted that it was God's book; that it was an inspired revelation of His will to man. I doubted miracles. I doubted the Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. But more than all, I doubted His vicarious expiation for the sins of men. I doubted any real power and vitality in the Christian religion. I never doubted that the Scriptures claimed inspiration, nor that they taught unequivocally the divinity and vicarious expiation of Jesus. If the Bible does not teach these, it teaches nothing. The trifling

expedient of accepting the Bible as “inspired in spots” never occurred to me. To accept, with Renan, its natural parts and arbitrarily deny its supernatural, or to accept with some the book as from God, and then strike at its heart by a false interpretation that denied the divinity and vicarious expiation of Jesus - these were follies of which I was never guilty-follies for which even now I have never seen or heard a respectable excuse. To me it was always “Aut Caesar, aut nihil.” What anybody wanted, in a religious way, with the shell after the kernel was gone I never could understand.

While the beginnings of my infidelity cannot be recalled, by memory I can give the date when it took tangible shape. I do know just when it emerged from chaos and outlined itself in my consciousness with startling distinctness. An event called it out of the mists and shadows into conscious reality. It happened on this wise:

There was a protracted meeting in our vicinity. A great and mysterious influence swept over the community. There was much excitement. Many people, old and young, joined the church and were baptized. Doubtless in the beginning of the meeting the conversions were what I would now call genuine. Afterward many merely went with the tide. They went because others were going. Two things surprised me. First, that I did not share the interest or excitement. To me it was only a curious spectacle. The second was that so many people wanted me to join the church. I had manifested no special interest except once or twice mechanically and experimentally. I had no conviction for sin. I had not felt lost and did not feel saved. First one and then another catechized me, and that categorically. Thus “Don’t you believe the Bible?” “Yes.” “Don’t you believe in Jesus Christ?” “Y-e-s.” “Well, doesn’t the Bible say that whoever believes in Jesus Christ is saved?” “Yes.” Now, mark three things: First, this catechizing was by zealous church-members before I presented myself for membership. Second, the answers were historical, Sunday school answers, as from a textbook. Third, I was only thirteen years old. These answers were reported to the preachers somewhat after this fashion: “Here is a lad who believes the Bible, believes in Jesus Christ and believes that he is saved. Ought not such a one to join the church?” Now came the pressure of well-meant but unwise persuasion. I will not describe it. The whole thing would have been exposed if, when I presented myself for membership, I had been asked to tell my own story without prompting or leading questions. I did not have any to tell and would have told none. But many had joined, the hour was late and a few direct

questions elicited the same historical, stereotyped answers. Thus the die was cast.

Until after my baptism everything seemed unreal, but walking home from the baptism the revelation came. The vague infidelity of all the past took positive shape, and would not down at my bidding. Truth was naked before me. My answers had been educational. I did not believe that the Bible was God's revelation. I did not believe its miracles and doctrines. I did not believe, in any true sense, in the divinity or vicarious sufferings of Jesus. I had no confidence in professed conversion and regeneration. I had not felt lost, nor did I feel saved. There was no perceptible, radical change in my disposition or affections. What I once loved, I still loved; what I once hated, I still hated. It was no temporary depression of spirit following a previous exaltation, such as I now believe sometimes comes to genuine Christians. This I knew. Joining the church, with its assumption of obligations, was a touchstone. It acted on me like the touch of Ithuriel's spear. I saw my real self. I knew that either I had no religion or it was not worth having. This certainty as to my state had no intermittance. The sensation of actual and positive infidelity was so new to me that I hardly knew what to say about it. I felt a repugnance to parade it. I wanted time and trial for its verification. I knew that its avowal would pain and horrify my family and the church, yet honesty required me to say something. And so I merely asked that the church withdraw from me on the ground that I was not converted. This was not granted because the brethren thought that I mistook temporary mental depression for lack of conversion. They asked me to wait and give it a trial; to read the Bible and pray. I could not make them understand, but from that time on I read the Bible as never before-read it all; read it many times; studied it in the light of my infidelity; marked its contradictions and fallacies, as they seemed to me, from Genesis to Revelation.

Two years passed away. In this interval we moved to Texas. In a meeting in Texas, when I was fifteen years old, I was persuaded to retain membership for a further examination. Now came the period of reading Christian apologies and infidel books. What a multitude of them of both kinds! Hume, Paine, Volney, Bolingbroke, Rousseau, Voltaire, Taylor, Gibbon, and others, over against Watson, Nelson, Horn, Calvin, Walker and a host of others. In the meantime I was at college devouring the Greek, Roman and Oriental philosophies. At seventeen, being worn out in body and mind, I joined McCullough's Texas Rangers, the first regiment mustered into the Confederate service, and on the remote, uninhabited frontier pursued the investigation with unabated ardor.

But now came another event. I shall not name it. It came from no sin on my part, but it blasted every hope and left me in Egyptian darkness. The battle of life was lost. In seeking the field of war, I sought death. By peremptory demand I had my church connection dissolved and turned utterly away from every semblance of Bible belief. In the hour of my darkness, I turned unreservedly to infidelity. This time I brought it a broken heart and a disappointed life, asking for light and peace and rest. It was now no curious speculation; no tentative intellectual examination. It was a stricken soul, tenderly and anxiously and earnestly seeking light.

As I was in the first Confederate regiment, so I was in the last corps that surrendered; but while armies grappled and throttled each other, a darker and deadlier warfare raged within me. I do know this: My quest for the truth was sincere and unintermittent. Happy people whose lives are not blasted may affect infidelity, may appeal to its oracles from a curious, speculative interest, and may minister to their intellectual pride by seeming to be odd. It was not so with me. With all the earnestness of a soul between which and happiness the bridges were burned, I brought a broken and bleeding, but honest heart to every reputed oracle of infidelity. I did not ask life or fame or pleasure. I merely asked light to shine on the path of right. Once more I viewed the anti-Christian philosophies, no longer to admire them in what they destroyed, but to inquire what they built up, what they offered to a hungry heart and a blasted life. There now came to me a revelation as awful as when Mokanna, in Moore's "Lalla Rookh," lifted his veil for Zelica.

Why had I never seen it before? How could I have been blind to it? These philosophies, one and all, were mere negations. They were destructive, but not constructive. They overturned and overturned and overturned; but, as my soul liveth, they built up nothing under the whole heaven in the place of what they destroyed. I say nothing; I mean nothing. To the unstricken, curious soul, they are as beautiful as the aurora borealis, shining on arctic icebergs. But to me they warmed nothing and melted nothing. No flowers bloomed and no fruit ripened under their cheerless beams. They looked down on my bleeding heart as the cold, distant, pitiless stars have ever looked down on all human suffering. Whoever, in his hour of real need, makes abstract philosophy his pillow, makes cold, hard granite his pillow. Whoever looks trustingly into any of its false faces, looks into the face of a Medusa, and is turned to stone. They are all wells without water, and clouds without rain.

I have witnessed a drought in Texas. The earth was iron and the heavens brass. Dust clouded the thoroughfares and choked the travelers. Water courses ran dry, grass scorched and crackled, corn leaves twisted and wilted, stock died around the last water holes, the ground cracked in fissures, and the song of birds died out in parched throats. Men despaired. The whole earth prayed: "Rain, rain, rain! O heaven, send rain!" Suddenly a cloud rises above the horizon and floats into vision like an angel of hope. It spreads a cool shade over the burning and glowing earth. Expectation gives life to desire. The lowing herds look up. The shriveled flowers open their tiny cups. The corn leaves untwist and rustle with gladness. And just when all trusting, suffering life opens her confiding heart to the promise of relief, the cloud, the cheating cloud, like a heartless coquette, gathers her drapery about her and floats scornfully away, leaving the angry sun free to dart his fires of death into the open heart of all suffering life. Such a cloud without rain is any form of infidelity to the soul in its hour of need.

Who then can conjure by the name of Voltaire? Of what avail in that hour is Epicurus or Zeno, Huxley or Darwin? Here now was my case: I had turned my back on Christianity, and had found nothing in infidelity; happiness was gone and death would not come.

The Civil War had left me a wounded cripple on crutches, utterly poverty-stricken and loaded with debt. The internal war of infidelity, after making me roll hopelessly the ever-falling stone of Sisyphus, vainly climb the revolving wheel of Ixion, and stoop like Tantalus to drink waters that ever receded, or reach out for fruit that could not be grasped, now left me bound like Prometheus on the cold rock, while vultures tore with beak and talons a life that could suffer, but could not die.

At this time, two books of the Bible took hold of me with unearthly power. I had not a thought of their inspiration, but I knew from my experience that they were neither fiction nor allegory — the Book of Job and the Book of Ecclesiastes. Some soul had walked those paths. They were histories, not dreams and not mere poems. Like Job, I believed in God; and like him had cried: "Oh, that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! ... Behold, I go forward, but he is not there: and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: but he knoweth the way that I take." Like Job, I could not find answers in nature to the heart's sorest need and the most important questions; and, like Job, regarding God as my

adversary, I had cried out for a revelation: “Oh, that one would hear me! behold, my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book. Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me.” Like Job, I felt the need of a mediator, who as a man could enter into my case, and as divine could enter into God’s case; and, like Job, I had complained: “He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.” And thus I approached my twenty-second year.

I had sworn never to put my foot in another church. My father had died believing me lost. My mother — when does a mother give up a child? — came to me one day and begged, for her sake, that I would attend one more meeting. It was a Methodist camp meeting, held in the fall of 1865. I had not an atom of interest in it. I liked the singing, but the preaching did not touch me.

But one day I shall never forget. It was Sunday at eleven o’clock. The great, wooden shed was crowded. I stood on the outskirts, leaning on my crutches, wearily and somewhat scornfully enduring. The preacher made a failure even for him. There was nothing in his sermon. But when he came down, as I supposed to exhort as usual, he startled me not only by not exhorting, but by asking some questions that seemed meant for me. He said: “You that stand aloof from Christianity and scorn us simple folks, what have you got? Answer honestly before God, have you found anything worth having where you are!” My heart answered in a moment “Nothing under the whole heaven; absolutely nothing.” As if he had heard my unspoken answer, he continued “Is there anything else out there worth trying, that has any promise in it?” Again my heart answered: “Nothing; absolutely nothing. I have been to the jumping-off place on all these roads. They all lead to a bottomless abyss.” “Well, then,” he continued, “admitting there’s nothing there, if there be a God, mustn’t there be a something somewhere? If so, how do you know it is not here? Are you willing to test it? Have you the fairness and courage to try it? I don’t ask you to read any book, nor study any evidences, nor make any difficult and tedious pilgrimages; that way is too long and time is too short. Are you willing to try it now; to make a practical, experimental test, you to be the judge of the result?” These cool, calm and pertinent questions hit me with tremendous force, but I didn’t understand the test. He continued: “I base my test on these two Scriptures: ‘If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God’; ‘Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.’” For the first time I

understood the import of these Scriptures. I had never before heard of such a translation for the first, and had never examined the original text. In our version it says: "If any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." But the preacher quoted it: "Whosoever willeth to do the will of God," showing that the knowledge as to whether the doctrine was of God depended not upon external action and not upon exact conformity with God's will, but upon the internal disposition — "whoso-ever willeth or wishes to do God's will." The old translation seemed to make knowledge impossible; the new, impracticable. In the second Scripture was also new light: "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord," which means that true knowledge follows persistence in the prosecution of it; that is, it comes not to temporary and spasmodic investigation.

So, when he invited all who were willing to make an immediate experimental test to come forward and give him their hands, I immediately went forward. I was not prepared for the stir which this action created. My infidelity and my hostile attitude toward Christianity were so well known in the community that such action on my part developed quite a sensation. Some even began to shout. Whereupon, to prevent any misconception, I arose and stated that I was not converted, that perhaps they misunderstood what was meant *by my* coming forward; that my heart was as cold as ice; my action meant no more than that I was willing to make an experimental test of the truth and power of the Christian religion, and that I was willing to persist in subjection to the test until a true solution could be found. This quieted matters.

The meeting closed without any change upon my part. The last sermon had been preached, the benediction pronounced and the congregation was dispersing. A few ladies only remained, seated near the pulpit and engaged in singing. Feeling that the experiment was ended and the solution not found, I remained to hear them sing. As their last song they sang

*O land of rest, for thee I sigh,
When will the moment come
When I shall lay my armor by
And dwell in peace at home.*

The singing made a wonderful impression upon me. Its tones were as soft as the rustling of angels' wings.

Suddenly there flashed upon my mind, like a light from heaven, this Scripture: “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” I did not see Jesus with my eye, but I seemed to see him standing before me, looking reproachfully and tenderly and pleadingly, seeming to rebuke me for having gone to all other sources for rest but the right one, and now inviting me to come to Him. In a moment I went, once and forever, casting myself unreservedly and for all time at Christ’s feet, and in a moment the rest came, indescribable and unspeakable, and it has remained from that day until now.

I gave no public expression of the change which had passed over me, but spent the night in the enjoyment of it and wondering if it would be with me when morning came. When the morning came, it was still with me, brighter than the sunlight and sweeter than the songs of birds, and now, for the first time, I understood the Scripture which I had often heard my mother repeat

“Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands” (²⁵¹²Isaiah 55:12).

When I reached home, I said nothing about the experience through which I had passed, hiding the righteousness of God in my own heart; but it could not be hidden. As I was walking across the floor on my crutches, an orphan boy whom my mother had raised noticed and called attention to the fact that I was both whistling and crying. I knew that my mother heard him, and to avoid observation, I went at once to my room, lay down on the bed and covered my face with my hands. I heard her coming. She pulled my hands away from my face and gazed long and stedfastly upon me without a word. A light came over her face that made it seem to me as the shining on the face of Stephen; and then, with trembling lips, she said: “My son, you have found the Lord.” Her happiness was indescribable. I don’t think she slept that night. She seemed to fear that with sleep she might dream and wake to find that the glorious fact was but a vision of the night. I spent the night at her bedside reading Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. I read it all that night, and when I came with the pilgrims to the Beulah Land, from which Doubting Castle could be seen no more forever, and which was within sight of the Heavenly City and within sound of the heavenly music, my soul was filled with such a rapture and such an ecstasy of joy as I had never before experienced. I knew then as well as I know now, that I would preach; that it would be my life work; that I would have no other work.

2. JESUS, THE CHRIST OF PROPHECY

Scripture Readings: ^{<2074>}Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-7; 11:1-10; ^{<2085>}Luke 2:8-14.

TEXT: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace — ^{<2086>}Isaiah 9:6.

The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. To Him give all the prophets witness. All the Scriptures — the law, the prophets and the psalms — testify of Him. And we are fools, and slow of heart to credit adequate testimony when we distrust any part of the inspired evidence.

Of the ancient prophets Isaiah was perhaps the most notable witness of the coming Messiah. An orderly combination of his many Messianic utterances amounts to more than a mere sketch — indeed, rather to a series of almost life-sized portraits. As a striking background for these successive portraits the prophet discloses the world's need of a Saviour.

He shows us the world full of sin and enveloped in gross darkness, whose inhabitants are the lawful captives and prey of the terrible one. Selfishness, greed and oppression crush the helpless. Covetousness joins house to house and lays field to field until the poor have no room for a home. Debauchees rise up early in the morning to follow strong drink and sit up late at night to inflame themselves with wine. Their fame is to be expert in mingling among liquors and to be mighty in drinking them.

The wicked draw iniquity with cords of falsehood and sin as with a cart-rope. They reverse the standard of morals and call evil good and good evil. They put darkness for light and light for darkness. Repudiating all modesty and humility for inordinate conceit, they become wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight. Justice, righteousness and equality are outlawed. Hell enlarges its desire and opens its mouth without measure.

Even the chosen nation has become a brood of vipers, formalists, hypocrites, thieves and robbers. Chastisement has vainly beaten them. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. There is no room to place another stroke. From the sole of the foot even unto the crown of the head there is no soundness

in it— only wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. The land is desolate, and the people, perishing for lack of knowledge, grope and shudder under the shadow of death.

Across this horrible background of gloom the prophet begins to sketch in startling strokes of light the images of a coming Redeemer. First, he delineates Him as a little child born of a Virgin, whose coming is the light of the world. He is outlined on the canvas in lowest humanity and highest divinity — “a child born” and yet the “mighty God” and the “everlasting Father.”

Next the child is grown and has become a teacher. And such a teacher! On Him rests the seven spirits of God -the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. He judges not according to appearances and reproves not according to rumors. With righteousness he judges the poor and reproves with equity in behalf of the meek. His words smite a guilty world like thunderbolts and His very breath slays iniquity. Righteousness and faithfulness are his girdle. He uplifts an infallible standard of morals. Then succeeds on the prophetic canvas a miracle-worker. In His presence the desert blossoms as a rose and springs burst out of dry ground. The banks of the Jordan rejoice. The lame man leaps like an hart, the dumb sing and the blind behold visions.

A sadder portrait follows: We see a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His visage is so marred it startles, all nations. He is a vicarious sacrifice. The chastisement of the peace of others is on Him. The iniquity of others is put on Him. It pleases the Father to bruise Him until He has poured out His soul unto death as an offering for sin.

Finally we behold an avenger. He comes out of Edom with dyed garments from Bozra. All his raiment is stained with the blood of his enemies whom he has trampled in his vengeance as grapes are crushed in the wine-vat.

Then under the prophet’s graphic pencil or glowing brush we behold the establishment and growth of His kingdom unlike all other kingdoms, a kingdom within men. A kingdom whose principles are justice, righteousness and equity and whose graces are faith, hope, love and joy, an undying and ever-growing kingdom. Its prevalence is like the rising waters of Noah’s flood “And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; . . . And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.”

So this kingdom grows under the brush of the prophetic limner until shores are illimitable. War ceases. Garments rolled in the blood of battle become fuel for fire. Conflagration is quenched. Famine outlawed. Pestilence banished. None are left to molest or make afraid.

Peace flows like a river. The wolf dwells with the lamb. The leopard lies down with the kid. The calf and the young lion walk forth together and a little child is leading them. Cow and bear feed in one pasture and their young ones are bedfellows. The sucking child plays safely over the hole of the asp, and weaned children put their hands in the adder's den. In all the holy realm none destroy nor hurt, because the earth is as full of the knowledge of the Lord as the fathomless ocean is full of water. Rapturous vision! Sublime and ineffable consummation! Was it only a dream?

But this is Christmas time. Our men today must not aspire to grasp all the panorama of glory that swept before Isaiah's eyes. We have to do with the beginning only. We commemorate the birth of a child. Our text declares: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."

The "for" refers to the preceding context, which tells us that she who was under the gloom shall have no more anguish. That the people who walked in darkness behold a great light. That the land of Zebulun and Naphtali on which divine contempt has been poured is now overflowed with blessings. That with light has come liberty, and with liberty peace, and with peace joy, and the joy of harvest and of victory, for this child is born. The coming of this child is assigned as the reason or cause for all this light, this liberty, this peace, this joy. Marvelous child to be the author of such blessings! Humanity is unquestionably here. It is a child, born of an earthly mother. But mere humanity cannot account for such glorious and eternal results. A mere child could not bear up under the government of the world and establish a kingdom of whose increase there should be no end.

What is his name? It cannot be Alexander, Caesar or Bonaparte. Their kingdoms were not of peace, and light and joy and liberty. Their kingdoms perished.

But what is this child's name? It staggers us to call it His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace! If this be not divinity, words cannot express it. And if it be divinity as certainly as a "child born" expresses humanity, then well may His name be "Wonderful," for He is a God-man. Earth, indeed, furnished His mother, but heaven furnished the

Sire. And if we doubt and inquire, "How can these things be?" it must be literally true as revealed and fulfilled later: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore, also that Holy One who shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

But it is far from my purpose today to discuss the import of these names which express the nature and power of the child, and account for His work. I entreat your consideration rather of a lowlier line of thought whose application is designed to be intensely practical and helpful.

The New Testament tells us that the light, liberty, peace and joy of the prophecy were fulfilled in the land of Zebulon and Naphtali when Jesus and His disciples came among the people dwelling around the Sea of Galilee, and preached His gospel and healed their sick and delivered their demoniacs; that His gospel was light, a great light.

All knowledge is light. Whatsoever maketh manifest is light. And this gospel brought the knowledge of salvation in the remission of their sins. It revealed their relations toward God. It revealed God Himself in the face of Jesus Christ. It discovered their sins and brought contrition and repentance. It revealed a sin-cleansing and sin-pardoning Saviour. Its reception brought peace by justification and brought liberty by dispossession of Satan. And with light, liberty and peace came joy unspeakable.

To just as many as received Him came the light, the liberty, the peace, the joy. And this opens the way to the practical line of thought which it is hoped will be helpful to us all.

Are we not prone at times to fall into errors of interpretation concerning the Kingdom similar to those which led ancient Israel so far and so harmfully astray concerning the advent of the Messiah? Either we so fill our minds with the sublimity of world redemption as applied to the race in the outcome, so satisfy our hearts with rhetorical splendor in the glowing description of universal dominion that we lose sight of its application to individuals in our day, and the responsibilities arising from the salvation of one man, or we so concentrate our fancy upon the consummation that we forget the progressive element in the development of the Kingdom and the required use of means in carrying on that progress.

The former error breeds unprofitable dreamers, the latter promotes skepticism. The preacher is more liable to be led astray by the one, the average church member by the other. Perhaps the most unprofitable of all sermons is the one full of human eloquence and glowing description excited by the great generalities of salvation, and perhaps the most stubborn of all skepticism is that resulting from disappointment in not witnessing and receiving at once the very climax of salvation, both as to the individual and the race.

Such a spirit of disappointment finds expression in words like these: "The prophet's vision is 2,600 years old. Nineteen centuries have elapsed since the child was born. Wars have not ceased. The poor are still oppressed. Justice, equity and righteousness do not prevail. Sorrow, sin and death still reign. And I am worried and burdened and perplexed. My soul is cast down and disquieted within me." In such cases we need to reconsider the false principles of interpretation which have misled us, and inquire: Have we been fair to the Book and its promises?

Will you kindly bear with me while I submit certain carefully considered statements: First of all, the consummation of the Messiah's kingdom was never promised as an instantaneous result of the birth of the child. The era of universal peace must follow the utter and eternal removal of things and persons that offend. This will be the harvest of the world. Again, this consummation was never promised as an immediate result; that is, without the use of means to be employed by Christ's people. Yet again, this aggregate consummation approaches only by individual reception of the kingdom and individual progress in sanctification.

It is safe to say that the promises have been faithfully fulfilled to just the extent that individuals have received the light, walked in the light and discharged the obligations imposed by the gift of the light. These receptive and obedient ones in every age have experienced life, liberty, peace and joy, and have contributed their part to the ultimate glorious outcome.

And this experience in individuals reliably forecasts the ultimate race and world result, and inspires rational hope of its coming. This is a common-sense interpretation. In the light of it our duty is obvious. Our concern should be with our day and our lot and our own case as at present environed.

The instances of fulfilment cited by the New Testament illustrate and verify this interpretation, particularly that recorded by Matthew as a fulfilment of our

context and other prophecies of Isaiah, in the fourth to thirteenth chapters, inclusive, of his Gospel. What dispassionate mind can read these ten chapters of Matthew, with the parallel passages in Mark and Luke, without conceding fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecies uttered seven centuries before?

Here is the shining of a great light, brighter than all the material luminaries in the heavens which declare the glory of God and show His handiwork. This, indeed, is the clean, sure and perfect law of the Lord, converting the soul, making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes, enduring forever, more desirable than gold and sweeter than honey in the honey comb. Here are judgments true and righteous altogether.

Here in sermon and similitude the incomparable Teacher discloses the principles and characteristics of a kingdom that unlike anything earthborn must be from heaven. Here is a fixed, faultless, supreme and universal standard of morality. The Teacher not only speaks with authority and wisdom, but evidences divinity by supernatural miracles, signs and wonders. But there is here more than a teacher and wonder-worker. He is a Saviour, a Liberator, a Healer, conferring life, liberty, health, peace and joy.

To John's question-John in prison and in doubt-the answer was conclusive that this, indeed, was the One foreshown by the prophets and there was no need to look for another:

“Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And whosoever shall find no occasion for stumbling in me, blessed is he” (☩Matthew 11:4-6).

The special matter here most worthy of our consideration and which ought to sink deep into our hearts is that the kingdom of heaven was not expanded by instantaneous diffusion over a community, a nation, or the world, regardless of human personality, activity, and responsibility in receiving and propagating it, but it took hold of each receptive individual's heart and worked itself out on that line toward the consummation. To as many as received Him to them He gave the power to become the sons of God. These only who walked in the light of the gospel realized the blessings of progressive sanctification. To the sons of peace, peace came as a thrilling reality. From those who preferred darkness to

light, who judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, the preferred peace departed, returning to the evangelists who offered it.

The poor woman whom Satan had bound for eighteen years experienced no imaginary or figurative release from her bonds (⁽²¹¹⁾Luke 11:10-16). That other woman, who had sinned much, and who, in grateful humility, washed his feet with tears — was not forgiveness real and sweet to her? That blind Bartimeus, who kept crying, “Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me” — did he not receive real sight? That publican, who stood afar off and beat upon his breast, crying, “God, be merciful to me, the sinner” — was he not justified?

And when the Galilean disciples went forth in poverty and weakness preaching His gospel, did they not experience the joy of the harvest in beholding the ingathering of souls? And when they saw even demons subject to them through the name of Jesus, was not that the joy of victory as when conquerors divide the spoil?

When the stronger than the strong man armed came upon him and bound him, might not our Lord justly say, “As lightning falls from heaven, I saw Satan fall before you?”

And just so in our own time. Every conversion brings life, liberty, peace and joy to the redeemed soul. Every advance in a higher and better life attests that rest is found at every upward step in the growth of grace. Every talent or pound rightly employed gains a hundred per cent for the capital invested, and so the individual Christian who looks persistently into the perfect law of liberty, being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the Word, is blessed in every deed. Willing to do the will of God, and following on to know the Lord, he not only knows the doctrine to be of God, but experimentally goes on from strength to strength, from grace to grace, and is changed into the divine image from glory to glory.

In the light of these personal experiences he understands how the kingdom of God is invincible and doubts not the certain coming of the glorious consummation foreshown in prophecy and graciously extended in the hand of promise. His faith, staggering not through unbelief, takes hold of the invisible and his hope leaps forward to the final recompense of the reward.

What I would particularly impress upon your minds is the present and personal interest you all, as heirs of salvation, have in these wonderful blessings coming through the wonderful child.

Do take to your own hearts the prophetic announcement: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,” and share with the shepherds the interest of the angelic proclamation: “Be not afraid, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.” Let your own lips, singing the heart’s fulness of joy, swell the ascription of praise voiced by angelic multitudes: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.”

Mark the limitation of peace on earth to those who please God. No peace, no life, no liberty, no joy, has ever been promised to the wicked. And now I doubt not there are many Christians here whose hearts are not attuned to praise. You have lost, not salvation, but the joy of it. You are without the true Christmas spirit. Some are perplexed with life’s hard business problems. Some mourn for loved ones taken away. Some cannot be happy because of back-sliding in heart and life. Others are the victims of despondency on account of ill health. Every pleasing prospect is seen through jaundiced eyes.

These all say with more or less emphasis: “The child Jesus was announced as the light, liberty, peace and joy of the world. But I am sad; my soul is cast down and disquieted within me. I am in the dark. I hear the lion’s roar. The gloom and horror of the Valley of the shadow of Death make me to quake.”

Oh, if I could, by divine help, bring Christmas cheer to these troubled ones! Indeed, our Heavenly Father would have us happy. He remembereth our frame. He knoweth that we are dust. His compassion is infinite. In His Word is the promise to crown the year with goodness. All the privileges of life, light, liberty, peace and joy are secured to us. We may by penitence and faith lay hold of all the riches of His grace. Why not, even now, as a congregation, seek His face? Why not every one confess his sins, and with contrite heart, seek now divine forgiveness for himself, that there may be Christmas cheer in all our souls and homes?

*Come ye disconsolate, where e'er ye languish,
Come to the Mercy Seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded heart, here tell your anguish;
Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.*

3. “AND THE CHILD GREW”

TEXT: And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. . . . And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. — ⁴⁰²⁰Luke 2:40-52.

This one paragraph covers at least twenty-eight years of our Lord’s life, and maybe thirty. He began to be about thirty years old when he was baptized. His ministry at the outside calculation lasted between three and four years. As he was declared to be an infant on his return from Egypt, this paragraph of thirteen verses covers all the period of time from his infancy until he was thirty years old, upon which I wish to remark first, the reticence of the Bible.

How prurient is human curiosity, how laboriously and even shamefully have men tried to fill up this gap of twenty-eight years with some additional accounts of the childhood of Jesus Christ! The fathers of the church, not indeed the very early fathers, but those of the centuries in which the Christian religion had greatly degenerated, invented histories of the childhood and infancy of Jesus. They are not only manifest forgeries, but ridiculously spurious. Some of them put modesty to blush, and their utter discordance in spirit, style and matter with the inspired Word of God is apparent on every page.

When a great man rises up and fills the vision of the people, the reporters begin to look back into his childhood to see what promise there was then of the greatness to which he has attained, and the obscurity that rested over his youthful years is penetrated at every point by a sensational curiosity, in order to drag from the silence and mistiness of past years any little incident of his cradle or schoolboy days that can be paraded as a prophecy of that to which he has attained, and precisely the same method was adopted in the case of Jesus and with about like results. A vast deal of what is genuinely apocryphal can be found in the subsequent histories of the childhood of great men and women. The reticence of the Bible upon this subject draws and maintains a clear and sharp distinction between a God-inspired record and a human record.

Next I would have you note the clear teaching of this lesson on the humanity of Jesus Christ as manifested in his development: “The child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom.” “And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature.” In other words, his humanity was not a mere appearance. It was an actual

humanity. His mind and body as a child were susceptible of the same development as the minds and bodies of children of the present day, or of any period of the world's history. Very clearly and necessarily does the pure humanity of Jesus Christ appear, so that it may never be forgotten.

In thinking about Him as the Messiah, and in dwelling upon that divinity whose wisdom is incapable of addition or diminution, we must not forget that on the score of his humanity there was the same necessity for development in him as in any other child. And it is this very fact that suggests the great lesson today to which your attention has been called.

In the case of every child there is a crucial period. It came to Jesus when he was twelve years old. According to the Jewish interpretation of the Law of Moses, this was the turning period in a boy's life. Every male inhabitant was required at this age to go up to Jerusalem to attend the three great annual feasts. The women were not compelled to go. The girls were never compelled to go, but just as soon as a boy reached the age of twelve the interpreter of the Law said to him, "You must go up to Jerusalem. You have now reached that age when the law must be your life-study. You now become a son of the law. You must learn the significance of the great feasts and the import of the sacrifices," and that is why this visit is recorded.

As the Law required his circumcision on the eighth day, his presentation in the Temple as a first-born male on the fortieth day (^(~~REB~~) Leviticus 12:2-6) and his attendance on the annual feasts in his twelfth year, according to the Jewish customs, so this much of his child-life is recorded. Nothing to gratify curiosity, nothing to minister to superstition, but everything to show his complete obedience to every commandment of God.

Now this period of twelve years of age leads me to present a theme, as I take it, of wonderful importance. I hear expressions quite frequently to this effect: "Receive no child into the church. They are too inexperienced in life's trials. They are incapable of understanding what it means to join the church." I am not satisfied with the logic of this undue caution nor with its practical effects. It seems to me that it can be shown that what oftentimes happens in the after life of children who early unite with the church need never happen, and that it may safely be attributed to other causes than early church connection. As I understand it, the argument is about this: As at an early period in life the trials of later years cannot be comprehended because of immaturity of mind, nor their temptations realized in the absence of experience, a child who unites with the

church will be sure in later years to question the fact of his conversion, when experimentally subject to the attractions of pleasure, wealth and ambition.

It is argued that one should wait until these tremendous temptations have had full sway so that it cannot be determined safely just where one is ultimately to be placed with reference to them. I desire to respectfully submit that this position is as untenable as it is plausible. If the argument holds good against a child professing faith in Jesus Christ, it is just as potent at any subsequent period of life from the simple fact that life has not one fixed period of trial, but many, and each succeeding period is a new world to its predecessor.

The experience of a married life opens up as wide and unknown territory to a collegian as college days open up to a high school student or as the academy reveals to the lower grades. So parental obligations, the business struggle for existence, the duties of citizenship, the strife of politics present a new world to the happy bridegroom and the blushing bride.

That is, if there are difficulties in young manhood and young womanhood that cannot be anticipated by a child ten years old; and if these things which cannot be anticipated are sufficient reasons for not then professing Christianity, then the argument would hold good that there is an equally undiscovered country before the young man and the young woman, and then before the married couple, and then before the business man, and finally after you become thirty-five or forty years old, and even older, there is a dark stretch of country ahead of you as thoroughly unknown to your experience as any past period, and that is the dispensation of God's afflictions. You cannot anticipate it.

When it comes, even though you may be fifty, sixty, or seventy years old, you are unprepared to see the wife die, the son die, the daughter die, friends die, acquaintances pass away, to feel the solitude and isolation of being left alone when those who commenced life's journey with you have all gone and to see that the young generation knows nothing about you and cares nothing about you. When you come to any of these you will find the same difficulty of adjustment that embarrassed the ten-year-old child when confronted with the exigencies of young manhood and young womanhood.

I say then that if the argument is worth anything it is just as much against avowing and openly professing your faith in Christ at one period as at another. Indeed, the age cuts no figure in the case. Whether the professor is twelve years

old or fifty, the only question for consideration is this: Is the profession of faith credible?

The main thing I desire to show today is that this lesson in the life of our Lord suggests how one may be well enough prepared for any new experience of life, whatever it may be, and so well prepared for it when it comes that it need not shake the religious foundation upon which your heart's hopes have rested, and that the peculiar difficulties of each period may, by the power of God, be made valuable to your training and development rather than to your discomfiture. The secret may be told in one sentence: With physical and mental development there should be a corresponding spiritual development.

Let us read the text and see: "And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. . . . And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature." He not only advanced in stature and intellect, but he advanced in spiritual wisdom. He not only advanced in the favor of men, but he advanced in the favor of God. And where there is this corresponding development of the inner man, then there is nothing to be apprehended from any of the new experiences which come from enlargement of physical stature, or from expansion of mental powers, or from the trials of life's succeeding periods.

But no matter how old you are, if there has not been a corresponding enlargement of your spiritual nature, you will be just as helpless to meet the exigencies of your situation as the child may be who, joining the church at ten years of age, is shaken in his faith by the temptations of youth and by the trials of manhood.

I say that there is no exemption on account of age as to this, and if the child who is early converted shall be so trained as that the spiritual nature shall enlarge in proportion as the physical and mental nature enlarges, then the fact of early conversion will be largely to his advantage. Instead of being a disadvantage it will be a positive help; and more readily than the one who was converted later in life will he be prepared for life's exigencies, of whatever nature.

The Apostle John expresses the true thought when he writes to Gaius, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper, and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." That is, make as much money as you please. I wish you may make a great deal of it, and have all the health possible. Only, covet neither wealth nor health beyond soul prosperity. Keep your soul on top.

That is, if the prosperity of our soul keeps pace with our making of money and with our healthfulness of body and of mind, there is no harm done.

It is the law of God that the whole man should be developed in due relation and proportion, and the trouble comes, not from the fact that one was converted and joined the church early, but from a neglect of the inner man. That is the trouble.

It becomes necessary to look at this matter somewhat in its detail, in order to see its force. Unquestionably, if the mind of a boy in the public school or in the college is developed more than his soul is developed, then the intellectual predominates over the spiritual. Jesus didn't grow that way. He waxed in physical and mental stature as he increased in spiritual wisdom. But if the conditions under which young professors of religion receive their education are such that the development of the soul is neglected while the mind is cultivated, they will naturally in later years question their conversion.

Mental development is a wonderful thing. The mind begins to analyze, it gradually acquires power to examine with thoughtfulness into the most abstruse problems of mathematics; it enlarges its historical horizon and increases its range of information. It acquaints itself with manners and customs of the different ages and different peoples of the world. And with that intellectual increase, unless there be a co-equal enlargement of the inner man, there comes conceit and pride and that soul is subject to temptation on that ground.

In the same way, if a young man, being educated so far as schools accomplish that work for him, goes out into the business of life, whatever that may be-let us suppose that he concludes to be a professional soldier or sailor-and when he has finished his collegiate course and then his course in his special profession at West Point or at Annapolis, there comes into his young heart something entirely new, an experience he has never felt before.

There rises an ambition to excel in his profession. If he be a sailor, feeling the authority conferred upon him as an officer of the United States, and making himself acquainted with the difficult problems of mathematics as they apply to navigation and gunnery and the tremendous power that comes from the mechanical inventions that bear upon armor and upon arms, upon projectiles and explosives, the stirrings of a mighty ambition are in him and he already sees the insignia of an admiral on his shoulder.

Now I maintain that such ambition is as new a thing to him and as dangerous as the trials of young maidenhood or young manhood are to the one who joins the church at ten years of age. He is just as liable under these new conditions to make shipwreck of a profession avowed at sixteen as of one avowed at twelve. Only one thing is an effective safeguard — a corresponding enlargement of his spiritual nature. Has it kept pace with his intellectual development? Has it grown strong enough to meet the stirrings of ambition in his heart? Is it able to grapple with those inordinate desires after power that are so seductive in their nature to the young heart, and can it place them in subordination to the higher nature?

Now I have received this past week a letter that suggested this theme, which by a strange coincidence happens to be the Sunday school lesson today. The letter is from a young member of this church, one who joined the church early, one, who in his youth, while many faltered or fell by the wayside, remained steadfast in his Christian profession, who in all the college period was as steady in his loyalty to Christ as the magnet to the pole; who even passed the period of an early married life still as unshaken as the everlasting rock; but who now writes me that there has come upon him the great crisis of his life. He has met for the first time consciously the temptation of an inordinate ambition, and says, “Pray for me. Send me my church letter. Let me join here. I must not drift away from Christ.”

In that letter is shown the clearest perception of the true relation of the inner and outer man that I have seen in twenty years of observation and reading. He has fully recognized what it will mean to him if ambition shall dominate; if even a desire to excel in an honorable profession shall so fill his vision and absorb his attention and divert and distract his mind as that when night comes he shall forget to pray, so he writes: “I need to be in touch with the spiritual influences that will keep me true to my Lord and Saviour.”

The attraction of wealth had never touched him. The attraction of pleasure had been of no more power against his Christian armor than were Robin Hood’s arrows against De Bracy’s coat of mail at the storming of Frontde-Boeuf’s castle in Scott’s *Ivanhoe*. But here ambition comes, that mounting and vaulting devil, and he has met an enemy.

Your case may be quite different. You are perhaps just a girl, say of ten years of age, and having learned to love and trust your Saviour, you come with the tears of joy in your eyes and say, “Let me follow my Saviour.” Perhaps the older brethren, knowing that you have not touched that awful boundary which

tries a woman's soul, may shake their heads and say, "you had better wait." I say, "Don't wait!" None would say wait if you were sixteen.

But beyond sixteen is that maelstrom called society, which may be a greater foe to grace in your case than ambition to a lieutenant in the navy. The seductiveness of its distinctions, its ceaseless rounds and imperious exactions, its all-absorbing worldly-mindedness have turned more religious professions awry among women than ambition has among men.

Our lesson from the life of our Lord furnishes the only remedy. Always grow in the inner man as you grow in the outer. There may be here today some Christian boy, whose near future holds a startling temptation, to-wit: The rapidity with which a certain financial venture shall pay a tremendous per cent on the principal invested. Midas had never before touched him with the magic wand of gold. The Elysium of Croesus had been veiled from his sight up to that time. But when an investment of \$200 suddenly realizes \$2,000, what a glitter the gold takes on, what a sheen the silver, what a felicitous rustling of the crisp bank notes; how it does make his chest enlarge to feel his heart beat against a big bank account in the book in his breast pocket! And it all at once comes to him with a rower never dreamed of before: "I will be a king on the exchange. I will rule the market." And a voice that he never heard before is echoing in his heart like the cry of the horse leech's daughter: "Give, give, give me more, more and yet more!" "And when this craving lust wants more I will take my brain's brightest thought and give that. I will take my spare moments that I once gave to friendly and pleasant converse with my family and give that. I will take the time that should have been devoted to the instruction of my children and give that. I will even rub off the glow and down of the sweet peach of love and give that. I will coin all the affection of natural relations into money and give that. I will even take my hitherto priceless honor and give that. I will go with no unshrinking foot, as in the past, and stand upon the boundary line of moral questions as to the methods of money-making, but I will only ask one question: Can I do it without being caught? Can I do this and be within the margin of man's law?"

Is not this a young miser on his way to a miser's doom? If indeed he be a child of God, what is to keep him from the downfall of usefulness? That downfall has not been hastened, but it has been retarded by an early profession of religion. If his life as a Christian is wrecked in its usefulness, it is not because he joined the church when young, but because he has not waxed in spiritual wisdom as he developed in other directions. That is the trouble.

Now to bring this matter to a close, I want to put one or two matters very briefly but very clearly before you, that will show you how to guard successfully against the new temptations that arise in the new experiences of life, whatever they may be. We get at these guards by studying the life of Jesus. Listen at His expression: "My Father!" He was not talking about Joseph. "My Father!" What then is the first guard? The guard of true relationship to God.

Oh, if the Holy Spirit has ever taught your stammering tongue and trembling lips to say, "Abba, Father"; if that holy and indissoluble spiritual relation is established between your orphaned and outcast soul and the God of Heaven, that is the first guard, the guard of true and genuine relationship to God.

Well, what next? The guard of a religious mission "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Now, if though a child of God you have never yourself found out and no one has ever taught you that in connection with that religious relation there is also a religious mission, then there is where your trouble will commence.

How was Jesus guarded? Always before Him, as one view which no cloud could shut out from His sight, was this thought: "I have a religious mission in this world. That is why I am here. I came for that. More, ten thousand times more, than any other mission is the mission to glorify God while I live here in this life. 'Father, Father, I have glorified thee. I came to glorify thee.'"

It is to have a religious mission, to feel that the light in your soul, the light of conversion, if it is no brighter than a wax taper, has a mission, that it is the design of the God who kindled its quenchless flame, and though it be only a lowly light, and though it shine only on some low coast point, to yet keep it burning and let it shine, that some poor shipwrecked sailor seeing it may take heart again-that is the glory of a Christian mission.

Oh, how defenseless, how like an unwallled city, is that Christian who has never felt that he has a religious mission, who has supposed that the transaction ended by his simply professing religion and joining the church! The Lord have mercy on your misguided soul! How shall you be able to stand when the enemies come in on you like a flood; when the siren of pleasure shall beckon, when the hope of wealth shall gild the skies of your future, when the minarets and turrets of successful ambition's gorgeous air-castles flash before the sight of your eye? What shall guard your soul if you do not feel that you have a religious mission?

Well, what is the next point? With that mission comes the sanctity of its obligation, embodied in the word, “duty.” “Wist ye not that I *must* be about my Father’s business?” Only twelve years old, but there is an obligation on me, though just that old. “I must,” and we hear the same “I must” later on in life when He felt the shadows of the dark conflict of crucifixion coming on Him, and He cried out in the same voice: “I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.” A ship may indeed be well built, and master workmen may have laid its keel and stepped its masts, and rigged it with ropes and shrouds, and it may have been cargoes with the choicest luxuries of commerce, but if there be no compass of duty to point out the true course yonder, whither, ah! whither will she drift or drive?

There must be a port of destination. Though the sun shine not, though the storms gather, keep your helm steady; and though foes endeavor to cross your path and shift you into lateral seas, duty points with an inflexible finger to your port, “There, there.”

I do wish that instead of talking about the folly of avowing your profession of religion, just as soon as you have any to profess, you would take to your heart the obligation that grows out of that mission, “I must, I must. Do not try to beguile me to sleep on flowery beds of ease. Do not invite me to step over the stile because the King’s highway is difficult, and on that other path there is shade and ease. I must keep this narrow way, and I will not turn aside lest I get into Doubting Castle and Giant Despair’s cold grip crush out of my heart the warm love of my first espousal to Jesus.”

What next? You must not only feel all the import of the word “duty,” but this word, “food.” When Jesus so stedfastly pursued His way in accordance with His mission and governed by His duty to fulfil that mission, the disciples could not understand how He could hold out physically. They went off to buy provisions and were startled when they came back to find that Jesus was not hungry. Why? He had feasted: “I have meat to eat that ye know not of. It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father that is in heaven.”

It is not only “I must,” but obedience is my nourishment. From it I get my strength. It is my soul’s nutrition. And if I should even lose sight of “must” I cannot forget hunger, soul-hunger. The soul of a truly converted man or woman hungers to do the will of God, and is fed by doing the will of God.

Not only food, but more. Life, according to God's strange constitution of our being, cannot altogether be made up of mission and duty and food. We are strangely constructed with reference to happiness. We want to be happy. It is sweet and pleasant to be happy. The soul cannot uphold itself when only tears and sadness constitute its portion. There must be joy; there must be delight; there must be the thrilling sensation, the heart leaping, the exultation of joy.

Well, what is said about Jesus? "I delight to do thy will, O God!" This is not "I must." This is not "my mission," but a richer, sweeter thought. It is more than my duty. It is my everlasting joy to serve God.

I admit there is a passing fragrance in the flower; that there is an evanescent glory in the rainbow, which vanishes in the storm. I admit that there is some joy, some pleasure in wearing the crown which ambition offers, or in reaping the rewards which fashion bestows on her votaries, but I do deny in the name of the Holy One, that these joys are comparable to the delight that comes to the soul in the service of God.

I delight to study thy Book. I delight to walk in the path that has been impressed with the print of the feet of Jesus. I delight, as I go along, to merge and harmonize my experience with the worthies of old-patriarchs, evangelists and martyrs-and as I get nearer home my joy finds its wings enlarging and expanding. There is more power in the pinion and wider sweep in its beat. It can soar higher and sustain itself longer, until like the enraptured eagle who leaves his eyrie on the summit of the loftiest mountain and soars to the sun, at last a dim speck, gilded with the rays of light that wrap him about, he vanishes in a blaze of glory. So they that wait often on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as on eagle's wings; they shall run and not faint; and as each victory is won and each height attained, and hope ever beckoning, says, "Higher, higher!" from each eminence accomplished, the glad soul looks back and says, "I rejoice. I am happy. I delight. I delight to do thy will, O God!"

Sunday school of the First Baptist Church, you had this lesson today of the childhood of Christ. Oh, how I have prayed in the beginning of this new year, that its great lesson might enter your heart. Will you go away and forget the sweet thought of relationship to our Father? Will you go away and forget that every child of the Father must have a religious mission? Will you forget that with that mission comes the obligation, "I must, I must?" And that, with that obligation, performed, there comes food, your meat and drink? And with the

assimilation of that spiritual food there comes joy? I delight to do thy will, O God!

It makes my soul sad when I see my own children or the children of any of my brethren and sisters showing plainly that they are waxing in physical and intellectual strength out of all proportion to the increase in spiritual stature. We must not forget this lesson. Our thoughts must dwell on it. We must pray about it, and sometime in the grace of God, and by the crowning of His sweet favor, we shall, from the pinnacle of perfection in heaven, look back over the low-lying ground of this warfare, and oh, how much brighter will become heaven's skies, and how much sweeter heaven's songs, if we can turn to the dear Lord and say, "Master, we never would have been here, but we kept right in thy path."

*His track I see, and I'll pursue,
The narrow way till Him I view.*

Now, I behold the Lord in righteousness; now have I awaked in His likeness, and I am satisfied.

4. OUR LORD'S FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM

Scriptures: ^{<R1B>}John 2:13-25; 3:1-21.

TEXT: Jesus went up to Jerusalem. — ^{<R1B>}John 2:13.

John alone gives the history of our Lord's first visit to Jerusalem after entrance on His public ministry. Indeed, John is the only gospel historian who was an eye witness of the facts narrated. Matthew, Mark and Luke were not yet disciples. So far as the records explicitly testify, only five of the twelve Apostles subsequently ordained have as yet made the acquaintance of Jesus. Nor does it appear that all these five follow Him regularly as yet. So early in His ministry in this visit to Jerusalem you may count on the fingers of one hand all the important events that have yet occurred

1. That wonderful event at His baptism—the visible descent upon Him of the Holy Ghost, which marked Him as the Messiah, Christ, Anointed One, and thereby accredited His mission. “Him hath God the Father sealed.”
2. His temptation by the Devil immediately following this bestowment of His credentials. Here the Second Adam, not in a paradise of delight, but fasting in a wilderness, with no companions but wild beasts, triumphs over the conqueror of the first Adam. True, this was but the skirmish before the decisive battle which was fought later in that “hour of the power of darkness,” which constituted the only “crisis of this world”; yet was it more than a prelude? It was the promise and pledge of ultimate victory.
3. The witness of Him as the Messiah by John the Baptist, who saw His credentials bestowed (^{<R1B>}John 1:19-34).
4. The gathering to Himself, as the preliminary step towards permanent organization, His first disciples out of the material made ready for Him by the ministry of the Baptist (^{<R1B>}John 1:35-51).
5. The manifestation of His glory by His first miracle at the marriage at Cana, of Galilee.

These five events, while so few, are all stupendous and significant. To the sight of some *they* rent from top to bottom the veil of obscurity which years of seclusion had wrapped about the supernatural phenomena of His birth. Never

more to these enlightened ones can He be a private man. Retirement and seclusion are ended forever. From henceforward till death drops the curtain He is conspicuously before the public. Each event, in its order, is a revelation whose shining makes Him yet more conspicuous to an ever increasing circle of interested spectators:

(a) To John the Baptist when visibly sealed with the Spirit and audibly attested by the Father.

(b) To Satan when foiled by Him in the temptation.

(c) To the angels who ministered to Him as Satan's conqueror.

(d) To the now transferred disciples of the Baptist when John focused on Him all His own "burning and shining light" while bearing the startling and dramatic testimony: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!"

(e) To His own disciples when He drew them to Himself by supernatural wisdom and bound them faster by supernatural love.

(f) To all who witnessed that beginning of His miracles when they saw the instant transmutation of one hundred and thirty-three gallons of water into wine.

(g) To His own consciousness as He more and more irrevocably committed Himself to the hazards, labors and responsibilities of so great a mission. To all these He must now ever be the most conspicuous man in the world.

But mark how few were yet enlightened, how remote from great centers the scenes of enlightenment. The sealing as Messiah was witnessed by the Baptist only. The temptation was known only by Satan, by Himself and the angels. The wilderness testimony of John identifies only to a very few disciples. The miracle was wrought in an obscure Galilean hamlet. These had not yet brought Him before the nation, much less the world.

But now a decisive hour approaches. The passover is at hand. He must attend this long-famous national feast with the thousands of Israel. He must go up to the Holy City. Jerusalem is not the wilderness, nor yet a Galilean village. There is the temple wrapped in the memories of many centuries. There the Sanhedrin, the supreme civil and ecclesiastical court of the nation. There rabbis, priests,

and scribes. There the tribes themselves, by hundreds of thousands, are gathered from the ends of the earth in attendance upon the annual feasts and sacrifices. There, too, are Pilate and his Roman cohorts in the impregnable Tower of Antonio. Moreover, at this time the temper of the people is dangerous. Jerusalem boils like a seething caldron.

John's ministry had set the wilderness on fire. All men were musing in their hearts as to the import of this "burning bush in the desert." How profoundly he had stirred the popular heart appears from the fact that the rulers had deemed it expedient to send to him an official deputation to take down his testimony as to himself. "Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself? That we may give an answer to them that sent us." That deputation had but recently returned, bringing the startling report that while John disclaimed being the Messiah himself, he yet positively affirmed that the Messiah had come. He had seen Him. Had baptized Him. Had witnessed heaven's bestowal on Him of His Holy Ghost credentials. That he, John, great as they might think him, was not worthy even to loose the latchet of the sandals of the one baptized.

Who, at such a juncture of expectation, dare to utterly discredit the testimony of such a witness? Are not the people goaded to despair and lashed to fury by Roman insult and oppression? Is not the very air Messianic? Then come these rumors flying on swift wings from the wilderness and from Galilee and filling the Holy City with strange stories of one Jesus!

John organized nothing. This young man was an organizer. He already had a devoted following, which was ever increasing. John did no miracle. Report credited this young man with miraculous power. John claimed nothing for himself. This young man made startling claims. He claimed ability to read the heart, of man as an open book. He talked familiarly of God as His Father. He openly avowed a supernatural mission. His bearing was majestic while gentle, winning hearts while imposing respect. He accepted the highest honors as His right. His teaching was simple, direct, heart-convincing, not tortuous, involved and incomprehensible. He speaks with authority and decision, and not as one balancing probabilities and leaning on the crutches of tradition. Who is He, where is He, will He visit the city, what is His attitude toward Pilate, toward Herod? Such were the times.

Hence this first visit of our Lord to Jerusalem, after entrance on His public ministry, is one of surpassing interest. The interest then centered in one burning question: "In what character will He introduce Himself and His mission to the

Holy City?" To us so long after the event, other questions, equally important, must follow the first, such as

(a) Was that particular presentation deliberate? That is, was it predetermined in view of all the possibilities that might have followed a different presentation? In yet other words, was there clearly before Him and rejected by Him another way, as one chooses an alternative?

(b) Did later developments of Himself and His doctrines correspond to that introduction? That is, did that first announcement of Himself and His mission forecast all the future, laying down with precision a foundation so exactly broad enough and deep enough in fitting and upholding all subsequent teaching and developments as to furnish a demonstration that from the beginning He built unswervingly in all after life according to a thoughtfully prearranged plan?

(c) Finally, were these initial characteristics of His kingdom immutable as well as vital? That is, do they now, after a lapse of two thousand years, best supply the needs of humanity? Are they yet so binding in obligation on those who profess His name that even a modification of them is treason, and such treason as deprives the traitor of power with men and the favor of God — such treason as nails on His brow God's judgments and burns on His heart God's curse?

These are four questions this sermon proposes to answer. These answers, if true, settle forever the question of His divinity and His title to all men's adoration. After earnest pleading for divine help, let us reverently address ourselves to a consideration of the several questions in their order

1. In what character did Jesus of Nazareth introduce Himself on His first visit to Jerusalem after entrance on His public ministry?

The whole history of the case is in John's Gospel extending from the thirteenth verse of the second chapter to the twenty-first verse of the third chapter (~~400~~John 2:13-25; 3:1-21). Here are only three notable things

- (a)** His purgation of the temple, with the consequent discussion.
- (b)** The working of unspecified miracles, with the effect thereof.
- (c)** The interview with Nicodemus.

These events constitute His introduction. Simple as may be the story to any reflecting, philosophical mind, it becomes the more astounding the more it is studied.

First, the negative aspects of this introduction, viewed from any standpoint of His mere humanity, are more than startling—they are incomprehensible, inexplicable. It was directly contrary to all popular expectation. It was directly contrary to all popular desire. It was directly contrary to all worldly ambition. There was not a man on the face of the earth wise enough to have anticipated it. It was directly contrary to all human nature. No demagogue, no selfish man, no ambitious man, no mere man as we know man, could have done as He did under the circumstances. He smote the Jew instead of the Roman. He struck the patriot instead of the tyrant, the holy temple instead of the Tower of Antonio. He not only refused to ride into power on a popular wave, but rebuked the tide that would uplift Him. He even refused to commit Himself to the faith His own miracles excited.

Second, the positive aspects of this introduction are even more marvelous than the negative.

1. His introduction was strictly according to prophecy, though no contemporary had been spiritually-minded enough to expect the event before its fulfilment. Right where the prophetic lines of light from David, Haggai and Malachi, focus, there He stood illumined. Haggai had foretold the coming of the “Desire of all nations” while the second temple was standing, and had intimated that the glory of this inferior building should be greater than the glory of Solomon’s unparalleled and lamented temple, because the Messiah Himself, and not a symbolic cloud, should stand within its courts (^{300B}Haggai 2:3-9). Malachi had expressly predicted that “the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple.” But that His coming should be as a purgation so terrible that none might abide His coming. As gold and silver are purified by fire, so would He refine in the heat of the crucible the sons of Levi and perfect an offering unto the Lord in righteousness. Instead of delivering them from external enemies, he would be “a swift witness,” against their inward sins and pollutions. David had foretold that in this work of purification so self-consuming would be His spirit that it would be said: “The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up,” and “I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother’s children.” Malachi had connected with this coming of the Lord this marvelous prophecy: “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering.” (See ^{300B}Haggai 2:6-9; ^{890B}Psalms 69:8-9 ^{300B}Malachi 1:11; 3:1-5.)

These are wonderful prophecies. The call for the coming of the Messiah before the destruction of the second temple would constitute its glory. That He would come suddenly. That He would come as a purifier. That His kingdom would be internal and spiritual. That His zeal in the work of purification would be a fire that would consume Himself and alienate His own brothers, the children of His own mother. That the temple would be destroyed. That it would no longer be a sin to offer incense (worship) elsewhere. That every spot on earth would be a temple. That the whole world—all the Gentiles from the orient to the occident—would magnify His name.

It is impossible to read John's short and simple story of His first visit to Jerusalem and the consecutive events, particularly the purgation of the temple and the interview with Nicodemus, and fail to see the wonderful fulfilment. We clearly see also the full answer to the first question:

In what character did He introduce Himself and His mission? He introduced Himself as divine, as the messenger of the covenant, as the Lord. He claimed authority to purify that Holy Place. He claimed omnipotent power, the ability to raise the temple in three days. He announced His kingdom as spiritual. A new and heavenly, and spiritual birth was essential even for the most elated Jew to see or enter it. That the human side of this regeneration was simple faith in Him. That as an object of faith He must be lifted on the Cross. That in three days He would rise from the — dead. That this resurrection constituted the one great sign of His divinity and Messiahship. That God loved all the world and not the Jews only. That “whosoever,” whether Jew or Gentile, accepted Him received eternal life. That whosoever rejected Him received eternal death. That He was light. That no man would refuse to come to the light unless his deeds were evil and he dreaded exposure to the light. That all human destiny and all final judgment turned on man's treatment of Jesus. What an announcement of Himself and His mission! Let us now consider the second question

2. Was this particular presentation of Himself and His mission deliberate?

The term “deliberate” implies not only previous thought, but also the judicial weighing of the argument in favor of alternative propositions, and a decision which, while choosing one course, rejects another.

Now, that Jesus of Nazareth had so deliberated, had considered all the possibilities that might arise from pursuing a different line of conduct, had been subjected to the force of all possible motives prompting that other course, had

peremptorily repelled these motives, had rejected with emphatic decision all overtures in that direction and had predetermined to do just what He did do. This is as clear as sunlight from one single fact — His temptation in the wilderness.

The Devil himself, the arch-tempter of man, with all possible tact and seductiveness, had put before Him the self-pleasing and apparently feasible plan of making Himself the hero and leader of that Jewish patriotism, now at white heat, and by easily gathering an aroused nation under His banner, become more than a second Judas Maccabeus or Joshua, overturn the Herod dynasty, repel the Romans, and on the rising wave of conquest advance to universal empire. He showed Him within reach “all the kingdoms of this world and’ the glory of them.” Just so in the world’s history he has often unfolded to vaulting ambition universal monarchy. Assyrian, Persian, Greek and Roman chiefs yielded to his seductions in ancient times. Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar and Bonaparte could tell the story of the power of such temptation.

It is idle for us to deny that Jesus was so tempted. Vainly may we split hairs in the dispute whether it was a case of “*Non posse peccare*” or “*Posse non peccare*.” “He was tempted in all points like as we are.” He had a genuine humanity. He was susceptible to all human impressions and necessarily liable, as a substitute for His people, as a Second Adam, to all possibilities. The temptations were genuine and forceful. His internal purity and moral and spiritual power of resistance constituted the only breakwater against the threatening flood. He must win as man, or fall. It was no fictitious struggle. It was no painted battle. It was intensely real. Over and over again it brought Him to His knees.

And once, later, it brought the “bloody sweat” and wrung from His pallid lips the cry: “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” and yet later that most awful shriek: “My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?”

Unquestionably Jesus rejected the temptation to establish an earthly kingdom. Unquestionably he predetermined, before he entered Jerusalem, to run counter to all popular expectations and desires; counter to all worldly policy, ambition and interest, and pre-determined to let alone Herod and the Romans and to establish a spiritual kingdom with spiritual subjects, a kingdom that should not “consist in meat and drink,” should not consist in earthly pomp and pageantry, but a kingdom within men, a kingdom of “righteousness, peace and joy in the

Holy Ghost,” a kingdom “not of this world,” coming “not with observation,” a kingdom “the weapons of whose warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.”

He has never understood the life of Jesus who has overlooked the deliberate election always made by Him when alternative propositions or alternative lines of conduct were before Him. The decision of Jesus made Him our great exemplar: “Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame.” Let us now approach the third question

3. Did that first presentation of Himself and His mission forecast all the future developments of both? Or did it lay a foundation so exactly broad and deep, fitting and upholding all subsequent teaching as to demonstrate a complete prearranged plan?

A young man of thirty years of age may have decision of character. He may deliberately make an election of alternative propositions. We find among the great conquerors of earth decision of character in early life. But this question inquires concerning a matter too far-reaching and comprehensive for any immature mind.

An affirmative answer implies a degree of prescience that itself suggests another question: Was this a mere man? What Jew of His circumstances, what man of His times could have at that age formulated such a plan? But leaving such questions to take care of themselves, we look at the facts of His subsequent life and inquire: What later doctrine finds not here its root? What later superstructure, however heavy, broad and high, finds not here a fitting foundation?

Here is the announcement of a spiritual kingdom. Here is regeneration as a prerequisite of citizenship. Here is “God so loved the world.” Here is justification by simple faith in Jesus. Here is condemnation through unbelief. Paul’s highest doctrines are here. Here is the forecast of the destruction of the Jewish polity. Here is death on the Cross. Here is resurrection on the third day. Here is that resurrection as the one supreme sign and verification of His Messiahship and divinity. Here is the forecast of the fall of the wall of partition and the ingathering of the Gentiles. When the last apostle laid in the wall of doctrine the last stone of revealed teaching, underneath that stone was this foundation.

So there was prescience. So there was a prearranged plan. So the architect had drafted a finished plan before he began to build and provided the exact place and correlation of every stick and stone. What this answer signifies as to the dignity and character of Jesus of Nazareth I leave you to determine. We come now to the last question

4. These initial characteristics of His kingdom, so announced on His first visit to Jerusalem — were they immutable? That is to say, now that two thousand years have passed away, do they yet best supply the needs of humanity? Have they waxed old? Has the nineteenth century outgrown them? Have modern culture and criticism provided something better? Is it now treason to modify them somewhat in view of time's mutations and latter-day progress?

This is a serious question every way. Let us get at it by subdivision. And you, O People of Waco, answer each interrogative detail

(a) Shall we cease to preach a spiritual kingdom? Shall we go back to the limitations of place and ritualism? Shall we substitute formalism and hypocrisy?

(b) Shall we cease to make the New Birth a prerequisite to citizenship? Shall men now find an open door once closed to Nicodemus?

(c) Shall we no longer say, "God so loved the world"?

(d) Shall we cease to glory in the Cross, "the Son of man lifted up"? Shall we abandon vicarious atonement?

(e) Shall we surrender justification by faith?

(f) Shall we establish worldly-minded, pleasure-loving, God-forgetting city churches?

(g) Shall we surrender the doctrine of the resurrection? Or in one question: Shall we remodel the gospel?

To all these questions this congregation would return a unanimous "No!" Indeed, "the old-time religion is good enough for us." Never before in this world's history was there as much spiritual religion as now. Humanity needs just such doctrines as Christ first announced in Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago. The whole world is hallowed ground. No longer at Jerusalem or Samaria do men confine and localize their worship, but "everywhere incense is offered unto his name" and "from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same his name is great among the Gentiles."

Yes, it would be treason to even modify those initial characteristics of His kingdom. On the brow of every such traitor is nailed the condemnation of God, and in his heart burns God's curse.

And now, gathering up all the details of this discussion, I embody them into one question: Seeing that this Jesus so introduced Himself and His mission to Jerusalem, not forgetting the times and circumstances, and seeing that this introduction was deliberate, having refused an alternative any other man on earth would have accepted, and seeing that thus early He forecast all future developments of Himself and doctrine, and seeing that after nearly two thousand years have rolled away, these initial doctrines yet best supply human needs, then what manner of man was this?

5. CHRIST AS A TEACHER

TEXT: Never man spake like this man. — ~~476~~ John 7:46.

The theme today is Christ as a teacher. The Sunday schools of Christendom, since the first day of January, have been studying the lessons in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. The accredited historians of that life are Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Paul. Mark commences with the public ministry of Christ and closes with His resurrection from the dead. Matthew commences with the birth of Jesus, tracing His genealogy from Abraham, and closing with the giving of the Great Commission in Galilee after His resurrection. Luke commences with the birth of His forerunner, John the Baptist, giving the genealogy of Jesus and tracing His descent from Adam and closes with His ascension (~~480~~ Acts 1:9-11). John commences with Christ's pre-existent state, before the foundation of the world, and closes with His state in eternity (John 1 and Revelation 1). Paul commences after Christ's ascent into heaven, and touches only that part of the life of Christ which relates to His call to the apostleship. These are the historians.

It is review day in the Sunday schools. You have reviewed many of the doctrines and of the deeds of Jesus Christ. In harmony with such review, it is my purpose today to show you Christ as a teacher. He stands before us pre-eminently as a teacher upon two special occasions. I am far from saying that on those two occasions we have the sum of his teachings. I mean that they fairly represent Him as a teacher, both as to manner and matter.

The scenes of the two teachings were close together. The second one, when He taught in parables, He was in a little boat, pushed out somewhat from the shore of the Sea of Galilee, and the multitude stood around on beach

I shall not discuss today the parable feature of Christ's teaching. The first is when He was up on top of the hills, the same hills that look down on that very beach where later He spoke the parables — upon the hills that formed the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. There He spoke the Sermon on the Mount. And you may, I say, gather from the parables and the Sermon on the Mount a pretty fair conception of the method and matter of Christ's teaching. His character as a teacher might safely rest on these two.

The historians of the Sermon on the Mount are Matthew and Luke, mainly Matthew. The scene of that sermon, as has just been stated, was a level place upon the mountains on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The audience consisted of the twelve disciples whom He had just appointed and of a large number of other disciples who had been instructed somewhat in the principles of His kingdom, and of a vast multitude of people from Judea and Samaria and Phoenicia.

Oh, it was an immense audience! Luke says: "The company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon." It was such an audience as you could not put in a house, any kind of a house. And it is a noticeable fact that whenever a great reformation commences, I mean a movement that has life and fire in it, then the reformers take to field preaching. I mean they quit the houses; they go into the street or fields or out in the open somewhere, for only such places as have the skies for a ceiling and the horizon for a boundary can hold the crowds of people that always gather when a deep and fiery movement of the Christian religion is in progress. So with this audience of Jesus.

The occasion of the Sermon on the Mount was this: He had just selected, as has been stated, twelve men, commencing the organization of His movement. These twelve men were to share with Him the burden of responsibility and labor, and it was quite important that they should be thoroughly instructed in the first principles of the kingdom which He announced. It was equally necessary that the larger body of His disciples should understand those fundamental principles, and that the miscellaneous and ever shifting crowd, drawn together by their expectations of a king, and looking to the establishment of an earthly monarchy which would overturn Roman supremacy and give to Judea the sovereignty of the universe, that this mixed rabble should have their misconceptions concerning the nature of the kingdom of Jesus Christ removed, and forever.

The setting or background of the sermon must never be overlooked. The multitudes, incited mainly by desires of relief from physical, temporal and external woes, even the better informed and more spiritually minded but dimly recognizing the great spiritual needs—these constituted the occasion of the Sermon on the Mount.

The design of it has been partly suggested by the occasion, but we need to erect here a pillar of caution. The design has a negative as well as a positive aspect.

First, then, negatively: It was not intended to be, as some have supposed and claimed, an epitome of doctrine and morals, neither of the one nor of the other. It falls very short of being a full synopsis of the doctrines of Jesus Christ. There is not a word in it directly of regeneration. There is nothing in it concerning the doctrine of the vicarious atonement and justification by faith so elaborately set forth both by the Saviour Himself and His apostles. So there are some departments of morals not here inculcated. Hence, one makes a very great mistake when he counts the Sermon on the Mount as a complete standard of life. You hear people say sometimes: "If I live by the Sermon on the Mount that will do." I say that this sermon is not all of the standard.

Positively, then, what was the design of it? The design of it was introductory-an opening or rudimental lecture setting forth the foundation principles of the Messianic kingdom, showing that these principles are internal, spiritual, practical, and not external, ritualistic, theoretical; setting forth first the characteristics, privileges and happiness of the Messianic subjects in the beatitudes. Showing next the importance, influence and responsibility of the Messianic subjects, comparing them to the light of the world and the salt of the earth. Then follows a discussion of the relations of the Messianic kingdom.

Relations to what? Relations to the Jewish law, whether ceremonial, civil or moral; to the prophets; to rabbinical traditions; to the world; to practical life, and to destiny. Such was the design of the Sermon on the Mount, intending afterwards, as in fact He did, to unfold, to develop other doctrines related to these and letting His whole life's teaching present the fulness of His doctrine and of His morality.

So the Sermon on the Mount is not a disconnected jumble of fine sayings, but exhibits remarkable unity as a discourse, as you will observe when I briefly state the outline and analysis of it. Indeed, I much question if any speech has ever been delivered more remarkable for unity than the Sermon on the Mount.

Next, as to the matter. The matter of this sermon is every bit of it every day matter, but while every day matter, as deep and as important as human life and destiny. One makes a great mistake in supposing that great teaching touches only the strange and exceptional and startling. The best and sublimest teaching

upon the earth concerns the every day life, and such is the matter of this sermon.

As to its style: These adjectives will convey a description of the style. It is simple, familiar, direct, sententious, paradoxical, startling, illustrative, conversational, practical, authoritative — a simple talk, I mean, that every one in the audience could understand. There was no attempt at big words. The language of the common people, as they spoke it and as they understood it, was used by our Saviour. It was familiar in that it was as homely in its phrases as if He were sitting by the fireside or out on the, housetop in the cool of the evening or on the curbing of the street and talking with the passing people. It was not an oration, for there is an utter absence of declaratory theatrical elocution and rhetoric, as there must be in all great teachers.

I mean to say that there is not an indication of a single strained mental effort after rounded phraseology, euphonious diction, rhetorical effect, dramatic gesticulation. It is direct; it does not intend to reach things by cannoning, hitting here and intending by glancing shot to strike out yonder. He moves right straight forward to the accomplishment of His object.

The style, I say, is paradoxical. A paradox is something which seems to be contradictory and is not contradictory, as for instance, “happy are the unhappy”; that is, blessed are they that mourn. That is a paradox, but there is nothing contradictory in it. There is a comparison between present unhappiness and future happiness. As Luke keeps bringing it out, “Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled hereafter.” “Woe unto you that are rich now, for ye shall be poor hereafter.” Yes, it is intensely paradoxical.

It is illustrative. The illustrations do not have to be explained, as some men’s illustrations. They illustrate. They preach a sermon by themselves; that is, they carry in their familiar imagery their own application. He selects objects that are perfectly well known to the people and so thoroughly familiar that when used as an illustration there can be no misconception as to the meaning. Sometimes He illustrated by a hen and chickens, sometimes by a lily, other times by rocks and thorns and sheep and birds. It is conversational in its style and unquestionably the greatest preachers are preachers who adopt the easy, off-hand, conversational style, like Doctor Broadus.

But the distinguishing characteristic in style is that which most impressed His audience—because of its intrinsic power and of its marked dissimilarity to the

methods of their ordinary religious teachers-He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes and Pharisees. The style then was authoritative.

Just look at the difference. A rabbi would get up before the people and with his eyes cast down would begin to say, “Rabbi Ben Israel says in the Talmud that Rabbi Joseph said that Rabbi Amos said that maybe such is the interpretation of the passage, but Rabbi Issachar quotes Rabbi Ephraim as saying that Rabbi Eleazar thought it might mean a different thing.” It was all indeterminate, uncertain; it did not take any positive shape. The pupil was perplexed by a balancing of conflicting probabilities. One leader doubtfully said, “Lo, here” while another distrustfully said, “Maybe yonder.”

But Jesus spoke with authority-authority vested in himself. He leaned on no human buttresses. Did not attempt to defend His doctrine, nor to vindicate it. He spoke as God speaks, and without stopping to give an explanation of His manner — and so ought man always to speak who speaks for God. Let him speak as the oracles of God.

Now as to the rank of this sermon: Daniel Webster says that no mere man could have produced the Sermon on the Mount. Old age and wisdom bow before the simplicity and sublimity of this incomparable teaching. Little children sweetly imbibe its spirit as if it were milk, and aged saints draw from it the strong meat which supplies their sinews of strength. Babes in Christ by it take their first step in the practical walk of Christian life, while the man or woman in Christ Jesus by it soar on eagles’ wings into the anticipations of the heavenly world. It is peerless, matchless, divine.

Now to show you the unity of the Sermon on the Mount, I will give you an outline of it that I think you can carry in your minds, as it consists of only three great heads.

First, the characteristics, privileges and happiness of the Messianic subjects as set forth in the beatitudes.

Second, the importance, influence, and responsibility of the Messianic subjects, as set forth in the images of salt and light.

And third, the relations of the Messianic kingdom or doctrines; that is, its relations to the Jewish law, whether ceremonial, civil or moral; its relations to the rabbinical traditions; its relations to the prophecies; its relations to the outside world in its spirit and maxims and chief good; its relations to human

destiny, closing with “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, he shall be like the man who built his house upon a rock and when the floods came and the storms hurtled, that house stood, for it was founded upon a rock.”

All through it, in all of its great divisions, is brought out in clearest light that the principles of the Christian religion are internal, spiritual and practical. It is not, “Do this that you may be seen of men.” It is not to wash the outside of the cup or platter. It is not a painted sepulcher, holding inside rottenness and dead men’s bones. It consists not in meat and drink nor in observances of days and months and seasons. It has not ten thousand ordinances that touch your dress and your manner.

Oh, the mass of stuff that has been imposed upon the Christian religion, which in its foundation principles was all spiritual and not ritualistic. All through it is practical, as opposed to theoretic or speculative. There is not a single part of it that is presented to the curious human mind as something calculated to entertain an idle person, not a thing. The whole of it is designated to be not abstract, but concrete, to be incarnated, to be embodied. It is practical, all of it.

Now, having presented you that outline of the sermon, I want to illustrate it by considering briefly the first two divisions.

First, the characteristics, privileges and happiness of the Messianic subjects, as set forth in what are called the beatitudes, commencing with a few general remarks. First, there are eight of these characteristics with eight corresponding privileges, or eight alternative woes. Every one of the privileges is based on character and every one of the particular measures of happiness is based on a privilege, showing the relation between character and happiness — a fixed relation, an indissoluble bond — between character and happiness. If a man possess the kingdom of God, if a man is allowed to see God and live with Him, if a man receive a reward from God at the last great day, these privileges are the springs of his happiness, but every privilege is predicated upon character in the man, upon the inside state of the man’s soul. As Burns expresses it

*It is no' in titles, nor in rank;
It is no' in wealth like London bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
If happiness have not her seat
And center in the breast
We may be wise or rich or great
But never can be blest.*

This sermon explains why Paul, covered with wounds and in prison and at midnight, and with death awaiting him in the morning, could sing praises to God. It explains how it is, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, that the ancient martyrs took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and who, while flames wrapped them about, shouted hallelujahs to God and who leaped for joy that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

The beatitudes express the only great philosophy as contrasted with Epicureanism and Stoicism. The Epicurean taught: "You have appetites; if you would be happy, gratify them. Eat, drink and be merry." The Stoic said, "You have appetites; if you would be happy, extirpate them — dig them up by the roots." This sermon says, "You have appetites; if you would be happy, regulate them. Neither gratify them immoderately nor suppress them, but divert them from improper channels and fix them upon worthy objects. You want to be rich; that is right, only what kind of riches? You want to live? Yes, but when-now or hereafter? You want great substance? That is all right, but what kind — evanescent or that which endures? You would treasure up — yes, but where? "Where neither moth nor rust corrupt, nor thieves dig through and steal."

You will next observe that these beatitudes are all double. I mean that they have a probable sense and an absolute sense. Take this one. Luke says, "Blessed are the poor." Matthew says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." The probable sense is always this, that comparing the two estates of poverty and riches, it is more probable that a poor man will get to heaven than that a rich man will. I mean to say that it is hard, very hard, for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. I mean to say that if your rent roll is one hundred thousand dollars a year, then your chances of heaven are very slim, but that is not the absolute sense. The absolute sense is: Blessed are the poor in spirit.

Again: "Blessed are they that mourn." The probable sense is that it is, as a rule, better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting; that, as a rule, afflicted people are more apt to seek the kingdom of heaven than people

who are not afflicted, but its meaning in its absolute sense is not merely to be a mourner, but to mourn in spirit for spiritual things.

You may next note generally that each beatitude has a corresponding woe, either expressed or implied. Luke mentions four of them. For instance, when he says “Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of heaven,” he then adds the alternative, “But woe unto you rich, for you have had your consolation.” So with all the beatitudes.

Let us examine somewhat particularly the first two. Take the first, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” What does that mean I believe in close analysis and clear definition. Now here is the way I would read that: “Happy is the man who in his inner, higher nature (that is, in his spirit) consciously feels his poverty or need of spiritual good from God.” There is poverty, yes, but it is that poverty in spirit which you consciously feel and not that which you have but do not know that you have it. Compare two Scriptures for proof: ^{<260>}Isaiah 66:2 — “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” ^{<687>}Revelation 3:17 — “Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold,” and so forth.

Evidently the blessing is promises, not to the poverty, but to the sense of the poverty — the consciousness of the need. It is quite important to observe this distinction.

Now in the case of these Laodiceans there was actual poverty in the sphere of the spirit, but there was no recognition of the poverty. On the contrary, they thought themselves to be rich and that they needed nothing.

The two states of mind are clearly represented in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican who went up into the temple to pray. The Pharisee had spirit need enough, but he had no consciousness of that need. The publican had the same need and he deeply felt it. He smote upon his heart and said, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” Blessed are the poor in spirit!

The prodigal son illustrates both phases of the subject. When he left his father’s house, however much he might have external things, for he was richly endowed, in his inner nature, in his spirit, he was actually poor, but he did not know it. He thought he was rich and great, and was correspondingly proud, but there came

a time when he began to be in want — when the need of his soul broke in upon his mind, when he said, “I have sinned. I will arise and go to my Father and say to him, Father, I am not worthy to be called thy son. Let me be a servant. I have sinned.”

Blessed are the poor in spirit! That means, happy is the man who in the sphere of the spirit (or inner or higher nature) feels his need of good from God, no less, no more. “I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord.” Oh, how sweet that hymn is! Poor in spirit. Oh, I have so few spiritual goods! I need. I need patience, I need strength, I need clearer views of heaven. I need more of the spirit of my Master. Poor, yea, blessed are the poor in spirit.

But do not forget the contrast in the now and the hereafter. What do you need, O Dives, at the banquet? “Not a thing in the world. I have a million dollars; have the finest table in the country; every time I walk out on the streets people fawn upon me and say, ‘There goes a millionaire; look at him! Look at him!’ Why, I do not need a thing in the world. You never did see such eating as I have on my table. I am rich.”

Rich, purse-proud, feeding upon external things and starving the soul. That is the now. But let me show him to you in the hereafter. You will have to look a long way down, away down into the depths of Hell. Did he take any money with him? Not a cent. Is he thirsty? Hear him:

“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my parched tongue; for I am tormented in this flame” (~~16:24~~ Luke 16:24).

Do you see that chasm that separates him from God? Do you mark his apprehension that his brethren will come where he is? Do you mark the play of his memory? “But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime received thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and you are tormented” (~~16:25~~ Luke 16:25). Oh, sublime Teacher! Thou Teacher of the relation of time and eternity!

“Blessed are they that mourn.” I would rather go to the house of mourning than to the house of laughing. But it refers to the sphere of the spirit. Do you mourn here? Do you mourn on account of sins? Do you mourn on account of your lack of conformity to the image of Jesus Christ? Do you mourn because of the

low state of piety in the land? Like Jeremiah, is the source of your grief the fact that the health of the daughter of God's people is not recovered?

"Blessed are they that mourn." Oh, you mourners in Zion, I say to you that you shall be comforted, and when your ashes are turned to beauty and your heaviness to the garments of praise, and your anguish to the thrilling joys of heaven, then will your consolation be deep and high and broad, with an "immeasurable" attached to every one of the adjectives. How sweet the song of Tom Moore

*Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish;
Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish,
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.*

"Blessed are they that mourn." Oh, mourners, hear the blessed Saviour:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (⁴⁰¹⁸Luke 4:18, 19).

We reach the fulness of the promise in heaven, for there are no tears in heaven, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, nor death. Hear the precise words of our Lord:

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (⁶²¹⁴Revelation 21:4).

I shall not refer to any of these other characteristics. There is no time for it. I must pass over them in silence, though they all have a special meaning and each one very sweet.

But let us consider somewhat the importance and influence and responsibility of the people who are poor in spirit and mourn, and are meek, and who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who are merciful, and who are peacemakers, and who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. What is their importance? What their responsibility? Listen: Jesus, in just one verse, answers all of these questions:

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men” (^{418B}Matthew 5:13).

The importance or value of the Messiah’s subjects is determined by the emphasis on the pronoun “ye.” The verb-ending would in ordinary cases determine the pronoun nominative so it would not have to be expressed. But if, in the Greek you desire to know emphasis on the pronoun, it must be expressed. The Greek verb “*este*” by itself means “ye are”; that is, without emphasis. But to have it “YE are,” capitalizing and emphasizing the pronoun, it must be written “*umeis este.*”

How then can I make you hear the emphasis, the deep stress our Saviour placed on that pronoun? YE-YE-YE are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Do you not see that He meant to deny such importance and influence and responsibility to anything else or to anybody else?

First, there is a constat when He says “ye.” The emphasis is on the “Ye.” Ye are the light of the world. Ye are the salt of the earth. It is as if he had said, If this world is preserved from moral corruption, if this world is wrested from the realms of darkness and bathed in light, ye will have to do it. Ye are the important ones. Oh, think of it, you mourners, you poor in spirit, you merciful ones, you that hunger and thirst after righteousness, you are more important in the sight of God and ten thousand times more valuable than all the rich, ungodly men that ever trod the face of the earth.

I say unto you that not the philosophers (lightning bugs trying to outshine the sun); not the police — shall keep the world from corrupting and rotting; not the public school, as the politicians would have you believe. No, you can have good public schools right over the mouth of the pit. And not Cotton Palaces and Fairs that open on Sunday. But ye are the light of the — world; these whose characteristics are internal, spiritual, practical; followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I say if the whole earth is not cracked open today it is because of you. If the cloud does not burst and bolt fall to smite it with universal flame, it is solely because of that “ye.” Ye poor in spirit; ye Christians that are scattered about on the face of the earth, ye and ye alone. Ah, me, if you were taken off of the earth it would rot and stink until heaven would be compelled to burn it!

I would, like to know whenever philosophy or secular education or commerce or riches or secular science ever kept a community from morally rotting. Do you know one? Can you put your finger on one city of ancient or modern times? I say today, in, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that but for the humble, God-fearing men and women in any state, in any county, in any town, it would rot. You are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

As the value and importance of God's people are determined by the emphatic "Ye," so the character of their influence is determined by the figures, "salt and light." Salt preserves — keeps pure. Light dispels darkness. Heat expels the cold. The salt of the sea is the shore's barrier against universal disease and death. Without the light and its accompanying heat there could be no life. No plant would germinate. Darkness that could be felt would shroud the earth. More than Arctic cold would ensue. All liquids would solidify and petrify. The rivers-earth's arteries-would stiffen into blocks of ice. The veins of blood would become like steel wire, harder than man's bones. What, therefore, salt and light are to the natural world even those that are Christians are to the spiritual world. And as the emphatic "Ye" expresses who are earth's important ones, and as the "salt and light" express the kind and character of their value, so their responsibility is expressed by "putting the candle on the candlestick."

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (⁴⁰⁸⁵Matthew 5:15, 16).

Mark the emphasis on the "so." It is commonly misunderstood. As the candle once lighted must be put on the candlestick in order to be sufficiently visible, even so when God shines into your heart your conversion must be so positioned as to be visible. It is to position and consequent visibility that "even so" refers.

I say that our responsibility is all involved in putting the candle in the right place. God Himself does the lighting. Our part is not to so misplace the light as to hide it. It therefore becomes a supreme question: How do you put it on the candlestick? I do not know how you are prepared to receive some things I am going to say, but I am going to say them with all my heart.

First, then, let the divine oracles speak. Hear the Word of God:

“I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation” (~~400~~ Psalm 40:10).

“Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul” (~~366~~ Psalm 66:16).

“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (~~412~~ Matthew 10:32, 33).

“The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks that thou sawest are the seven churches” (~~602~~ Revelation 1:20).

What then do these Scriptures mean? That we must tell it. Let God’s people hear our Christian experience. Let the whole world know just where we stand. Unite with the church. On every issue between righteousness and unrighteousness, between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial, take an unmistakable position on the Lord’s side. You younger brethren and sisters, it was a joy to me when you put the lamp on the lampstand, when you took the lighted candle and put it on the candlestick. Let it shine there. Put it where men can see it. Do not put it under a bushel. Do not put it under a bed. Do not try to be a secret partner of Jesus Christ, a Nicodemus, who comes to see Him by night. Come out and take a stand. Let the world know your alignment.

Put the candle on the candlestick and let the marksman of Hell try to snuff it out. To put it on the candlestick is unquestionably to on the church.? Where do you get that? Why, do you not read inn the Book of Revelation about Jesus moving among the candlesticks, and what are the candlesticks? They are the churches. The seven candlesticks are the seven churches. Why put the light there? Because the Lord Jesus Christ has made the church the pillar and ground of the truth. That is His institution. Now you can organize something, but Jesus organized the church. That is an institution which has the promise of this life and that which is to come. Yea, she it is “that looketh forth as the morning, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.”

Oh, but you say that means the invisible church. How on earth, if it is invisible, is it putting a candle on a candlestick? Do you mean an invisible candlestick? He

is not referring to invisibility. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. God lighted the candle and it is eternal, but God says, Make it conspicuous, visible. Put it on the candlestick that everybody can see it shine. Unquestionably. Well, if it gets in the church it shines. How? It will help the church publish the principles of the Messianic kingdom. It will be in the church and shine and the waves of light radiating from the church will go out into the darkened heathen land upon the wings of every sermon and prayer and song.

It will help advertise the truth of Jesus. In every sermon preached and prayer offered and song sung, let it be as if upon a ladder of promises it had gone up to the ceiling of the skies and placarded their whole scope with the promises of eternal life. That is the way you shine. You shine in your mission work. You shine in your example at home, in the school, everywhere.

And now let me tell you, if your religion is worth a snap of the finger, take it into politics. Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to have a religious political party, separate from every other, but I do mean, that whatever religion you have, let it be as potent in determining a political question as any other question.

Let me give you a sublime illustration: William E. Gladstone was England's prime minister. To be prime minister of England means a vast deal more than to be President of the United States, for under the present British constitution the prime minister is the sovereign, the government of England. The Queen has nothing more to do with it than you have, but the prime minister of England is the Lord of England and her Empire. The British cabinet is not like the cabinet we have here in our country, merely advisers.

Now he was prime minister of England, and had attained his premiership by combining the liberal elements of the political party in England and Scotland with the Irish element. The Irish element was led by Charles Stewart Parnell. Parnell was the king and chief of the Irish contingent, and he and Gladstone stood like two brothers, working together for the accomplishment of good for the whole empire. Well, now right in the midst of their great victory, an awful thing developed. A divorce suit was instituted against Mrs. O'Shea by her husband and making Parnell a co-respondent, and the fact brought out a moral depravity of heart in the case of Parnell — oh, such a sickening state of facts that Gladstone said, "If it costs me the prime minister's place I will not stand by the side of Charles Stewart Parnell. I will let the political party go. I am a Christian. I love God. I love God more than I love political party. I will not give this man the hand of fellowship. Ireland must select another leader." Parnell

refused to yield leadership. It divided the Irish vote and lost Gladstone's working majority in parliament. Well, of course, he had to resign, and he is the only man I know that actually preferred to be right than to be prime minister.

Why, I tell you, the time sometimes comes when instead of showing you are a Christian by being willing to shake hands with everybody, you must show your Christianity by refusing to take a bad man's hand, even though he pose as a Christian. It may be that you cannot reach him by church discipline. It becomes necessary that he may be made to feel the force of righteous public opinion.

I repeat it that there are degrees to which a church member may go in slandering his brethren, in breeding strife, in opposing or clogging the wheels of Christian progress, when to give him Christian recognition is a sin.. Such a man becomes a curse instead of a blessing.

What though a man be a Baptist, and what though some church retain him in fellowship, yet he may so go astray in doctrines that this Scripture applies: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (⁶¹⁰2 John 1:10, 11). Paul thus urgently entreats and exhorts the Romans: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (⁶¹⁷Romans 16:17, 18). He also thus enjoins the Corinthians: "I wrote to you in an epistle not to company with fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (⁶¹⁹1 Corinthians 5:9-11). He also urges Timothy "to turn away from" another class (⁶²²Timothy 3:5).

Indeed, there are men so adroit in the use of the forms and technicalities of the law they can, so far as human courts extend, violate with impunity the spirit of the whole moral law. Such men are to be shunned, avoided, turned from. Let no good man receive them as friends. They are incorrigible. And particularly is this true of a fomentor and breeder of strife among brethren, or one, who like Satan, is a slanderer of his brother. If he is a man that is called a brother, if he claims to be a Christian, and does certain things, turn from him and let the whole

world know that you do not claim fellowship with him. Says the Apostle, "Avoid him." If he can make you come up and stand beside him, so that he can say, "We two," and all the time proceed in infamy, all the time reap immoral rottenness, that is all he wants. He will spread the mantle of your Christianity over his vileness.

Aaron Burr, for political reasons and from very slight causes, none such as are regarded sufficiently weighty to justify a challenge, forced a duel on Alexander Hamilton although he knew Hamilton would never fire a shot at him, and he murdered Hamilton. Now, it was a sign that the United States was not absolutely rotting, when the public sentiment spoke out as to the crime of dueling, and Burr, though he had been a leading spirit in one of the great political parties of this Union, was not socially recognized. Good people by whom he would sit down would get up and move away somewhere else. Would you have taken the hand of Benedict Arnold or of Judas Iscariot?

To a certain extent the public enunciating that thundered over the head of Breckenridge of Kentucky was very Godlike; but when he stood up, and, without extenuation, without denying the facts, but openly confessing them, confessing his sin and asking forgiveness, I confess then there ought to have been mercy shown him.

But, I tell you, if the principles of the Christian religion are not carried into society, if they are not carried into business, if they are not carried into politics, if we do not let the light shine, then the salt has lost its savor and the light is out under a bushel. You are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, says the great Teacher.

My own conclusions are never child's play. They are always reached after profound investigation of a subject. I would rather stand up by the side of a half a dozen who were occupying the platform of that Sermon on the Mount than to be one of a million on the opposing side.

Oh, put the light on the candlestick! Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are these that mourn on account of sin. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, personal, practical righteousness, mark you, not imputed righteousness. It means absolutely sinless perfection. Such will come after a while.

Blessed are the pure in heart. That means the fulness of sanctification, in absolute deliverance from the corruption that is in the world through lust. It, too, will come after a while. It is not all attainable now. But you may move toward it and you will be filled; you will ultimately see God.

And now I thank you for having listened to me so long in discussing just two divisions in the Sermon on the Mount, as illustrating the character of the teaching of our blessed Lord. Oh, what teacher is like Jesus? Who of you would come and sit at the feet of Jesus? Who would say, Lord, let me enter thy class? Oh, tell me not how to possess external religion, nor altogether in what rites and ceremonies to profess religion; but, oh, Master, show me how to be right in the spirit, in my soul. Show me how to let the light so shine that when I die, when I pass away from the world, it may be said: "He was a part of the salt of the earth and of the light of the world."

6. THE THREE WITNESSES — THE SPIRIT, THE WATER AND THE BLOOD

This past week I received a communication from a prominent lawyer in Texas who had just been reading his Bible in his office. He asked me for an interpretation of the passage of Scripture upon which it is my purpose to preach today. He said he was puzzled by it. He did not understand what it meant. As preaching ought to be along practical lines, whenever you can find that one thoughtful person is engaged in the study of a passage of Scripture and wants information upon its import, it is quite probable that in the land there are others whose minds are perplexed upon the same point, and who would be gratified to have their difficulties removed.

This is the passage of Scripture, the first letter of John, fifth chapter, and from the sixth to the tenth verses: “This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. . . . And there are three that bear witness . . . the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: fir this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.”

After stating the passage of Scripture he asked me to expound two points

- (1) What is meant by His coming by water and blood?
- (2) Who are the two witnesses whose testimony harmonizes with the testimony of the Spirit? “There are three that bear witness . . . the Spirit, and the water, and the blood.”

It is quite a natural thing for a lawyer to be concerned upon a question of evidence, and upon the character of witnesses who give evidence, and upon the subject matter of that testimony, and its value when given. He saw at once that if this conjoint and harmonious testimony of three witnesses is to be of particular value to us, we ought to know who the witnesses are, and their character. We ought to know to what point their testimony conspires, upon which it unites, and then the value of the testimony to us.

I replied to him that our knowledge of Jesus Christ is derived from testimony; that there are many ways of obtaining knowledge, but upon certain subjects we have no way of obtaining information except upon evidence; in other words, that man, by searching, cannot find out God; and it is a fact that so far as our methods of investigation are concerned, God or any revelation of Him is unknown to us, and that if we obtain any information about Him it must be by testimony.

On this account, the Apostle Paul in writing to the Corinthians says, “I determined to know nothing among you but the testimony of God,” that is, “I lay aside all excellency of human speech or of human reason. I deal not with the philosophies of the world, nor with the inquiries which have been created by these philosophers. I confine my preaching to the testimony of God.” If we are to know anything about God, it is because He has borne witness. He has given us information.

This text, then, refers to One who came by water and blood, and not by water only, but by water and blood, and the first question to be answered is, What is meant by the expression, “He came by water”? That is one of the questions that puzzled this lawyer. “He came by water.”

I will not take up your time rehearsing the many interpretations that have been given by wild theorists upon this subject, but will at once call your attention to the scriptural answer to this question: How did Jesus “come by water”? The word “came” is equivalent in meaning to “was manifested.” Jesus Christ was manifested to be the Son of God by water, and He was manifested to be the Son of God by blood. How then was He manifested to be the Son of God by water?

In the first chapter of John’s Gospel, John the Baptist explains the whole matter. He says that he was sent to baptize for this specific purpose, that in his baptizing the Son of God might be manifested, might be made known. He says that when Jesus came to him to be baptized that he did not know that He was the Son of God, but that it had been revealed to him that the Son of God was to be manifested in his baptizing, and that he would know which one of the persons baptized was the Son of God by a certain event, namely: That the Holy Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, would descend upon one whom he baptized, and that that descent of the Spirit upon the person baptized was to be a manifestation to Israel, to John, and a manifestation to both of them that this

was the Son of God. And in referring to it he says, "I saw the Spirit descend upon him, and I bare record, that this is the Son of God."

So when our text says that He came by water, there is no reasonable question of the accuracy of this answer that the water by which He came was the water of His own baptism. While there have been some wide differences of opinion as to the manner in which Jesus Christ came by water, the scholarship of the world, among the nations of the earth, with reasonable unanimity have settled upon this meaning, that when He came by water He came by His own baptism. His baptism was His manifestation. His baptism was the initiatory step into His public work.

On that occasion a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." On that occasion the Holy Spirit of God descended upon Him and abode on Him. On that occasion as He was emerging from the waters of baptism, He prayed; and we may be reasonably certain of the thing He prayed for by the answer which came to His prayer, and that it is not irreverent to assume that His prayer was on this fashion: "Father, in the sight of men, I take my place as the substitute for men, to obey that word, to be obedient unto death, and to make expiation for the sins of man, and who will believe my report? Oh, send me divine accrediting! Give me unmistakable credentials. Let my mission be authenticated in such a way that it cannot be questioned. Empower me to do what I have engaged to do." And there on the banks of the Jordan, as He came up out of the water, praying, the answer came the Spirit descended upon Him; the voice of God from heaven announced Him to be His Son; and John, who saw it, bore witness, "This is my beloved Son." "This is the Son of God."

The next question is, "How did Jesus come by blood?" That answer was prefigured in His baptism. His baptism represented a burial, which implied a previous death. It was a forecast of what was at the terminus of His public life on earth. And so we are told that when it was written in the Book, "Lo, I am come to do thy will, O God," that He came and through the Eternal Spirit He offered Himself unto God, without spot, without blemish as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The Spirit bore witness at His baptism. It was through the Spirit that He made an offering of Himself unto God. The connection here of the blood is evident. John the Baptist saw its meaning, for as soon as he saw the Spirit of God resting upon Him he was not only satisfied in his own mind, "This is the Son of God," but he was satisfied as to the purpose

of the manifestation of that Son of God, for he pointed to Jesus just after baptism and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!"

And this leads us at once to understand the controversy between John and Christ as to the propriety of the baptism of Christ. John, not understanding the matter, but knowing the purity of Christ's life — that much he knew-and knowing from what had been testified concerning Him that He was a marvelous person, said to Jesus, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest thou to me?" "I am sent to baptize sinners, men who need repentance. You need no repentance. You need no baptism. Why do you ask me to baptize you?" And Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

What is the meaning of it? The meaning of it is this, that while Christ in His own character and in His own life and in His own person needed no repentance and no baptism, yet if He came as a Lamb to take away the sin of the world; if He came as a substitute for sinners; if He came to be made sin, though He knew no sin, then there was a propriety in His baptism. That is the explanation of it. It shows that His coming by water referred to His baptism, and that baptism prefigured His manifestation by blood. So, to paraphrase the Scripture, suppose we read it this way: "This is He that was manifested to be the Son of God through His baptism and His sacrificial death."

He was manifested to be the Son of God, not through His baptism only, but through His sacrificial death. So that the one who holds that the divine Logos left Jesus Christ when He was betrayed by Judas, holds and teaches an error. He came especially by blood. That is to say, He not only came through His baptism, which prefigured His sacrifice, but He came through the sacrifice which fulfilled what His baptism prefigured.

The next question propounded by the lawyer was about the three witnesses. Granting that He came or was manifested through His baptism and through His sacrificial offering, yet there are three that bear witness to the fact that He is the Son of God. Then who are the three? The first He had no question about-the Holy Spirit. He is the great witness to Jesus Christ. Our Lord Himself announced that fact, that when the Holy Spirit was come He would bear witness to Jesus, that He was the divine witness, and that the point of His testimony would be this: Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God; He is the fountain and author of eternal life.

That is the value of the testimony. He cannot be the fountain of eternal life if He be not the Son of God. If He be the Son of God, he is the fountain of eternal life. "And if He be the fountain of eternal life, my faith in Him is the victory by which I overcame the world.

So we get at the value now of the testimony. The three witnesses are to prove one proposition, that Jesus is the Son of God. He is the author of eternal life. If He be the author of eternal life, my faith in Him puts me in touch with that life and I possess that life.

Now let us look at the three witnesses whose several testimonies converge to one point, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. The first witness is the Holy Spirit, and we may examine the occasion upon which He bore convincing testimony to the divinity and the sonship of Jesus Christ, first of all, at His baptism. What was the import of that testimony of the Spirit at the baptism of Jesus? In the sixth chapter of John, it is said, "Him hath God the Father sealed." When did He seal Him? He sealed Him when the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon Him. What is the object of sealing? Sealing is a mark by which ownership is expressed, and by which consecration to a certain object is avowed.

What was the object avowed by that sealing? He was sealed as a victim. When the lambs were presented, the priest must go among them and examine them, and if any one has a spot on him he is rejected, if any one has a blemish he is rejected; but all that are acceptable, being of the right age, being of the right color, being without blemish or spot, those the priest seals, and they are set apart for sacrifice. The seal on him indicates that this particular lamb is God's peculiar property, and that he is a devoted lamb, and that he is to die upon the altar of sacrifice, and the object of that death is expiatory.

Now the Holy Spirit of God at the baptism of Jesus sealed Him by that descent upon Him, as the accepted and approved and inspected and consecrated sacrificial and expiatory offering for the sin of the world, and John the Baptist saw it and understood it. He also, besides sealing Him, revealed Him to be the Son of God by that descent. John could not know that Jesus was the Messiah, that Jesus was to be the prophet, priest and king of Israel, as well as the sacrificial victim. John could not know it except the Holy Spirit would reveal it by that descent upon Him. So He bore witness by revealing that particular person to be the Messiah, and by sealing that particular person to be the expiatory victim.

Not only this, but He bore witness at that baptism by anointing Him to be the prophet and teacher of Israel, and therefore Jesus said Himself, referring to this matter, when He stood up in Nazareth, where He had been brought up, “The Holy Spirit is upon me because he hath anointed me.” He hath set me apart. He hath indued me with the qualification to teach authoritatively and finally the will of God concerning man. The Spirit bore witness by that anointing.

And not only that, but in the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, in referring to that same descent of the Spirit at the baptism of Jesus Christ, it is said that Spirit not only on that occasion anointed Him, but indued Him with power to do what the Messiah was here to do upon the earth. Power descended upon Him, and from that time, what He wrought He wrought by the authority of God.

So we see on what particular points the Spirit bore witness at that baptism. He bore sealing witness to the victim. He bore revealing witness to the person. He bore anointing witness, giving authority and credentials as the prophet of Israel. He bore induing or power-giving witness in qualification of the one selected to do the work to be performed by the selected one.

But that was at the beginning of His life. Now, how did the Spirit bear witness at the end of His life? Not only in that figure of death (for He came by water), but He came by water and blood. How did the Spirit bear witness when He manifested Himself to be the Son of God by blood?

The answer is given to us in the letter to the Hebrews, that when an offering was to be made, that offering was to be made once for all; that it would take the place of the multitudinous and oft-repeated offerings made upon Jewish altars. This one offering was to be for the remission of sins, and the record is expressed that through the Eternal Spirit He made that offering.

So when Jesus died on the Cross, when His blood was poured out, that blood, through the Spirit bearing witness to its appropriateness and its efficacy, bearing witness to its intrinsic worth, bearing witness to its cleansing and saving power—through the Spirit that offering was made.

But again, how does the Spirit bear witness? To die as His baptism prefigures, to be buried, and to stop there, meant a frustration of all His claims and purposes; but the Spirit bore witness again in His resurrection. The Apostle Paul says, “He who was put to death in the flesh was made alive by the Spirit,”

and in the first chapter of the letter to the Romans, he says, “He was declared to be the Son of God, with power by his resurrection, through the Holy Spirit.” He was declared to be the Son of God through the Spirit. He was declared to be the Son of God through the Spirit at His resurrection.

What is the point upon which the testimony must converge?

The proposition is that Jesus is the Son of God.

What is the value of that proposition?

If He be the Son of God He is the fountain of eternal life.

How, then, speaks the witness of the Spirit?

That when Jesus was cold in death, He demonstrated that this dead person was the Son of God by quickening Him, by making Him alive, by causing Him to emerge from the grave as triumphant over death in its own territory.

But I come to the last, and as I think the main point upon which the Spirit’s evidence is given concerning His Sonship; an evidence more marked than the descent of the dove; an evidence more marked than the offering up of the sacrifice through the Spirit; an evidence more marked than the display of the Spirit-power in making the dead victim live again. And what was that?

He had said, “I will rise again on the third day, and I go to my Father, and if I go to my Father, if I be exalted, if I take my seat on the throne, if I be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, I will send you overwhelming proof that I am there, that I am empowered there, that all authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me there.”

And what was the witness?

Why, it was the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, when the church which Jesus Christ had established and to which He had given His Commission — this temple of God that had been completed, this temple, that was yet without an occupant, as the tabernacle was without an occupant until the cloud descended, as the temple of Solomon was without an occupant until the cloud descended—this finished church of Jesus Christ that stood empty on the day of Pentecost, the answer came in the outpouring of the Spirit, in filling that church and giving that church power to testify for Jesus Christ. And so now the Spirit bears witness that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God.

But there are three that bear witness. Let a thing be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses. Our text says that three bear witness, and there is no

lack of harmony in their testimony. We are not concerned with the testimony of the Spirit except upon one point: Does it prove that Jesus is the Son of God? We are not concerned with the testimony of the waterwitness except on one point: Does it agree with the Spirit's testimony? What is the bearing of the testimony of the water on the proposition that Jesus is the Son of God? That is all the use we have for that witness. And we put that witness on the stand and we want to know who the witness is.

It is true that Jesus came by water; that is, the water of His baptism; but there are three that bear witness, and one of the witnesses is the water. Now, what water is referred to? Again I answer that the concensus of intelligent construction and interpretation of the Word of God is that primarily the water there means the water of Christ's own baptism. I will refer you to a secondary and scripturally permissive meaning directly, but primarily it refers to His own baptism. His own baptism was not only a means by which He was manifested to be the Son of God, but His own baptism was constituting a witness to establish the proposition that He was the Son of God.

And do look at that baptism of Jesus and see how it bears upon the point: That He is the Son of God; He is the Author of Eternal Life; He is the object of faith by which we receive eternal life.

How does the baptism of Jesus bear witness upon that point? It does not bear witness upon any other point. There is no other way to account for His baptism.

There could be no other reason assigned why a perfectly sinless one, in His own person without spot or blemish, should be baptized at all.

We would have to support John's objection and protest. We would have to say, "You have no need of prayers. You have no sins to be forgiven. You have no need of repentance. Why comest Thou here?" And yet, that baptism says, "Jesus of Nazareth, you must go beneath the yielding waters. Jesus of Nazareth, as marked unto death, you must go through this symbol of peril, and here on the threshold of your public work there must be a commission that can never be forgotten, that from the start you know what is ahead of you. You know the terminus of your public life. You know why you are here upon the earth. You know what must be the outcome of your life here upon the earth. Your baptism bears witness to your Sonship in this That as the Divine Substitute for sinful men you are to die for sinners." And His sacrifice on the Cross bears witness to that.

Let us see how that bears witness to that. We stand and look at the death of Jesus Christ and ask for an explanation of it. A good man dies not in horror. A good man dies not in shame. A good man dies not in impenetrable darkness. A good man dies not in his spirit, for spiritual death is separation from the Father. And this man cried out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

No martyr died that way. The drops of blood as sweat rolled not from Paul’s brow when he was beheaded. Peter gave no such symptoms of unutterable woe when he came to die. Stephen’s face was heaven-lit and glory-crowned and full of rejoicing in his martyrdom.

But this Man did not die that way. He died as a sinner dies. He died in darkness. He died under condemnation. He died separated from the Father.

There is no testimony that can be wrung from the death of Jesus Christ that does not center upon this point: He is the Son of God, as the Substitute of sinners dying.

That is the testimony of His death. And so the Spirit and the water and the blood united without any dissension of testimony, with perfect congruity of evidence, to establish the proposition that Jesus is the Son of God.

Now comes a reflection of the Apostle John. He says, “If we receive the witness of men the witness of God is greater.” That is to say, You know you do receive the witness of men. You know that you count that human testimony is capable of establishing facts, and the text here furnishes us an example. Now listen to it.

In King James Version it reads thus: “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood.”

Now we receive the testimony of men that all that part of verses seven and eight, commencing, “There are three that bear record in heaven,” and concluding, “There are three that bear record in earth” — upon the testimony of man we reject every particle of that, as not a part of the text. It appears in the King James Version. It does not appear in the revision, and no scholar of the present time would call that a part of the Bible.

If there is one single passage in the whole Bible, according to the accepted or King James Version, upon which there is a unanimity of judgment among scholarship that it is spurious, this is the one, and upon this testimony of men we threw that out. Why do we throw it out? Well, it does not appear in the old and reliable Greek versions of the text. We bring the manuscripts into court. Scholarship introduces these witnesses, and this testimony, submitted by the power of human reason and according to the acuteness of human research and scholarship is accepted, and we reject that.

The text says: "If you receive the witness of men, now the testimony of God is greater." So far we have spoken of objective evidence only, to the one proposition that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and we have introduced three witnesses. First, the ordinance of baptism, or rather, so far, the baptism of Jesus Christ Himself, the reason why He was baptized, and then the otherwise unaccountable death of Jesus Christ.

There stands the Cross. There flows the water. The Spirit, and the water, and the blood! By the mouth of two or three witnesses shall everything be established. They say that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, is the Son of God, and one of these witnesses is a divine one — God Himself. Now, if you receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. How can you reject the proposition that Jesus is the Son of God?

The Holy Spirit at baptism induing Him with power to work miracles, foreshadowing His expiatory death, that Divine Witness through whom the sacrifice was offered when on the altar of His divinity His humanity was slain; that Witness that made Him live after death; that Witness that came down in power on the day of Pentecost and filled and accredited His church. Where on this earth has there been a witness of such veracity, of such competency? And that witness says Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

You accept the testimony of men on matters of property, on matters of title to your land. You accept it on everything. Your whole life is based upon your acceptance of evidence, that this witness shall be veracious, that this witness shall be competent, and on their testimony you act in everything in this life. If you accept the testimony of men, how can you reject the testimony of God?

I said that while this is the primary unquestionable meaning of this passage of Scripture, there is a secondary meaning, and scripturally true. There are two witnesses, the water and the blood, that are with us now. They bear witness

now. One is our own baptism. When we were baptized we were baptized into Christ's death. We were "buried with Christ by baptism into death," and your baptism is a secondary witness on the same line as the witness of the baptism of Christ.

Here stands, then, a venerable institution. It was instituted nearly two thousand years ago. It partakes of the nature of a monumental evidence. It is not a monument built of wasting wood or crumbling stone. It is not a monument that is confined to a single locality and must be approached from distant parts of the earth, at great sacrifice of time and toil and expense; but it is a witness that is always speaking, always visible.

Wherever water flows, wherever water gathers into pools, or lakes, or seas; wherever the stars mirror themselves in any placid pool of water, that water disturbed with the baptism of the believer in Jesus Christ carries back to the stars this testimony: Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus is the author of life. By faith in Jesus Christ I live. The life which I now live, I live by faith in Him. "Planted together in the likeness of His death we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."

Men have tried to silence this witness, and men have tried to obscure the clearness of the testimony of this witness by changing a burial to an effusion, by substituting a sprinkling for an immersion, and by putting the water upon one who knows not Jesus Christ, who does not believe in Jesus Christ, and this witness has in a measure been slain. In places, for hundreds of years, murderous and felonious hands have been upon this witness, but its deathless testimony still survives. And your baptism testifies on that point.

Well, what is the testimony of the blood? There it is. Why are you here today? What means these emblems? What signifies the shroud? What lies beneath it? The emblems of a body, slain, broken; the emblem of blood outpoured. There are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water and the blood. And men have tried to mar the testimony of this witness. They have taken away the cup, and that is the main thing, for it represents the blood. They have contented themselves with putting a wafer on the tongue of the communicant, and saying, "This witness hath testified, but no blood." And they have destroyed the value of this evidence by allowing men on whom the blood of Christ hath never been sprinkled, who have never been born of God, who do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, to come up and take of these elements. And thus they have sought to destroy the value of the testimony.

I had an intelligent man only week before last come to me and say, “There is one thing in connection with religion that I cannot understand. I cannot understand the persistency of the controversies about baptism and the Lord’s Supper. At the best they are only external symbols: Why on earth have they been battle grounds?” I said to him, “Ask the Devil. Ask him why he would put out of court two witnesses, and what he secures by obscuring their testimony, or by silencing their evidence, and that will explain it to you.”

Now if they meant nothing; if they came with babbling words into court; if there was no cogency in their evidence; if there was no veracity in their testimony, who would have a controversy about it? But if while water flows and grapes express their juice — the fruit of the vine — to fill the cup of the communion with the Lord’s blood-then you would expect all manner of controversies concerning baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

There will be those controversies until Christ comes. But I have this to say to you: The blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross demonstrated that He was the Son of God, and the author of Eternal Life, and this ordinance which holds forth that fact is the secondary witness that witness that is to abide until Jesus comes — and if all demonstrations on the face of the earth were to gather in some unscriptural conclave, and ecumenical and synodical enactment declare, “There shall be no more baptism, there shall be no more observances of the Lord’s Supper,” it would still be true that they would have no power to exclude the witness from court.

When Jesus said, “This do until I come; as often as ye drink this cup ye do shew forth the Lord’s death until He come” — until He comes that voice will speak and cannot be silenced. And I doubt not there will be congregations of faithful Christians gathered around the Lord’s Supper, partaking of the emblems of His death, and while these symbols are being handed around a shout will interrupt the services, a proclamation will startle the worshipers, “Behold, the bridegroom cometh!” This witness now goes out of court forever. His mission is ended. There is no need of his testimony any further. Their Master Himself is here.

Briefly and finally, you see the object of this letter is to show that the proposition is established by external testimony, objective testimony: three witnesses, the Spirit, the water and the blood. But I want something more than that, and the witness tells us that we have it “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him.” *In him!*

Now, here is the subjective ratification of the external evidence. The baptism of Jesus Christ was nearly two thousand years ago, a traditional witness. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ was nearly two thousand years ago, a traditional witness. The outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was nearly two thousand years ago, a traditional witness. What can I have new?

If I accept that evidence by faith, can I not have a confirmation in me that will be perfectly and forever assuring that this evidence is true? That is exactly what you can have. Now mark the object of the testimony is to prove that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The value of that proposition is that if He is the Son of God He is the author of eternal life and that we get in touch with that eternal life by faith in Him.

Now comes the concluding thought, that if I exercise that faith in Him on this external evidence, that proves His Sonship, and hence, His being the Author of Eternal Life, then I have that witness in me. And when they talk about cold testimony — testimony two thousand years old — I say, “Yes, it does not make any difference to me how old it is, if I can in my own heart have that testimony confirmed, if I can have it in me.”

Well, the man who rejects Jesus Christ never gets to that internal evidence. No man has that who rejects the external evidence. “But whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ hath the witness in him.” And if he be a poor man, if he be an ignorant man, if he be a slave, if he be a white-headed and trembling old Negro, he can stand up before the universities and kings and courts and emperors, and say, “I am not able to compete with you in your logic, but Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I have the witness in me. I feel it. I know it. He is my Saviour. One thing I do know, that I was blind, and now I see; that I was a sinner and burdened with sin and God, for Christ’s sake, when I believed in Him, has forgiven my sins. And while this evidence in me is not to convince you, it satisfied me. It was given for my satisfaction and I have it, and you cannot take it away from me.”

You might confront me with logicians. You might bring up your higher critics and experts. You might bombard me with these learned theses and scholastic dissertations, yet, I, poor, ignorant, unlearned, have the witness in me that Jesus Christ is my Saviour, and you cannot take that evidence from me. God gave it to me. He hath compassion on my infirmity. He knows how to have compassion on the ignorant, and He descended to my low estate, and He kindled a fire in my soul that all the powers of the earth cannot put out. It shines there and it

does me good. I feel the shining when it is night. I feel the power of it when I am sick. I feel it when I go to die, and like the dying Methodist bishop, I look in the face of the grim and spectral monster and say, “is this death — this light, this joy, this buoyancy, this soaring, this chariot, this welcoming of angels? Is this death? Welcome death; O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

I have the witness in me, and if you are a Christian you can have that eternal ratification. You can go out before the world without any fear. That is the hope of the church. And the Holy Spirit beareth witness by convicting, by converting, by sanctifying. The Holy Spirit beareth witness throughout the whole earth. And hence, said Paul, “When I come to discuss God, when I speak of what God is to man, and how man is to be reconciled to God, I lay aside philosophy, I waste no time in trying to find out God by that method, but I confine myself to the testimony of God. My way of knowing Jesus is by evidence.” I look at the witnesses and they speak to me. The Spirit says, “He is the Son of God.” The water says, “He is the Son of God.” And the blood says, “He is the Son of God.” And one of these witnesses is here in these emblems — the testimony of His blood.

If you are a Christian and you stay away from the observances of the Lord’s Supper, you lend your aid to the Devil just that much to darken the clearness of His testimony. You are not called on to partake because you are good, not because you are consistent, nor because your life has been holy in the sight of God, but you are called on because miserable sinner and unworthy sinner as you have been, you yet have faith in Jesus Christ. By faith in the blood you come up and allow this witness to show forth Christ’s death.

Show it, Brother, oh! show it! For the world needs to see it! Unmuzzle the witness! Unmuffle the voice! Let him speak. Let him tell to the dark and lost world, Jesus the Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. I have the witness in me. My soul tells me that it is true—He is my Saviour. Oh! how precious that internal evidence!

Have you been sick? Have the shadows been upon you? Have you felt that you were parted from your scattered loved ones? Have you felt that earthly help was gone? Oh! in that hour has it not been an unspeakably precious thought that you had a witness in you that Jesus the Christ is the Son of God and your Saviour? Now we want to show forth the Lord’s death. Let us pray.

7. JESUS WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM

TEXT: And when He drew nigh, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. — ~~2941~~ Luke 19:41-44.

A very profound impression has been made upon my mind by the study of the Sunday school lesson of today, — Christ's triumphal procession into Jerusalem. Some months ago I preached to you a sermon on Christ's public visit to Jerusalem, after He had commenced His ministry. This is His last. This closed His ministry.

I wish I knew how to get clearly before you the contrast between Christ's triumphal entry and the triumphal entry of the kings of this world. Pick up your Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and read his graphic descriptions of the triumphs decreed for the general who had accomplished some great object, who had subdued a nation, who had slaughtered a million and led a million into captivity, and mark how that triumphal entry (for it was always celebrated in Rome) was managed in its ceremonies.

See the prisoners manacled with irons that were brought from that far-off land to grace the triumph. See the chariot, drawn by four, or six, or ten, or twenty, magnificent, beautiful, snow-white horses. See the ensigns of war carried at the head of the column. Behold the pomp and circumstance and splendor, every step of it prescribed by a master of ceremonies. Who should meet it as it came to a certain point? Where should be the arch of triumph? What distinguished citizens should make speeches at a certain point? And how those speeches were carefully written out and all the rhetorical finish upon them coldly prepared in the study. A Roman triumph!

Go and stand under the Arch of Triumph as it once stood in the City of Paris and read on it the inscriptions of the great victories of Napoleon Bonaparte, and study just one triumphal procession as it passed under that arch, and then read

how Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords entered into the Holy City. No master of ceremonies; no cold programme of set speeches; no arrangement of the crowd that should come out from the city to meet the crowd that went in, but all of it was the involuntary, instantaneous and unprompted uprising of the souls of the poor, of the people who had been benefited by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not a sword, not a flag, not a war horse, not a chariot, none of the trappings that were usually placed upon the steed that was to bear the conquering hero that came, were seen here. No cloth of gold spread out upon a field of gold, as when earthly kings meet, to impress upon the eyes of the rabble and upon the heart of the rabble, some conception of their earthly dignity.

He came riding upon the foal of an ass, without saddle or bridle. Sitting on that untrained colt He rode in, and such branches as the people might pluck from the trees were scattered where gratitude prompted that they should be placed. And if one would spread down his tunic, or outer garment, upon the ground, to signify that a king was coming, that might be done. I do wish you would take into your hearts the difference between Jesus and the spirit of this world.

Strauss, who has written as a German, but largely from the standpoint of Renan, a Frenchman, endeavoring to deny anything supernatural in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, has asserted that Jesus Himself lost His balance and was temporarily led away by the expressions of applause that greeted Him on this occasion, and that He must have regretted that the popular tide did not have depth and force enough in it to carry Him to the kingdom which He sought.

The object of the selection of my theme today partially is to sweep away any such conception, to furnish an absolute demonstration that the Lord Jesus Christ understood the whole situation, in all its present and backward and forward relations. That He was never for one moment deceived by any cry falling from the lips of His humble disciples, or by any questioning or accusation that rose from the malicious hearts of the Pharisees that would smite Him to death; but that He thoroughly comprehended the deep and eternal significance of all of it.

Now mark you that this paragraph which I have read immediately follows your lesson. Your lesson closes with, "Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna to the Lamb of God." Your lesson closes with palm leaves and garments spread before Him. Your lesson closes by giving every demonstration which it is alleged had misled even Jesus Himself. And while they are saying hosanna, and while the colt upon

which He rides is walking upon the outspread garments, and upon the scattered palm leaves, their road makes a turn. You can go and stand there now and see where it occurred. The road makes a turn and as it turns the city bursts upon His view. The city of Jerusalem rises up in all of its glorious splendor.

And as He saw it a great gasping sob shook Him. It was not that silent weeping, as when He stood at the grave of Lazarus and wept. A different word is used. It is an outcry of grief. It is a lamentation. It is an extorted wail, a dirge like a funeral note of woe that breaks from His pallid lips as a vision bursts upon His sight. And what is that vision?

Let us look at the fact first. There is nothing upon this earth that so impresses the human heart as when walking along the pathway of life, all at once, whether you have expected such a thing or not, all at once, by the Providence of God, a curtain is held back and you see over yonder into the future. When from some unclouded summit of vision there bursts upon the eye what shall be in the near future, and the lips speak what the startled heart feels, there is an awful impression, a deep and sublime impression made upon the mind by such a sight.

The poets have tried, with all the arts known to the dramatic writer, to grasp this. See how Campbell tries to bring it out when he introduces a seer as meeting Lochiel, "Whose clan is a thousand, whose breast is but one," when he meets him on the eve of the battle of Culloden and startles him by gathering back the curtain and showing him that bloody field. But you can trace the art all the way through in the expressions of Campbell.

It is only when a real vision is seen, only when God's Providence draws back these curtains and the eye which is opened looks upon actuality, that the voice is natural and that the utterances have tears in them. And such it was then. Just as clearly as men saw the fact forty years later, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the midst of that shouting, in the midst of that waving of palms, saw Titus coming. He saw the Roman armies gathering. He saw the embankments raised around that doomed city. He saw that city shut in on every side. He saw famine in its ghastliness and pestilence in its noisomeness, and conflagration with its torch of fire, and war with all of its grim and grisly horrors, and civil strife and insurrection, and women eating the bodies of their children — -all of it burst upon His mind at one time.

Now let us read it, and I will read, connecting it with your lesson, so as not to make a break: "Blessed is the king that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace

in heaven and glory in the highest. And when He drew nigh He saw the city.” Many men who have visited Jerusalem have gone back on the road to Jericho and gotten into that road and followed it slowly and solemnly around, just as if they were in that procession, to make the effect upon them as they turned that very corner of the mountain side, and to see the city burst upon their view, and have described the impression that it made upon them.

“And when He drew nigh He saw the city and He wailed over it,” not wept. He wailed over it: “If thou hadst known in this thy day, even thou, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee and compass thee around and keep thee in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground and thy children with thee. And they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation.”

What a deep, significant reason. Forty years after, Titus comes. Forty years before Titus is the cause. There the effect; here the cause. Who will trace out the subtle connections between the downfall of Jerusalem and their rejection of this last offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, this last coming! He had been there before. He had been there often. It had been line upon line and precept upon precept. He is not mistaken.

He knows that it means death to Him. He has announced that it means death to Him. And when Mary, who believed His words, who believed He was to die, and the only one who did, when she took her precious alabaster box of ointment and broke it and poured it over His head and over His feet, and wiped His feet with the hair of her head, she knew that the nails would very soon pierce these feet, and Jesus says, “She hath done this beforehand, to prepare me for my burial.” There was no misconception in His mind, but the awful thought on His mind was this:

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the lost! Oh, how often I would have gathered them, but they would not. How many times before this have I sent my prophets, sent my servants. How tenderly have I pleaded with them. And even now, when I see them on the verge of their final doom; even now when they have turned away from me forever; even now, when blindfolded, the things that make for their peace hidden from their sight, even when they go out of sight down the dark pathway of irreparable disaster, as that pathway closes behind them, I stop and weep over the lost and fallen.”

It is a picture of the heart of Jesus. It is an exhibition of the soul, the compassionate soul of the Son of God. He is the express image of the invisible God, of that God whom no man has seen at any time. He was sent in order to make known to men who were despising and misunderstanding and misrepresenting God, a father's loving heart. Is this a tyrant? Is this a tyrant that stands where the perverse and incorrigible and malicious and murderous and persistent despisers of divine love and compassion have passed by and gone down and gone down forever? Oh, these tears of Jesus, even when He knows that the men He weeps for are lost forever! What a picture of God's heart!

I want to make the application of this in two directions. What occurs in human experience can govern only the individual life in which that experience occurs. I mean to say that the standard for the government of the world is the written word, and that you cannot substitute in place of that word any feeling you have had, any vision you have seen. You may not say, "I, too, have a vision," and put it in place of what is written.

I doubt not that in ways innumerable and with people innumerable, the Lord God does send beforehand impressions that are genuine and correspond to the divine influence that produces them, and that so far as that particular soul is concerned it is as if God had said, "Here at the turn of the road I show you the city. See it from this standpoint. See it from the standpoint of the rejection of Jesus Christ. See it from the standpoint of malice against the principles of His holy religion. Let me show you the city." And I doubt not men have seen it, but it is not to take the place of what is written.

Then this word "nigh." This is followed by an exclamation point at the end of the sentence. It expresses not only such a thought as, "It might have been," not only that, but it expresses the sadness of a heart that had so deeply longed that a different thing had been. "If thou hadst known in this thy day, even thou, the things which belong unto thy peace!"

Now here was the last time when it was possible for that city to get a glimpse of the things which made for its peace. God knew it was the last time. Jesus knew it was the last time, and He knew that if they did not see it that day they would never see it. He knew that as that road wound around that mountain, and as it passed a specific point, that at that point there was the last opening, the last vista up which and through which Jerusalem could ever see her peace, and that if that opening was passed, never more would there be any open way through which their sight could reach peace and things which made for their peace.

Now you can understand His grief. Just to see that city pass out, and Him looking at it. See the three or four millions of people, see those three or four millions representing the nation. See that nation that has walked from the days of Abraham until now under the direct Providence of God. See that people upon whom the most signal blessings have been bestowed, and that have been the marked recipients of divine favor above all nations in every age of the world up to this time. See them passing without knowing, without seeing, without being conscious of it, the very last place from which they can ever see peace.

“Oh, if you could know it today! Even if today, as I come in my procession into Jerusalem, while these people are spreading their palm leaves, while they are shouting hosanna to the Son of God. Oh, if today, the last opportunity, you would look to the things which make for your peace! But they are hidden from your sight.”

And they are hidden yet. One hundred years is a long time. Eighteen hundred years, oh, what a long time that is! Nineteen hundred years, what a stretch of time! And yet nearly twenty centuries have rolled away since they passed that point.

Have they come to a place yet where they could see? Not yet; not yet. Did the Romans come? They came. Was the embankment thrown up? It was. Were they shut in on every side? They were. Were they left to internal strife, fighting among themselves? They were. Did brother grapple brother by the throat? They did. Did women eat their own children in their hunger and their starvation? They did. Did ruin such as the world had never known before come upon them? It did. And is the night on them yet? It is.

To me it would be the saddest thing on earth to look at but for one expression in this connection that stretches far over the centuries and takes hold of a time when this nation, that had been scattered and dispersed over the earth, to be a by-word of hissing and reproach, at last it shall turn to the Lord, and Israel shall be saved. That is the only thing that relieves the dark picture to my mind.

Now there is a remarkable similarity between a nation of people and an individual. That has struck every student of nations; every man that ever studied history has been impressed with that thought, that as an individual person has his childhood, and as he grows and matures and reaches manhood and after a while passes the zenith and then goes down, so with nations, so with people gathered together. And that student of history is also bound to notice this point,

that just as certain as an individual is responsible to God for all departures from the moral law and for lack of conformity thereto, so is the nation. And the nation that forgets God is doomed just as much as the individual that forgets God.

The doom cannot be averted. No counsels of men, no precautions of earthly wisdom, no massing of armies, no mustering phalanx or Pretorian Guard, no hitherto invincible regiments of Swiss infantry or Austrian hussars can keep down the doom when it comes upon the nation.

There are things which make for our community peace. There are things which make for our State peace. There are things which make for our national peace, and wise are we if they are not hidden from our eyes, and it is a sure token of the manifest judgment of God if we cannot look down some of the openings and discern the things which make for peace.

And now let us close with the reference of this matter to the individual. It has always, ever since I have had any religious thoughts on the subject, been to me a matter of profound concern that education should be in a religious atmosphere, and that mere mental and physical development, without moral and spiritual development, signified nothing in the wide world toward the conservation of public morals, toward the perpetuity and stability of government. And it has also ever been to my mind clear that there is a propitious period; there is a standpoint from which many roads to peace can be walked and many sights of peace can be seen.

I refer to young people. How few can tell. These Baylor boys will soon go home. It is true it is a month or two yet until they go, but it is not a month or two until their last opportunity this year for salvation has passed. When did you ever read about anybody being converted in the days that you are preparing for examination-when the mind is diverted by thoughts of going home? Is that a time for conversion?

Oh, is there not from where we now stand on this first Sunday in April-is there not a way through which if you look you can find some student hitherto lost who can see and find peace, and that if passed now will be forever passed! Gone! Gone! And gone so that after it is gone you can just look back and say, "Oh, oh, if I had known!" Oh, in view of heaven lost and hell gained; oh, son or daughter, if you had known, even that last time, the things that made for peace! Too late! Too late!

I have myself felt my heart almost break as I would stand over a dead child, a dead baby, a dead boy. Oh, it is bitter, it is bitter! But what is that to standing over a dead soul, a soul from which peace is gone forever, yea, forever and forever!

Then beyond the student (and, oh, Lord God, let there be nothing in me that would hide peace from their sight!) beyond the student I look at the city. I look at the congregation, I look at the young people here in Waco, and I cannot help it. I have passed through some strange experiences in the last forty-eight hours. I do not present it as a revelation, as gospel; there is no standard but the Word of God. But I have been where I could see and feel the certainty and the nearness of the eternity of heaven and of hell. And there are some that have come often here; some maybe whose fathers died in the faith of the gospel that is preached here; some, it may be, whose mothers, from the spirit world are looking down on this earth; some over whom God's light has been shining with special brightness; some who have been held under the uplifted prayers of the pious, and whose pillows, even the pillows in their cradles, have been bedewed with the tears and have been surrounded with the watching and prayers of mothers who prayed for them while they were yet in the cradle. And some of these, maybe, are now and forever passing the point where they will never see peace any more, never will again.

Who would make a mock of death? I do want to say this to you: There is in the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ a self-evidencing demonstration of its truth. It is true and the soul that rejects Jesus Christ is lost. That soul is lost. And would you be satisfied, after death has come, to say, "Well, we had a magnificent funeral?" Would you be satisfied to say after death has come, "We had flowers put on the grave?" Would you be satisfied because a monument of pure white marble has been erected? Would you be satisfied if a quotation from the Bible and about heaven has been inscribed on that tombstone, if, notwithstanding the flowers, notwithstanding the external indications, that marble monument rests on a breast which once caged a lost soul?

To show the foreknowledge of Jesus it is only necessary to note that right in connection with this visit He instituted this very memorial of the supper we celebrate today. If a stranger inquire: "What is that? What is it?" That is intended to represent a shroud, a white shroud. What is under the shroud? The emblems of a dead body. How are they the emblems of a dead body? The body and the blood are separated. And what does it signify? It signifies that the

One whom the people greeted with their hosannas, the meek and lowly One, that without pomp or ceremony came into Jerusalem on the day that you have read about in your lesson-that Jesus put away His personal glory; that Jesus emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of a slave; that Jesus gave His life for the salvation of the people.

Who would sing hosanna? Let no man sing it who has not the spirit of Jesus. Let no man, through a form, celebrate a ritual of Palm Sunday. Oh, yes, all through the ages you read about Palm Sundays. Today is Palm Sunday, as they call it. Read in novels and romances and histories about how they set this day forth. No, keep no such days. "Touch not, taste not, handle not," said the Apostle Paul, not that way. How then? Oh, in your souls, in your spirits, come up to the Lord Jesus Christ and catch the spirit of humility and of sacrifice that was in Him. That would be a real Palm Sunday.

Oh, that would be a triumphant procession of Jesus Christ into Waco. That would do more to recognize Him than to spread a cloth of gold for Him to walk on. Not gold, but hearts, hearts!

Bring your souls and place them on the altar today, on this day of the solemn communion that commemorates His death. Oh, if one spark of the light of Christ's religion is in your heart, if one echo of His precious promises yet faintly sounds in your soul, oh, if there be just one breath in the lungs of your spiritual life that is like the breath in the lungs of the life of Jesus Christ, let us use that today in coming right up to Jesus, right near to Jesus.

Mary saw it. She felt it. She never said anything about it, but she gave her choicest and her best. Not in words did she speak, but in actions she said, "Oh, dying Master, I see it! I feel it! I believe it! Let me prepare Thee for Thy burial! Oh, let the odor of the ointment of my sacrifice fill the world." Mary saw it! Let us pray.

8. SEEKING THE MIND OF CHRIST

TEXT: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:5.

But very recently this church in its official capacity had occasion to cite, and to commend as worthy of imitation, an illustrious example of our Lord touching the question of taking vengeance in our own hands. And now tonight it is my purpose to present for your most thoughtful and prayerful consideration another illustrious example of our Lord Jesus Christ, commended with equal sanction as the other, to our imitation. By imitation of this example we are to become, in a crooked and perverse generation, as the lights of the world. holding forth the word of life.

By so much as the imitation conforms to the example set before us as our model, by that much light shines in the darkness around us. By so much as our imitation falls short of or deflects from exact conformity to the model, by that much is the light dimmed and the world left to perish in the dimness. The example of Christ to which I wish to call your attention tonight is expressed in the fifth verse of the second chapter of the letter to the Philippians: “Having this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Before discussing this text I wish very briefly to refer to the letter itself, of which the text is only a part. On the southeastern shore of Europe, with only a narrow sea dividing it from Asia, is a famous spot. Its first fame and its first name was derived from a gift of nature. A number of fountains of unusual fulness and force burst up out of the ground, as God — unsealed, and flow off in living streams, and from this fact the place was called Crenides, or fountains. Later, it obtained another name, Philippi, in honor of Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great; and still later it obtained another glory because in the extensive plain hard by was fought the decisive battle between Octavius and Antony on one hand, and Brutus and Cassius on the other, by consequence of which victory it obtained the privilege of being a Roman colony.

But its crowning glory was when God’s inspired Apostle landed there and preached to its people the glorious gospel of eternal life. There was a time, according to the song of Homer, when Greece sent her navies and her panoplied hosts to demolish the walls of Troy, but there came a later time when

a stranger amid the ruins of Troy, by night saw a Macedonian at his bedside, whispering in his ear, "Come over and help us." And thus the gospel was introduced into Europe.

You remember the first convert was a woman, in that little prayer chapel by one of those flowing streams which first gave a name to the place. You remember the miracle wrought, which cast out the demon of divination, and the consequent chastisement by stripes and the imprisonment of the Apostles, and the appeal made to the Father, and how at midnight, the earthquake responded as God's answer to the prayer of His preachers down in the cell and bound; and how the jailer was saved, and the little church planted.

Of all the churches to whom Paul writes letters this church is never rebuked. So far as history testifies, it was a church that was to him a joy forever. And now the preacher who planted the gospel in that place has been led by duty far away from the scene of the great meeting, having received time and again, as remembrances of the affection of the people, contributions to his support, while at Thessalonica and at other places, and has now carried the gospel to Rome, and in Rome is in prison, with the expectation of death hanging over him. Unterrified he confronts it and welcomes it, regarding it as the portal to heaven and desiring to die, but leaving it to God whether he shall remain.

Under these circumstances this church, hearing of his critical state and hard and bitter necessities, sends to him through the hands of Epaphroditus another contribution of money and supplies. The messenger that brings it contracts an illness, and is nigh unto death, and as Paul says: "That I might not have sorrow on sorrow, God had mercy on me and spared his life."

Now he sends him back with this letter, in which he addresses himself to the condition of that church. While there are no rebukes in it, he recognizes dangers. There were two women in the church, both of whom he held in very high remembrance, Euodias and Syntyche. They had helped him very much in that place when he preached the gospel there. They had helped his successor there, but now, sad to say, these two women were at strife with each other, and there was likely to be a division in the church, growing out of the contention between two noble women that had so signally illustrated their faith in Jesus, and their spirit of sacrifice in the days that were gone.

Women can form parties in a church even more easily than men. He sends a special message to them. You can see all through the letter how he exhorts all

the brethren, and especially Euodias and Syntyche, “Who helped me in the gospel that they be of the same mind”; that is, if the Christian religion has no power to bring God’s dear children together in Christian work, then how can it claim to regenerate and reform the world?

He had heard too of the persecution of that people. He says they were called upon not only to believe in Jesus Christ, but also to suffer for Him. The fires which commenced to burn there in his own time were burning still, and some of them were becoming afraid, and hence he writes this letter to stir up their spirit of courage “In nothing be ye terrified by your adversaries.”

Then there was developing in the little congregation, just rising up as yet, but susceptible of enormous development, the spirit of pride, the spirit of selfishness, and in some the spirit of despondency, and in others the spirit of corroding anxieties.

The object of this letter then was to induce this congregation, first, to have courage, not fear; second, unity; third, humility — to lay aside pride, by which the Devil fell. And then cultivate a spirit of unselfishness, regarding not their own things, but regarding the things of others. And then, instead of being despondent, rejoice “I say unto you again, rejoice always and be anxious about nothing, but in everything, with prayer and supplication make known your requests unto God.”

While these are the general objects, he enforces what he has to say by citing the illustrious example of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and particularly when He wanted to enforce humanity and unselfishness.

And now before yet commencing to discuss the text which cites the great example of our Lord, I want to speak to you a few words about the standpoint from which the Apostle writes this letter. There is something exceedingly touching in it, something which renders the words very impressive. What was his attitude? It was the attitude of one held back from heaven, “Having a desire to depart,” facing death just ahead of him, expecting to hear the sentence pronounced at the lips of fallible men, expecting to hear the invitation to come Home from the lips of the Lord.

Held back from Heaven! What a tremendous thought! Socrates is represented as saying just before he drank the fatal hemlock, “It is now time to depart, I to die and you to live, but which of us shall go to the better destiny is known only

to the Deity.” Poor Socrates! “I to die, but whether that is to go to a better destiny, I don’t know.”

Hear the Apostle on the other hand: “To die is gain,” or in the expressive language of the Greek, with its double comparative, “which is by far the more better.” Think of that, Christian people, that a man can in the light of Christianity look at death and say, “It is gain.” That he can look at death and say, “It is far, far better.” I desire to depart, not that death in itself be coveted, but because of that other sentence coupled with it, “To be with Christ.”

It shows his clear conception of what lies beyond death. It shows that from the delectable mountain of revelation on which God placed him he could see across the intervening river with its cold flood and chilling streams, the far uplifted heights of the -heavenly city, the sheen of its splendor and its glorious estate, that place where black night cannot spread her mantle or flap her wings, that place where sickness and sorrow and pain and death can never come, that place of reunion with Christ and with the loved ones who have gone before, that place so attractively dear, that he can say, “It is gain. I desire to depart. O, Master! Speak the word and call thy homesick servant to thyself!”

Look at the standpoint. See the mariner who for a long time has been out on a toilsome voyage on strange seas, exposed to strange fortunes by storm and other perils. At last in his storm-battered ship he gets in sight of the port at home. He can see the shining in the window where the loved one is waiting and watching. And just at that place he is held back. A voice says, “Turn the prow of the ship and make another voyage.” It must be a mighty motive, it must be a mighty incentive, with home in sight, to make him turn back and take up again the toils of another voyage.

So might Paul say, “I don’t know which I will choose. I know it is better, far better, to go, and if I am not allowed to go it is because God means to use me for the good of others, and if I am held back when nearly home, then I cannot trifle. If I turn back at all it is to speak words as if in view of the judgment. It is to speak to do good. It is to speak for salvation.” How can you conceive of one writing from his standpoint, when God holds him back, saying, “It shall be for the fruit of your work,” bringing some idle message, some trifling theme, some transitory subject before the people?

Men may trifle, but not under such circumstances. There are times when the heart is tuned to folly, but I venture to say that when after a long voyage, the

port of home is in sight, and one is turned back, cannot land then, as he turns back he utters a strange sentence. He says, "I don't know which I will choose, even after I know that it is expedient for me to remain. I don't know which I shall choose, but I do know that I am going to abide somebody else's choice for me." He did not know which he would choose, but there was an election in heaven. A choice was made from the other shore, and he says, "I know that I will abide, and that it will be for your good."

Now that being the standpoint from which he writes, let us see what he says. Did you ever hear such words? Let me read them to you again, lest a while ago you failed to catch their deep significance: "If there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation through love, if any communion of the spirit, if any tender affection and compassion toward me, then make my joy complete by being of the same mind, regarding not your own things, but regarding the things of others. Also let this mind be in you, which was also in Jesus Christ."

How could any one who is a true Christian deny the force of such a predicate as that? Do you notice that every sentence appeals to a Christian's experience? Not what you have read, not what you have thought, not some argument you are able to make, but if, as you have found it in your own heart, there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation from love, if there is any communion with the Holy Spirit, I press those thoughts upon you and appeal to your experience.

I would go back and say, "In your past did you ever find any encouragement in Christ? What! None at all? Has there been no period of your life when you took courage as you thought of Christ? Have you ever found any consolation arising from God's love for you and your love for God? Has your heart ever been comforted in any sorrow? Surely you have been stricken many times and woes have come to you. Did they entirely overwhelm you? Did they sweep you entirely off your feet? Didn't you find any comfort for your soul, nor any promise of God fulfilled to you in that time? Did not some power, silent, invisible, touch your soul and make you feel as you never felt before in your life, that brought the tears to your eyes, and pierced your heart through with sorrow when you thought of your sins, that led you to look upon your Redeemer and to stretch out your hands, and cry, "My Lord and my God?" If there be anything like this in your experiences, let it be a predicate for receiving the exhortation of the text.

From the history of this case at Philippi, and from the standpoint of the writer and from the predicate upon which he makes his appeal, we may better approach his exhortation: "Be not terrified by your adversaries." Be faithful. Fresh courage take. When was the Almighty put down before a host? If God be for us, who can be against us?

If timid women, undergirded by the arms of the Almighty, have bravely confronted the greatest perils, and have patiently endured most poignant suffering, and have shouted in the very embrace of death, and have glorified the Lord by their martyrdom, then why should you be afraid? Is your adversary so formidable that with God's help you cannot cope with him? Is the array of opposition against Christianity so vast, so irresistible, that even with God back of you, you are afraid to confront the issues? If then there be encouragement in Christ, if there be consolation in love, if there be communion with the Spirit, lay aside your cowardice. Be brave.

Peter was a bold man when he had communion with the Spirit. He testified boldly. He feared no evil. The persecution by the Jewish council, the persecution by the king, imprisonment with the view of death on the morrow, did not daunt the heart that was stayed upon God's omnipotence.

Behold on what unsinking and unsinkable foundations God has planted your feet. See how the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler interpose between you and the fiery darts of your adversaries. See how the feeblest, thus encouraged and supported, have been able to be as brave as a lion. Then let fear take its flight. Let it spread its wings and fly away like a fancy of the night. Rouse up in your firmness and boldness and testify in this city that God has power on earth to forgive sins.

And, not only be brave, but unite. Be of one mind. "They were all of one accord in one place," at Pentecost. Oh, the harmony that comes from God! Though a thousand harps be brought together, of different strings, if the Spirit attunes them and touches the chord of one, the chord of every other responds in unison, and there is harmony. Be of one mind as you work together for the salvation of men. "Ye are lights of the world in a crooked generation." It is crooked. It is perverse. It is opposed to the religion which you profess, and which you teach, and which, blessed be God, you have. But there is power in the light reflected from the Sun of Righteousness in heaven to compel attention, compel conviction, compel faith, compel confession and compel a surrender, unconditional, eternal and absolute, to the government of your God.

But here is the hard part — to put on humility and unselfishness. Did you know that the classic Greek had no word to express humility? The nearest word that it has signifies “mean spirit,” “contemptible spirit.” So Christianity had to coin a word to express humility.

You remember, some of you students, what Aristotle teaches on this subject. He says that high-mindedness is the greatest virtue, and that means that one shall deem himself worthy of all greatness. And you remember that he said if man professed humility, or the nearest thing to humility their language could express, it was never justifiable unless he was indeed some pitiable and contemptible fellow. You remember that Heine declared that humility was the dog virtue — “the dog virtue of humility.”

But the gospel came and coined a word — a word that does not signify a mean or contemptible spirit. Our Lord announced the true thought when He said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” which means what? “Blessed are those who are conscious of need and poverty in their spirit.” Blessed are those who do not deplore the lack of riches that touch this world only, the external things only, but when they look inside, into the soul, into the spirit, feel that they are poor. “In my soul I am naked; in my soul I am bankrupt; in my soul I am lost.” “Blessed are the poor in spirit.”

Now you will have to teach the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, I believe, next Sunday; it is your Sunday school lesson. It becomes you, therefore, to give the children the right idea of it. Oh, pride! Why is it we get mad? Pride! Why is it we are quick to resent?

Pride! Why is it that we will not meet and stand together as brethren? Pride! That vaunting devil! For by pride the vaunting devil fell, and, therefore, God’s Word says, “Lay not the hands of ordination upon a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”

Surely the hardest thing to do is to avoid pride-social pride. Ah, me! the social pride of this town! Pride in money; pride in purse; pride that will not kneel to God; pride that will not admit its beggary and its want; pride that lies when it says, “I am rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing,” for it is miserable and poor and blind and naked. How are you to induce these people to be humble?

Now, we come to our great example. Look at it. Look at the example of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Now, what mind! Let me read it to you and see the mind that was in Jesus: "Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, or retained, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, becoming in the likeness of man, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient," becoming obedient "unto death," becoming obedient unto the death "of the Cross." "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name."

I do put before you the example of Jesus. Let us look at it. What is it? Subsisting as God, the express image of His person, and brightness of His glory that He had before the world was. How did He regard His own fame? "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not as a thing to be retained;" "equality with God ... but emptied himself," and stooped to what? To the place of a servant; took upon Himself our nature.

Do you mean when He became a man he became a Solomon, a David, or like Aaron, full-grown? No. Oh, ye listening shepherds! This shall be a sign unto you, that you shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. This shall be a sign unto you.

A babe! He that was wrapped in swaddling clothes, brought to the world eternal life.

You mean that He shall be found in some gilt cradle in a palace? No; in a manger, an ox-trough. But did He not come mighty in reputation? He made Himself of no reputation. But did He not come decked with the gold and silver and jewels of the world? No. He who was rich became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. But did He not come to a palace? No. "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but he had nowhere to lay his head." But did He not come to have men gather round Him and minister unto Him? No. "I come not to be ministered unto, but to minister." "I, your Lord and Master, wash your feet."

Oh, that condescension of Jesus Christ! We are too proud to obey, but He became obedient. He was subject to parents, subject to the law of the land, subject to all of its requirements; without guilt, without spot, without blemish. No man was able to convict Him of disobedience in anything. And we are too proud to obey God. We treat obedience as a mark of contempt, and when

God speaks and the majesty of His law, “Thus saith the Lord,” is put right before us, we are too proud to simply obey Him. He stooped to obedience, though it led to death.

Says one, “I would obey. I would confine myself to a business which Jesus Christ approves, but I must make a living, and then I will enter into this. My conscience tells me it is not right. I feel that it is not right, but I must make a living.” He was obedient unto death!

“Well,” says another, “I am willing to be obedient unto death if you will make it a glorious death. Let me hear the trumpet sound. Let me hear the beat of the drum. Let me snuff up the dust of a glorious battle; amid the plaudits and huzzahs of admiring comrades let me storm some deadly breach and die on the pinnacles of fame.” But He became obedient unto the death of the Cross, crucified between two thieves. So, “let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Oh, that height from which He stooped, that marvelous condescension! No wonder the Greeks had no word to express humility.

And now the unselfishness of it! What was it? What motive prompted Him? He loved sinners. It was the motive in the shepherd’s heart when he counted the flock and only ninety and nine were found; one was gone, one was lost, one was wandering on mountains bleak and bare: “I will leave the fold and the protecting shelter and go out and face the darkness and the storm to find that one.” It was the motive, the benevolent rescuing of the perishing at personal hazard, of becoming poor that we might be made rich, of dying that we might live, of baring His heart to the piercing sword of divine justice that we might be acquitted, of being condemned and drinking to the last bitter dregs the cup of loneliness and woe in order that we might drink forever from the well-spring of salvation; in order that under the overflowing fountain might be written for you, “Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come and drink, without money and without price, since Jesus on the Cross, said, ‘I thirst.’” Let this mind be in you. I take the example of the Lord and lay it right down before you. Can we sincerely sing,

*His track I see, and I’ll pursue,
The narrow way till Him I view?*

Who would be ashamed to follow Jesus, ashamed before an evil and perverse generation? Ashamed to admit that you have the Spirit of Christ, ashamed to look the proud ones of this world in the face and say, “I am a Christian?” Oh, the light that there is following Jesus! “Ye are lights shining in a crooked and

perverse generation,” but “if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!”

Oh, how great! Are you despondent? He tells you to “rejoice.” Are you anxious? “Be anxious about nothing.” What have you a right to summon? Summon courage. Summon unity. Summon humility. Summon unselfishness. Summon joy. Summon contentment and peace, under the promises of God, and go out and do the work that the Master has given you to do.

Now I close what I have to say by making this application: When Jesus had that mind not to regard His own greatness, but lay aside His crown and stoop — stoop unto obedience, stoop unto death, unto the death of the Cross, it was with a view of saving other people. What, then, I want to say is this: That is the only way that you can save other people. I do not know of any other way. I have never known a case of any man being saved by human instrumentality in any other way. You may, through the paths of pride, get people to join the church, but that does not save them.

I say that if you look to the salvation of men, if you look to the forgiveness of their sins, if you look to the regeneration of their souls, if you look to the consciousness of the divine presence and blessedness, if you want to give them not vain conjecture, but sight of heaven and its glorious shores, this is the way you must do it. If we can be of one mind! Oh, that heaven would make us harmonious in this—that in unselfishness and humbleness we would address ourselves to the work of saving men!

My own heart aches for the salvation of some soul through the ministry of this church. And I charge you to put away pride, put it away. Be humble. Have this mind in you that was in our Lord Jesus Christ. Stoop! Stoop low, lower, Brother, Sister. Come together. -Hunger and thirst after righteousness. Feel the poverty that is in your spirits and find God’s blessing, for “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” That is our way of access to their hearts. I do not know any other way.

And as for me, pardon me, if I say that I occupy the standpoint of Paul. I say that, as between me and the fifth of last November there rolls a shoreless ocean, and it hurts inexpressibly to go back to the affairs of a bygone world. But if I go back I would speak no trifling words. I would speak to save men. I do not say that I would be willing to die that you might have a revival of religion,

but do say a harder thing — I would be willing to live. Shall we have it then! If so, we must get down low, down like our dear Lord.

There must be in our souls a thirsting for the salvation of men that will not be appeased till they are saved. I summon you to it as more important than the autonomy or independence of Cuba, than the annexation of all the islands of the Pacific, than the election of a thousand United States senators or presidents, than the acquisition of uncounted millions that we gather souls to God, for if we get just one it outweighs the world. “For what will it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”


I speak then for a jewel brighter in its luster than the beams of the sun or the sparkle of the stars or the sheen of the moon — the jewel of a soul dimmed by sin, and in the deep darkness of mountain quarries it lies embedded; and we must search for it as for a hidden treasure, and bring it out and let heaven’s light touch it with luster, and let it sparkle with the glory of God.

Now who will help us in this work? We are a long way from being in a condition to do this work, a long way. Oh, the pride! Oh, the lack of unity! Oh, the despondency! Oh, the anxiety! Oh, the selfishness! Put them down. Put down the weights that sink you, and buoyantly stand up erect as God’s people and let us go out to carry the tidings of freedom of the world. Others are bound in shackles of spiritual slavery, hand and foot, at the mercy of the Devil. Let us rescue them. Will you seek this mind that is in our Lord Jesus Christ? Promise me that you will do this, that you will make an honest effort.

You will if you so promise, and I do not want you to promise unless you are determined to make the effort. Feeling as I do now, looking as I do now at death and heaven and the peril of souls, I would not be willing as a Christian man to leave this house tonight without praying that God would put within me the mind that was in the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you also covet that mind?

I would not commit you unwarily to a long promise, nor engage your future to obligations you may not have sufficiently considered. Saying nothing, therefore, of tomorrow or next week, or next year, I do call for an expression touching the immediate present. You Christian people then, all of you who are willing, now and here, to seek by prayer the mind that was in our Lord Jesus Christ, stand up for a moment. It is a multitude standing! Let us then pray devoutly for the mind of Christ.

9. THE LIVING CHRIST

TEXT: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold I am alive for evermore.  Revelation 1:18.

In the service this morning I called your attention to a certain subject with the accompanying statement that that subject would be preached upon tonight — a living Christ. I repeat again tonight that there has never been a time in my life that I have not been impressed with the force and power of the historical argument proving the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But no matter how strong that demonstration may be, it might be as high as heaven, and no man might be able to see a flaw in any part of the argument, it yet would be a powerless argument unless proofs of Christ's living could be shown.

It would serve no purpose as affects us to prove that He was alive eighteen hundred years ago. In order for it to be a special benefit to us there must be a kind of argument that conclusively proves to us that He is alive yet.

The Scripture read in your hearing tonight is a case in point. Years had passed away since Christ arose from the dead, and yet the Apostle Paul preaching in Lystra, saw a man in the audience with impotent feet, who never had walked; he had been lame from his mother's womb. And the poor, helpless cripple was intently listening to the sermon Paul was preaching, and Paul caught his eye and perceived that that man had faith to be healed, and in the name of Jesus Christ he commanded him to stand upright, and he leaped and walked.

That is to say, Jesus Christ was alive then, and His power was just as great in healing that cripple at Lystra as it was through the instrumentality of Peter and John in healing the beggar at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and just as potent as it was when Jesus in the flesh raised from the dead the sleeping maiden, or the lame young man, or Lazarus four days resting in the tomb.

Now it is the affirmation of this text tonight that He is alive forevermore. He was dead, but He is alive forever more; that He is as much alive tonight and as accessible tonight and can hear our prayers as well tonight and can read our hearts as readily tonight, and tonight has power on earth to forgive sins as in the days of His flesh. And that Christianity, by whomsoever preached or advocated, that does not furnish proof of a living Redeemer, is not worthy to be offered to the acceptance of the people. And that preacher who does not see in

his Saviour a living Christ with present power to save, had better surrender his credentials. And that church that has not faith in a living Redeemer who can now furnish proofs of His life and His power and His majesty and of His glory, had better disband and not mock the world with a form of godliness after having denied its power.

So far as I am concerned, if the whole world were to stand up before me, they could not make me believe that I did not in my heart and by faith see the Lord Jesus Christ in the hour of my conversion, and by His divine power was freed from my sins.

There is a personal experience, a matter of inward consciousness that is more satisfactory to the one who is the subject of it, than the thousand false theories, than ten thousand speculations of philosophy; it is something a man has; it is something that teaches him; and he is a witness concerning a gift which has come to him from God. He is more competent to testify of it than everybody else in the world.

I would like to see this matter fairly tested tonight. I have never been afraid to accept any fair challenge of the power of Jesus. Across the sky of my soul there does not roll one speck of the cloud of doubt that He is tonight mighty to save.

Let us look at some of the points which go to establish this. I shall not take your time to ask you to hear the arguments upon the evidences of Christianity, but I call your attention to things that now are, and these are the proofs convincing to my mind, overwhelmingly convincing, that Jesus Christ tonight has power on earth to forgive sin.

I call attention first to this: He can hear us we know, and He can answer our petitions we know. I know that just as well as I know that you hear me and that you can grant a request of mine. There is no more question with reference to the throne of mercy which He has established, that those who approach that throne of mercy, as prompted by His Spirit and offering prayers that are in accordance with His will, that the answer comes, and readily comes, and sensibly comes—there can be no more question of that than of our own existence.

I know He has heard and answered prayers offered today. He is near enough to us to send a response inside of twelve hours; he is near enough to us to send a response even while we speak the petition; so near that He can anticipate, and before our lips have completely voiced it, the answer is like an echo to the

first part of the prayer, and God has granted what we desired and so soon that He did not give us time to ask that it be done.

He said that if He arose He would give gifts to men, and these gifts are here in this house tonight—fresh gifts, gifts that are not old and musty and ancient, like documentary proofs on parchment, but gifts that the heart cherishes; gifts of power, gifts of utterance, gifts of prayer, gifts of discerning spirits, gifts of faith, gifts of hope, gifts of love; they are here, right here in this house. And the dead cannot give gifts.

He said that if He arose He would be with His people. That was His promise: “Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.” He is risen. If that promise is fulfilled in your heart, or in my heart, or in the heart of any member of this church; if Jesus in His Spiritual power is with you and you feel His presence, then is He risen indeed; then is He alive. Then being risen, being alive, being present, He has all the power with which He was ever invested. By those gifts and by that presence Jesus is risen and is alive.

He said, “It is expedient for you that I go away. If I go not away the Comforter will not come. If I be raised from the dead I will send Him and when He is come He will convict the world of sin.”

If there is in this house tonight one sinner that trembles at the thought of God; if there be one mind here uneasy at the fact that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth and the judgment cometh; if there be here tonight one soul that is lamenting sin and grieving over it and mourning because of it, then Jesus is risen.

There can fly no arrow of conviction from the bow of a dead archer; but if He be living, then with an unerring aim He can select this man and that man and send that shaft dipped with fire and tinged with the blood of redemption into that heart and make that man who a short time ago was careless and indifferent, now full of deep concern and ready to cry out: “God be merciful to me, a sinner.”

If, since this service commenced, one trembling sinner whose mind was darkened by his memories of iniquities and his apprehensions of judgment, who has passed out of that state of trembling and fear and found rest and peace in believing in Jesus Christ, then Jesus Christ is risen, and that conversion stands for the present day and for the present generation as a more convincing argument in favor of the resurrection of Jesus Christ than all the books that ever

have been written upon the evidences of Christianity. That is practical. That is personal. That is satisfactory. It convinces the subject and convinces him in such a way that his mind cannot turn away from it, for it is a present possession of light and peace and joy.

Then, is Christ risen! Men may doubt that He has risen when church members assemble and feel no presence of God. Many may doubt that He is alive when sinners are convicted and are not converted, but if there be a felt presence of God; if there be the exercise of fresh gifts bestowed by His divine hand from the throne of His power; if sinners tremble and then rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, how can men doubt that Jesus is risen?

If you can find one, just one, on whom some crushing calamity has come, one heart into which the finger of God's chastisement has been placed and has snapped every tuneful chord and filled it with unspeakable sorrow because a dear loved one has been taken away from earth forever, and while that heart is swelling and while the soul is in gloom because of a vacant place, or a vacant chair, or because of the strange fixed look of some picture on the wall that has no earthly representative, that into that heart there comes consolation so rich and sweet that death and separation cannot overcloud its light, then is Jesus risen.

And these are the proofs we want, and these are the proofs which we want in this meeting and that we want here tonight. And I would be ashamed to invite any sinner to come to an empty tomb, to bow before a dead Saviour; to ask of one who cannot give him relief from any burden of whatever kind. But it is the present and all-powerful Son of God that we hold up before you tonight.

I care not how black the heart, how seamed and scarred the soul may be with sin, how distant the wandering, how confirmed the habits of vice, if you have faith to be healed and will bring that heart under the blood that falls from the riven heart of Jesus Christ you tonight shall be washed whiter than snow.

I do not know anything about tomorrow. I know tonight there are people in this house who are lost, lost! Some that are old, but lost. I know that there is a place of awful hazard if you remain there for one moment, and in my mind I can see the soul near that precipice, beyond which rises the flame coming up to meet him, the smoke of torment already rising, and thus on the brink of eternal death I can yet speak to that soul and say, "Even you tonight by grace divine can be made alive unto God and saved forevermore, if you have faith to be

healed.” I ask you to try it. I put the whole matter before you into an act, into a deed, a deed of faith, a deed that will set the seal of your sincerity.

Will you from the heart ask God for Christ’s sake to forgive your sins? I could not feel this any more deeply — I could not believe it any more sincerely if the Lord Jesus Christ and the twelve Apostles were standing here, and if I had this afternoon seen Him raise the dead and heal the sick and comfort the sinner — I could not more confidently ask you to come and trust Him here tonight and receive the benefit of His power; and I know that if you come sincerely and hold out your hand to Him that you will be saved.

He says, “Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” I do not believe He ever did cast any one out. I do not believe that hell could furnish a single witness who could truthfully say, “In yonder world I penitently kneeled at the feet of Jesus and said, ‘Lord save me.’”

I am going to ask you to try to venture on the promises of God. There are here all around us men and women who tell you that they were once lost and felt the burden and anguish of their sins; they penitently asked God for Christ’s sake to forgive them and He did forgive. And these tonight will reach out to you the hand of sympathy, the hand of prayer; they will try to bring you to Jesus, knowing that if they can get you to Him, your petition is answered and your soul is saved.

Oh, may the Spirit of God shine into your heart, drive away your doubts, fix your attention, awaken your faith, move your lips to speak and your heart to feel, that you may this night find precious peace in the salvation of your soul! I invite you to try it, any of you, all of you, that are without God and without hope in the world.

I can scarcely control my feelings. I do not know how to put what I feel into words, but I do know that I have the most intense longing to go right out and take you by the hand, lead you to Jesus and say, “Lord, save this sinner; save him now!” Sinner, come to Him! Come to Him now! While we stand and sing, I want to ask every one in this house who sincerely desires to be saved to come and give me your hand.

10. THE EVER LIVING CHRIST

TEXT: Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and the spirit-world. — ^{<6617>}Revelation 1:17, 18.

Unto him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Behold, he cometh with the clouds. — ^{<6605>}Revelation 1:5, 6, 7. (Revised Version.)

This is a long text. The emphasis, however, will be laid upon one declaration, “I am the Living One.” There is much doubt about the exact dates of many of the events connected with our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not know the date of His birth, but we can determine with reasonable probability the date of His resurrection. We know that the Jewish Passover took place on a certain date in the month of April, and that Jesus rose from the dead on the Sunday after the Passover.

There have been grave questions by many people as to the degree of evidence necessary to establish such a tremendous event as the resurrection of a dead man, but I submit that no two things are more susceptible of legal proof than, first, that a man dies, and, second, that a man is alive. If you can establish anything in the world by human testimony you can prove the death of a man, and in the same way you can prove that a man is living. It is constantly done in our courts.

There was a murder trial in which a certain man was accused of having put to death by violence a friend who was last seen with him. The circumstantial evidence was very strong against the accused, but when the jury was about to make up its verdict, and it seemed certain that this man would be condemned, the supposed victim stepped into the court and stood there before them.

There was no question of his identity. He was there, and he was alive. The evidence was so abundant as to both the identity of the man and the fact that he was alive, that it at once disposed of the case. The accused was instantly dismissed. A man cannot be tried for the murder of one proved to be living.

In the same way it frequently, in our courts, is necessary to establish the death of a person. An insurance company requires such evidence before it will pay the policy taken out on a man's life. The physician who attended the dead man usually gives his evidence: "I knew this man. I was his physician. I was with him in his last illness. I examined him and I know he is dead." The undertaker gives his evidence: "I knew the man. I was called on to prepare him for burial. I did prepare him for burial. I did bury him." Other evidence like this is introduced until the fact is clearly established that the death has taken place, and on that evidence the policy is paid.

Now, it has been objected in the case of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ that nobody saw Jesus rise from the dead. But the evidence is very complete that He died. No evidence can be stronger than the evidence that Jesus Christ died on the Cross.

The centurion who conducted the execution, and who in that capacity about answers to our present sheriff, gave his certificate that he carried out the sentence of the law, and he knew He was dead. He stood by until He was dead. The evidence of those who buried Him, the evidence of those who watched the grave after He was buried, the evidence of His disciples who witnessed His death and wept over His departure-if any fact in the world can be proven, it can be proven that Jesus died.

So, on the other hand, by the most overwhelming evidence it can be proved that Jesus was alive after He died. His mother, His brothers, His sisters, who ought to know Him, saw Him, talked with Him, were with Him many days. His nearest friends and most intimate associates were with Him for forty days. They saw Him; they talked to Him; and more than five hundred witnesses testified to the fact that Jesus, "Who was dead is now alive." In this text He says, "I am the Living One. I became dead, but I am alive to die no more."

In vital concerns the human mind is not willing to rest alone upon the historic evidence of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. That evidence is indeed complete and sufficient for academic purposes. But we now have much stronger evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If every man in Jerusalem, including all the officials, both Jewish and Roman, had testified that they were gathered about His grave, and saw Him emerge from the grave, and were to sign their depositions before notaries that they did witness it; and if the Emperor of Rome and all of his officers, even to the number of a million men, had gone before the courts of the land and certified that they saw Him after He rose from

the dead, and all of that were to be upon record and we had that record before us now, it would not be half as satisfactory as the evidence that we of today have that Jesus Christ is alive.

He says, "I am the Living One." All historic evidence is remote. Nearly two thousand years have come between us and this old evidence. If, indeed, He rose from the dead there must be some fresh evidence, some continuous evidence. If He rose from the dead, He must be somewhere now, and there must be some signs of His life now. There must be some demonstrative proof of the fact that He is living today, and this proof must be not the evidence of dead men; not the evidence of people who have been sleeping in their graves for two thousand years, but the evidence of men and women of the present time. You might put this entire church on the witness stand to establish the fact that Jesus Christ is now, today, alive: And this is living and, therefore, more impressive evidence. Note carefully the words of our text. They are just as applicable to us as to the ones to whom the words were spoken.

Let us see what these words are: The King James Version says, "Unto him that loved us," — past tense — but the revised version more correctly gives it, "Unto him that loveth us." It is not a love that may be confined to the past tense. It is the outgoing of a heart now beating. Not merely He did love us a long time ago, but "Unto him that LOVETH us," loveth us TODAY. We are the subjects of the affection of our Lord Jesus Christ as we sit before Him, or stand before Him this Sunday morning.' "He loveth us."

Not only does He love us now, and the proofs of His love will be referred to in a moment, but "He loosed us from our sins." That, indeed, is past tense. That may not be referred to as the time when He made His expiation for sin nearly two thousand years ago.

There is necessarily — a difference in time between expiation, which was once for all an ever recurring remission of sins, based on that expiation. So it was not two thousand years ago when the application of that atonement was made to your soul. You were nonexistent then. You must have gotten in touch with that forgiveness of sins since the time that Jesus Christ died on the Cross, and, unless somebody is alive, unless there is some living force in the world to apply the benefits of that divine transaction that took place on the Cross nearly two thousand years ago, then we cannot go before men and testify to the pardon of our sins. But many of us can look back to a certain time in our own lives and say, "On that day God, for Christ's sake, forgave my sins. The One who once

loved us yet loves us. I know that it is not merely historic love, that it is not merely a love for the human race in bulk. It is a particular and present love, because the application has been made to me as an individual, and made to me in my lifetime.”

And just as that man who had been healed of blindness was able to stand up before the court and testify to two facts: “I was blind; I now see; I know both of these things to be true: I know I was blind; I know I see,” so some of us can stand up and say, “I know that date, a certain date, in my life, when I stood in my own consciousness, in my own heart, a condemned and lost sinner in the sight of God, but at that date I was loosed from my sins. The sense of guilt and condemnation that was oppressing my soul departed, and in the place of it came a sense of peace and rest. I was conscious of a reconciliation with the Father.”

But while that was not so very long ago, I need not go back to the time when I was twenty-three years old, and God, for Christ’s sake, forgave my sins. I have been committing sins since that, and every time I commit a sin my conscience takes notice of it and reproaches me for it. Now, not only did He then loose me from sin, but He continues to loose me from sin. The transaction goes on.

Every time the back-slidden Christian comes humbly before God and makes a confession of sin, God is just and faithful to forgive his sins. But that forgiveness cannot take place unless there be somebody alive, some advocate with God, who takes the case and pleads it before the Judge. He looseth us from our sins, now — not only then, but now; not merely an historic expiation of the sins of all His people, two thousand years ago; not merely my own case when I was first converted, but my case all along through my life, it may be seven times a day. The pardoning stream continues, and the dispensation of that pardon is based upon one fact, that “He ever liveth to make intercession for us.”

So I need not go back to that old historic evidence that John and Peter and James and the five hundred brethren and sisters saw Jesus Christ alive. There is other evidence, today’s evidence, evidence of which I am both subject and witness, and can testify that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and that Jesus is alive, because I get the application of forgiveness of sins through His loving intercessions. “He loveth us and looseth us from our sins.”

Again the text says, “He hath made us to be a kingdom.” Here, too, we need not content ourselves with an abstract historical argument based upon the Book

of Daniel that there was a Babylonian kingdom, followed by a Medo-Persian kingdom, and that by a Grecian kingdom, and that followed by a Roman kingdom, and that followed by the establishment of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is easy enough to submit historical proof that in the days of the Roman kings the

God of heaven set up a kingdom. But this event of which I am talking, was in the year 95 A.D., and there was only one apostle living. It was in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, and it was during the persecution by that emperor that John was banished from Ephesus to Patmos, and he was then a very old man, and to him the revelation was made just as fresh as it was made when they cast their garments before Him and waved their palm branches and shouted, "Behold, the King cometh!"

We do not now allude to those subjects, men, women and children who formed the procession that welcomed Jesus Christ when He entered Jerusalem. Let us rather consider a nearer kingdom. "He loveth us; he loosed us from our sins. He has made us to be a kingdom not kings.

Now, can it be proven? Is it in evidence that today, not two thousand years ago, there are actually living subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ? Nero had no subjects after he died. Alexander the Great did not have any subjects after his death. It has been two thousand years, nearly, since Jesus died, and yet there is the affirmation of a kingdom of loving subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ. There has been neither change of dynasty nor royal person of the same dynasty. Whosoever has felt on his heart the handwriting of the Spirit of God, on whose soul has been breathed the breath of life, who has been converted, who has been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, is a living witness of an actual, existing kingdom — a kingdom that does not go on without a king.

Look over the map of the world today. Try to enumerate, if you can, the number of the subjects of Jesus Christ, those who do not hesitate to say, "He is my King; I am His subject. I am under His law." He as King, sitting on His throne, is dispensing the affairs of the kingdom now. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things." "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion."

We want to keep out of the past tense. We want to refer to the present. Every individual Christian, being a subject of the King of kings and Lord of lords, is a witness that Jesus is alive. No king, no kingdom! If a kingdom, then a king! We cannot be under the dominion of a dead man. We cannot be under the sway of a scepter when the hand that held it has turned to dust. Empty thrones do not rule mankind. There must be an occupant of that throne. He must possess the powers of a king. He must be able to demonstrate the supremacy of his sway or else he will have no subjects in the world.

Now, He has made us to be a kingdom. And will you please notice the distinction in this text between the kingdom and the church! When you refer to the kingdom of Jesus Christ you mean by it those who have been really and truly converted. Whoever has been converted is a subject of the kingdom. He is a part of the kingdom. But now, when He comes to speak of the churches, He does not speak of them in the aggregate. He says, "To the Seven churches." And He moves among the seven churches, and holds each church responsible to Him. Each church is an executive, business body in the kingdom, but now when it comes to the kingdom of Christ, whether we are members of the church or not, if we are God's children we are subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ, and He is alive. We belong to the kingdom. He has made us to be a kingdom, and He has made us priests unto God.

I mean every Christian, whether he is a member of the church or not, is a priest, and offers sacrifices, but sacrifices are not offered where the oracle is dumb. When the Shekinah left the temple, when the Veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, from that time, void was every sacrifice offered upon a Jewish altar. There is now no Jewish high priest. The temple has disappeared. And because there is no temple and no altar, there can be no priest in the Old Testament sense. But here we are made priests and the character of our sacrifices is defined. We do not offer bullocks and goats, but we offer the sacrifices of praise and of humility and of prayer and of contributions. These sacrifices are being offered now unto God by those who are God's priests, and there is no distinction between them. It is not the preachers alone who are the priests. It is the people of God, whether they are even members of a church or not. If they are converted they are priests, and every time they praise God they are offering sacrifices, and every time they pray to God they are offering sacrifices, and every time they make a contribution for Christ's sake they are offering a sacrifice.

Now, to get the picture before you in its bearing on the fact that Jesus Christ is alive, let us consider the one sacrifice of praying. I kneel down to pray. and if the one to whom I pray is alive and able, He can answer me, and if He be alive and able and willing, and the request is a proper one, He will answer. If, therefore, the throne of grace be a living institution; if there be an ear that hearkens when pallid human lips plead; if there be an eye which sees when trembling human hands are uplifted; if there is a heart that feels when, with sighs and sobs and gaspings, the stricken and troubled ones here upon the earth pour out their woes; oh! if there be a heart that can enter into sympathy with their wants, then *somebody is alive*.

When Christ died, the heathen oracles became dumb. Men quit making visits to the oracle of Delphi. Why? There was nobody to answer. No replies came. And in the two thousand years that have elapsed since the death of Christ, if there had been no response to prayer, no matter what the historical evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is, or might be, what would it count to us that He be alive if He does not hear us, if He does not answer us, if He does not sympathize with us, if He does not intervene in our extremity? So when we say that Jesus is alive we refer to the fact of a present love, of a present loosing from sin, of a present kingdom, of present priests who offer sacrifices of prayer, and who now get the answers to their prayers.

Take another thought in connection with it. The historical testimony is that Jesus Christ entered into the realm of death. He was disembodied, and after awhile He emerged from death. What comfort is that to me?

What present and powerful compensation is that to me, if, when I stand, as I did last Friday, a member of the First Church having died and a number of us went to Itasca to bury him, and there was his wife, and there were the children and the grandchildren, and between 700 and 1,000 people out there in that cemetery. Now if there were a mere historical resurrection from the dead, with nothing heard from it since, oh! how could I comfort those stricken hearts that day? But when I read this passage of Scripture upon which I am speaking today, that He has the keys of death and the spiritworld; He now has the keys; He now can open; He now can shut; and no power can shut when He opens, and no power can open when He shuts. He will come again and raise the dead—that was comfort to the stricken ones.

I refer to the present comfort that the Christian heart derives from the fact that Jesus is alive, and being alive, holds the keys of death. When we deposit the

bodies of our loved ones in the grave, that is death — death to the body. Now, if Jesus has the keys — not if He had them once, but if He now has them — and when we know that this spirit has gone into its disembodied state, if there be no kind of evidence that this spirit meets the Lord Jesus Christ, finds Him alive, has such communion with Him that the soul can say, “For me to die is gain — When I am absent from the body, I am present with the Lord,” our comfort fails. But when we die, we, too, may hear the voice: “Today thou shalt be with me in paradise.”

If Jesus is alive, then our dead ones are with Him, and He has the keys, and whenever He says the word, that whole realm of the spirit — world will be *destroyed*. There will no longer be a disembodied soul. A voice will speak the word that will raise us from the dead, and bring our bodies out through that open door to die no more, so that we can say, “I am a Living One; I became dead, but I am alive to die no more.” There is the comfort that belongs to God’s people in the thought that Jesus is alive today.

Where one is dead you cannot hope to get any benefit from him. Hope stops at death, if that death be complete. Jesus Christ is not only alive in the sense that He loveth us and we are now the subjects of that love, and that He looseth us from our sins, and that He makes us a present kingdom and present priests, and in our behalf holds the keys of death and the spirit-world, but more than that, the Lord Jesus Christ assures the heart at the present moment of a glorious hope. What is it? The text says, “Behold, he cometh; he cometh.” If He is dead He will not come back. If He is alive He will come back. If He is alive I may hope for His coming. I may not only desire it, but I may expect it. I may not only rest in a present love, in a present forgiving power, in a present comfort, in a present answer to prayer, in a present service as belonging to a kingdom, but I may rejoice in the fact that this Living One is coming; coming in the clouds of heaven; coming to wind up the affairs of the world. And He stands before my hope and causes that hope to become so keen of vision that it can penetrate the intervening mists, and behold the Coming One until He may loom up in visible form before the expectant eye, for the declaration is, “Every eye shall see him; and they also that pierced him.”

Thus, brethren, I have presented to you Jesus Christ alive, as the lover of your soul, as the pardoner of the sins of your soul, as requiring of you a present service as a subject unto His kingdom, and as hearing your petition when you

lift up your sad hearts to Him in prayer, and as holding the keys of death and hell, and as one who is coming, coming.

Who looks for Apollo to come back to the earth? Who expects Jupiter to descend and occupy his ancient temple? Who expects the Neptune of the classics to reassert his power over the ocean waves? But the millions of Christians expect Jesus to come back. "Behold, he cometh, he cometh!"

Now, is Jesus alive in this sense? If He is alive He knows about the future. He is a revelator. John saw a book — the book of future events — and it was sealed — sealed seven times — and nobody on earth could open it. But if Jesus is alive He can break those seals. He can drive away the mists that hide the future from our sight, as one draws curtains that shroud a hidden room. And He may say, "Rise, make a record. I will reveal now the things which must come to pass. I will stretch out before you in panorama the coming events that touch 'the church and the people of Jesus Christ, clear on to the general judgment, and the end of the world.'" And as a revealer He speaks in this book.

We, looking back after two thousand years have passed away, are amazed at the accuracy of this forecast. Paul had said, "Jesus will not come unless there first be a falling away." Who expected such an apostasy as that? Who that looked upon the first triumphant march of the kingdom of God, when, under apostolic power, they took the capitals of the world and overturned idols where they were fortified in the hearts of the people; who expected that the brightness of that faith would be eclipsed, and that shameful impostures would take the place of religion? We look back at it now and we know that it did take place, but when this book was written no man could see it except the man unto whom God gave the vision to look into the years ahead.

And here is the book that tells all about it. It tells of the decay of the piety of the churches. It tells of a formal religion taking the place of a religion of heart and of life and of power. It tells of the coming of a cumbrous system of rites and ceremonies, though they had been nailed to the Cross of Jesus Christ and banished. It tells us that they will come back and sway the world, and that only out in the wilderness where faithful witnesses have fled will there be true ones who will adhere to the simplicity of the gospel as it is in Christ Jesus. We know now that all this happened, but here it was put on record that it would happen, and some of it more than a thousand years before it did happen. So that we stand before Jesus Christ as a living revelator, and we hear His words: "The revelation is ended."

There will be nothing more revealed until Jesus comes, and whosoever adds to the words of this prophecy, God will add unto him the plagues that are written in the Book, and whosoever takes away from the words of this prophecy, God will take away from him any place in the kingdom of heaven, or any space in the Book of Life, which contains the roll of the immortal ones that shall reign with Him forever and ever.

Finally, there are the churches. This is one. Is Jesus alive? Does He move among the churches now as then? Does His flaming eye take cognizance of every act of fidelity on the part of the pastor? Does He hold the pastor in His right hand? Does He know of the faithfulness of the members of the church, so that He can say to you, as He said to Ephesus and Smyrna and Laodicea and Thyatira, "I know thy works. I know thy fidelity — or thy infidelity?"

And, oh, sad to say, can He in His present state, in His omniscient sight, say to us, "I have somewhat against thee; thou hast left thy first love?" Or, "Thou hast substituted for gospel that which I never gave as gospel?" Or, "Thou hast become indifferent, neither cold nor hot, imagining thyself to be all right in the sight of God, when thou art all wrong?" Is Jesus alive in the church?

If He is alive in the church, there must be some evidence of that life, and to the church that does not manifest the evidence of Christ's being alive now He says, "I take away thy candlestick. If a tree has become so dead that, after winter passes, it will not put forth buds; if when April comes it will neither cover itself with foliage nor flowers; if when summer comes it will not bear fruit, then let that dead tree be cut down. Why cumberst it the ground?"

The fact that these trees are cut down proves that Jesus is alive. The fact that dead churches become the subject of His chastisement is evidence that the Administrator of Justice is not a dead Man. And the fact that He gives His blessing to faithful churches is a proof that He is alive.

Your own record is evidence. In four years' time one hundred and fifty have been baptized upon a profession of faith. Now that proves that Jesus is alive. The pastor could not convert one hundred and fifty people, not even one. The church could not convert one.

But the Holy Spirit, the living vicar of the living but absent Christ, can convert souls, and if the church is yielding itself to the monition and to the impulses of the living Son of God in heaven, then somebody is going to be converted; some

backslidden Christian will be restored; some hypocrite will be unmasked and discipline will be administered. There will be power in the church if Jesus is alive.

And I cite these arguments as greater proof that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead than the monumental evidence of the Lord's Day. That is monumental evidence. He rose on the first day of the week, and from that time the date changes, and the monument stands — *Anno Domini*, the year of our Lord, and Sunday, the sacred day, instead of the seventh day. But stronger than monumental evidence is the presence of Jesus Christ in the churches, in their revivals.

And now, brethren, you wish to present this house to Him. You act simply as stewards for Him in retaining control of the house. None of you occupies this house as a home. You have your own home. You say, "This is the Lord's house, and we will meet here to worship and serve our living God." That is what you mean. Then if that be in your heart I think I could say to you what the prophet said in the time of Joshua the high priest, and Zerubbabel: "The latter glory of this house shall eclipse its former glory, and this house shall be the abode of much peace, and unto this house the Desire of all nations shall come." Jesus will come in spiritual presence and power to bless your services.

There is a field for you here. There is room for you to do great things. Upon your enterprise I invoke the benediction of a Living Redeemer. I gave the first money that went into the little building where you first assembled as a congregation, and with the missionary at that time joined in the prayer that God would bless that humble beginning, and make it a signal power, and I continue my prayer for you today. The Lord bless you!

Whatever may be the fate of the candlestick that once stood and held the light at Laodicea and is now gone; and, though marshes have taken the place of the harbor of Ephesus, where that other candlestick shone, God grant that this candlestick, supplied with heavenly light, may be a demonstration of the fact that Jesus is alive, by conversions, and restorations, and reconciliations, and prayers, and praises, and every other act of priesthood. May God's blessing rest on you!

11. THE SINNING CHRISTIAN AND HIS SINS

Dear Brethren: Before the text is announced, let us prepare our minds for it by prayerful attention to these Scriptures: ^{<6084>}Romans 8:34:

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

Spurgeon has a great sermon on this text which he says contains “the four pillars of salvation,” namely:

- (1) The sacrificial death of Christ;
- (2) His resurrection from the dead;
- (3) His exaltation to the throne of sovereign power;
- (4) His ever-living intercession.

It is this fourth pillar: “Who also maketh intercession for us,” that I would have you bear in mind just now. ^{<610>}Romans 5:10: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the *death* of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His *life*.”

Here notice salvation by the *life* of Christ. Three pillars of salvation of the four just cited belong to Christ’s life after His death. As He said to John on Patmos: “I am He that *liveth*, and was dead: and, behold, *I am alive for evermore*.” And again as He said to His sorrowing disciples when preparing them for His departure: “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me; *because I live, ye shall live also*.”

Now, let this next Scripture sink deep into your hearts, ^{<8124>}Hebrews 7:24, 25: “But this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also *to save them to the uttermost* that come unto God by Him, seeing *He ever liveth to make intercession for them*.” Hear one more passage: ^{<611>}1 John 2:1, 2: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, *we have an advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And He is the propitiation for our sins.” With this introduction I now announce as the text, ^{<5416>}1 Timothy 2:5: “There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

You have learned a great deal of theology, you have made tremendous progress in divine things, when you have accepted without any sort of modification the simple declaration of this text, that there is one, and that means but one, Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. There are many millions, there are hundreds of millions of those who profess to be Christians, that do not believe it, but who believe in other mediators between God and men than the man Christ Jesus.

In taking this text today I want to compare it with two other passages of Scripture. One of them is in the letter to the Corinthians, where the Apostle Paul says that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and where he goes on to say that this reconciliation was affected by the death of Christ. The other passage of Scripture I read to you a while ago from the letter to the Romans, where he says that if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more shall we be saved by His life.

There are two departments in the work of mediation. One is to make an offering, a satisfactory propitiation, and the other is in the intercession based on that offering. Jesus Christ, when He died, made an offering of Himself, without spot, unto God, as a lamb without blemish, and in that offering became the propitiation for our sins and furnished the ground upon which we are reconciled to God. That is the first department.

But now, after you are reconciled to God, when your past sins are blotted out, when you are a Christian, you come in conflict with this thought: No man's conscience can reproach for a sin before it is committed. Hence it is the sight of "past offenses which pain his eyes" and constitute his burden. But he reads that Christ died once for all. That there will be no more offering for sin. And his conscience, he knows, was not purified from the reproach of future sins. Hence, while he questions not the sufficiency of the one offering to propitiate for all sins, past, present and future, he does not feel that when he first came to Christ there was an *application* of its cleansing power to any but the sins which preceded his faith in Jesus.

After you become a Christian you sin. You know that you do. I have had children ask me the question, and with as much intelligence as when grown people have asked it, "What must we do, and what does God do with the sins which we commit after we are Christians?" They understand that when they first come to Christ by faith they put all their sins on Him, and they understand that these past sins are blotted out forever. But in a very short time after that, much

sooner than they are aware of, but consciously to them, soon after they say: “We have sinned. The conscience says it.” They know that they have violated some law of God. And when the question arises with them, What am I to do with this? Where am I to put it? What disposition does God make in His Word for the sins which Christians commit of per they are converted?

Now it is upon this point that we come to the second part of the mediation of Jesus Christ. It is here that we understand, not how we are saved when we trust in Jesus Christ, but how we are saved to the uttermost; not how we are saved when we are converted, but how the salvation is to continue, and continue to the end. That is the thought.

I shall not seek at all today to be original. Indeed, if I were to tell you in what books of theology you may find similar thoughts, I would have to refer you to all that have been written upon the subject. But I want to speak very plainly today about one of the grandest doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that is the intercession of Christ—Christ’s intercession. And I am not talking about the intercession that Christ, when here upon earth, made for sinners. He did make intercession for the transgressors. He did pray, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do,” just as He commands us to do today.

But I am not discussing that part of Christ’s work. I wish to discuss His intercession for His own people, by which the life that comes into them at their conversion is to be continued; by which remission of sins which they receive at conversion is to be applied to sins after conversion; by which the life that is in their souls is to continue and prove itself to be eternal life. That is the subject, and I will put some questions so that you can understand.

The first question is: “Where does Christ make His intercession?” The place of it. In the ninth chapter of the letter to the Hebrews, and in the third chapter of the first letter of Peter, we are expressly told that the place where he makes this intercession is in heaven; that He ascended to heaven for that purpose.

The thought was presented in type in the Old Testament ceremonies, where the priest would first slay the sacrificial victim in the outer court. The lamb would be put to death, and then taking the blood of the lamb as the basis, he would enter into the holy of holies, and there would offer the blood, and when the blood was offered he would stand there, and upon the plea of that blood the intercession took place, in the Most Holy Place.

So is Christ's intercession for His people in heaven. It is going on now. Right here today when we are gathered to worship God, His intercession is going on at the court of Heaven, and the sins which you Christians have committed during the past week He is interceding for. He is pleading His blood, once offered, as ample to cover your sins, for the present as well as the past.

The next question has already been answered. What is the basis of the intercession which He offers up there? Again I repeat that the basis of it is the ample atonement that He made for sin when He offered Himself up as a lamb without spot or — blemish. He never offered any other plea, never! And no plea could possibly be accepted that was based upon anything else than the fact that the blood of Jesus Christ was shed for the remission of sins. No prayer for forgiveness could possibly be heard, either here or yonder, that was not based upon the ample and all-sufficient atonement made in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The blood is shed once for all. But we come to the blood as often as we sin. So the Lord's Supper teaches by its frequency. That blood not only cleansed us once, but still cleanses.

And now we come to a particular part of the subject. What are the qualifications of one who is to be a mediator between God and men? What constitutes Him a suitable Mediator to go before God and touch Him with one hand and reach back and touch man with the other hand?

1. He must be both God and man. With His divinity He must be able to touch God, and with His manhood He must be able to touch man, to be able to put the two in contact. And impress this on your mind, that whenever anybody offers to you a mediator between God and men, who does not possess both humanity and divinity, reject him at once.

Suppose they offer the angels? You must say, "These angels do not possess either one of these qualifications. They are neither divine nor human. They can neither touch man nor touch God. They cannot mediate between men and God on that account." Bear that in mind. You will need it directly.

2. Now the next qualification. The Lord God says, as you will find in the first chapter of the letter to the Hebrews, that no one taketh this honor upon himself. Even Aaron, who was to represent the thought in type, did not take it upon himself. He did not say, "I will be the mediator. I claim this office." There had to be divine authority conferred. God had to speak from heaven and say, "I invest this one with authority. I appoint him. I furnish him credentials to mediate

between me and men.” As Aaron could not do that in the type, so it is expressly stated that in the anti-type the Son took not this honor upon Himself, but the Father put it on Him. The Father gave Him His credentials. And now you apply this test if any one presents for your consideration a mediator between God and men. Call on him for the chapter and verse where Almighty God conferred that authority; and if he has no credentials; if he cannot be in this mission authenticated as from God, you reject him.

Now I want to read you where authority was conferred on somebody else than Christ, and that, too, since you were born. I read from a decree of Pope Pius the Ninth, on the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin Mary:

“Since we have never ceased in humility and fasting to offer up our prayers and those of the church of God the Father through His Son, that He might deign to direct and confirm our mind by the power of the Holy Ghost, after imploring the protection of the whole celestial court, and after invoking on our knees the Holy Ghost the Paraclete, under His inspiration we pronounce, declare and define unto the glory of the holy and indivisible Trinity, the honor and the ornament of the holy virgin, the mother of God, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the increase of the Christian religion, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and *insure our own authority*, that the doctrine which holds the blessed virgin Mary to have been, from the first instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Christ Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, preserved free from all stain of original sin, was revealed by God, and is, therefore, to be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful. Therefore, if some should presume to think in their hearts otherwise than we have defined (which God forbid), they shall know and thoroughly understand that they are by their own judgment condemned, have made shipwreck concerning the faith, and fallen away from the unity of the church; and, moreover, that they, by this very act, subject themselves to the penalties ordained by the law, if, by word or writing, or any other external means, they dare to signify what they think in their hearts.” — 1854.

Now you ask yourself why that decree was published. The point is that whoever goes as a mediator between God and men must be *righteous*. John says, “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” The

proof must be made out that the mediator is holy, undefiled and separated from sinners; there must not be a spot, or a blemish, or a wrinkle upon the character of the one who mediates between God and man. Otherwise, he would need to have a mediation offered for himself instead of being mediatory for others. Now to meet that qualification—the qualification of holiness and righteousness—it became necessary in order to have a mediator other than the Lord Jesus Christ; in order to have a woman, one who could plead with God, and who would act as days-woman between men and God — it was necessary that the decree should be issued making her immaculate.

But the decree is marvelously out of date. It is nearly two thousand years after the canon of Scripture is closed. It is a decree signed by the name of a man, himself frail, sinful, who expressly declares that it is issued by inspiration and *under his authority*, as well as the authority of God, and upon that it is issued and being accepted it is held by two hundred million so-called Christians upon the earth, that Mary intercedes, that Mary mediates.

3. The next qualification: In the fourth chapter of the letter to the Hebrews, where this mediator is being discussed, it is said that he is touched with a sense of our infirmities. Now that is a phrase, expressed by one Greek word, which being Anglicized becomes our word “sympathy.” There must be in this mediator a bond of sympathy between him and the one for whom he intercedes ^¾ *sympathy*. And the basis of the sympathy toward us in that Scripture is declared to be this, that in all points (now you may not be willing to believe it, but that is what the Bible says) — that in all points He was tempted as we are, yet without sin. It is the declaration of God that when the Lord Jesus Christ was here upon this earth that every kind of temptation that comes to you came to Him. The Devil suggested to Him in His hunger what He suggests to men in their hunger now. The Devil suggested to Him, in view of His being able to establish kingly power over earthly territory, just what he suggests to the ambitious men of the present time. The Devil suggested to Him when He met the contradiction of sinners, just the same kind of resentment that you would be tempted to exercise if there should fall upon you such an indignity. In every point, *every point*, it covers the amazing length and breadth of human experience on the subject of temptation. That could not be affirmed of Mary or any other woman, or any man, or any angel, but it was true of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and men.

Now, take the next question: For whom does He make intercession in heaven? I stated to you a while ago that I was not discussing the intercession that He offered for transgressors, and which we are commanded to imitate, but I am speaking of His priestly office as exercised in heaven, in which He says, "I pray for them I pray not for the world." I will now merely state this point so as to hasten to the concluding part of my subject.

In making intercession in heaven, for what does He intercede? What does He ask? First, He asks that Christians here in the world should not be taken out of it, but that while in the world they should be preserved from evil. I do not know how to express the thoughts that are in my mind on this subject.

I imagine that if the Lord would just lift the veil off the inscrutable past, and we could take a back look at all the paths we have trod, and see in the light of that revelation how many times we have unconsciously walked as it were upon the edge of a knife, how many times our feet have stood on the brink of a pit, how many times, as it were, by a chance step we have over-stepped a net that was set for our feet, how many times enemies have come and have lain in ambush and were ready to shoot their arrows against us, and yet utterly unseen by us a shield was interposed that protected us from the fiery darts of the adversaries, and as we look at it and wonder where it came from, we look up to heaven and see Christ praying: "Preserve him. Preserve him from the evil. I see the evil ahead of him. I see the plans, I see the counsel and devices, I see the hazard. Father, preserve him. Let him not fall into them."

Oh, if we could realize it, how rich, how deep and how sweet to our hearts would be the thought of the preciousness of the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ continually going on for us, that we should be preserved from evil!

I can look back over my life where in after years things have been brought to light that I knew nothing on earth about at the time, just as ignorant as a child, and yet how there seemed to be just a hair's breadth between me and death — just a hair's breadth. And surely it was not my forecast, it was not my wisdom, it was not my strength that rescued me, but that prayer of Jesus: "Father, preserve him from evil."

Brethren, if the Lord Jesus Christ was to withdraw that shield from between you and your enemies; if the restraints of the great 'High Priest were withdrawn, every Christian in this town would be wrecked before night. You may think you know men, but you do not know the Devil. You do not know the depths of sin.

You do not know Satan's wiles. You do not know his stratagems. Oh, it is principalities and powers with which you have to wrestle, and were it not for the restraining power of God, every one of us would be swept away like driftwood on the rising breast of a stream swollen by the downpour of waterspouts of rain!

For what else does He pray? I will give you a sample. You will understand it better. Jesus one time saw the Devil looking with hungry eyes at one of his apostles, and He saw the Devil laying his traps for him, and He called the apostle to Him and said, "Simon, Satan hath desired thee. Satan hath made a request that he might have you. Don't you know that he made a request to God about Job? Satan hath made a request that he might have you, that he might sift you as wheat; and, Simon, I have prayed for you that your faith fail not."

Now, there is a part of it. There the intercession comes in. What is it that keeps your faith alive! What is it that keeps the faith of any Christian alive! Why, I tell you that the Devil would gather about you a fog and mist of doubts and perplexities that you would absolutely not know whether you are in the flesh or not. He could make 'you doubt your very existence. He has made men doubt it. I say there have been men who have carried their doubt to the extent that they have doubted their own existence.

Now Jesus said, "I have prayed for you that your faith fail not." I cannot tell you how many times, right here in this town (I do not call any names), some of the best Christians in this town, from my estimate of a Christian, have come to me staggered on that question of *faith-staggered*. Is my faith failing? Is the light going out?

Now, that intercession goes on in heaven. You are to be saved in that respect by the life of Christ; having been reconciled to God by His death, much more shall you be saved by His life. He ever liveth to intercede for you, and therefore He is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God through Him.

Well, what else? As I told you just now, sins that you commit after you are Christians, if we confess them, He is faithful and just to forgive them. If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Here is our attorney, here is our pleader. Here is the one that takes our case upon the sins that we commit after we are Christians, and takes it before the Father's throne and pleads the all-sufficient blood offered once for all, and

never to be offered again, and says, "Father, forgive him." That blood is enough, that atonement is enough.

I tell you what I do: Whenever I become conscious that I have done wrong I do not parley. I take the wrong, whatever it may be, and say, "Lord Jesus, take this and plead for me. Take my case; I do not dare to plead my own case. O thou righteous Advocate with God, plead for me, and by Thy intercession let this sin be blotted out."

Now, a great many Christians are continually in trouble because they have not learned that when they do a wrong they must come and put that case in the hands of the Advocate. Let *Him* plead. He is the Mediator. We cannot go to God directly. There must be a daysman between us and God. Our prayers do not reach God directly. The High Priest offers the prayers. He takes them as the high priest of old took the censer, and having kindled the incense with a coal from the altar, and waved it before the throne of God, He said, "Father, let these prayers be heard." He is our Advocate.

He prays for the unity of His people: "I pray that they may be one." Now if there be any danger (and there is always danger) of schisms, a rent of any kind, flying "off at a tangent", the supreme hope of the world on that subject is the intercession up yonder: "I am praying all the time that my people may be one; even as the Father and myself are one. I am praying that my people may be one."

Hurrying on, the intercession takes in the whole subject of our sanctification: "I pray for them that thou mayest sanctify them by thy truth. Thy word is truth." The whole process of sanctification that goes on in Christians after they are converted is brought about by the intercession of the High Priest. He is pleading that this work may go on.

Very briefly I mention two other points. After He went up there to exercise His priestly office in heaven (I do not understand it, but I know the fact) He went up there to make some preparations. Here is what He said: "I am going to leave you, but I am going to prepare a place. I am going to prepare a place for you." And, based upon His death, upon the plea that is predicated upon His blood, in His high priestly power, somehow, I cannot explain how, He does prepare a place in heaven for every one of His children.

Sometimes here on this earth a letter comes to a family about a long-absent loved one: "I will be home on the twentieth of a certain month." And they read the letter over in the family, and Oh, how glad they are! "He will be here at that time. Now we must make ready. Let us prepare a place for him. What room shall we give him and how shall we fit it up, and shall we put flowers here and shall we prepare the things that he likes best? Shall we gather his friends to meet him and grace his coming and help us to extend a welcome?" And that preparation goes on, and after a while that long-absent traveler comes, and when he comes he does not have to go to a hotel. He does not have to go among strangers. But here in a bright and happy home is a place made ready, and those that love him the best are there to greet him and go out and kiss him, go out and take him by the hand; go out and say, "Oh, we are glad that you have come to be with us!"

So up there in His high priestly office He prepares a place for us. I tell you, my brother, we may die suddenly, as in a lightning's flash, but death cannot come to you in so sudden or startling a form, cannot thrust you out of this life and thrust you into a world to come so as to take the reception committee unaware of the fact. It will be ready, no matter whether your train gets to the depot of death in the daytime or in the night; or in the summer or in the winter; God's carriage, His chariot of fire and His convoy of angels, will meet you there and take you to the place that is prepared for you in that bright and better world up yonder. You do not have to send any dispatches ahead, oh, no; it will be ready, your place; yours, brother; yours, sister; it will be ready when you get there. There is room enough in Paradise for all to have a home in glory.

Now my crowning thought is that the effect of this intercession not only gets the place ready, but, blessed be God, it provides an abundant entrance into the place. Why, you do not go as if you were squeezing through a hole in the wall. You do not go as if you were a galley slave, whipped and scourged to a task. The door is open. The door is a wide-open door. Your ship comes home, comes to the harbor of heaven, comes to the port of eternity, not a battered and shattered hulk, with compass and helm lost, and cordage snapped and shrouds and sails torn to tatters. No! It comes with every sail full; without danger of rock in the harbor. It comes with an abundant entrance into the glory of God, our Father. And ever since that time when you received the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Saviour, ever since that time, up yonder in heaven Jesus has been praying: "Father, I want that one to be with me, where I am. I want that one to

be here in heaven forever with his Lord. Father, I want that one to have an abundant entrance into heaven.”

That prayer goes on day and night, forever and forever. And it is in this way that we are saved by His life. It is in this way that we are saved to the uttermost. It is in this way that the one Mediator between God and men ever liveth to make intercession for us.

12. THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE

SCRIPTURES: ~~106~~ *Matthew 19:16-22;* ~~117~~ *Mark 10:17-22.*

It is not my purpose this morning to preach a sermon, but to talk to you somewhat upon your Sunday school lesson. That lesson is concerning the rich young ruler, and shows the perils of riches and the necessity of leaving all things to follow Christ. It is followed by a parable which discloses the principle upon which Christ rewards His disciples.

All of the lesson flows from a simple incident: A young man came running very earnestly and propounded to Jesus this question: “Good Master, what good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?” By comparing Matthew’s statement with Mark’s you find that the adjective “good” is applied by this young man to the person of Christ and to the thing which is to be done as a means of securing eternal life — “Good Master, what good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?” And by comparing the two accounts you will see that Jesus replies to the use of this adjective in both cases. Replying to the application of the adjective “good” to Himself, He says: “Why do you call me good? There is none good but God.” Replying to the application of the adjective to the thing to be done, He says: “Why do you ask me concerning that which is good? God is the only good.” So you see that the answer is “God” to both of the thoughts. As a person, God only is good. As a possession, a thing to be enjoyed, God only is good.

I never read this but my mind goes back to the historical incident when Louis XIV was about to be buried — Louis the Grand Monarch, the greatest sovereign of the French nation, Bonaparte excepted, that ever occupied the throne of France — Louis the magnificent, who had the power to attract to him the greatest literary minds, the greatest social celebrities and the greatest martial heroes, and who, by the impress of his own character, not merely pushed out the boundaries of the French empire to a vast extent, but exercised an equal sway over society and over literature. He was truly great, as men count greatness, but in his old age (for he reigned a long time) he lived to see all of his glory vanish. It began to pass away when the Duke of Marlborough at the battle of Blenheim defeated Marshal Tallard, and continued to pass away as Marlborough gained victory after victory, until France became impoverished, until Louis shriveled up, void of human respect, a painted old man. He who had

been the center of all sight, the chief attraction of all the great of the earth, was dead even while he lived. His greatness was an illusion, his life artificial.

Macaulay says that it excited great surprise to find by post-mortem examination that instead of his being such a very tall man he was only a little over five feet high. But, anyhow, on the occasion of his funeral the preacher commenced with this statement, "God alone is great."

So here our Saviour wished to rebuke the adjective employed by this young man and applied to Himself. The young man did not regard Jesus as divine. He did not look on Him as God. He looked on Him merely as a great teacher. To paraphrase the thought: "Looking on me as only a man, why do you prostrate yourself before me and apply to me the term 'good'? God alone is good. If you mean to ascribe it to God, well. If you mean to apply it to me as a mere human being, not well. There is none good but God."

The thought is this that there is no perfection in human goodness. While the law requires a man to be as perfect as God is perfect, and as good as God is good, and while grace will ultimately bring that about in the case of every man who enters heaven, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord, yet it is an arrogant claim when one applies it to himself here and now, under the present earthly conditions. Supreme goodness can only be predicated on God Himself.

Now the other thought, "What good thing?" The Saviour rebukes his application of the adjective "good" to a thing, to a possession: "You may have ideas of goodness as applied to things that need to be corrected. You say to me, What good thing shall I do? That is, to be so good, that I can offer it to God as an equivalent or eternal life. Why askest thou me concerning that which is good? God alone is good."

The meaning of it is this: It is the old question, which is the chief good? What is that one possession which if a man have — he lacks nothing, and if he have everything else in the world except that one thing, you can say to him, "One thing thou lackest?" What is the chief good? The answer to it, as to the other, is, "God is the good." That is to say, He has so constituted our immortal spirits, He has so endowed them with capacities, He has so conferred upon them desires, that these capacities cannot be suitably employed and these desires cannot be adequately satisfied outside of the end of them, which is God. God is the good that alone can satisfy the human heart.

Allow a man to possess just as many other things as he is willing to enumerate, and let their excellency be as high in the human scale as one is disposed to wish, there will be no dispute about quality; take as many as you please and after you take all you may wish to claim, your soul will be a pauper, for God is not its portion. One thing thou lackest — THE thing.

There will come a time when you will get to the end of any limited thing. There will come a time when you will exhaust the fulness of all measures, of all finite quantity. There will come a time when all glory of earthly things will vanish, and when that time comes, defer it just as long as you please, pass from days to months, and months to years, and from years to cycles and from cycles to ten thousand times ten thousand centuries, let it be so, when you do get there, and ultimately you must, and your eye sweeps the horizon of eternity you are in absolute poverty. You have used up what you had. You have used it up without, in the least, taking away your capacity for enjoyment. You remain as hungry, as craving, as longing, as when you first commenced. Then none of these things can be called the good, the equivalent of eternal life—none of them.

“You asked me” concerning that which is good. I say to you that God is the good, and if your springs of joy are not in God, then your springs of joy are summer springs. They will dry up. There will come a time when dust takes the place of sparkling and bubbling waters. Now that is the thought with which the lesson commences.

Notice next that while this young man had a very low idea of personal goodness and of the good that could fill the heart of man, and consequently a very low estimate of the dignity of manhood itself, the Saviour now wants to show him that he has an equally faulty view of the law. “You ask me what you shall do to inherit eternal life. If you wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments.” The law is the measure of human conduct. “The law, you mean, as I know it?” “No, I mean as God knows it. It is not limited by your ignorance.” “Oh, then you mean as my conscience feels it?” “No, conscience is not a standard. Conscience is only a judge. The judge that sits on the bench is not the standard. The law is the standard. Conscience pronounces according to the law that is before it, whatever law that may be. If it is an inferior law, then the decisions of conscience will be inferior. The supreme standard is the divine law, and you are in no way free from the obligation of the law simply because you say, ‘My conscience does not tell me to do that.’ Ask Paul. He verily thought within himself that he was doing God’s service in persecuting the Christian religion. He

had a certain standard. According to that standard his conscience, as a judge, construed and applied the law put before it, hence his conscience told that persecution was the right thing to do. But is God's law to be lowered until it fits an unclean conscience? Is God's law to be lowered until it fits human ignorance?"

The Saviour knew that this young man was at fault in supposing that he had kept the law all his life. That was his claim. He says, "All these have I observed from my youth." Why then did the Saviour refer him to the law? In order to disclose the real state of his heart. The law, expressed in great principles and not in special statutes, is this: "Thou shalt love God supremely and thy neighbor as thyself. Thou shalt love God with all thy affections, all of them. Thou shalt love God with all thy understanding, thy intelligence. Thou shalt love God with all thy activities, thy strength. Thou shalt love God supremely and thy neighbor equally with thyself." Now he said that he had kept that all the way.

Mark how the Saviour discovers his case to him: "You affirm that you love God with all your heart, for you say you have kept the law from your youth up. I will subject you to a test. God says that heavenly treasures are better than earthly treasures. God says that heavenly rewards are superior in excellency to earthly rewards. You say you love God with all your heart. I will test your affections. Here you have vast earthly possessions. Yonder are vast heavenly possessions. I propose an even swap to you. Let these replace those. Give up one and take the other. Sell all that you have, every bit of it, and come and follow me and you shall have reward yonder. You say you love God supremely, that your heart is obedient to the divine statute. If you have rightly judged yourself, it will be to you an absolute pleasure to exchange an earthly pleasure for a heavenly one."

Look at it this way: One man has silver, but alleges a preference for gold. He claims to estimate an ounce of gold to be sixteen of silver. As a test of the sincerity of his estimate of relative values, put down by the side of his silver an equal weight of gold, ounce for ounce, and let him take his choice. Now on your theory of sixteen to one, will you exchange the onesixteenth for the whole number? If he says, "No, I will keep my silver," what will it prove? It will prove that he did not tell the truth when he said he estimated the gold to be of more value than the silver.

Another has gold but alleges a preference for diamonds. "Diamonds," he says, "far exceed gold in relative value." Test him the same way. Put clear, large, lustrous diamonds over against his gold, equal weight, ounce for ounce, and

give him his choice. "Give me that weight in gold and I will give you this weight in diamonds." "I cannot do that; I would rather have my gold." What does it prove? It proves that he did not tell the truth when he said he estimated the diamonds to be more valuable than the gold.

Apply these illustrations to this young man. He said that from youth up he had kept the law. The law said, "Thou shalt love God supremely. Thou shalt prefer God to earth. Thou shalt prefer heavenly treasure to temporal treasure. Thou shalt prefer moral and spiritual good to physical and temporal good. Now, if you have kept the law, if this is the attitude of your mind and heart, when I offer you a fair exchange, heavenly treasure for earthly treasure, you will joyfully take it."

What happened? The young man's countenance fell. What an expression! His countenance fell. Why? He went away sorrowful. And why? True, he had great possessions, but here, according to his own theory, was offered him greater possessions in exchange, and he declined to take them. The besetting sin of that young man, as is the besetting sin of this age, was the love of money. This is absolute idolatry. I mean counting money the chief good. Evidently he so counted it. Because he was not willing to exchange it for what on his own theory was a better and a greater good. When the two came of an alternative possession, he refused the one and elected the other.

Here are all the elements of a decision. Here are the two things put over against each other by contrast. Here the elector looks first upon this picture and then on that, and, looking, deliberately chooses. His choice established the fact that money was his chief good. "Why askest thou me concerning that which is the good? God is the good. You, in heart, say money is the good, and as a proof that you worship the money, when I put money and God directly before you as objects of affection, as comparative objects. of human love, you turn your back on God and you cling to the money." So it made manifest the awful fact that he had never kept a commandment in his life, never had. He never had even approximated keeping a commandment.

Now, I want to press a question on you with all the solemnity of which I am capable. I know I am in earnest about it. I know I have so deliberated upon it that I feel that I am touching eternal things here today and that today there will be a touchstone applied to human hearts. I have prayed God that you may propound this question, "What lack I?" And that when you have discovered what it is, that your decision will be different from the decision of this young

man. Some things about which others have been much exercised may never even have interested me. I am utterly unable to appreciate their obstinate hold on the human mind. For instance, sacramental salvation, ritualism as a means or condition of life. It always seemed to me to be as small a thing as a man's mind could belittle itself with.

How did any one ever say, If you are baptized you will be saved? If you are not baptized you will be lost? If you commune you will be saved? If you do not commune you will be lost? Salvation never turns on things of that kind. It turns rather upon a supreme principle, your recognition and acceptance of Jesus Christ as sovereign, as good, as supreme.

I do not care what else you do, if you leave that out you are lost, whether you be preacher, deacon or unofficial church member. You may have paid money every day of your life. You may have attended service; you may have observed rituals; you may have busied yourself about many things, but I do know that if you have never recognized and bowed to the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ you are not saved and you lack the supreme thing.

The test may come up in various ways; in your case perhaps on a different thing from that which exposed the idolatry of the young man. It may not be that love of money is your besetting sin. But no matter in what form the test does come, when it clearly reaches you, when it comes as an alternative proposition, when it sets before you in competition, heaven or earth, when your soul must take one and leave the other, then if there be on the face of the earth any one thing that you prefer to God, you fall all along the line. You lack one thing.

My own mind never studied a question as great as the subject of the supremacy of God.

God alone is great. God alone is the good. "He went away sorrowful because he had much possessions."

Now I want to show you how the Lord Jesus Christ brought out the thought in another way. It was not a full disclosure to show him where His chief thing was, his king-thing, the royal thing, that which took precedence of everything else. There is quite another view to be seen. Let us suppose that this young man had said: "Here is the title to everything I have. I will turn it all over to you now. Let it be sold and distributed among the poor, since you require it. My money, yes, take it — all of it but my personal service, no." "Sell it all?" "Yes." "Give it to

the poor?" "Yes." "Follow you? No." Right here, it would seem, is an important point.

I shall never forget a conversation I had with an old friend in a certain city when canvassing for the redemption of Baylor University. He accorded me a brief interview, but desired to end the whole thing in a minute. "I know what you want, I approve your work, here is a check for \$50." "Excuse me," I replied, "you misunderstand. The check is very far from all I want."

"Well," he said, "what is it?" "I mean to say that if my mission is what you conceive (and if it is not, you ought not to give any money to it) you owe to it some personal service as well as your money, and more than the \$50 the cause needs your influence. Now you cannot discharge that duty by a financial contribution." His good sense grasped the situation in a moment, and his kindness and loyalty accorded promptly, gracefully and lovingly, just what I wanted, and just what was become in him to do for such a cause. He fixed a convenient hour, heard me patiently and thoroughly, became deeply interested, increased his own contribution, furnished me much valuable information, gave some good advice, of which he was quite capable, wrote some letters of introduction, went with me to other places and every way made the cause his own for such time as he could spare. When I left him I thanked him, not for courtesies to me, but I thanked him for Christ's sake. His face glowed with the pleasure of personal service.

It is not difficult to find business men who readily contribute to worthy objects, and are even willing to let the deacons say how much they ought to give, but who are unwilling to bring their personal service to bear in the cause of Christ; who are willing to have an evangelist come and hold a protracted meeting and never frown as they sign the check to pay him, but who will not personally labor in the meeting, pray in the meeting and work in the meeting for the salvation of souls.

What, then, do such facts disclose: Put the disclosure in words: "Lord, I recognize your sovereignty over my money; you may check on me when you will; I will honor your check, but I do not recognize your sovereignty over myself." We have here some of this class.

Oh, how I have longed to see them come to prayer meeting just occasionally! How I have longed to see them show a personal interest in the Sunday school! How I have longed to see them show a disposition to give personal help to the

deacons in their work, to give personal help to the pastor in seeking to build up this church!

I witnessed this scene once, and could give you the names. I was sitting in the office of a wholesale house in a certain city which did an immense business, far, wide-reaching business. The proprietor was a liberal man, too, as the world goeth. While there, word was brought to a gentleman present, whose office was just across the street, notifying him that a man, according to his appointment and at the time designated, was over at his office waiting for him. He uttered an impatient exclamation which I will not repeat and added: "I have an appointment with him. He wants me to give money to him. I suppose I must go." The wholesale proprietor laughed: "Don't you know the way out of that? Why, just send your check over to him. Sign it here and send it over. Of course, you ought to give it. We have to do these things; that is right, but I would not be bored with an interview."

There was a cold-blooded insolence of tone and manner no words can describe. It made me shudder at the brutality to which money-getting degrades men. I could not be silent. Knowing all the facts in the case, that the waiting one represented not himself but the Lord Jesus Christ, whom both these men professed to serve and honor, that he was a most honorable gentleman, unselfishly devoted to the cause of Christ and humanity, that this cause was entitled to a hearing upon the part of those who claimed to be Christians, I said: "Did you accord this interview, designating time and place?" "I did." "Do you concede the worthiness of the cause and its claims on you?" "Oh, yes!" "Do you understand that the waiting gentleman desires any favor for himself?" "Oh, no!" "Whom then does he represent?" "Oh, well, he represents our church." "Do you mean your church, or Christ?" "Of course, our church does Christ's work." "Will you answer me plainly one question — do you regard him as representing Christ in this matter?" "Well, yes." "Then you have insolently refused an interview with Christ. You have brutally affronted His representative. How do you interpret this Scripture: 'And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet' (~~1004~~ Matthew 10:14). 'He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward'

(~~400~~ Matthew 10:40-42)? Now apply it. You say this is a good thing, but deny it a hearing, deny that it is entitled to enough of your time for you to investigate it, or to be even civil to its representative.”

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.” Now listen to a statement from Paul. He tells of a model offering. The Philippian church was a very poor church financially. They were not only financially poor, but they were under a very great stress of persecution. Well, these people thoughtfully considered the subject that Paul presented to them, a subject that related to God, and considering it and praying about it they made an offering which Paul marks as a model offering, by saying:

“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God” (~~400~~ 2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

Go read that Scripture. They first gave themselves. Not only my money, but myself, Lord. Mark that they gave themselves not only unto the Lord, but unto His representative, and both “by the will of God.”

Then what is involved in being a Christian? This, much is involved, that there be an absolute surrender to Jesus Christ. I mean that you recognize Him as Lord of person and of time and of property, of everything. And if He is God, He is entitled to it. If He is not God, He is a usurper and an impostor to demand anything at your hands. This is where we fail. We do play at things. People play at being Christians. They are always knowing and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. They are always splitting hairs and caviling and discussing this little boundary, when the heart of the question is one question: Do you yield yourself and all that you have to the Lord Jesus Christ?

I do not care on what comes the issue; it may come upon a yard of ribbon. It may come upon a silver thimble. It may come upon the most infinitesimally small thing in which the human mind can take interest, but if the point on which the controversy arises be as narrow in its boundaries as the point of a cambric needle, and on that thing, however small, a soul says, “God, here you are not

supreme,” that is a lost soul. That is the whole of the question. and it is all involved.

I know that it is personally distasteful for me to refer so much to myself, but when one discusses a personal experience he speaks within his knowledge. Now, if I have any consciousness, if I have any just recognition of the processes of my own thought, if I am able faithfully to chronicle the principal facts of my own past, I do know that this was the supreme question that addressed itself to my mind for settlement when I was converted. After you settle that, you never find any hard question. There are none others that can approximate it. Whether you do this or that particular thing amounts to but little when the supreme - question is settled, the one that has the heart of the whole matter in it.

I think I understood what the old preacher meant when he said: “With my view of my allegiance to Jesus Christ, if I could get the evidence upon my mind that Jesus Christ commanded me to go out yonder in that graveyard and stand over the dust of the dead and say, ‘Live!’ I would go out there and say it expecting to see them come up from their graves.” He just meant this: The only thing that I have ever to settle is, What does He want me to do? Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? That is all I want to know. There is where the question comes in. It is not as to the way, but what is the thing to do?

Now, Paul settled that supreme question when Jesus says, “Saul, why persecuteth thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goads.” You may think you are only persecuting the people. I tell you that you are persecuting the Son of God when you are unjust to His cause. But what replied Paul? “What shall I do, Lord! I recognize your sovereignty, I see you are Lord. I see that you are the only Lord. You are the one king. You are sovereign. Now what will you have me to do?” “Go to Damascus.” “I will go.” “Go to a certain street called Straight.” “I will.” “There wait for a man to come called Ananias.” “I will.” “Then do what he tells you to do, for I will send a message by him.” “I will do it.” “I will show you that I have marked out for you to be a great sufferer.” “Send it, Lord, send it. I will rejoice in it. I accept it.” “I will show you that you must suffer a great many things for my sake.” “Send them; let them come.” “You must leave home. It will nearly break your heart. You would a great deal rather preach to your home people.” “I will go.” “I will send you far hence.” “I will go.”

Notice he never fought the real battle but once, and notice that the battle did not consist in simply saying, Will you go to Damascus, or will you go to the street

called Straight? It didn't consist in that. Those were details, all settled in the main question, in the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over him, to send him here, there, or anywhere.

Well, let us take one other case and then I am done. "Gaius," "Here, Lord! Lord, are you going to make me a missionary?" "No." "Why, you let Paul go." "It is not for you to determine whether you go or whether you stay. I appoint you to stay, not to go. You serve me here." "How?" "Well, I will pour wealth on you." "You don't mean that I have to sell all that I have?" "Not at all; you do what I tell you to do. I will pour wealth on you. As fast as your soul prospers, I will make your money prosper." "Well, Lord, haven't you got any sickness for me?" "No, I am not going to send affliction on you. I am willing for you to be well in body as long as you are well in soul." "Well, what am I to do then?" "You are to be a fellow helper to the truth. You receive those whom I send. You greet those whom I send. You contribute to those whom I send." God says, "I am sovereign. I say to Gaius, 'Be rich.' I say to Paul, 'Go.' I say to Gaius, 'Stay.'"

So you see it does not consist in whether you will do this or that particular thing, but whatever thing, leave it to Him. Paul says to Silas: "Let us go over into Asia and preach." The Spirit says, "You cannot go." "All right, I won't set my face that way. Let us go over then into Bithynia to preach." The Spirit says, "No, you cannot go there." "All right, I won't try to go there. Lord, you are sovereign. You select my field; I don't want to select it. I belong to you. Not only when you want me to work, and not only what you want me to do, but where you want me to work." The sovereignty extends to the place as well as to the time.

Now that is the thought that I wanted to get before you today, the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Let His mind be in you, the mind that was in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "I came not to be ministered unto but to minister." He came to serve and to do the Father's will. So, adapt yourself to God's methods as well as to His work.

Take one illustration: God might have made the Bible ready bound, given it in the English tongue, pictures in it, gilt edge, marginal notes and all, and handed it right down from heaven just that way, but it would have been a very mechanical way of handing it down. It would have been a way that imposture could have imitated and did imitate in the Mormon Bible. So he did not pursue any such way. He gave His revelation in His own way, and by giving it as He did He

called out, He engaged, He employed the thought of ten thousand Christians in ascertaining the true text, in collating the passages, in sifting, in holding up before us at last the reliable Word of God.

Tischendorf felt that God called him not to go as a missionary and not to stay at home, but he wanted the truest text of God's Word that could be found. That meant to travel and spend money. That meant hardship and poverty. "Let it come. My soul is on my work and I don't care how much I suffer and I don't care how much I labor. Paris, Rome, Egypt, Arabia, anywhere." At one time, begging those stern guardians of the Vatican manuscript to just let him look at it, let him copy as much as he could copy on his finger nail; another time on Matthew Sinai dealing with the stupidity of ignorance, making three trips there at great personal cost, in order to be able to bring away the famous Sinaitic text of the Bible.

See another yonder in that old convent in the desert of Africa, where for a consideration he is let down through a trap door into a room that had been filled with old parchments of bygone ages, and gathered them up and exhibited his inestimable treasures to the courts of Europe and to the world. He had his work. The same thing was in the heart of Wyclif when he said, "My mission is to see to it that every plow boy shall have the Bible in the Anglo-Saxon tongue to read as he plows." And he brought it about.

So then, divergent as may be the paths, different in themselves as may be these avenues to work, the one and the only question to be considered is, "Do you let God decide, do you make Him sovereign? Lord, art thou my Lord?" That is what Lord means. It means sovereign, potentate, king.

I press that question now on you. As you go out of this house ask yourself: "Do I recognize Jesus Christ as Lord of myself, Lord of my time, Lord of my money, Lord of all?"

And you might just as well write on and engage your room in hell if you deny the jurisdiction of Jesus Christ over your money, over your time, over everything.

13. OBSERVING THE COMMANDS OF CHRIST

TEXT: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. — ^{483D}Matthew 28:20.

More than once during the last great meeting your attention was called to this commission of our Saviour, and the first part of it was doubtless sufficiently discussed; that is, to make disciples by repentance and faith, and to baptize the disciples. And now comes the text of today: “Teaching them (that is, the baptized disciples) to observe all things whatsoever” Jesus Christ has commanded.

You will do well to note carefully that a baptized disciple has only started. He has complied with the initial commandments. He has learned the rudiments. He has made his heart acquainted with the first principles of the oracles of God. He is a babe in Christ. It is easy to point out the ground over which he has passed. He has repented towards God — he has received the Lord Jesus Christ—he has been baptized. He is now a member of the church, entitled to all its privileges and franchises and subject to all its obligations.

I ask you next to compare thoughtfully the difficulties of the first teaching with the difficulties of this teaching. In making disciples you deal with the enemies of Jesus Christ, in open revolt against His government. The inveterate and incorrigible depravity of the heart must be subdued; but when a disciple is once made, when the Holy Spirit has breathed upon him and made him a new man; when his heart is full of love to God, then it would seem easy to teach him to do whatever his Saviour has commanded him to do. And my reliance today is upon the fact that you are children *of God* born from above penitent believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, created in Him unto good works. I have as the predicate of every instruction I shall give you today, and as the hope of its fulfilment in your life, that you are children of God.

Not only this, but I can appeal to your baptism, to which you submitted in the presence of vast throngs of the people, thus publicly obligating yourselves to walk in newness of life according to the resurrection which it showed. Not only this, but the baptism was more than a declaration of your faith in Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, and divine teacher and divine Saviour; it was

also your oath of allegiance to Him. In it you put on His uniform, enlisted in His service, acknowledged His ownership of brain and hand and heart and purse and everything that you had. Therefore, in teaching you, God's children, you monuments of His mercy, you, on the altar of whose hearts the kindling fire of a new inspiration has been placed, I can with some confidence venture to lay upon you the obligation to do whatever else He has commanded.

Now, I am going to so arrange this sermon that you can take hold of it and the different parts of it. I will do this by emphasizing single words.

First, is the word "impossible." By that, I mean that it would be impossible to teach you to do these things Jesus Christ has commanded if you had not been born of the Spirit of God. It would be morally impossible. There are some foolish people who assume to take a raw sinner and whitewash his depravity and baptize him in his unregenerated, his sinful and antagonistic state, and then try to teach him to observe all the commandments of Jesus Christ. It is morally impossible.

Such teachers will say, "Join the church if you have no more religion than a horse. Join the church and get religion by doing religion." These very teachers who break down the walls of the sheepfold and invite in and drive in all the goats who can be persuaded or driven, will then stand at the gate and complain that the fold is full of goats, who will not act like sheep.

It is circumstantially impossible to teach the latter part of this commission to those ignorant of the first part. Unless he is converted, unless his soul is made anew, you cannot induce him to attend regularly and systematically, and regular attendance there must be in order to learn and to do what my text speaks about today; and, therefore, circumstantially it would be impossible for this part of the commission of the Lord Jesus Christ to be performed, the other being undone.

And it is not only morally and circumstantially impossible, but it is personally impossible, in that you could not, except upon the predicate of the first work done, get the man's consent to be a learner and a doer of these other words of Jesus Christ. And without his consent and co-operation, how can you teach? Therefore, morally, circumstantially and personally, it would be impossible for this latter part of the commission to be carried out if the first part had failed.

So when you hear false teachers transpose the order of God's commandments and when you see their deluded followers vainly trying to lead a Christian life

without being Christians, you will recall this first emphatic word, “impossible.” You will recall God’s word in Ezekiel, that when He had cleansed them, when He had taken away their stony hearts, when He had given them a heart of flesh, when He had put His Spirit within them, “then they would keep his commandments and do them.” You will recall the words of Jesus: “First make the tree good and then the fruit will be good.” Yes, impossible — impossible!

My next word is “only.” “Teaching them only what he has commanded.” Now, there is a vast deal of both religion and theology in that thought. I do not feel upon my heart as a preacher the slightest obligation to teach to you from this pulpit on this and similar occasions anything except what Jesus has commanded, either by express words or by fair and necessary implication. I will not go back to any authority of councils in dark ages, nor to conventions, nor to resolutions of men, to find even the shadows of a burden to put on you-not one. Here the law by the expression of one thing excludes every other thing.

When the obligation is laid upon us to teach what Jesus has commanded, it means to teach in His name nothing that He has not commanded. I wish you would rivet that, clinch it, and never allow any preacher, your pastor nor any other man’s pastor, pope, archbishop, cardinal, deacon, or elder, no matter what his name or what his position, to teach you anything as a religious obligation except what Jesus Christ has commanded.

And if Jesus has commanded it you may be sure He has commanded it in words easy to be understood, and the words are a matter of record; therefore, demand that the teacher show you the words. And if he cannot show you the words you say to him, “As a religious teacher you are out of your province. I am not under the slightest obligation to hear you teach that. Give me the precepts and examples from the Word of my Lord.”

Now I asked you to rivet that so it may abide with you, and I will tell you why. Because thereby you have swept away nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand of the so-called religious obligations imposed upon the consciences of men. They are swept away. When teachers with itching ears, or the people themselves would yield to popular demands or customs in other denominations, when they try to impose their Easter days or other festivals or rites of paganism and will-worship on you, remember this word, “only.” Only what Jesus has commanded. Remember Paul’s injunction, misapplied to the less deadly sin of dram-drinking: “Touch not; taste not; handle not.”

I will give you a smaller word for the next thought — “All.” *All*. That is in the text. “Teaching them to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Now, when it says, “all” it doesn’t mean a part. When it says, “all” it doesn’t allow us with nicety of conscience to discriminate. It doesn’t allow us to say, “This commandment I will teach and I will do; that other commandment, being less important, I will leave out.”

You may count the days from the time a churchmember begins to quibble in his discrimination of ordinances until he commits treason. There must be some high ideal of the majesty and dignity and supremacy of law—so high that you will not attempt to palm off upon the ignorant and credulous and superstitious anything as law that is not written, nor amend at your hazard anything that is written. I tremble for a man who begins to extenuate and palliate and apologize for his disregard of the least of the commandments of Jesus Christ. We will come to that “all” again directly.

For the present, consider another word — “always”. That is in the text. “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you *always*.” In other words, His continuance with His people is to be commensurate with the obligation to teach and to do what He has commanded, and therefore the obligation is to teach “always,” because He has promised to be with them, “always.”

Now let us see what is the first idea in that “always,” and especially when you look at it as it is expressed in the original, “Lo, I am with you all the days, every one of the days, bright or dark; I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world.” What then is the first thought in it! Do you know how much you have learned when you receive, not as a sojourner, but as a member of the family, this thought, that no — commandment of Jesus Christ is ever to become antiquated!

You will see men in these modern times attitudinizing before an undiscerning public as men of “advanced thought,” of high culture, who have gotten beyond some of the old commandments of Jesus. They say, “That was that time; this is now.”

Never, forever does any commandment of Jesus Christ go out of date.

It lies on you as imperious in its obligation as it rested on the hearts and consciences of the men to whom it was originally addressed.

Not only that, but there comes right under that thought, which is that as we are to teach only what He has commanded, and all He has commanded, and as we are to teach that always, and as He so commanded, being omniscient and looking to the end of the world, and foreseeing all future contingencies and developments, therefore, there will never be any need for another revelation. This is the gospel. It is to have no successor. Like an angel, it has no posterity. And like its eternal Priest, it has no successor.

The next thought is the tense. Tense refers to time. We say, “present tense, past tense, future tense.” Now what tense comes in here? “Teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you.” “It is finished.” What does that mean? That means that from the day this obligation was placed upon the disciples, Jesus Christ was to reveal no new commandments, but He was to give the Holy Spirit, whose mission it was merely to bring to their remembrance the things that He had done and had taught, so that not even from Christ Himself do we look for another book, another revelation. So that what is contained in the Acts of the Apostles, and referred to in the epistles and in the Apocalypse, are but the unfolding and development of what had occurred when He said, “It is finished.”

When I come to the next word I think of that old Latin proverb, *Hic labor; hoc opus est*. Not teaching them all the commandments? Oh, no! Oh, how sad it is when we get the idea of it! But “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” — *to observe*.

Hear the story of the Scotch boys, for I do want you to rivet this thought. A Scotch mother had two boys, Jamie and Robbie. Jamie was very bright, but Robbie was very dull; Jamie had a strong, vigorous body, but poor Robbie was a cripple. One day the Scotch mother brought home a chart on which were the Ten Commandments, and hung it up in the room and said, “Now, boys, there is your lesson.” Jamie flashed his eyes at it and said, “Why, Mother, I can learn it in half an hour, but it will take Bobby a month.” And in half an hour Jamie came and recited every one of them, but poor Bobby could not say one of them. But he had come to his mother and asked her the meaning of this one, “Honour thy father and thy mother.” And she had explained it. Soon after, the mother said, “Jamie, I wish you would run out beyond the hill and drive the cattle home.” And he shrugged his shoulders and said, “Oh, mother, I don’t want to go.” But Bobby hobbled up to his mother and said, “Mother, I will go.” “Ah, Jamie,

Robbie is ahead of you in the commandments. You have learned them, but have not learned to observe any of them.”

Listen at the scorn of God, the sarcasm of the Almighty, when He speaks to Ezekiel: “Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not.”

The Saviour’s grand peroration comes up to emphasize and accentuate the thought. At the close of the Sermon on the Mount, He says,

“Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell and great was the fall of it.”

And James says,

“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man, beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his *way* and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of, rams.” It is the essence of the law, obedience. “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” We are all like Solomon in one respect; we know more wisdom than we practice. But I do wish—it has been a matter of very grave concern to me in the last twenty-four hours — I do wish that in your hearts could come this very day a purpose like granite, “God being my helper I

will delight to do His will. It shall be more to me than my necessary food. It shall be sweeter to me than the honey-comb.”

God, give us the spirit of prompt and loving and continuous obedience! You have slept with a traitor the very night that you have harbored the thought that you could disregard a commandment of Jesus Christ.

Let our last emphasis be on a phrase, “I am with you.” “Lo, I am *with you*, always, even unto the end of the world.” That presence! Do you remember the day I preached the sermon here in which the position was taken that you could be as vividly impressed by and as sensibly conscious of the presence of God as you could of the presence of a man, and some thought it a strange doctrine? But since our meeting, I venture to say 250 of you, maybe more, would stand up and say, “I know that now just as well as you do. I know that is true.” You recollect when you felt that presence, when you felt it in this house. Here was His power, here was the Lord Himself.

Oh, the sweetness of it! Can succeeding events ever blur the pictures on our hearts of that glorious meeting, when mercy came down, and power and love filled this house full of the glory of God!

Now, brethren, I can promise you that presence always if you do what He says. He promises that presence only when we make disciples as He commanded, only when we teach them what He has commanded. But always when we carry out His instructions we may claim and expect that presence.

But suppose I teach a substitute for baptism; can I say, “Be thou with me?” Suppose I sidetrack the principal thought in the communion; can I say, “Be thou with me?” Suppose I enjoin a tradition of man as a substitute for the commandment of Jesus Christ; can I say, “Be thou with me?”

For that reason, if there were no other reason in this world, I would count it as an obligation which absolutely shut me in, leaving me no alternative. I cannot afford to be without. God’s presence. I want to feel it when I pray, when I preach. When I do anything that is a religious thing, I want the presence of the Holy Spirit.

When men corrupt the plain words of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is to step out of the highways which He illumines, which He overshadows, which He guards from uncleanness and peril, to wander in a dismal Okefenokee swamp of

tradition, to listen to the bellowing — and hooting of alligators and owls, and to dwell with slimy things.

I would not have God's finger write on my brain, "High treason! Thou traitor!" And then I expect to die, and when I come to die, it may be, it will be a time of memories for me; and when my mind goes back over the past, it would be a bitter thing for me to remember that I had taught men in the name of God to do what God had never commanded and that in teaching them to do what God had never commanded I had thereby substituted man's word for God's Word.

I do not want that memory at such a time. And when I come to die, it will be a time of anticipation. The mind will not only look backward, but it will look forward above the swelling of the Jordan into the misty shores of the beyond into the realms of eternity, in the forefront of which looms up the Great White Throne of God's judgment. In such anticipation I do not wish to look into the eye of Him whose glance is like lightning, so keen, so hot, that men who could bear the piercing of the dart and saber and arrow flinch from it as from a spear of fire. I would not, while standing before Him, have to think that I had spent my life teaching men to do contrary to what He had commanded.

Finally, what are the things which He has commanded? You cannot even consider them unless you take hold first of this word "church." I would not have any member of this congregation to be ignorant of what that word means—church.

There are questions I want you to be able to answer just as quick as you can put the forefinger of your right hand on the forefinger of your left hand. I want you to be able to turn the leaves of the Book to the proof-texts as fast as you can answer: Who established the church? When did He establish the church? What is the church? What are its ordinances? Who are its officers? What are their duties? What is its worship? What is its discipline? What is its work?

Do you know that to be a Baptist there is a greater demand for intelligence and piety than to be anything else in the world? I make that statement boldly and never expect to qualify it unless to make it stronger, and now, I will tell you why, directly. I want you to learn that the Lord Jesus Christ established His church, and not Abraham, nor Mahomet, nor Moses, nor Lord Chesterfield, and that the Lord Jesus Christ established His church, not in His preincarnate state, nor in His ascended state, but in the days of His flesh.

In a sermon hereafter I will cite these Scriptures. I would cite them today but for one reason: You left your Bibles at home, and I now ask you, every member of this church, to bring your Bibles next time and note the passages, so that any member of this church can meet any preacher in the world and say, "Here, thus saith the Lord." I want to answer these questions: Who founded the church? When did He found the church? What is the church? What are its ordinances? Who are its officers? What are their duties? What is its worship? What is its authority? What is its work? What is its mission?

A church of Jesus Christ is the purest democracy the world ever saw, and the only one; the only one in the world, the only one the world ever knew anything about. Every member is the full equal of every other member; no master in it, no lord in it. Now I will tell you why it requires more intelligence and more piety and more courage to be a Baptist than to be anything else in the world.

In the first place, members of Baptist churches have truer and higher citizenship than any others in the world. Your franchise is broader. You select your religious teachers — you receive your members you are the final earthly judges of doctrine and discipline.

Now that calls for intelligence. If these were done for you by others, it would not make any difference whether you had any intelligence or not. If somebody else settled the question for you, if you had the luxury of a pope or a bishop, who could appoint for you teachers of morals and of religion, for you and for your children, why then let him be intelligent and pious. But if you make the election, if God devolves upon you such vast and solemn obligations, you cannot delegate your responsibilities.

Whatever may be the case with others, with you there can be no sponsors and no proxies. You, as fellow citizens, elect your preacher, elect your deacons, ordain your preacher and your deacons, and then judge of the soundness of the doctrines which they teach. Therefore, you ought to know the Bible by heart. You ought to learn it, every member of you.

I am prouder of you as a congregation in one thing than of any congregation I ever saw, and that is, you do your own thinking. You are indeed fellow citizens, and under God you feel responsibility resting upon you every time you elect a preacher or a deacon, or even appoint a protracted meeting. And I gladly admit you were right in your judgment as to when to commence this last one and your pastor's judgment was at fault.

Now, doesn't that call for intelligence and piety and courage? And then to be the judge of doctrine. I want you to be able to prove that from the Bible. I could tell you the Scripture this morning, but you have no Bibles with you and you would not remember it. You, knowing God's Word in the pew, are to be the judges of the soundness of the truth preached from the pulpit; and if a man brings to you any other gospel than the gospel of Jesus Christ, you are not to receive him.

Not only that, but as a member of this congregation, this commonwealth, this pure democracy, you and not the preacher have charge of its discipline, and therefore you ought to be acquainted with the law of the New Testament. Every step of it ought to be as familiar to you as the walk from your house-door to your front-gate sidewalk. Yes, it ought to be that familiar to you. Well, it isn't easy then to be a Baptist.

Moreover, upon you, the congregation, upon you has God devolved this solemn charge, to preserve and to observe the ordinances as He delivered them unto you. Then you ought to know all about them. You ought to be able to tell how many of them there are, and where He placed them, and what is to be done and why it is to be done, and to what end. It ought to be just as familiar to you as it is to your pastor. And that means every member of every Baptist church.

Not only this, but here is the grand thing, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." O church, *ecclesia*, the called out, the called out from the world, the called out to the service of God, the blood-washed congregation of Jesus Christ, on you is devolved this commandment, "making disciples of all nations." What a thought! How stupendously high! How immeasurably deep! How incomprehensibly broad!

You are to make disciples here in Waco. You are to make disciples in co-operating with the churches of the association. You are to make disciples in the state, co-operating in the state convention. You are to make disciples in the world, co-operating with the Southern Baptist Convention. And you ought to understand every point of duty and history in these departments of work. You ought to know the name, of every special collector in your church, and you ought to know the object of that collection. You ought to know its end or destination. So then, as a citizen, understanding, piously observing, courageously executing the law of God, you may at last hear, rising above the

cold waves of death, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.”

O ye children of God, ye converted people, ye called out, ye witnesses, ye lovers of Jesus, ye men and women who stood up here before great throngs and said He is our Saviour, what is your mission herein Waco, here among your neighbors, here where you live? Make disciples! Carry the gospel!

God give us a revolution in Christian work. I pray for this revolution and can tell you the steps of it. How are you going to make disciples here in Waco! You must give yourself to God for service. Now, I am just one, and I do my best. I have six public services every week, and every one of them has to be studied. Who would bring an empty mind before a people, commits a sin. Oftentimes I do not sit down to eat. I am so busy that one of the members of the church suggested that I needed nine days to the week. Then how can I do the visiting in Waco? What can I do in so great a matter? But there are of you over eight hundred. What if you made one visit a day, a religious visit, each one of you! In a week you would make 5,600 religious visits. Did you ever think of that? Will you now think about It? It would breed a revolution.

I tell you the science of heaven, as well as of earth, brings the most battalions upon a given point at one time. If you mount only one gun, whose solitary shot is heard only once a week, the Devil will build up three walls while you demolish one. But if you bring up the whole line of God’s elect, if you put the commission on the heart of every converted soul, if you let every man of them feel, “Yes, I know how to lead a soul to Jesus,” then comes stupendous victory.

I know that every man in the world can tell his experience if he has one. Some people cannot tell it because they have not got it. But if you love Jesus you can say that to a sinner. Now, brethren, if each of you bring one sinner here a week, that is a thousand new ones every Sunday. Did you ever think about it? Oh, do think of it! There is the secret; there is the power; there is the revolution.

Bring a Bible with you next Sunday and mark the Scriptures I will give you, then study them so that you will know them by heart, and when you sit down by a man you say, “I am your neighbor. I am no preacher. I don’t know anything about Greek and Latin, but here is what Jesus said. You read that.” Oh, for a working church!

And now having given you this exhortation, I will speak a few words of praise. I was gratified exceedingly when the State Superintendent of Missions announced publicly and published it in the Minutes of the Convention, that you did, as a congregation, more mission work for God than any other ten churches in the state. I was glad of that, but I knew we had not done very much after all. But when we come to the true conception of service to Christ, you will hear men get up in this congregation and say, "Here, I have \$100 or \$500 or \$1,000 I would like to invest in the necessary books to put into the hands of the members of the church, that they may learn their duties, and I will give another \$100 and let the city missionary take them over the district, wherever you go, and flood the town in every place."

Now, here is a proposition: I will agree to it if you will. Here we stand today, fronting each other. I say I will agree to it if you will, that at every public service we hold in this church, at the prayer meeting, Sunday morning or Sunday night service, I will call for sinners to step heavenward if you will get them. here and pray for their present salvation, and so let the Lord bless us until every time this church comes together a soul is converted. Now that is the revolution I seek. Are you willing? I will commence right now. Saviour, make this a great day!

To any lost soul here today I do now offer present and eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. Will you accept it as a gift? Will you take it today? If you do not understand, will you now rise up and come here for... guidance and instruction? Will you come as the publican, praying, "God be merciful to me a sinner"?

14. WINNING CHRIST

TEXT: That I may win Christ. ~~SIBB~~ Philippians 3:8, last clause.

There are here today preachers who have been in the ministry a long time, and white-headed deacons who for a third of a century, perhaps, have held that office, and old men and women who for many years have been devoted followers of Jesus. But in all of this congregation I do not see one in whom this text is fulfilled, "That I may win Christ." Not a man of you, not a woman of you, no matter what may be your spiritual attainments, can lay your hands on the heart and say in the sense of this Scripture, "I have won Christ."

And yet the winning of Christ is presented as an object of such great desirability that all of the things in this world estimated highly among men, when put in an opposite scale, are counted but as fine dust in the balances when compared to it. I do not mean to affirm, nor do you understand me to say that nobody here is a child of God. I do not mean to say that you have not found Christ as a Saviour, but I do mean to say that you have not won Christ in the sense of this text.

I want to speak therefore to Christian people about winning Christ. If there — be any in this house today without a reasonable hope of salvation in Christ, my sermon cannot be anything to you unless by awful contrast it may suggest your condition and excite alarm concerning your distance from God.

In order to get, the thought of this text before you I want to explain quite briefly, but I trust clearly, some of the passages of Scripture read to you in the introductory service, commencing with the thirteenth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians, where the expression is used after this fashion: "We see through a glass darkly now, but then face to face. Now we know in part but then we shall know even as we are known." Here the word "darkly" is an attempt to translate three Greek words, and none of them is an adverb. Literally it means "in an enigma," for the word "enigma" is an anglicized Greek word. *In an enigma*; that is, "We see through a glass in an enigma." What then is meant by "seeing through a glass"? It means a mirror, the word "glass" being not a correct rendering. We see through a mirror; that is, by means of a reflector. The mirrors in use in Paul's time reflected but dimly the object before them. They were only polished metal.

The thought of modern application is, We see not the real thing, but a dim reflection of it, a mere shadow. The modern photograph is a permanent shadow. Suppose I held before an orphan who had never known her mother a photograph of that parent and said, "Little girl, behold your mother," and after a tearful contemplation of it, she should reply: "Now I see my mother by means of a shadow, but in heaven I shall see her face to face, she would express the meaning of this text.

All the difference between a dim shadow and the reality is the thought presented. We know in part. Our knowledge of heaven is very imperfect, because so unreal. Again, the thought may be expressed: Now we know the truth about heaven as reflected in an obscure speech. That would make good English and would fairly convey the meaning of this Scripture. Now we behold the truth about what shall be, not face to face, not in a realizing sense, not as being in touch with it, but we know it is as imperfectly reflected in an obscure verbal description.

I stand before you and I try to give you an idea of heaven, of Christ, of the world to come, and all I can do is to make a dim shadow. You look at that. It is a shadow in speech, in an enigma, not a reality, and you do not get the fulness of it, and the reality of it; but I say to you that then,, at the time referred to in the text, you shall see it itself, face to face.

Consider attentively Paul's illustration. He says, "When I was a child, I thought as a child, I reasoned as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Or "Now we know in part." Who can make a child understand what life is at fifty years of age? The child listens to you, hears you as a child, thinks about it as a child, reasons about it as a child, but there is no realization. Children have only the vaguest idea concerning the realities of life in this world. So the most advanced Christian in the world, the one who has experienced the deepest joys and revelations from heaven, knows no more about heaven in its actuality and cannot understand any more about it than a five-year-old child can be made to understand the maturity of womanhood and manhood or the cares and joys and sorrows and responsibilities of adult life.

But one other word needs exposition. Now we know in part, in a riddle, in an enigma; then we shall know even as we are known. The idea can be best conveyed by putting it in the past tense: "Then I shall know even as I was known, or as I have been known." What does that mean? When I get to heaven, when I attain to the full felicity of that heavenly state, I shall then know,

even as I was known. Known by whom? Let us so see that as never to forget it.

Suppose we stand on a mountain-side where marble is being quarried, and a huge piece of this marble is put on a float. There is no realization on the part of this marble as to what it shall be. It is jagged on the edges, of unequal thickness, utterly unpolished. But somebody knows. There is one who knows. In his studio yonder is a sculptor. He selected that piece of marble and in his mind he saw in it the statue of an angel. From the beginning he saw it. It was all just as clear to him in the beginning as it was in the end. It is brought into that studio and work commences on it. At first, there seems to be no particular design in the work. There is a striking off here and there and shaping and chiseling and the hammer is still being used. But after a while there stands out a statue, leaning forward as if listening, as if about to speak, and as if breathing, with wings half-poised, as if about to fly. And as it thus stands, so it was in the beginning known on the part of the artist.

Paul says, "I do not know, except in part, what I am going to be up yonder. I see a dim shadow of it conveyed in the revelations that are made to me. I do not know but in part, but then I shall know even as I was known." Was known by whom? By the One who commenced the work of redemption in that soul. And "known unto God are all His works," from the beginning. His knowledge when in eternity he was elected, is just as perfect as when after the resurrection the salvation is consummated, which was known then unto Him.

In the second Scripture read, the thought is exactly the same. Paul, looking forward to that consummation, what he shall be, says, I have not attained to it. I am not perfect. Brethren, I do not count myself to have laid hold of the things for which Christ laid hold on me. When yonder at Damascus He laid hold on me He had a purpose. He knew what I would be in glory. He knew of my transition from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. He knew of the conquest of the spirit over the flesh. He knew of the glory that should come to my beautiful spirit when it was released from the frail tabernacle of clay. He knew the power of the resurrection that should transform the body of my humiliation into the similitude of His own glorious body. He knew it all when He laid hands on me, when He apprehended me. I, don't know it all yet. I count myself to not know it. I know some of it. I see through a glass darkly,, imperfectly, as a shadow conveys the idea of reality that forecasts it. I get some ideas about it, but not yet, not yet do I know as I was known."

Now, is that thought clear to you? We shall know ultimately as we were known, as God knew us when He called us. Take a member of this congregation. Take him before the Holy Spirit had convinced him of his sins, while he is still the servant of sin, while oaths are falling from blasphemous lips. Take him when his mind is beclouded with dissipation, when his habits are habits of vice.

Oh, how fallen a man! But God knew him then. God in eternity had elected him. God knew him as he will be at the Judgment Day, in all the brightness and perfection of a complete salvation. There comes a time when thoughtfulness comes over him, when the penitential tear courses down his cheek, when in the midnight hour anguish pierces his heart, when he bemoans himself, as he thinks of blighted life and opportunities lost and manhood degraded. We see him when in the midnight hour anguish pierces him, and then after accepting Christ he says, "Oh, how sweet to sit at Jesus' feet! I have a foretaste of heaven." But he does not know. He knows only in part. He knows like a child would know the mother by looking at the photograph. But I tell you the time shall come when he shall know as he is known; when he shall know face to face.

But what does "face to face" mean? Let us see if we cannot grasp it. A child sees me digging a deep hole in the ground. "What are you doing?" "I am going to put a tree here." "What kind of a tree?" "An apple tree." He sees me putting that shrub into the ground and he says, "I see no apples on it." "No, there are no apples yet, but there shall be apples if God wills, on this tree." "Tell me about an apple; what is it?" And I get him a book and show him a picture of an apple. "There, you see that picture?" "Will there be things like that on that tree?" "Yes." And I begin to tell him about how it comes. At first a blossom, then a little green ball on the end of a twig, and how it swells, and how at last it matures, and gathers color to itself from the sunlight, and gathers mellowness and aroma. And then I tell about the sweetness of it to the taste. "Do you know?" "Well, I know in an enigma. I know in a riddle. I know in a word picture." "I tell you if you live long enough you shall know face to face."

So one day I take the child into that same garden, when that tree is mature and full of fruit, every bough bending down, laden with its joyous fruit, and I select the richest, ripest apple on it, and hold it right to his face. "Face to face." "Now taste it." He puts it to his mouth and bites it and tastes it. That is face to face. That is realization. That is experience.

Now, let me carry this thought on by showing you that the same thing is in the mind of Paul in the second Scripture. He tells about the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

I heard a man preach about that once and he said that the excellency there referred to was reading the Bible and getting into your head a knowledge of the plan of salvation in Christ. Why, the Devil knows that much, and there is no excellency in it to him. The word “know” in the Bible frequently means more than information. It is employed oftentimes in the Bible to express approbation, and then it has a deeper meaning than that; it means realization, personal realization.

When Paul here speaks of the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as precious as the knowledge of conversion was, he is not talking about that; as precious as the knowledge of Jesus Christ was in justification, he is not talking about that. He is already a justified man, and yet says, “That I may know Him, that I may win Him,” the excellency of a knowledge of the future, the excellency of a knowledge not yet attained, a knowledge face to face, a knowledge of realization, that is the knowledge he is talking about. He says not, “*I counted* all things but loss,” but, “I do *now count* all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, that I may know Him, that I may win Christ.”

What does it mean then to win Christ? What does it mean to know Christ in the sense of this text? You ask that child eating the apple what it is to know the apple now. He has knowledge that he could not get from a book nor from a picture, the knowledge, the realization by personal contact.

Let us expound somewhat our third Scripture. John says, “Beloved we are the children of God now, and it doth not appear what we shall be.” That doesn’t appear yet, “but we know that when he is made manifest we shall be like him.” *Like Him*. Look at that ancient prophet, that sweet singer of Israel, and let me prove to you that there was a knowledge to which he had not yet attained, that there was a part of salvation that he had not known. We find him restless. We find him dissatisfied. Ask him, “David, were you ever converted?” “Yes, God created in me a new heart.” “After your conversion and you had lapsed into sin, did you ever know the joy of salvation to be restored to you?” “Yes, I know all about that.” “So, then, for yourself by faith you have taken hold of the salvation of God?” “Yes.” “And you have had this salvation confirmed to you by the restoration of the joys after you had lapsed into sin?” “Yes.” “Are you happy all

the time?” “No.” “Got everything you want?” “No.” “Why, what is the matter?” “I shall be happy when I wake in thy likeness. I shall be satisfied when I awake in the likeness of my Lord.” He had not yet attained that. “We are the children of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him.” “I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.”

Now, we come back to that knowledge of God. Paul says, “That I may know him.” What do you mean by knowing HIM? “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection. If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead. I count not myself to have attained it. I have not that knowledge yet. I am here in the body that can be sick and full of pain, and that through its sickness will depress my mind. I am here in a land, cloud-covered and stormtossed, and I cannot be satisfied. I only know in part. I know in photographs. Oh, that I might know Him face to face! Oh, that I might realize in the fulfilment in my own body the power of the resurrection!”

Now we see the meaning of our text. I have tried to lead up to the thought. I look over your faces today and I know that there is not a satisfied one in the house. I know you have not reached a stopping place. I know that you have not yet attained to a state where you can say, “Here is home.” You are all pilgrims. You are all strangers and sojourners. You are all seekers, seeking for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. This is the precious thought of our text. Let us look at it in all of its context and see:

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence we also look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself.”

This is to win Christ and having thus opened the subject, let us attend to the application. What that is I say you do not know. I do not mean to say you have no ideas about it. The Bible gives us many. But I mean to say that all the knowledge we have of it is very imperfect, and it is not realization-knowledge. We are looking at a photograph of it. We are looking at it in an enigma. We are

looking at it as imperfectly reflected in obscure speech that cannot convey the fulness and the sweetness of the thing itself.

This estate of the resurrection of the dead, which is called the knowing of Jesus Christ, which is called the winning of Christ, “That I may win Christ and be found in him,” which is called the “face-to-face” knowledge, that is the most desirable thing in all this world.

Do you desire it? What will you put by the side of it? To what will you liken it? What thing of value can you compare to it? To be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ, to win Him, to be found in Him, to feel in yourself that all susceptibility of pain is gone, all weakness gone, all corruptness gone, to be swallowed up in immortality, to have the power to move as swift as thought and outspeeding the lightning. No sin, no sorrow, no pain, no death, and to be thrilled through and through with the joy of personal likeness to the Son of God, and to know it as a child knows when he eats the apple, to know it by experience, and to look back from that height of bliss, to look back from that unperishable and unfading inheritance down to the struggling cloud-covered shores of time and say, “I was yonder and groping my way, and knew so little and caught hold of things so imperfectly. Now I know face to face.” Ah! how attractive, how magnetic, how drawing is that consummation! For it I am willing to turn around to the world, rich with its honors, and its gifts and its pleasures and say, “Vain world, farewell. This is not my world. That is better. I am drawn yonder, yonder! I count all things but loss for the excellency of knowing Christ, winning Christ, being found in Christ, knowing Him face to face.”

But let us make the application much more searching. Does one lie down and fold his hands and so glide into that state? Are you passive? I tell you, “No.” To get into that state is service, is activity, is sacrifice, is striving. How do you prove it! I prove it by those Scriptures that I read to you: “Work out your salvation. For it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure.” “Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance and to temperance patience, and to patience Godliness, and to Godliness brotherly kindness.” “Make your calling and election sure.” “Walk worthy of the vocation with which you are called.” “I press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.”

He called me unto eternal life. He called me through His word. He called me through His providence. He called me through His Spirit. He called me by the

example of Christians. He called me by the light of the church. He called me upward and I heard Him. "Now walk worthy of your vocation, your calling."

That is what John L. Dagg meant when he said that the only infallible proof that a man is a Christian is perseverance in holiness. That is the only infallible proof. I tell you that only those who over-came, only those who held out faithfully to the end, only those who persevered, were ever God's children. Just as the upper side of conversion (and I mean by conversion in that use of the word, "conviction," "repentance" and "faith") is regeneration, so the upper side of perseverance is sanctification.

Now, in conclusion, let us see what we do. Go back to the text. I do not want you to leave it. Let us see what we do: "I follow after." That is one way. "I pursue, for that I may lay hold of Jesus Christ." This one thing I do. Now the Greek of all that is just this — "One thing." The rest is supplied. "One thing." What is the one thing? "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

What is the picture here? There is a prize, and there is somebody reaching forth and pressing forward. What then is the picture? Why, you know it is the picture of the Grecian race. See the goal yonder. That is what the word "mark" means—goal. There is the prize, and here is a man running to that goal for that prize. What did he say? "I forget the ground I have gone over. I forget the exercise that was necessary to attain thus far. I do not stop to glory in the sacrifices that were made to bring me to this point. I forget all of that. One thing, one thing only, Forward! Forward!" And you see the runner. He is leaning forward, his attitude is that of one who anticipates, who reaches out after that which is ahead.

Now my question: Is that a state of activity? Is that a state of work? Is that a state of motion? Answer the question for yourself. And I do say that when a man relies upon mere lifeless, unsacrificing orthodoxy, he is as dead as the seven sleepers. There is not one promise in God's Word that shines on his estate. There is not one rational hope to which he can look and say,

"That tells me of heaven."

Come we now to the climax of it. Listen at this, from the eighth chapter of the letter to the Romans: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the

earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. ‘And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.’”

I said that the sluggard could not lay his hand upon one rational hope—the hope that comes to the man now groaning; the hope that he shall see that for which creation travaileth; the hope of the liberty that comes to the children of God; the hope of the glory of the manifestation when their bodies are redeemed from the power of the grave at the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us return to one of the Scriptures read. I want to clinch the thought. I want to show you that one who does not persevere in holiness has no hope. Listen at it: “Beloved, we are now the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.”

Every man that has that hope is moving on in sanctification. Every man that has a rational hope in the redemption of his body is crucifying himself, is turning from the world, is consecrating his life, is praying, “Nearer, my God to Thee, nearer to Thee.” This hymn, then, expresses your condition.

But if you are just resting on empty orthodoxy, then another hymn suits you better: “Mistaken souls who dream of heaven, when they are slaves to lust.” Mistaken souls! Who of us can endure eternal burning?

I say to you, brethren, that if the principle of the real life of Christianity be in us, it is an active principle that rejoices to honor God, that says to the blessed Redeemer, “Let me work. Let me labor. Let me suffer. Oh, let me be made conformable to the sufferings of our Lord, and have fellowship with His suffering cause! I know that these sufferings are not to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us in that day. I reckon that these light afflictions,

which endure but for a moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

This is my sermon to you. I determined to give you an individual view of the state after the resurrection. Next Sunday I want to give you the social view, I mean the church view-not the view of one man saved, one man rejoicing, one man happy, but the view of the bride of Christ, the view of the whole body of Christ, the view of the new Jerusalem, the view of Matthew Zion, the view of the whole company of the redeemed after the resurrection.

As I look in the faces that I have seen; for many years in this congregation, one of the sweetest thoughts that comes to me is that I will know you yonder, not imperfect, but face to face, like that child who-said, “Show me my mother,” but only a photograph could be shown. “little one, you shall see your mother, herself, face to face, in the glory world.”

There are sad hearts here today because loved ones have been taken away. You never more will see them in time. You only know the shadow of them, a dim picture. But, Christians, I tell you that the time will come when, on the blissful shore of everlasting deliverance, you shall meet and greet and rejoice in the company of those from whom you have been parted here, meet in Christ, found in Him.

But we are here yet, and I want us to be faithful. I want us as a church not to be discouraged because sometimes we are misunderstood, not to be discouraged because so many needy objects appeal to us for help.

In heaven you will be glad because there were so many; you will be glad that your hand helped so many; you will be glad that God multiplied the opportunities of glorifying Him in your pathway. But none will gladden your heart like this one, that God gave you opportunity to lead sinners to repentance-none like that.

And I am sad, sad, that opportunities are so far apart. Oh, that He honored us more, that He counted us more faithful! Oh, that He thought us worthy every Sunday, to bless our prayers and our preaching in leading souls to Christ! Let us be ashamed. Let us prostrate ourselves in humiliation. Let us — wrap ourselves in spiritual sackcloth and scatter spiritual ashes on our heads and bemoan ourselves, that so long a time passes before this whole congregation leads a soul to Christ.

15. A SERMON TO PREACHERS

Delivered Before

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TEXT: I magnify mine office. ~~411B~~ Romans 11:13.

However far, and by whatever license a minister may depart from the primary meaning of a text in its immediate connection, it is always obligatory that he should first give the primary and contextual import and then explain how the general principle contained in it may be safely applied to all his deductions from it. In the present case the connection is this: The Apostle seems to anticipate an objection in the minds of the Gentiles whom he addresses, that he, their apostle, should manifest such concern for the salvation of the Jews. He justifies his solicitude for the redemption of his Jewish brethren, though he is an apostle to the Gentiles, and even magnifies his office as their apostle that by their glorious success in the gospel the Jews may be excited to emulation and thereby some of them be saved. He argues that, if the Gentiles derived benefit from the fall of the Jews, they would derive yet more by their recovery. Nor does he content himself with the salvation of only "some of them." He looks to the salvation of the whole Jewish nation and to this end he speaks in the text and its connections: "But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry; if by any means I may provoke to emulation them that are my flesh."

But while this is the primary meaning of the text, in its connections it embodies a great principle of wider application. It is this great principle which burns in my heart and which I feel impelled to discuss before this Convention. The fairness and safety of this wider application may be gathered from the first Scripture read- ~~411B~~ Ephesians 4:11-16- in which it is alleged that God gave apostles, pastors, teachers and evangelists for the same glorious purpose. Therefore, if the office of one is to be magnified, so the office of the others to the same end. Hence the

THEME: The office of a minister must be magnified -glorified always, everywhere, and by all incumbents.

In discussing this theme, it is purposed to emphasize three thoughts: The office itself, why it should be magnified, how to magnify it.

I. THE OFFICE — First impress on your minds the fact that the work of the ministry, is official. It is an office in the true and common acceptance of that term. Let us define: Webster's *International Dictionary* says: "Office — a special duty, trust, charge or position, conferred by authority for a public purpose; a position of trust or authority; as an executive or judicial office; a municipal office. A charge or trust of sacred nature, conferred by God Himself; as, the office of a priest under the old dispensation, and that of the apostles in the new," quoting our text as an example. Mark the essential elements of an office. The duty, trust or charge is special. It is conferred by authority. It is for a public purpose. In the case of a religious office, the trust is sacred and God Himself confers it. While in civil affairs it is the duty of every citizen to do all in his power toward the enforcement of law and the preservation of order, certain functions devolve exclusively on officers appointed for the purpose. A private citizen cannot perform the official duties of the sheriff, judge, governor or president. So in the church and kingdom of Christ. While it is the privilege of every Christian to tell the story of the cross and to otherwise aid in the dissemination of the gospel, yet in magnifying individual duties and privileges let it never be forgotten that God has called out a special class of men and set them apart officially and committed to them certain official duties. "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." The truth of the proposition just set forth is more recognized than realized. Let us impress ourselves with it by carefully reconsidering some things well known to all of us.

1. The terms by which God designates His ministers not only indicate office but suggest the nature of the office and its duties. In many places the minister is called a shepherd. A shepherd performs special duties committed to him alone. He must watch over the flock, feed them when hungry, heal them when sick, guard them in peril, keep them from worries and alarms, and shelter them in the fold. He is called a bishop, which means an overseer. The overseer has special duty and authority. He directs the labor of those he oversees. He is called a steward, one who holds in trust the goods or business of another and who acts for his principal, as an agent in the matter committed to him. He is called an ambassador, a term which implies official functions. The ambassador acts by special appointment, under definite instructions, and carries credentials authenticating his mission. There are other terms of similar purport.

2. The form or ceremony by which the minister is set apart to his work indicates an office. He is separated to this work by prayer and laying on of the hands of the presbytery (~~433~~ Acts 13:2, 3; ~~504~~ 1 Timothy 4:14).

3. The special provision made for his support indicates an office (~~400~~ 1 Corinthians 9:1-14). As there is a salary for the governor of a state, or the sheriff of a county, or a soldier in the army, so the Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Now it is evident that all Christians cannot live of the gospel-cannot be put on a salary out of the common fund. The fact, therefore, that special provision is made for the financial and material support of a certain class who devote their time and labor to a solemn trust for the public benefit; is a demonstration that such class are in office. There is no escape from this alternative: Either the preacher is an object of, charity in receiving pecuniary aid from his congregation, or he receives it. in compensation for official duties.

4. Ministerial responsibility is proof of office. I mean to say that there is a responsibility laid on every preacher that does not rest on any private member of the church, and that in the great day of account he must answer to God for the manner in which he has discharged his official duties.

Now, by these four facts-the terms employed to designate his work, the form by which he is set apart to that work, the provision made for his support while engaged in it, and his responsibility for its performance, it is demonstrable that he fills an office in the ordinary sense of that word and the duties of such office are in contradistinction to the duties of private members of the church. These private members are not called shepherds, bishops, ambassadors, nor even stewards, in the sense that he is a steward. They are not ordained. They rely upon their secular business for a support. They have not his responsibility.

II. WHY THE OFFICE SHOULD BE MAGNIFIED —

1. Because of Him who appoints. The dignity of every office is measured largely by the dignity of the appointing power. The servant is not above his master. When one holds an official position under the commission of a king, that royal signature ennobles every official action performed under its authority and confers on it the royal sanction, however paltry it may seem in itself. But what earthly potentate can be compared in majesty with the King of kings and Lord of lords, who as the eternal God, Himself specially calls every man, appoints every man, and sends forth under His supreme authority every man who

lawfully enters the ministry? How does such a commission, handed down from the Supreme Court of Heaven, infinitely transcend in majesty and dignity any commission issued by any lower court, so finite in time and power!

The divine Lord of the harvest sends forth His laborers into the harvest. He separates them from the masses of Christian people. He kindles on the altar of their hearts an unquenchable desire to preach His gospel. He counts it as rendered to Himself the treatment they receive. An audience given to them is given to Him. Their message scorned is His message scorned. Therefore, every minister should magnify his office.

2. This office should be magnified because of the work involved in it. What is the minister to do? For what service is he commissioned? Even those in high authority sometimes necessarily commission their servants to perform trifling and unimportant services. But is such your work, my brethren? Let us re-read our commission tonight. The Scriptures, ('Scriptures read: ^{<4041>}Ephesians 4:11-16; ^{<4018>}Acts 20:28-92; ^{<6011>}1 Peter 5:1-4; ^{<4001>}1 Corinthians 4:1, 2; ^{<4024>}2 Corinthians 2:14-17; 3:1-12; 4:1-7; 6:18-20; ^{<5012>}1 Timothy 1:12. 13; 4:12-16; ^{<5011>}2 Timothy 2:1-7; 4:1-8,) which introduced this service tell their own story. They were earnestly and solemnly read — were they reverently heard? By them our work is divided into two distinct parts—reconciliation and edification. The reconciliation of sinners to God the upbuilding of the reconciled in their most holy faith. How awful the responsibility, how solemn the obligation, how important the service of carrying to the lost the word and hope of eternal life! Salvation! Salvation! How much it means! Life! Eternal life! What is thy purport? Hear what was said to one of the early preachers:

“I send thee to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me” (^{<4817>}Acts 26:17, 18). What privation of the lost is here disclosed! What subjection! What guilt! What orphanage! What bankruptcy! What homelessness! They are blind. Night overshadows them. Satan has bound them hand and foot. His cloven foot presses their quivering hearts. They are without God and hope in the world. They are condemned and the sword of execution hangs over them suspended by one brittle thread. They are heirs to an inheritance of despair.

And what service does the minister render to them? He brings sight for blindness; light for darkness; forgiveness for guilt; hope for despair; a heavenly inheritance for spiritual bankruptcy; fatherhood for orphanage; and thrusts back

the triumphant devil from off the prostrate victim and stands him up unshackled before God, “redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled.”

Hear that same early preacher tell of this part of his work: “And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God” (⁽⁴¹⁸⁾2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Oh, the enmity of man against God! Oh, the sweetness of reconciliation! And “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things.”

Beautiful feet! Though bare, and bruised, and bleeding, and swollen, and dust-covered. Beautiful feet! When thy Saviour has girded Himself and washed them shall they evermore walk on a less holy mission! My brother in the ministry, is this trifling work?

And how like it, in importance, is the other part? “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (⁽⁴⁰⁸⁾Acts 20:28). “... Feed my lambs.... Feed my sheep” (⁽⁴¹⁵⁾John 21:15, 16). “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith,, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with, every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the’ truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (⁽⁴⁰¹⁾Ephesians 4:11-16).

Ministers of God, have you studied these Scriptures? Have you gauged these responsibilities? Have you measured these duties? My brethren, let our bare hearts be the targets of the fiery arrows of interrogation: Are any sheep of our flock hungry? Is any lamb astray? Are wolves howling around the fold committed to our care? Are any laborers idle under our oversight? Are the “babes in Christ” in our charge growing? Have you heard any of them crying for

the “sincere milk of the word,” while you crammed them with solid food they were unable to digest? Are our people unified in the faith? Are any of the young converts tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine? Are they at the mercy of every theological tramp, who, for revenue, seeks to sidetrack them from their straight road of service? Are they a prey to religious cranks, who poison them with patent nostrums and quack medicines? Is the body over which you preside fitly joined together? Does every joint supply compactness? Does every part work effectually? Does the body increase? Is it edified? O watchman, have you blown the trumpet at the coming of the sword?

My brethren in the ministry, was this Scripture written for our sakes: “Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves I should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered”

(~~34~~Ezekiel 34:2-5).

And under our mismanagement has it become necessary for God to “judge between cattle and cattle”? Have we allowed some of the flock to “eat up the good pasture and tread the residue under their feet-to drink the water and foul the residue with their feet”?

Have we stood cowardly silent while some “have thrust with side and shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with their horns, till they are scattered abroad”? Oh, “when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, shall we receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away”? Brethren, I press this question: Are not reconciliation and edification work enough? And should we not magnify our office because of the work?

3. This office is to be magnified because of the extraordinary means appointed for the accomplishing of the work of reconciliation and edification. I waste no words on the Koran nor the Book of Mormon. I mention no vagaries of human speculation, nor hallucinations of earthly philosophy. I hold up no glow-worm light of science. I speak not of the Constitution of the United States nor of any statutes evolved from it. But I do speak of the inspired Word of God as the instrument appointed for reconciliation and edification. When we consider this

inspired volume as the means of glorifying his office placed in the preacher's hands, we would not dare mention in comparison the office of the Supreme Court of the United States, which expounds only the principles of earthly jurisprudence. Let them quote Blackstone, and Kent. Let them painfully and laboriously gather up the doubtful opinions of dead men — that is their business. But the man of God takes a Word inviolable and infallible—which has breathed on those who wrote it; this must he expound and illustrate. It is the Word which God at sundry times and in divers manner, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets and in these last days by His Son. This Word is “quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of ‘the heart.’” This “Word of the Lord endureth forever.” It is brighter and more potent than the light of all the heavenly bodies (Psalm 19). It is more credible than a visitor from the dead (~~2~~¹ Luke 16:28-31). It is surer than the evidences of the senses (~~2~~¹ Peter 1:13-19). Therefore, the preacher is “charged”; that is, put on his oath, “before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, to preach the word” (~~2~~¹ Timothy 4:1). Such extraordinary and potential means would not have been provided for an office that men could refuse to magnify.

4. The office should be magnified because of Him who accompanies the official and gives efficacy to his words. I speak of the Holy Spirit, whose presence and power constitute the only guarantee of ministerial success. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God alone gives the increase. To what earthly office, however great, are such presence and power attached? The minister is a “laborer together with God.” No reverent mind can think of this presence and power, and depreciate the office which they sanctify and energize.

5. The office is to be magnified on account of the extraordinary qualifications required of the officer — qualifications mental, moral and spiritual. I maintain that there is no other office among men that calls for the kind and degree of qualifications which God's Word requires for the ministerial office. He must have gifts, graces and character such as no human law requires for any earthly office. While the measure of his knowledge and scholarly education is not prescribed, he must be apt to teach. Without this aptness he never can be a preacher.

He must wrap himself in a mantle of personal purity whiter than the ermine of a judge. This mantle no minister can smirch with impunity. He must be unspotted before the world and must preserve a good report of them that are without. He may as well resign when the world seriously questions his sincerity or his morals. In an age of mammon, while the world bows before its golden calf, he must not be covetous. “Not for filthy lucre” must he take charge of any flock. While other men hate and fight, he must be no “striker or brawler.” His spiritual qualifications are yet higher. He must be full of the Holy Spirit. He is the instrument of the Spirit. He must ever yield to the monition of the Spirit.

Therefore, because of his extraordinary appointment, because of his extraordinary work, because of the extraordinary means furnished him, because of the extraordinary presence, and because of the extraordinary qualifications required, it is demonstrable that this office should be magnified above every other office. We now come to the main question

III. How SHALL THE OFFICE BE MAGNIFIED? BRETHREN, — I feel pressed in spirit tonight when I look out over this audience—among whom are so many ministers, so many older than myself, so many of longer service in the ministry. And I speak with great diffidence, but I do desire to express very earnestly and without the slightest reservation my own deep and abiding convictions concerning the truth of God as I understand it, in answering the question how all ministers may magnify their office.

1. By a profound realization of its importance. Pardon a personal reference, for men only theorize when they go beyond their personal experience. In delivering addresses on other subjects, I have been singularly free from embarrassment, but I never stand up to preach without trembling. It is not stagefright, for perhaps I esteem too slightly the judgment of men and women, whether expressed in praise or censure. But there is something about preaching which affects me even more than the approach of death. I never refuse to preach on any proper occasion when invited — I love to preach. I was not driven into the ministry. I never fled from God’s message, like Jonah. I never hide behind modest apologies, but I never in my life stood up to preach except once—which exception I profoundly regret — without first isolating myself from all human company, even the dearest, and prostrating myself in spirit before the dread and awful God, imploring Him, in deepest humility, to bless me that one time.

Perhaps I am wrong. I would not judge harshly, but I cannot rid myself of the conviction that a man who can lightly, who can arrogantly, who can with, seeming effrontery of manner, get up in the pulpit, get up unstagged with the weight of responsibility resting on him, get up as an ambassador for God, as if God was his ambassador, is disqualified for this holy office.

Just think of it seriously. Eternal interests hinge on every sermon. Every sentence may be freighted with eternal weal or woe. Every word may be the savor of life unto life or of death unto death. Would any one of deep moral sense deliver idly or lightly even a political oration if every word uttered might be a winged bullet of death, or a message of reprieve from a death sentence? What must be his moral character, what the turpitude of his nature, if he was more concerned to display his wit or logic or eloquence than to measure the effect of his speech 'on human suffering or joy!

But can such trifling, however selfish, compare with his, who, standing up for God in matters which cost the life of Christ and engaged the attention of the three worlds — men, angels and devils—who stands up as Heaven's agent to dispense terms of life and conditions of pardon, or to denounce eternal judgments, and there poses as a wit or attitudinizes as a rhetorician, or plays the actor, as if the whole service were a theatrical display and heaven and hell were but scenic paintings to accentuate his dramatic talent!

Therefore, the impression never leaves me that no irreverent man should ever dare preach. I do not care how much he knows, nor how well he can declaim, nor how many his admirers. I shudder-cold chills of apprehension creep over me when I hear him.

Is it the office of a mountebank? Is it the vocation of a circus clown? Is it the lifework of a privileged jester? Oh, the agony of Paul's question: "Who is sufficient for these things?"! Oh, the richness of his experience: "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power"! If one of you were-commissioned to give directions of safety to a crowd of men, women and children standing on a quivering sandbank — encircled by an ever-rising flood, which moment by moment encroached on the narrow space where they stood, and your word meant life or death to every strong man, to every loving woman, to every clinging child, would you, could you-how could you, standing on a safe shore, speak those words in the carefully practiced declamation of a rhetorician!

Did you ever in your life hear of a preacher noted for habitually reaching souls, for leading thousands to Christ, who stood before a mirror and studied the postures and gesticulations with which to ornament his sermons! I submit to you, if your own interest has not slackened, if your spiritual nature has not been shocked, every time you detected art in the preacher's declamation!

I would not depreciate proper culture of voice or manner, but I do believe that if you realize the importance of your work, and forget yourself in it—if the great deep of your own soul is moved upon by the Spirit of God — your manner and gesticulation will take care of themselves.

2. Profound and abiding gratitude to God for putting you in the ministry will help you to magnify your office. Your heart must gratefully appreciate that you, a worm as other men—that you, not on account of your own merit—you, from among thousands naturally as good — and perhaps better by grace—you were selected by the Divine Master for this distinguished honor; as much higher above the crowns of earth as the stars in heaven are above their reflection in a well.

How can I ever forget the impression made on my heart, or get beyond its influence on my life, when I heard Doctor Broadus at Jefferson, Texas, in the Southern Baptist Convention, preach from the text: “I thank Christ Jesus, my Lord, for that he hath enabled me, putting me into the ministry”?

Let thy call to preach unseal a ceaselessly flowing fountain of gratitude. Rejoice in the honor conferred on you. You who desire to magnify your office, let me pass the question around and press its point on every heart: Are you glad you are a preacher? Are you? Are you grateful? Do you thank Him? Do you appreciate it as a priceless treasure?

3. You can magnify your office by studying; that is, being diligent, “To show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

This diligence applies to every department of ministerial work, and therefore includes a profound acquaintance with all the revealed will of God in its proper order and relation. This knowledge, and the use made of it, must be “unto the approval of God,” and not of man. But how can a man magnify his office who is too lazy to study that Word which it is his business to preach — who lives year after year in ignorance of the very rudiments of Bible-teaching — who has not

studied that sacred library, book by book, and chapter by chapter? I refer not so much to mere mental study as to heart study. I mean such study as places the heart against every Bible doctrine, and prays: “Lord God, filtrate into my heart the very essence of this doctrine — let me receive into my soul experimentally just what is the mind of the Spirit; let me so assimilate it as food that it will be a part of my being; let me not only know it but be nourished by it.”

I knew a young preacher who bade fair, in his youth to eclipse all competitors. Endowed with a wonderful fluency of speech, captivating address, a vast amount of magnetism, as a boy preacher he so captured his admiring crowd that he began to imagine he “had the world in a sling.” Much concerned about the permanency of his usefulness, I paid him a special visit and said “My boy, you have no books. I never see you studying the Bible. You are ignorant of the great body of its teachings. You seem not to understand it as a system of truth, fitly correlated in all its parts. You preach without investigation, on such striking passages here and there as in the English version impress you by their sound. What are you going to do after a while? You will soon use up this emotional power on which you rely. You go around as an evangelist, preaching over and over the same old sermons, using the same old illustrations, because your audiences are different. But have you considered this: That these sermons and illustrations by frequent use will become tame to you! Their lack of freshness will kill your own interest in them. They will lose the good taste, even in your own mouth. Then they will have no power over the people. You “are fast approaching shipwreck as a useful preacher. Your doom is to join the crowd of soreheads and growlers who complain that they are not appreciated, unless you study, study, study! If you like, I will make out for you a list of books, with some suggestions as to their use, and if you are not able to buy them I will see that you get them.”

Perhaps you are curious to know the result. Well, he did not appreciate my proffered counsel or help. He seemed to think that I was jealous of his power and wanted to handicap him. If he ever studied, I never heard of it. He did, join the growlers. He never stays longer than tit years with any church, because in that time he tells all he knows and some things he doesn't know. The rose color and glamour of a new field of labor, where he can use the old material, entices him away. He criticizes the management of Boards and denominational enterprises, and talks much of “rings and bosses and favorites,” and complains that the oldfashioned gospel is superseded by new-fangled notions.

My brother, if you would magnify your office, make the Word of God your life-study. Let down your buckets into the wells of salvation; lengthen your cords and let them down deep, and draw up the water fresh and sparkling every day, and give it out freely to your thirsty congregations. Burn all your written sermons that you carry around in your valise. Don't you know that when you keep on gnawing the same sermons they become like what a wolf leaves of a once juicy antelope — dry bones?

An unchanged sermon never suits two congregations. Conditions vary. Be fresh. Be flexible. Learn proper adjustments. Study the needs of the people before you, and preach from a full heart that within that very hour has sought the Spirit's guidance as to the theme and the Spirit's power as to utterance.

4. You can magnify your office by giving yourself wholly to it. No man should give himself wholly to a work that is too scant in character and too small in volume to call out and employ all his reserve force, and to develop to their full capacity every faculty of his being. But in the ministry God has committed to a man an office as high as heaven, as deep as hell, as broad as space. There is a broad margin for all his powers. There is room enough for all possible development in all directions.

Let me again refer to myself. When I was converted I was making two thousand five hundred dollars a year -more than I have ever received since. I was ambitious of distinction and promotion. I had luxurious tastes and a wonderful appreciation of conveniences. Now, to abandon all this pride, ambition and prospect of luxury, to come down to a few hundreds a year, grudgingly given, was very grinding to my sensitiveness. But the crisis was one for solution. I determined never to be burdened with its solution but once. Without a dollar in my pocket or in sight; with a wife, baby and feather bed as the sum total of earthly possessions, I settled that question once for all.

I made a solemn covenant with God, that while I lived I would never have any other business or profession or calling than to preach the gospel to give myself wholly to that, "sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish," to turn back to any other, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, FOREVER. I learned to see that it was a small matter if I did die. I remembered the Master's words: "He that loseth his life for my sake, and the Gospel's, shall find it; and he that findeth his life shall lose it."

Indeed, it might be the best for me to die. It might be the best that I should starve to death. I didn't know. Who can tell? But I was certain that whether I starved or fattened it was my duty to preach the gospel.

My brother, take home to thyself the charge of Paul to Timothy: "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate on these things; give thyself wholly to them."

How is it you can undertake so many lifeworks? I call upon you to interpret this Scripture: "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of life." Is it addressed to a preacher? You cannot deny it. Is it not directly in connection with the charge to Timothy to "commit to faithful men, who shall be able to instruct others also" the things which he had heard and learned? You cannot deny it. Does it not fairly apply to preachers of today? You cannot deny it: Then will you answer candidly to your own heart and to God: Are you so entangled? Does the entanglement help you as a preacher! Are you content to remain so!

Not long ago I said to a beautiful and brilliant wife that her husband had descended when he left the pulpit to be just a governor. Magnify this office above every other office. If it is an anti-climax to stoop from Mont Blanc to a molehill, how much more for a preacher to vacate an office higher than that of field-marshal, president or king, to seek a subordinate position in politics or commerce.

The lustre of all the diamonds in the diadems of kingly crowns pales before God's promised reward to the minister: "They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever."

You can magnify this office by regarding God's interests, solemnly committed to you, as transcendently above place and congregation and world. This is a hard saying. I know it by experience. How seductive the temptation to a preacher to yield to selfish considerations as to where he shall preach and what he shall preach! The preacher is included in the "mankind" so graphically pictured by Robert Burns:

*Ouch! Mankind is unco' weak,
And little to be trusted,
If self the wavering balance touch,
Tis rarely right adjusted.*

And how most shameful of all the weakness when he gets in front of the Cross and hides it from the people to show off himself!

Some years ago I invited a minister to preach for me the following Sunday. He came with a valise full of written sermons on various sensational topics. He read over to me about a dozen of them — who can doubt my patience in view of it! and asked me, the pastor of the flock, which one would make the most favorable impression for him on my congregation. I turned on him in scorn and said: “That matter is one of supreme indifference to my people. I wanted you to so preach from an humble, full and loving heart of our Divine Redeemer as to make a favorable impression for Him, but as no man can preach Jesus when self fills his vision, I withdraw my invitation for you to occupy my pulpit.” He did not preach for me then, nor has he since. And I am glad he is out of Texas and out of the Baptist denomination.

At another time I heard one of our greatest Texas ministers preach a sermon of marked simplicity, of the sweetest humility, and of tremendous power. And as it was on a topic peculiarly suited to the needs of my own congregation, I urged him to come and preach it for us. We needed it just then. I knew it would do us good. Well, he came, but when he looked out over the upturned faces, when he saw among many prominent men a host of university students, he concluded that the sermon I asked him to preach was much too homely for the occasion, and without consulting me, delivered instead one of his early sophomore sermons. Oh, it was full of stardust and diamond-lustre and rhetorical sheen, excusable, perhaps, in an inexperienced boy, but simply ridiculous from him on that grand occasion. It was the most mortifying failure of his life. The people were sorely disgusted and disappointed. They insisted that I didn't know who could preach, and suggested to the to leave such matters to the deacons. The hungry who came for bread had to content themselves with a bouquet of artificial flowers. The sad-hearted who came for consolation were treated to a display of literary fireworks, and the lost who were seeking a Saviour's face found only a word-painter. But more than all others was he hurt by it. It seemed to crush him to the earth and grind him to powder. Being a good man, his penitence was swift and profound. He spent the afternoon in tears and prayer. At night he preached a sermon that it seemed would melt a stone, but alas! the audience of the morning was not there to hear him. Nor was he ever afterward able to get out much of a congregation in that place.

The temptation sometimes comes in another form, wafted on the seductive breath of flattery. People “with itching ears,” who cannot endure sound doctrine and holy living, will come with honeyed words about his “broadness” and “liberality.” “He is no moss-back,” no “straight-jacket.” “He belongs to higher culture and criticism.”

Ah, me! if the preacher drinks once of this intoxicating champagne, you may count the days till he hearts the gospel as a squirrel hearts an acorn, leaving only a shattered shell, without even a germ of life.

It sometimes comes in the growls of his congregation. “He presses some things too much.” “He is crazy on the subject of missions.” “He urges too many collections.” “He has too much zeal.” Woe to him and to his people if he heed the growling!

It sometimes comes in the clamor for short, soothing and soporific sermons, about fifteen minutes long.

Let me tell you of a case: In a city once, I went to hear a sermon. Preachers get hungry to hear others preach. I was oppressed in spirit and gravely solicitous about a great matter. I wanted my faith strengthened. Quietly taking my seat, I listened. The rendition of the music, confined exclusively to the choir, was very artistic, I suppose. I held myself in reserve for the sermon. That, I took it for granted, would have body to it. The preacher rose, at last, with his sermon in his hand. I looked at it. It was a neat essay, on note-paper, giltedged, and perfumed, I verily believe. I know it was tied with a delicately shaded ribbon, and he gracefully read the dainty document through in just fifteen minutes; and that seemed to me too much for it. My sensations were never paralleled except once when, on a moonlight night, I stepped confidently upon what I supposed was a plank, and found it a sluice of muddy water fully knee-deep.

Some one asked me what I thought about the sermon. Perhaps my disappointment made me say: “Well, I’ve figured it out, and if there is no mistake in my calculation, it would take eight hundred and seventy nine thousand, three hundred and sixteen years for five hundred seventy-eight thousand, three hundred and fourteen such sermons to reach one soul, and then they would make no more impression on it than a cloud of thistledown blown by human breath against the granite face of Mont Blanc. I think it might safely pass through Texas from Sabine Pass to El Paso, and no Baptist, if all the General Convention were out hunting for a sermon, would fire a shot at it.”

But usually the preacher fails most in loyalty to God's interests, both local and general, when fears about the payment of his own salary, and cowardly deference to local pressure induce him to isolate his church from cooperation with sister churches in general denominational enterprises, when he shuts off from his people that information of general affairs and those appeals which are necessary to education and intelligent co-operation. The church thus isolated becomes narrow and selfish in policy to a degree that is destructive of its own spirituality and prosperity. God's cause is one, whether in town or in country, at home or abroad. The city churches should never fail to be represented in the district Associations. They should bind the country churches to them with indissoluble bonds of fraternity and reciprocity. It is weakness to yield to the selfish cry: "Too many collections, too many agents." It is easy to be silent when he should cry aloud and spare not. But his tower of strength is honeycombed in its foundation when he allows a perverted sensitiveness in the church or the world to put a padlock on his lips.

Let me emphasize a sentence: In the general denominational enterprises, everything depends on the preachers. They are the bishops who direct and oversee the labors of the churches. If they are silent, the churches will be silent. If you ever make a canvass for a general denominational interest, as I have done, you will know that as is the preacher, so is the church. You will find, whether you canvass for home, foreign or Sunday school missions, or education or orphanage, that your greatest obstacle is preachers, and your greatest help preachers. How can a stranger, who respects the sanctity of the pastoral office, do anything to advantage in a sovereign Baptist church if the pastor is even apathetic, much less adverse?

I say now to you all, every one of you, charged with a general work by the State Convention or the Southern Baptist Convention, that where the local preacher loves your work and honors you in your devotion to it, where he prayerfully, lovingly, tenderly, and with all his might, supports you, there you will succeed. Not elsewhere to any great extent. If he leaves out the interest you represent, the church will let him leave it out. There is a spiritual sensitiveness that has keener and swifter perception than intuition, which informs every agent of a general work whether the preacher is for him or against him.

I repeat, everything depends on the preachers, even quarrels and divisions. When was there ever a division of a church or Association or Convention, and a preacher not in it? Who knows of even one! Oh, if God's interests be not

esteemed by the preacher above his own selfishness or cowardice, above the flattery or growling of the church, above the praise or censure of the world, how can the man magnify his office?

How vividly do I recall the crisis of my own pastoral life on this very point, when called to the responsible charge of Waco Church, twenty-two years ago! I greatly distrusted my fitness for the important position. I was young and inexperienced. The church had great and wise men in it. But fortunately I remembered that God was greater and wiser than all; that my responsibility to Him was supreme. I made up my mind fully, once for all. I told the brethren that perhaps they had made a mistake. Time would show; that I had nothing to say about my own salary then or afterward. They must care for that. That my duty was to preach and teach the necessity of coming up to a high mark on every local and every denominational work. That I would do this at all hazards. That the cord which bound us as pastor and people should be a rope of sand when they wanted it broken, but a cable as long as they desired it to hold. That the hazard of loosing my pastorate should not be regarded as even fine dust in the balance. There is no other safe or righteous course for any pastor.

Finally, you may magnify your office by continually renewing your consecration. When you enter this *office*, and so long as you are in it, over how much of you do you consent that God should write His name and put the obligation of exclusive service? Do you say: "Lord Jesus, Thou hast put me into Thy ministry. I am but a little child. I know not how to go out or to come in. I am unworthy of so great honor. I shall surely fail if Thou art not with me. What I am to do, how I am to do it, and where I go, do Thou choose for me; only be Thou with me. It seems, Good Master, that every part of me has been washed whiter than snow in Thy cleansing blood, every part of me subject of divine grace, every part of me redeemed by Thy power and love and dying groans. But Lord Jesus, if Thou canst find any part of me that the blood has not touched, then write not Thy name on that lost part. But over every part the blood has touched, there write Thy name, whether brain, or eye, or ear, or hand, or heart, or mouth, or foot, over ALL, ALL OVER ALL, write Thy name of authority and ownership forever. Let me be Thy faithful servant in time, and thy welcome servant in eternity."

To illustrate this consecration: At the examination of a candidate for ordination I once heard a deacon ask this question: "In going into this work, have you burned the bridges behind you or only taken up the planks with a view to re-

laying them in case you should want to cross back to secular affairs?" I thought it a wonderfully pertinent question that went to the heart of the matter. It is better for the preacher never to even look backward toward the place where the bridge once stood. And never let him seek to please himself as to where he shall preach. Let the Lord of the harvest determine the where as well as the what and how.

Turn not a longing eye to big churches and fat salaries.

Let the Master say where, whether under burning skies in Africa's malarial jungles, or where "wolves are howling on lone Onalaska's shore." This consecration involves that you fully trust Him for material support and spiritual power.

Be not faithless. The Master points you to the lilies and the sparrows. You are more valuable than they. He tells you that "verily you shall be clothed and you shall be fed." Not a hair of your head shall perish. He will care for your wife and children if you trustingly serve Him.

I do not say trust the brethren. That is a broken reed. But to deny that Jesus will keep His promise to you is to deny the veracity of God. Trust Him for your power.

Even today I had a talk with a young brother staggering under the responsibility of presenting a great work tomorrow. His eyes were full of tears, as he said "I have no strength at all for this great service." I laid my hand on him and said: "Let Jesus be your power, Lash yourself with God's promises to the throne of His omnipotence, and your weakness will become strength." I have promised to spend much of the night with him praying that the power of God and not of man may rest upon him.

Brethren, there is no censoriousness in anything that I have said. Apply as much of it to me as you will, and then I am ready to confess other, faults and weaknesses that you know not of. But is it not appalling, that revelation of the statistical secretary: There are nine hundred and eighty-nine preachers in Texas who are not pastors, nor missionaries, nor evangelists, nor teachers, nor denominational agents, nor editors?

Indeed, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels."

Oh, how earthen! When I first read of the quarrel between Paul and Barnabas, I said: "Earthen vessels." And when preachers now quarrel, the bleeding church cries out: "Earthen! Earthen!" I could get down on my knees before God in your presence to make one yearning plea—that you make this Convention one of peace, power and brotherly love. Put relentless hands down into your hearts, and tear out by the roots everything that will not advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom here in this meeting. Tear it out. It depends on you. Let every watchman blow his trumpet at the coming of the sword. Let every sentinel cry out on his post: "To arms! They came! The foe — the foe!" Let every leader leap to the front of his battalion and stay to the front in every good work and work, lest there be a retreat while the mournful bugles sound a recall and the dirge of defeat be the music to which we march.

I magnify my office, oh, my God, as I get nearer home. I can say more truthfully every year, "I thank God that He put me in this office"; I thank Him that He would not let me have any other; that He shut me up to this glorious work; and when I get home among the blessed on the bank of everlasting deliverance and look back toward time and all of its clouds, and sorrows, and pains, and privations, I expect to stand up and shout for joy that down there in the fog and mists, down there in the dust and in the struggle, God let me be a preacher. I magnify my office in life; I magnify it in death; I magnify it in heaven; I magnify it, whether poor or rich, whether sick or well, whether strong or weak, anywhere, everywhere, among all people, in any crowd. Lord God, I am glad that I am a preacher, that I am a preacher of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.