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### Sparks from a Busy Anvil

John R. Gilpin

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# "Sparks from a Busy Anvil"

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By

JOHN R. GILPIN



Radio Messages from First Baptist Church  
Russell, Kentucky

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# “Sparks from a Busy Anvil”

By

JOHN R. GILPIN



Radio Messages from First Baptist Church  
Russell, Kentucky

(From May 30, 1937—August 22, 1937)



W  
252  
G489s

To

A glorious Christian character, to whom  
I owe a debt, which Heaven alone can  
pay,

MY BELOVED WIFE

this volume is affectionately dedicated.

## Foreword

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When I was seventeen years old, I was called into the ministry. For the past fifteen years, I have been trying to preach the Gospel. All of these thirty-two years have been spent in school: grammar, high, college, seminary, and the school of practical experience. During these years of schooling, I have only learned three lessons that are really worth-while.

I was born a totally depraved, vicious sinner; but I did not know it. My parents say that evidences of that sinful disposition began to manifest themselves before I was three days old. The first day I went to school I rebelled at the authority of the school. I had numerous disputes with other students. Some of these disputes ended in blows. I did not know why it was that I rebelled at all authority, and defied anyone that opposed me. I went to church, but I was not interested. I was never able to understand myself until I read: "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." (Psa. 58:3). Then I read Psalm 51:5, which says: "Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Later, as a beloved brother of the cross read: "For we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), I saw myself as I was—depraved from birth, with vicious desires and unholy passions; condemned before God. Thus I learned my first lesson.

Just how to rid myself of the sin I possessed, I did not know. I had attended a church of another denomination and had heard men speculate about the plan of salvation. I had heard them say with emphasis: "No man can know that he is saved until he gets to heaven." I had heard them sing:

"Tis a point I long to know,  
Oft it causes anxious thought:  
Do I love the Lord, or no?  
Am I His, or am I not?"

That type of religion made no appeal to me. If I had possessed that kind of religion, I would have been no better off than I was; I was already in a state of indecision. Then, one night I sat in a Baptist church and heard the scripture: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7.) Like a drowning man grasping at a straw, I laid hold of this; and sang that night with others that trusted the same Savior:

“Happy night, happy night, when Jesus washed my black  
heart white;  
He taught me how to sing and shout, and be a Christian  
out and out,  
Happy night, happy night, when Jesus washed my black  
heart white.”

Then I could say with Paul: “I know whom I have believed.” (II Tim. 1:12.) There was no guess-work about this. I could say with Naaman: “Now I know there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel” (II Kings 5:15). As my second great lesson, I had learned that I was a sinner saved by grace.

I was so happy in the Lord that I felt this experience just could not last. I concluded that it must end some time. But, lo, it was not ended; but has grown sweeter with each passing day. Thus I learned my third great lesson,—that I was saved eternally, and could never be lost. This was the greatest lesson of all. Now with Paul, I say: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Phil. 1:6); or with Peter: “Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (I Pet. 1:5); or still again with my blessed Lord: “No man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” (John 10:29).

These three lessons have meant very much to me. I preach them every time I stand before an audience. I have preached them in each of these thirteen messages of the past thirteen consecutive Sunday evenings in our radio broadcast over Station WCMI. These sermons are not attempts at polished literary productions, but are simply “sparks from a busy anvil”, being reproduced here exactly as they have been given over the air. May God bless them to the good of the many who shall read them as He has the many who have heard them.

JOHN R. GILPIN.

September 1, 1937.  
Study, First Baptist Church,  
Russell, Kentucky.

## Contents

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	Page
Foreword .....	3
Eternal Life Insurance .....	6
Christ and His Sheep .....	11
The Stage Being Set for the Closing of This World's History ----	16
Jesus the Carpenter .....	23
Five Golden Links Which Make Our Salvation Eternal .....	31
Is God Dead? .....	37
Life As A Structure .....	45
God's Jewels .....	54
The Conclusion of One Who Tried the World .....	61
An Exposition of Matthew 23 .....	68
The Angel's Charge to Baptists .....	76
The Greatest Subject in the World for Consideration .....	84
The Good Samaritan .....	91



## Eternal Life Insurance

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John 10:27-29, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

I want to tell you about the greatest insurance policy in the world. I am an agent for the company. I represent the King's Eternal Life Insurance Company. It has headquarters in Heaven. The directorate includes God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The President is the King of kings. The General Agent is the Holy Spirit.

### I

I want to offer some reasons why you should take a policy in this company. First of all, it is the oldest. It has been doing business for thousands of years and it has never changed its policies nor management: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). "For I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6).

It is the strongest of all insurance companies. It has more capital than all other companies combined, for its capital is the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8).

It has the largest number of policy holders. In Matt. 8:11, we read that Jesus said, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven". Rev. 7:9 speaks of, "A great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne". In Rev. 5:11, we read, "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." Bring on your adding machine, your posting machine, and your clerks, secretaries, and stenographers and try to count the redeemed; you will only find that it is "a great multitude, which no man could number".

It has no dissatisfied policy holders. Not one has been displeased with the benefits derived in 6000 years of the company's existence. Every one is a booster. In fact, all are anxious to get others to enroll.

It is the only company which insures a man for more than he is

worth. In every company there is a limitation except in this one. How much is a man worth? Paul tells us, "They are together become unprofitable (Rom. 3:12)". In spite of man's valuation, God insures us for Time and Eternity.

You need it. How strongly God argues your need of ETERNAL LIFE INSURANCE! "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (II Thess. 1:7-9). "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5). "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).

## II

A policy in this company has many provisions which no other policy carries. At the outset, it is a mutual benefit association. Every policy holder is given a joint interest and shares in its profits. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17).

It provides an unlimited drawing account throughout life. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (John 14:14).

This policy insures you against shipwreck in the River of Death. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26). In his early ministry (1869), B. H. Carroll was holding a revival under a brush arbor, and when about half way through one of his sermons he noticed a ramshackle mover's wagon stop in the road, and through a rent in the dirty wagon-sheet there looked out a hungry-eyed, emaciated face of poverty and suffering. Brother Carroll was impressed to stop his sermon to the crowd, and going out he preached present and eternal salvation to the dying man. Accepting the Lord Jesus as His Redeemer, he was received into the church. He was so weak that he had to be baptized sitting in a chair. A few days later he was dying. Mr. Carroll, leaned over him, and said, "Brother Bryan, you have come to the river. But in the name of Jesus, I assure you that in the crossing, you'll find no river and no darkness. If God permit you, give us a token that what I say is true." As he nodded his head, he seemed to die. Brother Carroll put his finger on his eye to close it and the man, not yet dead, raised his hand and with jerking words said, "Brother Carroll—no—river—all bright," and died.

“Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar  
When I put out to sea;  
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

“Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark.  
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar.”

Further, this policy insures you against loss in the Great Judgment Day Fire. I believe in an old-fashioned Hell of literal fire for unbelievers, for the Bible speaks of those who “shall be tormented with fire and brimstone . . . and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever” (Rev. 14:10, 11). “And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:43-48). However, the believer is safely insured against this day. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1). “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24). “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

This policy provides an eternal inheritance. “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away” (I Pet. 1:4). “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (John 6:47).

This policy is ir-revokable and non-forfeitable. This means that God won't revoke it and man can't forfeit it. It is non-cancellable from the standpoint of God and man. “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God,



which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38, 39). "You who are kept through the power of God through faith unto salvation" (I Pet. 1:5). "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (Jer. 32:40). "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:28, 29).

Years ago, at Leicester, England, there was a strike. Property was demolished and homes were ruined in the riot. In one home a lad was playing on the first floor, while his big brother was mending shoes upstairs. Fearing the rioters would break the door down, he stepped to the ladder and called: "Tom, Tom, they are going to smash the door open; make haste and come down." The big brother, a strong, well-built man, put his burly back to the door, while the younger boy went on about his play. Sometimes the Devil comes to this house of mine, and when I fear, lest he take me by force, I rush to the foot of the ascension ladder and cry: "Christ, Christ, make haste and come down: the Devil is about to get me." Like lightning He places Himself at the door of my heart, and there are not enough Devils in all Hell to break the door open, when my "elder Brother" has his back to the door.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word;  
What more can he say than to you he hath said,  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?"

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
That soul, tho' all Hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

The premium is paid for Time and Eternity. That which keeps men from carrying insurance in this life is the premium, which must be paid when due. When Jesus said, "It is finished" (John 19:30), the premium on this policy was paid forever. What is the premium? "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:18, 19). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Pet. 2:24). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (I Pet. 3:18).



### III

It is interesting to notice the terms and conditions of this policy. Such a remarkable policy is offered you as a gift. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

George F. Pentecost, in spite of the advice of his friends determined to climb Pike's Peak alone. He was getting along very well when suddenly a snow-storm overtook him. Without warning the blinding snow covered him and he began to drift. He had about given himself up to die when he fell to the ground, and his hand fell upon some dry twigs. It came to him that if he could make a fire, he might escape. He felt in his pocket for matches and found only one. The wind was blowing a terrific gale. He took the match and shielding it in his hand from the snow, he started to strike it, then put it back into his pocket. Finally in his desperation, he got up closer under some rocks and struck the match. Shielding the little flame the best he could he touched it to the dry twigs. The fire was started and his life was saved. There was just one thing between him and death—that was one match. There can be just one thing between you and the judgment and that is the precious blood of Jesus Christ which you must receive as a gift from God.

Furthermore it must be accepted only as a gift. There is nothing that I can do to merit it. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5). "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5).

It must be received by faith. "But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). "And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30, 31).

Will you now make application for one of these policies? You must apply to the president. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5).

Suffer this further word. Make your application immediately. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2).

"A dear one in Heaven thy heart yearns to see  
At the beautiful gate may be watching for thee,  
Then list to the note of this solemn refrain  
Ye must be born again."

## Christ and His Sheep

---

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."  
—John 10:27-29.

Perhaps Jesus never spoke greater words than these concerning Himself as the Good Shepherd. The little child as it goes to sleep, lisps a simple prayer,

"Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,  
Bless thy little lamb tonight."

The old gray-haired saint lies down to die, comforted because, "The Lord is my shepherd. . . . Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil" (Psalm 23:1, 4). And all in between these two extremes of life, the thought of Jesus as our tender Shepherd appeals to all.

No greater figure of speech could be used to describe the relation between Christ and the saved:—He, our Shepherd, and we, the sheep of His pasture.

### I

First, let us notice the characteristics of a sheep. A sheep is helpless. Nature didn't endow sheep with weapons of defense or of attack. A believing child of God is equally helpless. As Jesus said, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch **cannot** bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me . . . without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:4, 5).

Also, a sheep is gentle. There is nothing so tame and gentle as a sheep. Even a child will approach one without fear. This characteristic of gentleness should ever distinguish God's own. "**Gentle**, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits" (James 3:17). "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, **gentleness**, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22, 23).

A sheep is dependent. This is noticeably the case in the Orient, for there the sheep must look to the shepherd for protection and for guidance to and from the pasture. God's people ought thus to depend upon the Lord. The great Mueller of England said, "If you lose a

door-key, don't do anything to find it, until you pray." May God's sheep be cast back more and more upon God!

A sheep is ever characterized by a proneness to wander. If there is a single gap anywhere in the fence, he will get out. How sadly true this is of God's dear sheep!

"O to grace how great a debtor,  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let thy goodness like a fetter  
Bind my wandering heart to thee!  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it;  
Seal it for thy court's above."

A sheep is harmless. Who ever saw even a child that was afraid of a sheep! God's people are thus exhorted to be harmless. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).

A sheep doesn't like filth. It is the cleanest domestic animal known. Although God's people have a proneness to wander and quickly go astray, they do not like filth, nor love sin. The world gets a wrong impression when it sees sinning church members wallowing in sin. They are not God's sheep; they are either the Devil's hogs that have rooted in under the fence, or the Devil's goats that have climbed over the top.

When Noah sent forth the raven and dove from the ark, the dove came back, since there was no food but rotting carcasses and no place for her to alight upon except on filth. The raven never came back. Those putrid carcasses floating in the water provided a place for his feet to stand and food for his stomach. Thus the nature of each manifested itself. There is a lot of old raven unconverted nature in our churches. God's sheep are like the dove; they don't like filth.

As a boy I grew up on a stock farm, where we raised lots of sheep and hogs. It was my business to get the hogs ready for the show circuit and fairs. The Devil always told me that there was no time like Sunday morning to do this, and usually I believed him. Accordingly, on Sunday morning, I gave Mr. Hog his weekly bath, trimmed his toe-nails so he would stand up well on his feet, and polished his bristles with oil until they shone in the sun-light. Then I would say, "Now, Mr. Hog, stay clean". Instead of walking around to the front porch and seating himself in an easy chair, he would make a bee-line to an old mud-slough back of the barn and would roll over on one side. As I watched, I would say, "Good-bye, 50 per cent of my work is gone already". As if not content, he would roll over on the other side to finish his task of spoiling my morning's work. Why did he do it? Because he was a hog and it is a hog's nature to like filth. One day I saw a pet sheep walking across the old pond dam of this mud-slough and when some dirt slipped be-



neath her, she fell in. She got out at once, looking very much ashamed of herself for having soiled her pretty white wool. Why didn't she wallow there like the hog? It was her nature to be clean. In our churches, we have a lot of the old hog, un-regenerate nature, which manifests itself, but they are not God's people. His people may fall in sin, like the sheep, but they will not wallow in it, like the hog.

A sheep is a useful animal. Each year it produces a crop of wool and mutton. God's dear sheep are useful also. The daily attitude of every believer should be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

I used to have an old gentleman in a church of which I was pastor who was perfectly happy whenever I preached from either one of the texts: "Feed My Sheep", or "By grace are ye saved". If I used them each Sunday morning and evening, this dear old soul would go into ecstatic jubilation. Now, those are good texts, but any text or subject used to an extreme will kill any church. One day I preached on "Missions" and at the close of the service he came to me with a look on his face as though he had been eating sour-kraut and drinking lemonade for the past six months, saying, "O, Brother Gilpin, why didn't you feed the sheep?" Having heard that same plaintive note and having seen that rejected face often before, I said: "Look here, Brother, if I had a sheep as onery as you, I'd send him to the stock yards tomorrow morning". Beloved, there are many church members just like that, good—but good for nothing. A genuine sheep is really useful in Christ's Kingdom.

## II

It is interesting to notice the mark of ownership which God's sheep carry. Every good farmer will mark his livestock or poultry with either an ear-mark or a foot-mark. God's dear sheep carry His brand both in the ear and the foot.

First, there is the mark of the ear. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice" (John 10:27). God's sheep have a hearing ear. They will hear Christ and His Word. They are like Lazarus, who though dead for three days, responded to the voice of Jesus (John 11:43, 44). Any church member who is not willing to listen to God's Word and who will not accept His Word, thereby proves that He is not one of God's sheep. In fact one of God's sheep won't hear anything else but His Word. Whereas one may be satisfied with the "Discipline", or with the findings of the "Presbytery", or with the teachings of his church fathers, the moment he is saved, he will have a taste then for nothing but the Word of God.

Not only do God's sheep carry a mark in the ear, they also carry a foot-mark. They have more than a hearing ear; they have following feet as well. Jesus said, "My sheep . . . follow me" (John 10:27). They may rebel or delay following some of Jesus' teachings, but if saved, eventually the "following foot" will manifest itself. Those who never follow Him, thus say to the world that they know not the Lord Jesus.



### III

This text further declares that Christ knows his sheep. He says, "I know them". I am sure that one way whereby he knows His sheep is by their imperfections. A preacher friend travelling in Palestine said to a native shepherd, "Is it true that you actually know each sheep?" By way of answer the shepherd lifted his voice. No sooner had he done so than a sheep lifted his head from grazing to answer. He called again and another looked up, and on and on he called various ones of his flock. When asked how he could tell them apart he said, "This one has a squint; this one's toes are in a little; this one has a black spot; another, some wool off; and another has a piece out of the ear". Thus he remembered his sheep by their imperfections. Possibly Christ remembers us in like manner, for surely no one of His sheep is perfect.

Since He knows us then each of his sheep are secure. At the Judgment, Christ will say to the lost, "I never knew you". (Matt. 7:23). If one of Christ's sheep could be lost then Christ would falsify at the Judgment when he says, "I never knew you". In view of this spotless character of our Lord, then none of us can believe that he would thus speak. Therefore only one conclusion remains: since he knows us, we are secure in Him. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10: 27-29). "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38, 39.)

Since He knows His sheep then all is well even in the midst of danger. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psa. 121:4). "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living" (Psa. 142: 4, 5).

"There's never a heart-ache and never a groan  
Never a tear-drop and never a moan;  
Never a danger, but there on his throne  
Moment by moment he thinks of His own."

Since He knows His sheep then Heaven is our home and He will take us to it by and by. "For our citizenship is in Heaven; from whence also we 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 even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:20-21). What a blessed future each of God's dear sheep has before him. How wonderful to know that the God who has provided saving Grace, keeping Grace, and protecting Grace will also provide dying Grace, when He makes ready to take us to Heaven. Possibly the experience of no one better illustrates this than that of Roland Hill of Surrey Chapel, London, who when he lay dying raised himself and repeated a poem which he often quoted from his pulpit:

"And when I am to die, receive me I'll cry,  
For Jesus has loved me I can not tell why;  
But this I do find, that we two are so joined,  
He'll not be in glory and leave me behind."

In closing we ask, "Are you one of his sheep; are you sure of it?" I imagine that many of the hearts of my listeners must answer in the negative, and say, "I wish I were a sheep." Then if you sincerely wish to be one of His sheep listen to His words, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). There are no difficult walls to scale to get to God; there is only one step, a step of Faith. There is only one door. "Jesus said unto them, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Today that door is open. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2). In view of the fact that some day this door will be closed, then make your calling and election sure today.

In the hills of West Virginia, a miner attended some evangelistic services and became deeply convicted. One night he started to talk to the evangelist after all had gone home, but he couldn't seem to grasp the Truth. At 10:30 o'clock the preacher proposed that the man go home, but return to talk about the matter the next night. The man said, "Sir, it must be settled tonight or never". At twelve o'clock the man jumped to his feet and cried, "I've got it". "Got what?" asked the evangelist. "The peace that Jesus made", was his reply. He went down in the shaft at 6 o'clock the next morning to work. Two hours later, there was a terrible explosion and he was pinned into a corner by a huge piece of coal. One man put his ear against a crack in the coal and heard him say, "Thank God, it was settled last night".

"It must be settled tonight.  
I can no longer wait,  
Peace with my God I now must have.  
Tomorrow may be too late."

"Tomorrow's sun may never rise  
To bless my long deluded sight,  
This is the time. O, then be wise.  
Thou wouldst be saved, then why not tonight?"

## The Stage Being Set for the Closing of This World's History

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"Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The Watchman said, 'The morning cometh and also the night: If ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come.'—Isa. 21:11, 12.

Did you ever sit by a bedside at night and watch someone who was ill? Time after time you have doubtlessly looked at your watch and perhaps asked, "What hour is it?" During the long hours of the dark vigil, often you looked out and said, "Will the light soon dawn?" Isaiah, God's prophet was just such a watchman for Israel. The Edomites in a condition of humiliation and distress, said to Isaiah, "What of the night; how long before the morning?"

Today we read of pestilences, floods, wars, strikes, terrible world conditions and like the Edomites we ask, "What about the future: how long before things are going to be better?"

### I

From a material viewpoint the future is exceedingly dark. This was likewise true in Isaiah's day for did he not say, "The morning cometh and also the night." Literally he said, "If this night of trouble passes, it will but give place to another". I remember distinctly my first really long ride in a railroad coach—from Cincinnati to Williamsburg, Ky., where I was enrolling in school several years ago. On this railroad the tunnels are most plenteous. We would run out of the darkness of one into the light of day and then back into the darkness of another. It is thus with the world. We may pass through one night of darkness and may come into the sunlight for a little while and then again will come another night of darkness.

In Boston, a man advertised, "I will answer any question, any time, for any one, anywhere, on any subject". A preacher by the name of Cook visited him and said, "What I want to know is, how are things?" He received this reply, "Rev. Dr. Cook, 'things is mixed'." This Boston wise man may have been grammatically incorrect, but actually his reply characterized his day. It does not require a wise man to know that such is true today for surely "things is mixed". There are distinct evidences that this world's history is



fast drawing to a close and that the stage is fast being set for the closing of the history of this age.

Could the future be anything else other than dark, in view of the fact that human nature will remain the same through the ages that are before us? "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:37). Civilization, philosophy, education, and science will never make mankind better in nature than since the beginning and thus, materially speaking, the future is exceedingly dark.

## II

The world will never know any abiding conditions of peace among men or nations. "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom" (Matt. 24:6, 7). The League of Nations has become a league of notions and its boasted peace conferences have not been so peaceful, nor have they succeeded in producing peace. H. G. Wells says, "In 6,000 years of human history we have had but 226 years of peace". It is true that a day is coming when the swords shall be beaten into plow-shares and war shall be no more. However, this will not be until the Prince of Peace returns. Until then, God says, concerning the earth, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it" (Ezek. 21:27). Just now the tramp of armies all over Europe and Asia is heard, while the clang of hammers in the work shops tell a grisly story of death dealing material being manufactured. Man's inhumanity to man has filled the pages of history and until Jesus returns there can be no abiding conditions of peace among men or nations.

## III

Opposition to God and His people will never cease, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. 24:9-12). "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:10-12). In Russia the national salute today is for one to pause and shake his fist toward the Heavens in defiance of God. Churches by the thousands have been destroyed and Christians by the tens of thousands have been killed. I saw sometime ago a cartoon of a workman climbing a ladder with a chisel and a mallet in his hand and an angry scowl upon his face as he climbed upward



into the ethereal spaces. Underneath was the descriptive caption, "Now that we have finished with the earthly czars we will tackle the Heavenly ones". That spirit of opposition to a greater or lesser degree prevails the world around and will continue thus until the closing of the age.

#### IV

Society will become more and more corrupt. "For wheresoever the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together" (Matt. 24:28). The word "eagle" used in the King James Version is the word for "buzzard". Whenever you see an old buzzard flying around in the air you can know that something dead and putrifying is near at hand. Until Jesus Christ returns to this earth, society will become more and more corrupt and will be nothing but a rotten carcass when He returns. In this same chapter of Matthew's gospel, Jesus gives a further description of social life. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark" (Matt. 24:37, 38). The eating and drinking indicates hilarious living. The "marriage and giving in marriage" finds explanation in our divorce courts and remarriage often in the same day. Of recent date we have heard of married couples by mutual agreement exchanging partners for hilarious weekends, with no thought of God's woe resting upon them. Unconsciously they fulfill Jesus' prediction just read. Paul gives an accurate description of the social conditions which shall exist in the last day. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (II Tim. 3:1-5). If one reads this list of 19 characteristics of the last days and then looks about at conditions as they exist today, there is little need to wonder if we are not living now in the very last of the last days.

For years it has been debated as to whether the world is getting better or worse. As if in answer, Paul says, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13). In the prophecy of Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of an image, the form of which was terrible, with a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron. Daniel interpreted this as a dream of history, showing that the head of gold represented Babylon, breast of silver, Media-Persia, the belly of brass, Greece, and the legs of iron, Rome. Starting with the head of gold please note the metals of this image—gold, silver, brass, and iron. Though there is an increase of strength in these metals there is a deterioration as to the finer qualities. Truly this illustrates the world's

condition morally for there has been a deterioration of finer qualities through the ages.

## V

Religiously the world will get farther and farther from God. In prophecy of the world-wide dictator, Paul says, "That day shall not come, except there come a **falling away first**" (II Thess. 2:3). When he speaks of perilous times in the last days, Paul describes the world as, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (II Tim. 3:5). In the majority of churches, there is a **form** of worship which is devoid of the Spirit's power. But did not Jesus also prophesy a spiritual declension? "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, Which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened" (Matt. 13:33). Leaven causes fermentation and spoilage. Is not the whole world, religiously speaking, well on the way to spiritual fermentation? Surely any spiritually minded student of the Scriptures and current events must realize that we are living today in the light of these Scriptures.

And, are not the preachers greatly to blame for existing conditions? Fully nine-tenths of the preachers themselves are lost, if they believe what they preach, for 90 per cent preach salvation by works or salvation by the cities water-works, instead of salvation by grace, as taught in the Scriptures. Many hundreds of the so-called ministry have compromised the doctrines of the Bible. They have taken God out of Christ, the water out of the baptistry, the fire out of Hell, the Holy Spirit out of regeneration, the Blood out of the cross, the Spirit out of the Bible, faith out of salvation, and life out of the grave. In many instances, they are preaching a bloodless, twentieth century religion, which will send souls to a first century Hell. Actuated by a spirit of fear or favoritism, many hundreds more have been effectively silenced. All of this has reacted most unfavorably on the morals and policies of the ministry. Many of them have become religious charlatans and "hucksters of the Word". Some time ago we heard one of these religious racketeers of the air say, "This is station WHAM and this is evangelist Whoop-it-up, Cloud-Smasher, Put-on-the-pressure, Sky-buster. We are in great need. Send in your offering at once. This is desperate. We must go off the air if help doesn't come at once. And then you good people listening in, I must be taken care of. I like white shoes, size 7; also white socks. I wear size fifteen in a shirt and thirty-eight in a suit. And the doctor says I will have to go on a diet, so send me lots of oranges, apples, bananas, beans, celery, strawberries, potatoes, onions, parsnips, blackeyed peas, cucumbers, cabbage, carrots, and ice cream."

Perhaps we have over-drawn the words he actually used, but the spirit of his appeal is as described. The sad part of it is that most church members are pleased with that kind of a ministry. The prophet of old said, "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and **my people love to have it so**" (Jer. 5:31). As in the days of Jeremiah, so today a carnal people love a carnal



priesthood. With that type ministry it is no wonder the average Christian does not travel fast enough to avoid a tail-end collision with the Devil. Just as long as the ministry continues in its degeneracy, then religiously we will get farther and farther from God.

## VI

In these perilous days, the Bible will continue to be our resource. After that Paul describes the apostasy of the last days, he says, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:14-17). This is our hope for the perilous days before us. It shall remain such, for did not Jesus say, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35).

"Last eve I stood beside the blacksmith's door  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;  
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor  
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had, said I,  
To wear and batter these hammers so?  
Only one, said he, the anvil  
Wears the hammers out, you know.

"And so, I thought, the anvil of God's word  
For ages skeptics' blows have beat upon,  
And though the sound of falling blows was heard,  
The anvil is unhurt—the hammers gone."

Isn't it glorious to know that in the days before us, the Bible cannot be destroyed and will continue to be our chiefest resource?

## VII

The old gospel of Jesus Christ will continue triumphant. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matt. 24:14). We hear today that the gospel does not interest people as it once did. It isn't the old gospel that has lost its power: it's the ministry instead.

When I first entered the ministry, preachers were complaining of a difficulty in getting crowds and many were beginning to substitute theatricals for preaching on Sunday evening and in the summer season, many were closing their buildings on Sunday night. I made a resolution something like this: "When the old Gospel fails to draw folks, then I'll quit the ministry". Since then, I've failed in many



ways in the ministry, but I've never deviated from my initial ministerial resolution. I have never labored without blood in the basin and have never preached without telling sinners that they could be saved only through Jesus' shed blood. For sixteen years I've been preaching the Gospel, and I've never preached to more people in my life than I'm preaching to today, both at home and away from home. No! No! Brother preacher, if you are having your troubles, don't forget that the old gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). We are living in a day when modern science adds a "less" to everything—horseless carriages, smokeless shells, iceless refrigerators, beardless wheat, and seedless fruits. And now we have bloodless religions. As surely as we live, a bloodless religion will send souls to a never-ending Hell. Thank God, the gospel hasn't lost its power, but will continue triumphant to redeem the elect until Jesus comes.

"Dear dying Lamb thy precious blood  
Shall never loose its power  
Till all the ransomed church of God  
Be saved to sin no more."

### VIII

Eventually the Lord Jesus is coming back to take possession of the world that has been forever rebellious against him. On the day when Jesus left this earth to ascend back to the Father, two angels stood beside Christ's disciples and said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you unto heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death **till he come**" (I Cor. 11:26). Every time, we observe the memorial supper, we have a prophecy of Christ's return. Thank God, He's coming back! What difference does it make if the future is dark, and God's people are being opposed on every hand, and society is rotting, and the world is getting farther from God, and the preachers are compromising the Truth, and the world is going to Hell in high gear? Jesus Christ is coming back! What difference does it make if we do have floods to beggar us, wars to threaten us, strikes to worry us, and terrible world conditions to confront us? What does it matter if the communists with their Hellish anti-God propaganda are subtly securing a foothold in our political, social, industrial, and religious life? Jesus Christ is coming back!

During the dark days of the struggle for Italian liberty the people looked upon General Garibaldi as their invincible deliverer. Prisoners, hurried away to loathsome dungeons, would be cheered as they passed along the streets by friends whispering in their ears, "Courage, Garibaldi is coming!" Men would steal out at night and chalk on the walls and pavements, "Garibaldi is coming!" And when the news of his approach near to a city was announced the people broke out

into the rapturous shout, "Garibaldi is coming!" He came, and Italy broke her political and religious fetters, never to be so enslaved again. A greater Garibaldi is coming to God's people. The desire of all nations is on the way. Jesus is coming, coming to reign.

Are you ready for His coming? If not, then heed the words of Jesus, "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). May you cry out tonight as the Philippian jailor in his midnight darkness, "What must I do to be saved?" Then pause for a moment to hear the answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

## Jesus the Carpenter

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"Is not this the Carpenter?"—Mark 6:3.

On the twelve parapets of a bridge in Austria are twelve images of Christ, in which He is represented as being occupied in various vocations, such as, Jesus the farmer, Jesus the physician, Jesus the carpenter, and others. In entering the city, men bow in worship before the image which represents their craft. It is my desire that we may bow tonight before Jesus the Carpenter.

A **big lump**—supposedly of stone—lay for centuries in a shallow brook in North Carolina. People in passing, saw only an **ugly lump**, and passed on. A poor man saw a **heavy lump**,—something good to hold his door ajar, and took it home. A geologist saw it and found a lump of **gold**, the largest ever found east of the Rockies. Many looked upon Jesus in such a way: some see a Galilean peasant; some, a beautiful life; others see only a man; while a few, with eyes that are lighted with Divine light, behold Him as the Divine architect, carpenter, and builder of all things. Jesus' work before He came to this world and since His departure, was and is, a work of building. In order that His 33 years of earthly ministry might harmonize with His Pre-incarnate and Post-incarnate work, He must of necessity be a carpenter while in the flesh. If he had been anything else, God's plan could not have been fulfilled completely.

### I

Jesus as a carpenter built the world. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). You will notice that this verse refers to the creative acts of God. Please remember the words of Jesus: "I and my Father are One" (John 10:30). The God of the Old Testament is the Christ of the New, so that even though the name of Christ does not occur in Gen. 1:1, it is His creative acts that are described. "For by him (Jesus) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:16). "God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1, 2).



I believe that this world was created and all things therein by the Lord Jesus Christ. Evolution can never explain the riddle of the universe. A lad came rushing home to say, "Now I know where horses come from; Mr. Shultz, the blacksmith makes them". When his father remonstrated, the boy said, "I saw him make one". The father said, "Did you see him make a whole horse?" To which the boy replied, "No, I did not see him make a whole one; I saw him finishing one up; he was just nailing the shoes on when I passed by". That is just like evolution. At best it is but a system of guesses.

"Don't be discouraged, poor little fly,  
You'll be a chipmunk, by and by  
And, years after, I can see  
You'll be a full grown chimpanzee.  
Next, I see with prophet's ken  
You'll take your place in the ranks of men  
Then in the great sweet by and by,  
We'll be angels, you and I.  
Why should I swat you, poor little fly?  
Prophetic chum of my home on high.  
That's what Darwin says, not I."

Just look about for Jesus' work as a carpenter. View the world as His creation. He built every spring that ripples in the sunlight; every stream, great and small; every lake that mirrors the glory of the down-looking moon; the swelling white-caps of all the oceans and the seas. He built every mountain which adds its grandeur to the world. He made the rock-ribbed canyons of the west, the peaceful valleys of the east. The hand that built the hardy redwoods of California is the hand that built the gentle maples of Ohio. The mesquite bush of Mexico, the cactus of Arizona, the blue grass of Kentucky, and the date-palm of the sands of the Sahara are all built by the self-same carpenter. The designer of the universe fashioned the common limestone as well as the expensive marble and granite. Every rose that sheds its perfume on the desert air, each slender violet that peeps from beneath the snow, and each hardy, golden sunflower, Jesus built them all.

Turn your telescope toward the heavens. Behold the gentle moon of the night as it placidly beams upon earth and water below. Notice each tiny star, the golden sentinels of the night. Note with Job the sweet influences of the Pleiades and Orion. View the sun as a great ball of fire in its travels from the eastern to the western horizon daily, and then turn away to say with the Psalmist, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work" (Psa. 19:1). Surely David must have been thinking of Jesus as carpenter when he said, "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?" (Psa. 8:3, 4). Every ray

of sunlight, every color of the rainbow, and every tint of the sun-kissed sky tells us of Jesus the designer of the universe.

Turn your telescope toward the interior of the earth. See there the gold, silver, iron, coal, diamonds, platinum, and quartz. Sometimes it occurs in pockets; sometimes as dust; again, it is in nuggets; and at other times it occurs in strata, but always the handiwork of God is seen.

Look at the life of the waters, with its hundreds of specie of fish. Some beautiful, others hideous; some game, some timid; some, monstrous in size, while others are so small they must be magnified 400 to 500 times to be seen; some with fins, others fin-less; some, useful for food, some the rankest of poison. Yet each bears the marks of having come from the hand of God.

Even in the animal world we behold Jesus' work as carpenter. Compare the slow-footed tortoise with the swift-footed hare; the shrieks of the noisy jackass with the musical "baa" of the sheep; the agility of the monkey with the clumsiness of the elephant; the usefulness of the cow with the uselessness of the warthog; the ferocity of the lion with the gentleness of the lamb. Each is built exactly as Jesus drew the design.

The birds that fly in the Heavens show many marked differences. The crimson breast of the robin, the sweet songs of the oriole, the chipping of the chick-a-dee, the destructiveness of the cat-bird, and the singing of the canary was all alike planned by the hand of an all-wise Creator.

Then, study the capstone of creation—man himself. Five colors, hundreds of languages, thousands of diversities, and millions of habits differentiate the 1,500,000,000 of the human family and Jesus Christ made us all. There are those who have been troubled believing that God created the world and all that is therein. Not so with me. When I see the beauty and homogeneity of it all I would have trouble believing that it came otherwise. Sir Isaac Newton, the Christian scientist, had a friend who was an avowed infidel. Newton had a mechanic make a replica of the solar system in miniature. The central, large gilded ball represented the sun; Mercury, Earth, Venus, Uranus, Saturn, and other planets were arranged so that by turning a crank, the sun would revolve and the planets revolve about it. The infidel friend began to admire it and said to Newton, "Who made it?" Newton said, "Nobody". The infidel quickly turned and said, "Evidently you did not understand me; I said, 'Who made it?'" Newton said, "Nobody". The man said, "I'm no fool; I know that someone had to make it". Newton said, "This is but a poor imitation of the grander system which we know; you will not believe but that this had a maker, yet you are willing to say that the original came into being without either designer or maker".

## II

Jesus as carpenter built the Bible. 2600 times the Old Testament



prophets and 525 times the New Testament writers assert that their words are the words of God. Numerous statements occur such as, "The Lord spoke unto Moses", "Thus saith the Lord", or "Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah". "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:21). "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Tim. 3:16). "And Moses . . . said unto them, These are the words which the Lord hath commanded" (Ex. 35:1).

When Columbus discovered the Orinoco River, someone said that he had discovered an island. He replied, "No such river flows from an island. That mighty torrent must drain a continent." It is thus with the Bible. No man could have written it if he would and no man would have written it if he could. It must have come from Jesus.

The Bible was written on two continents and was printed in three languages; its composition extended through 16 centuries. It was written by forty men at different times and places and under the most varying circumstances. It was written in tents, deserts, cities, palaces, and dungeons. It was written by kings, judges, priests, prophets, physicians, patriarchs, prime ministers, herdsmen, scribes, soldiers, and fishermen. Yet in spite of all these differences, it is one Book, with one system of doctrine, one code of ethics and one plan of salvation. Suppose we were to select forty men of different walks of life today to write a book on theology or church government, and were to put them in different rooms. Their completed book would be so diverse that it would take steel binding to hold it together. The differences of the writers would be even far greater if they were separated by centuries as were the Bible writers. Yet in the case of the Bible, there is unity and harmony. It is a volume of 66 books written with such perfect accord and unison that we know that it must have been Jesus Himself who placed the words in the mouths of the prophets. Many human mouths and hands spoke and penned the words of the Bible, but behind all was Jesus' guiding, over-ruling and controlling.

Shall we suppose that there is a man upon the earth who has lived for 6,000 years and that he has been thrown into the sea to be drowned; he has been compelled to drink every deadly poison; he has been locked in prisons and dungeons and has been bound in iron chains; he has been crucified until his friends thought him dead; hundreds of times he has been burned at the stake, **yet he lives**. Such a person would be a super-man. This is precisely the treatment which the Bible has received. Does this not prove that the Bible is superman? The fact that it lives despite all opposition, unmistakably proves that it is not of man but of God and that Jesus the carpenter built the Bible.

You can find evidences of Jesus as the builder of the Bible in the entire book.



In Genesis, He is Shiloh and seed of woman.  
 In Exodus, He is the Passover Lamb.  
 In Leviticus, He is the High Priest.  
 In Numbers, He is the Star out of Jacob.  
 In Deuteronomy, He is prophet like unto Moses.  
 In Joshua, He is captain of the Lord's host.  
 In Judges, He is the messenger of Jehovah.  
 In Ruth, He is our Kinsman.  
 In Samuel, He is the Lord and seed of David.  
 In Kings and Chronicles, He is the Lord of lords and King of kings.  
 In Ezra and Nehemiah, He is Lord of Heaven and earth.  
 In Esther, He is the mighty God, who cares for His people.  
 In Job, He is our risen Redeemer.  
 In Psalms, He is the perfect all-in-all.  
 In Proverbs, He is the wisdom of God.  
 In Ecclesiastes, He is the preacher.  
 In Song of Songs, He is fairest among ten thousand.  
 In Isaiah, He is the suffering servant.  
 In Jeremiah, He is the Lord our Righteousness.  
 In Lamentations, He is the Man of Sorrows.  
 In Ezekiel, He is high priest of God on earth.  
 In Daniel, He is the ancient of days.  
 In Hosea, He is the risen son of God.  
 In Haggai (and other minor prophets), He is the desire of the nations.  
 In Malachi, He is the Sun, our Righteousness.  
 In Matthew, He is the King of the Jews.  
 In Mark, He is the perfect servant.  
 In Luke, He is the man whose name is the **Branch**.  
 In John, He is the Son of God.  
 In Acts, He is the ascended Lord and Christ.  
 In Romans, He is the Lord of our Righteousness.  
 In Corinthians, He is first-fruits from dead.  
 In Galatians, He is author of Paul's apostleship.  
 In Ephesians, He is the head of the church.  
 In Philippians, He is the believer's pattern.  
 In Colossians, He is the fulness of the godhead bodily, or the All-in-all.  
 In Thessalonians, He is the Coming One.  
 In Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, He is the sovereign of His servants; the Head of His churches.  
 In Hebrews, He is our great High Priest.  
 In James, He is the Lord of Glory.  
 In Peter, He is the chief corner-stone and the example of suffering.  
 In John, He is the Advocate for His little children.  
 In Jude, He is the keeper from Apostasy.  
 In Revelation, He is the coming one.

S. D. Gordon tells of a Christian lady whose age began to tell on her memory. Though she had been a great Bible student, eventually all of it went from her memory save only, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). As her last days continued all she could remember of this passage was, "That which I have committed unto Him". And on her death bed all she could recall was "Him" and she kept saying this to herself—"Him, Him, Him". She had lost the whole Bible but one word, but she had the whole Bible in that one word.

### III

Jesus as carpenter built the church. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:17, 18). In spite of these words of Jesus, there are many heretical and heretical souls who say that the church was founded on the day of Pentecost. I do not think that it can be too strongly argued that Jesus built the church in the days of His flesh. On the day of Pentecost 3,000 souls were added to the church. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). If one says that he is going to add \$100 to his bank account, it argues and implies that he now has a bank account. Accordingly since 3,000 souls were added on the day of Pentecost, then surely the church was in existence before that memorable day.

Shortly after Jesus first mentioned the church, he gave to it a rule of discipline. "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:15-17). He does not say that this was the rule of discipline for the future church nor for the church that was to be organized at Pentecost. Rather He said, "Tell it unto the church", as if to imply emphatically that the church already existed.

In prophecy it is stated of Jesus, "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Heb. 2:12). The only time that Jesus ever sang in the church was when He instituted the Lord's Supper, at which time it was said, "And when they had sung a hymn they went out unto the Mount of Olives" (Mark 14:26). Please remember that this was not only prior to the day of Pentecost; but it even antedated His death.

Do not the Scriptures likewise tell us that the Apostles were in



the church before Pentecost. In fact the first members of His church were the Apostles. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles" (I Cor. 12:28). These were chosen in the beginning of Jesus' ministry which would emphatically say to us that Jesus built His church in the days of his personal ministry.

#### IV

Jesus as carpenter built the inter-world bridge. I mean by this, the bridge which spans the chasm between Heaven and earth. Note these scriptures, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3). ". . . And without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). "For he hath made him who knew no sin; to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Pet. 2:24). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (I Pet. 3:18). Such a bridge spanning earth and heaven had been prophesied since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. When Christ died upon the cross, that bridge was completed, for Jesus who was God in the flesh, the perfect man, the perfect God, joined heaven and earth which had become separated at the Garden of Eden.

When the famous Brooklyn bridge was constructed two architects were prostrated. One was slain by his toils, the other became a life invalid. To build the inter-world bridge required the death of the Divine architect. The blood of Jesus had to be spilt.

The first time I visited Niagara Falls I was tremendously interested in the tradition concerning the Seneca Indians who once lived in the neighborhood of Niagara Falls. Each year they made an offering to propitiate the Spirit of the falls. The offering was a beautiful maiden. On a bright moon-light night, in a white canoe, filled with flowers, deer, and fruits, she would push out into the stream, and the current would carry her to her death. The daughter of the chief was chosen one year. As the Indians waited in their canoes just above the precipice over which the water drops, the old chief saw the current carrying his daughter swiftly to her destruction. With a few swift strokes of his paddle he brought his own canoe along side that of his daughter. There was a look of infinite love, a swift embrace and both went over the falls together. He loved his daughter too much to see her take the death journey alone; that was real love. But this story lacks the superlative element. It would have been far better had the chief stepped into the boat and died for his daughter. It may be fine to die with another, but far better to die for another. That was what Christ did. When humanity's boat was about to drift over the falls, he placed the feet of the doomed race safely on shore and went down into the rapids alone, thus bridging



the gulf between earth and heaven and destroying the chasm which separated God and man.

## V

Jesus as carpenter is building Heaven now. "Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). The Lamb who built the inter-world bridge has gone away to build for each of the elect, a mansion in Heaven. If you are one of God's elect, then the title to it is yours; you are absolutely sure of it; no one can prevent you from inhabiting it; what a glorious day it will be when you cross its threshold.

Jesus is now selecting, marking, preparing and finishing that home for you. A Sunday School teacher asked what was Jesus' work while on earth. Someone said, "He was a carpenter". "And what did he build?" was asked. "Why houses, I suppose." "And," said an old saint, "Thank God, He is still building them; He is preparing a mansion for me".

When the Franco-Prussian War broke out a young lieutenant of the Prussian army told the girl he loved that when he returned he would take her to the home that he would provide for her. When the war was over and the troops returned to Berlin in triumphant procession, Julie stood by her gate waiting for her lover who was sleeping beneath the sod of a foreign land. "But he must come; he said he would," she kept saying to herself. So she watched for forty years in all kinds of weather, day by day. Then her mind was turned; she fell ill waiting for him, was carried to the hospital where she died. Thank God, Jesus is providing a home for us and will not disappoint us! His coming is made possible by His going, for He said, "If I go, I will come again" (John 14:3).

Are you ready for His coming? If not, then heed the words of Jesus, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

## Five Golden Links Which Make Our Salvation Eternal

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"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. 8:29, 30.

The whole Bible from Gen. 1:1 to Rev. 22:21 pulsates with the infinite greatness and majesty of God. In the Scriptures man is minified and God is magnified. This is much in contrast with modern theology, for much of our preaching today glorifies man and puts God in a very insignificant place. Some time ago, a popular preacher announced for his subject one Sunday morning, "God's Duty To Man". Ah, dear me, as if God owed man anything! And who is man? Who are you? Who am I? Just one of 1,500,000,000 like you that inhabit the globe today. Not very big are you? Just one out of 1,500,000,000. And what is this globe? Just a small part of the universe and so small at that, that if the sun were hollowed out, you could pour 1,200,000 earths like ours into it and there would still be room to rattle around. And what is the sun? Just one of 350,000,000 known suns and stars. And God made them all.

Do you wish your size stated with mathematical accuracy? Divide one by 1,500,000,000; and that by 1,200,000; and that by 350,000,000; and that by infinity; and that's you! And how great is God? Multiply one by 1,500,000,000; and that by 1,200,000; and that by 350,000,000; and that by infinity; and that's God!

Oh, how mighty is God and how puny is man! Perhaps no Scripture more clearly teaches this than does our text, for it breathes, and throbs, and swells with the majesty of God. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29, 30). I like to think of our text as a great chain of five golden links, fastened in eternity past, stretched through time, and anchored in eternity to come, each link magnifying God.

## I

The first link is God's Foreknowledge. "For whom he did foreknow" (Rom. 8:29). This is the very thing which man lacks. As an example, who knows what the weather may be like tomorrow. We may be able to give a shrewd guess as to the future but one thing is positive—we lack foreknowledge. What man lacks, God possesses. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).

Every event of our lives is known to God; and was known even before the world began. In the days of His flesh, Jesus declared that He knew the time and manner of Simon Peter's death. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God" (John 21:18, 19). Jesus in this passage declared the manner of Peter's death as that of crucifixion, and the time of it, when Peter should be old. Since Jesus knew the time and manner of Simon Peter's death, I am led to believe that He likewise knows the time and manner of death of each of us. In fact there never is an event in our lives that He does not foreknow.

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.

"Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of neverfailing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs,  
And works His sov'reign will.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face.

"His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flow'r.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan His works in vain;  
God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain."



## II

The second link of this text is Predestination. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate" (Rom. 8:29). Predestination and election! What words are these! So seldom are they heard to-day in the average church that they sound as though we had borrowed a phrase from some dead language of the past.

Predestination! What a marvelous doctrine, though little taught today! Why before the foundation of the world, God chose some to Salvation. "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name" (Isa. 65:1). "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16). ". . . and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning **chosen you to salvation** through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thess. 2:13). "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit" (I Pet. 1:2).

God has through the ages worked on the basis of election. God chose Abel, and rejected Cain. God chose Shem as the line through which the Messiah must come; at the same time He rejected Ham and Japheth. God chose Isaac and rejected Ishmael. God chose Jacob and rejected Esau. "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated". "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory" (Rom. 9:13 . . . 20-23). God chose Abraham alone and rejected all his idolatrous relations. "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for **I called him alone**, and blessed him, and increased him" (Isa. 51:1, 2).

God chose the Jews for his people as a nation. Read Gen. 12:1-3. The Egyptians were far wiser. The Chaldeans were more ancient. Yet God chose Israel. Why? "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me" (Isa. 45:4).

God has gathered out in the past 1000 years, practically all His own from the Anglo-Saxon race. The Chinese practice a nobler system of morality. India has thrice America's population. Why has He chosen thus? "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Matt. 11:26).

There are many objections offered by the carnal man to the doctrine of predestination. Often do we hear it said that it is so mysterious. I am ready to grant that it is beyond the power of man to understand it. However, there are many things which we can never grasp. I cannot understand why God permitted sin. I cannot understand the many inequalities of the human race. I cannot understand the procreation of life. I cannot understand how God saves. I cannot understand why that hogs, cows, geese and sheep eat grass and yet it produces bristles, hair, feathers and wool on the back of each respectively. I can only bow before God to hear Him say, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8, 9).

Again there is the objection concerning the doctrine of election that God is unjust. May I remind you that salvation isn't a matter of justice but of grace: "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. 2:8). If we received justice we would all spend eternity in Hell. It is best that God should elect some than that all should perish. It is also objected, why preach the gospel since God has elected some to be saved. We are to preach it because God commanded us to do so. "And he said unto them, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Preaching is the means God uses for the saving of His elect. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). Since I do not know who the elect are, it is my duty to preach the gospel to all as though each man were one of God's elect and then wait on God to do the saving.

### III

The third link in this chain is that of God's calling. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called" (Rom. 8:30). In a general sense God calls every one. "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). However, there is an effectual call which only the elect hear. Through His goodness God calls sinners to Him. "Or despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4). Likewise He uses the Bible. "Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. 33:11). Sometimes He uses our troubles to call us. I once conducted a funeral of a little



babe that had left its baby clothes to live with God. After we had heaped up the little mound, the grief-stricken father of the little babe said, "Tell me pastor will I ever see my darling baby again?" God had thus given that little grave a voice and it was calling that hardened man to repentance. A few years ago in listening to the radio, a news-commentator told of a vessel which overturned, throwing the only occupant of the small boat into the water when he was returning home at the close of his day's fishing. It was very dark and in the water he became confused and began swimming in the wrong direction. Just then his daughter came out of the door of his home and called to her father, not knowing of his plight in the water. When the light shined out through the open door and he heard the voice of his daughter he turned and swam to shore. If she had not called, he would have died. So it is with us. If God had not called us, each of us would perish in Hell."

#### IV

The fourth link of this chain is Justification. "Whom he called them he also justified" (Rom. 8:30). Long years ago we find Job saying, "I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God" (Job 9:2). What Job was grasping at and desirous to know, we learn through the New Testament Scriptures. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39). "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28). "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Rom. 8:33).

Justification is just the opposite of condemnation. Each of us who are redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ are justified sinners. We are not sinners paroled but we are sinners justified. The fact and fear of condemnation is gone.

How we do rejoice when we learn that that which has been justified by God can never be condemned by man or the Devil. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38, 39).

#### V

The fifth link of this glorious chain is Glorification. "And whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:30). In eternity past God foreknew us and elected us unto Salvation. In time God calls and justifies those whom he has foreknown and elected. But



in eternity to come. He will glorify all those whom he foreknew and elected in eternity past and called and justified in time.

Glorification! What a wonderful doctrine! All fleshly nature and habits will be gone from the body of each of the redeemed. There will be nothing to tempt nor clog. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. 15:49). "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and 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" (1 John 3:2).

What a marvelous text is this which we have been considering:—foreknowledge, election, calling, justification, and glorification. How can all this come to pass and who is it that brings it to pass? It is none other than the **Lord God**. Thus we are compelled to say that salvation in every respect is an act of God. There is no room for human effort, no place for priestly meditation, no room for good works on the part of man, nor is there any place for religious ordinances and services.

Long years ago a disobedient prophet named Jonah went to school in the belly of a whale where he learned what we choose to call, "whale belly theology". When he had graduated and hung up his sheepskin, he just knew one text, "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). May God grant that you too might learn that it is "God that justifies" and may you trust His Son now as your Saviour for time and eternity.

"The stars shall shine for a thousand years  
A thousand years and a day;  
But God and I shall live and love,  
When the stars have passed away."

## Is God Dead?

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"There is a God in Heaven."—Daniel 2:28.

There was a time in this world's history when there was no true church. Can you imagine a world without a true New Testament church? There was a time when there was no Bible. When we consider the comfort, the joy, and the instruction which it gives, it seems pathetic to us to think there was a time when there was no Bible. There was a time when there was no sin. Originally man was placed in the Garden of Eden with perfect human righteousness. When man was living in the Garden without sin, dwelling in constant fellowship with God, the sweetest music that could ever fall on human ears fell on Adam's when God spoke to him face to face and he heard God's voice. There was a time when there was no man. Imagine, if you can, an earth with no man to till the soil. Not even one of the 1,500,000,000 of earth's population existed then. There was a time when there was no Devil. When we recall the tragedy, the wreck and the ruin wrought in the human family, the earth, and the Church of Jesus Christ, how we rejoice that once upon a time there was no Devil. There was even a time when there was no earth. Actually this world did not exist. So accustomed are we to it that it seems almost impossible for us to imagine that there could have been a time when the earth was not. Though there was a time when there was no church, no Bible, no sin, no man, no Devil, no earth, there never was a time when there was no God. For God has always existed. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psa. 90:1, 2).

A wise man one day was asked, "What is God?" Realizing the profundity of the question and the importance of his answer, he requested time for meditation. At the end of one day, he declared that the subject was too vast and asked that the time be extended to three days. At the end of three days the answer was the same, that the subject was too deep for him to comprehend it in so short a time and requested six days for meditation. At the end of the six days he asked for two weeks. At the end of two weeks he asked for a month, and at the end of a month he asked for a year, and at the end of a year he asked for a life time. The subject was simply too vast and too profound for the mind of man to comprehend.

## I

In view of the vastness of this subject we approach with timidity the question, "Is God dead?"

The infidel answers this question with an emphatic affirmative to declare that God is not only dead but that there is no God and that never has there been a God. How such a one can live in this world and still deny the existence of God is beyond my comprehension! Over at North Benton, Ohio, there lived an infidel, notorious for his blasphemy of God and his dishonest dealings with man. He held a mortgage on pretty nearly everyone's property in that section. Through his dishonest financial dealings, he amassed quite a fortune. When he attended services at the little Presbyterian church house at North Benton on rare occasions, his presence caused a frigidity to come over the entire congregation. Before his death he decided to build a tomb for himself. Wanting an inscription for the door of this tomb he went to a poet in that section and paid him \$10.00 in advance for a suitable small poem which would be placed on the door of his vault. A few days later the poet delivered him the following lines:

"This is the grave of Chet Bedell,  
Here lies his body, his soul's in Hell."

Somehow the infidel seemed to think that that was an unsuitable poem and sued the poet for the recovery of the \$10.00. The court returned the verdict in favor of the poet, who in turn sued the old infidel for libel and won a judgment of \$50,000 against him. This experience dampened his spirit as to the vault and he then decided to build a monument in life-size form which he erected in the cemetery in North Benton, Ohio. The monument depicts him with his feet trampling on the Bible and in one of his upraised hands is a scroll with these words, "Universal Mental Liberty". Before he died he wrote in his will, "If there be any truth in the Bible or in the things which I have denied; let my grave be inhabited by snakes". When he had died and they started to dig his grave the workman had to kill several snakes. When his body was lowered into the grave a snake fell down in the grave along side the casket. From that time on the grave has apparently been a mound which has been infested by snakes. All around the base of his monument are the holes where they enter the ground to live beneath his monument. It is not uncommon for one to find snakes on top of the ground stretched out on his grave at any time during the summer days. When I visited the community wherein this infidel formerly lived and began to inquire for the cemetery and Chet Bedell's grave, a native grinned and said, "You are looking for snakes aren't you?" Another a little later on said, "Well if old Chet Bedell asked for snakes he sure got them." I gathered from this experience when I visited North Benton, Ohio, three years ago that God had answered this



infidel who declared that God was dead and who blasphemously said that there was no God.

Here's the question we have before us, "Is God dead?" The agnostic says, "I don't know". The sceptic says, "I doubt if he is alive; I think that he is dead; I am not positive; I am in a fog of doubt". The materialist says, "I believe in only material things; I have no time for spiritual things in my life; therefore, there is no God; God is dead".

Suppose we observe our church members for an answer to the question, "Is God dead?" Frankly if we judge by the life which the average church member lives we must conclude that God is dead. The majority of church members think nothing of staying away from the house of God with only the slightest pretext or perhaps no excuse at all. Many go camping and picnicing on the Lord's Day. The lives of many are filled with the filthiest of sins. Gross immorality characterizes the lives of many who are supposed to be God's own. Sins too vile for the lips of modesty to mention are often found in the weekday lives of many church members. Many of them are worldly beyond description. They go into places of sin. They drink and dance and attend theaters with no thought of conscience. The weekday lives and the Sunday experience of most professors are poles apart. Very few live sacrificial lives. You have doubtlessly heard of:

"Old Deacon Horner, who sat in the corner  
When the collection plate passed by;  
He put in a cent, heaved a sigh of content  
And said, 'What a good Christian am I!'"

How truly he characterizes many church members today!

To the English nobility, Lady Barelay illustrated Sunday Godliness and Monday Godlessness with a little mechanical bird so contrived that by the raising of the lid the bird would sit up and sing and then when the lid was closed, it went back into his house of darkness until opened again.

Many professors, but not professors of Christ, come into God's House with an air of piety, with a song book and Bible under their arms on the Lord's day and in a saetimonious whine sing, "My Jesus I love Thee". On Monday morning back they go into their little box of darkness and all the good intentions of their feeble lives are lost in oblivion until they immerge on the next Lord's Day. Truly from all appearances the average church member says to the world, "God is dead", for surely he could not believe very strongly that God is alive in him and then live during the week as he does. Theoretically, he may believe that God is alive, but actually he does not walk before the world as though God were living within him.

## II

However, in spite of the answer of infidels, agnostics, sceptics,

and materialists and contrary to our observation of Christian professors, I want to answer emphatically, **that God is alive.**

Nature proves the existence of God. Everywhere in nature we find order, beauty, symmetry, law, and design, conclusively proving the existence of an intelligent Creator of the material realm. There can be no design without a designer, no beauty without one to make beautiful, and no order without one to establish it. Suppose you take out your watch and look at it for a moment while I ask you a simple question, "Did your watch have an intelligent maker?" Without a moment's hesitancy you would answer that it did. The very shape of it, the numbers in orderly procession from one to twelve, the works within the case, and the makeup naturally forces you to conclude that it had an intelligent maker. However, suppose that I might tell you that you are mistaken; that the watch did not have an intelligent maker but that the atoms and molecules which constitute the watch danced about in space until by a fortuitous chain of circumstances, they came together in their present shape and style. Just what would you think of this speaker, if I were to speak thus to you? You would doubtless say, "That man may be a graduate of the best schools but he is a fool". And in plain words you would be telling the truth. But what is this watch in its grandeur of makeup, in comparison with this world in which we live? If your watch had an intelligent maker, surely this world must have possessed One too. Even the human body in its structure is far more intricate, complex, and delicate in its makeup. If the watch had an intelligent maker, how much more must your body have had One too?

To revert to my illustration of your watch: If I were a teacher in the public schools and were to say that the atoms of the watch danced about until by a fortuitous chain of circumstances they came together into their present shape, you would probably think that I needed a good strong mind cure. However, if I were a teacher in the public schools and were to tell your children that the atoms and molecules of this world danced about for centuries of time until by a fortuitous chain of circumstances they came together into their present shape—the world and all things therein—you would say, "My, ain't he smart, let's give him a raise in salary". Surely this old world is round and funny.

I remember a few years ago in between my Freshman and Sophomore years in college it became necessary for me to secure employment in order that I might get back to school in September. I couldn't find a position so I began to look for a job. The only thing I could find was construction work on a public highway. When I walked up to the boss and asked him for a job, he looked me over and said, "I have a team of mules in the barn that are standing idle; they've killed every colored man that has driven them. If you want to take a chance on your life, I will give you 40c an hour to drive them". I wasn't very anxious to gamble with my health but I did need the 40c, so I went to the barn determined to harness the team. I opened



the door cautiously and pushed my head inside just in time to have a pair of mule heels fly through space barely fanning my face and striking against the side of the barn. I closed the door at once. Life was mighty sweet to me that morning—too sweet to gamble away at 40c per hour. Presently I decided that I needed work badly enough to make a second attempt, and with the bridle in hand I started back into the barn. One of the mules laid his ears back and rolled his eyes wickedly around in my direction and started for me. I began to think that perhaps the mules were color blind and couldn't tell the difference between me and a colored man. After nearly a half morning's effort I had the mules harnessed and ready to put to work. My team and another were hooked to the plow. The driver of this other team took up the reins to drive and I took hold of the handlebars to plow. We had plowed about ten minutes when we struck a thorn-root which nearly threw me over the plow. With an axe the root was quickly dispatched and we continued our plowing. When we had finished, the man who had cut the root for us came to me and with his pen-knife split the root's outer bark. Then he peeled the inner layers of bark one by one, nine of them in number, if I remember correctly, as yellow as gold, and as fine as tissue. When he had finished, his eyes filled with mist as he said, "Preacher, it seems to me there is enough of the love of God shown in God's protection of this thorn root to convert the whole world". I heartily agree that nature proves that God is not dead. Long years ago the Psalmist David slipped out of his tent one evening to turn his face toward the pale blue Syrian sky above him. He saw the moon as it took its place in the heavens and the stars come out one by one, as the golden sentinels of the night; then he wrote, "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?" (Psa. 8:3, 4). In the early morning David viewed the world about him and the heavens above him and wrote, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork" (Psa. 19:1).

The events of our own lives prove that God is alive. A few years ago there came a depression,—a financial panic, which engulfed not only our country but the whole world as well. Following in March, 1936, the Ohio River stood at flood stage for its entire length of nearly 1,000 miles, for the first time in the history of civilized man that it stood at flood stage for its entire length at one time. When this passed, then came that terrible cyclone and tornado through Mississippi and Georgia which brought thousands of dollars of financial loss, as well as the loss of many, many lives. Then the greatest dust storm ever experienced, 1,500 miles in length, began moving eastward from the west. Who of our listeners do not recall the drought of the summer of '36, when the ground became chapped, pastures became dust and the entire country was experiencing a great fire hazard because of the drought? All of these events passed



by to give rise to the flood of January, 1937, the disaster of which is remembered all too well by my audience. Where I am standing tonight, on the second floor of our church building, the water stood 34 inches in depth. Then came the school house explosion in Texas. Truly the parents of this entire country sympathize with those grief-stricken parents in Texas over the explosion of the school building and the many, many little lives that were snuffed out without a moment's warning. Somehow after each of these events, I can hear the voice of the Lord saying, "Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord" (Amos 4:11). Most assuredly do each of these events prove that God is alive.

Further, the believer knows that He is alive because he can feel His presence. "For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I **know whom I have believed**, and am persuaded that he is able to deep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. The spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:14, 16). A minister saw a lad running along one day holding on to a string gazing up into the air. When he asked the lad as to his occupation, he received the reply, "I am flying my kite, sir". To this he replied, "But I don't see any kite". "Neither do I, sir, but I can feel its pull", said the boy. So it is with a believer. He cannot see God but he can feel His pull.

I know that God exists because I can feel His presence. My personal experience with Him is enough to convince me that God is not dead but alive. I am thinking now of an exceedingly close friend. Suppose you were to try to convince me that that friend did not exist. You might by some system of philosophy prove his nonexistence. When you had finished your argumentation I might not be able to put my finger upon the weak spot of your argument but I would still know that that friend existed because of my personal experience with him. You might try to convince me that God does not exist and when you have finished with your argument I may be unable to put my finger upon the weak spot thereof, but I would still know that God exists because of my experience with Him.

Prayer is one experience which proves the existence of God. During the World's Fair in Chicago several years ago, Mr. Moody was carrying on a campaign which cost a great many thousands of dollars. A little group met one day to plan and assist and pray with Mr. Moody about the work. As they sat down to eat, Mr. Moody said, "We need \$7,000.00 today for the work. I have already received \$1,000.00 but before we eat I propose that we pray and ask God for the other \$6,000.00". So with simple child-like faith Mr. Moody presented this problem to the Father. About an hour later after the little group had finished their luncheon and completed their plans for the day, a boy came in with a telegram in his hand. Mr. Moody read

it and handed it to Reuben Torrey to read aloud. This was what it said: "Mr. Moody, your friends in North Field had a feeling that you needed money in Chicago. We have just taken up a collection and there is \$6,000.00 in the basket". North-Field as you know is a short distance from Boston. It is nearly a thousand miles from Chicago. That morning, as a service was coming to a close in North-Field, someone proposed that they take a collection for Mr. Moody's work in Chicago. Others voiced their opinion and it seemed unanimous that Mr. Moody was desperately in need of funds. How are we to account for the fact that 1,000 miles away God put it on the hearts of 3,000 people to respond to the tune of \$6,000.00? There is only one way whereby it can be explained: God lives! The believers know He is alive by their intimate experiences with Him.

How many times God has proven Himself alive in my own life in response to prayer! There is a restaurant over in Lexington, Kentucky, where I used to eat quite often when passing through town. I used to walk up to the counter and give my order to the girl standing behind it, who in turn called my order back through a little hole, about two feet square. Suppose I were to order my favorite dinner, fried chicken, corn bread, buttermilk, and pumpkin pie. She would immediately call this order back through that hole in the wall and within a few minutes time it would be set up and she would hand it out to me. I never saw anyone behind that hole in the wall but I know that someone was back there for as soon as I gave my order the food was handed out. Prayer is just such an aperture in the sky. I go to God and voice to Him my petitions. The answer comes back. I cannot see God but I know He exists because He answers prayer.

### III

Therefore, since God exists you need to heed the words of the prophet: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12).

And how do you prepare to meet God? There is only one way. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). There is only one door. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). There is no salvation in any other save only in Jesus who died for our sins. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). ". . . and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

Several years ago when I first came to this church as pastor, I visited a dying man in Ashland. His disease had destroyed all the red corpuscles in his blood. The pillow upon which he lay was no whiter than the flesh which lay upon it. I saw the doctor one evening take a healthy friend of mine and make a blood transfusion. Within

a few minutes the hitherto colorless cheeks assumed a rosy glow. A few days later when I visited him that healthy blood had been burned away and his cheeks were colorless again. A second and third transfusion was made with the same results. Finally we took him out to the cemetery and lowered him thus within the grave. When the service was ended I turned away thinking how that human blood had failed. His own blood had failed him, the blood of three friends had failed him but thank God the Blood of Jesus Christ never fails. How we rejoice tonight that God still lives and that since Jesus Christ died for our sins you can live too by trusting the shed blood of our precious Redeemer. May the grace of God lead you tonight to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy wounded side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Not the labor of my hands  
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow,  
These for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;  
Vile, I to the fountain fly,  
Wash me, Savior or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When my eyes shall close in death,  
When I rise to worlds unknown,  
And behold Thee on Thy throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.



## Life As A Structure

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"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."—I Cor. 3:11-17.

Two men were walking down the streets of London, Elder William Pennefather, and Reginald Radcliffe, an able Liverpool lawyer. A beggar came up and looked hurriedly into the face of each. Without a moment's hesitation he said to the preacher, "O man, with Heaven shining in your face, give me a penny".

Long years ago when Moses had been communing with God for eighty days, when he came down from the mountain, it was written, "That Moses knew not that the skin of his face shone" (Ex. 34:29). In the early days of Christianity, the witness of the apostles was truly effective, for do not the Scriptures say, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). When I remember this experience of Moses and that of the New Testament apostles, I pray for grace that the world may be able to see Heaven shining in my face. I am interested in the members of the church of which I am pastor having faces wherein Heaven does shine. Further, I am interested in the members of my invisible audience being people who have Heaven shining in their faces. It is because of this desire that I preach this sermon, "Life As A Structure".

### I

Our text declares to us first of all that there is a foundation to be laid, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,

which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11). This is the most important part of any building. In Philadelphia, opposite the Eastern Theological Seminary, there stands a great hotel building, which cost over two million dollars, and yet it has never been used. A building inspector condemned it as unsafe, even before it was fully complete because imperfect material had been put into the foundation. How much more important is the foundation upon which each of us is to build his life!

The only foundation upon which we can build is the Lord Jesus Christ. "Wherefore also it is contained in the structure, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner" (I Peter 2:6, 7). "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of your builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:10-12). Jesus Christ then is the foundation. We cannot take these words too literally. The foundation of all this world's hopes and of every man's salvation is Jesus Christ Himself.

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand,  
All other ground is sinking sand.

Jesus Christ is the only foundation which will stand when the day of testing comes. "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 the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one 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" (Matt. 7:24-27). In view of this scripture, you need to be sure that you are building upon the Rock; and what is the Rock? "And that Rock was Christ" (I Cor. 10:4).

The foundation thus is what God does apart from man to enable him to begin to live rightly before God. Man does not do one



thing in order to put in the foundation of his life. When Jesus died on the cross, He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Everything that was needed for man's salvation was thus completed. Even today though man repents, his repentance is a gift from God. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to **give repentance** to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31). "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles **granted repentance** unto life" (Acts 11:18). "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will **give them repentance** to the acknowledging of the truth" (II Tim. 2:25). Actually the faith which one exercises in salvation is a gift of God, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: **it is the gift of God**: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9). Is not salvation thus considered throughout the scriptures as a gift of God? "Thanks be unto God for his **unspeakable gift**" (II Cor. 9:15). "For the wages of sin is death: but **the gift of God** is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that **the gift of God** may be purchased with money" (Acts 8:20). "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk **without money and without price**" (Isa. 55:1).

No man can begin to live rightly just as he is. Sin has come into the very springs of our nature, and has touched and tainted the deepest things in us. We have been depraved, polluted and enfeebled by its presence. There is no part of our nature which we hold today in purity. Immense numbers of men are busy in a vain attempt to lay a foundation of their own. As builders drive in piles into the marshy ground and throw in vast loads of earth and stone, so men pile up their good deeds and sufferings, their penitential regrets, their sacrifices, and their recognitions of Divine mercy, and lay these down as a substantial basis upon which they hope to raise their life as a structure. What vain toils are these! The gulf is too deep to be filled up by man; the materials cast into it have no real strength or worth. God has thus declared man's inability and the futility of man's labors; "But to him that **worketh not**, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28). "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16).

Truly the foundation is of the Lord! Long years ago, old Jonah declared this truth. "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9).



## II

There is a building to be raised upon this foundation. As the foundation is built by God, so the structure is to be raised by man. God somewhat retires after laying the foundation, and leaves the building in our hands. Does He not say, "If **any man** build upon this foundation"? (Vs. 12). In verse 13 He declares "The fire shall try **every man's work**", and again in verses 14 and 15 He says, "If **any man's work** abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If **any man's work** shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire". Thus in these four verses (1 Cor. 3:12-15), God five times refers to what is put upon the foundation as **man's building**.

He tells us what we may build, and what we ought to build. We may build a house; we ought to build a temple. The apostle seems to refer to the building of a house when he speaks of "wood, hay and stubble". Wood was used for the posts and doors; "hay" mixed with mud was used for the walls; and "stubble" was used for the roof. These are brittle, inflammable materials used for the building of a house, but never for a temple. The temples were built of precious stones, both durable and beautiful, and were adorned with gold and silver. Each man then is called upon to build a temple and not a house, as man's life is to be a temple of God. We are not to make a living, but to build a life. The man who just makes a living is building of "wood, hay and stubble", while the one who builds a life is rearing a temple unto God.

While it is true that the building is to be of man's labors and effort, it is also a cooperative work of man and God. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12, 13).

While it is true that the foundation of our life as a structure was finished at Calvary, it is equally true that the structure that we build was begun at Calvary. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). "This is a faithful saying and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works" (Titus 3:8).

By every deed which we do, after we are saved, we lay on a stone. Be sure you use the right materials. There are six of these mentioned which it is possible for us to use in the building—"wood, hay, stubble, gold, silver, and precious stone". Every man must use one or more of these six materials.

Just what is included in "wood, hay and stubble"? Our evil tempers, our worldly habits, and our religious errors. Did you loose your temper yesterday? Then a little "wood, hay and stubble" was

placed into your building. Have you as a professing Christian spent this evening at a picture show, a card party, or a dance? Then some more "wood, hay and stubble" has come into your structure this day. Have you as a preacher or teacher labored to advance some religious error, and have you as an individual Christian put your stamp of approval upon that error by your presence? Then more "wood, hay and stubble" has been put into your structure. All errors, but especially religious errors, are very abundant. How easily it is to build them up into our system of faith. Likewise the vices of the world abounding on every hand, are besetting the Christian both fore and aft. So easily, vices work their way into the structure we are building; if we are not careful they may become a part of us, and thus "wood, hay and stubble" goes into our life-temple.

"He smoked cigars three times a day,  
Ten centers, too, at that,  
Then gave a nickel to the church  
When the deacon passed the hat.

"She gave one cent for mission work,  
Then spent two cents for gum,  
And really bowed her head and prayed  
O Lord, Thy kingdom come.

"They sat at home and wondered why  
The church did not succeed;  
She chewed her gum and couldn't tell,  
He puzzled, smoked his weed."

Surrounded by vices, temptations, and evils, some may suspect that there is no possibility of their building except with "wood, hay and stubble", but that is a jaundiced view of life. The good and proper materials are likewise available, for does not the apostle refer to "gold, silver, and precious stones"? Did you go to church today and worship in spirit and in truth? (John 4:25). Have virtue and truth found a welcome in your life throughout your wakeful hours this day? Have you visited others with an idea of helping them? Has your life been filled with right and proper living? Have the true scriptural doctrines of the Bible been given the proper place in your life? Then, if so, into the building today has gone some gold, silver, and precious stones.

Here are the six materials before us with which to build. No one builds entirely of the good, nor yet entirely of the evil. At best our building is but a patch work. Here is a structure before us. Above the foundation there may be five or six courses of good, massive stone, well cemented and joined together; then a mass of poor material, just thrown at the structure; then a little more good; then some "hay and stubble". Possibly at the top there is a marble slab. No one would think of putting up a building like this, and yet it is thus we build our lives as structures before God. The great-



est characters of the Bible, by their examples, have thus built. If you will read the lives of Jacob, Simon Peter, and David, you will find that even these great men of God built their lives just as we build today, with the six materials, intermingling them with no thought of architectural beauty and design.

Near Gallipolis, Ohio, there is a building called the "crazy house", not because of the mental condition of the occupants thereof, but because of its appearance due to a lack of architectural conformity. I am told that it was built by a man who was a carpenter, and from each job that he had, he would carry home a brick, a piece of board, or some paint. It is built of various sized and shaped doors. The weather boarding is of odds and ends. There are many colors and styles of brick in the chimney. The colors of paint on the outside are too varied for calculation. I wonder if perhaps the structure which each of us is building by way of our lives does not look a great deal like this "crazy house". Possibly in God's sight my life structure has no more architectural conformity and beauty than does the house referred to above. Doubtlessly your life is an even greater "crazy house", and if you could see the kind of a house you have built, you would perhaps disdain the ownership thereof.

### III

The work of building goes on. In storm, in shade, summer and winter, the work continues. When the builder is active and conscious, and when he is weary and helpless, this mystic temple continues to rise, and at death the cap-stone is placed, and the whole work is finished. This leads us to declare there is a time given to finish the work, and when that time comes not another stone can be laid on by the builder. "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). "And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:7). "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die" (Ecc. 3:1, 2).

Go out to a cemetery and look at the tombstones. Here is a marker which tells that an infant was born, who wrestled with mortality for but a few days, and then died. It may seem that that life was wasted, but depend upon it, that little history was the building of a temple, and when it was finished, the angels carried the little builder away.

Or here is a stone which marks the resting place of one who was a little worker, who had just been saved. He was only permitted to take a few tiny steps in following the Master. Many would say that he had done nothing to make a finished life. Even you perhaps would say, "Too bad he could not finish his life". Wrong you are,



that little workman will never need be ashamed, for when God called, he had finished his temple life.

Or the next stone you see may give you a maiden's name, just a young virgin, ready to marry. As she looked toward her bridal day, she was snatched away. Her parents and lover read, "Her sun is gone down while it is yet day" (Jer. 15:9). And they say, "How true it is of her". But they are wrong again, for the angels have written, "Evening tide", and the Saviour has written, "Finished", and her life's temple was complete.

Or perhaps here is a great business man. He has been making money and giving it liberally. His name stands as a synonym of justice, truth, honesty, and Christianity. He sickens and dies, as it seems to us prematurely. It looks like a calamity. It seems that nothing was finished, but his temple life was complete.

And now we come to the grave of an old pilgrim. He had lingered long in this world. The shock of corn seems more than ripe. He was blind, deaf, in pain, and helpless as a child. He wants to die; he begs to die; maybe others even want him to die. Finally God hears his cry, and he passes out into the skies. Would not it have been better if he had gone years before? No! No! It was the right time, it was just his "even-tide".

#### IV

Our text further declares that there will be a testing fire. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (I Cor. 3:13). Our day is now; God's day is coming. We spare our vices, sins, religious errors, worldly habits, and evil tempers, and all these go into our house. Some day these will be burned, when the testing fire of God is applied to our life structure, and nothing but the good and the true will be left. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). Our building may be a mixture of good and bad, but when God's testing fire burns over it, the evil which we have spared will all be burned.

Our text seems to imply that there may be some who will have nothing left except the foundation, "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:15). Others will have but very, very little. This we do know that all that has been done in Christian service in the name of, and for the glory of God, shall endure. "And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour" (I Cor. 3:8). When one builds a house, the architect has to give his certificate before the builder can get his final pay. Truly before any of the redeemed may secure their rewards, the Divine architect of our lives, even Jesus, must test that which we have built and only that which

endures the test to which He submits us will be found worthy of recognition or rewards.

When that day of testing comes, the gold, silver, and precious stones will not crumble; they will not lose one atom of their weight. All that we have done which has been worth while shall stand as a basis of our rewards. Even the least deed that we do, will receive its rightful 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" (Matt. 10:42).

In view of all of this how shall I as a child of God treat this body of mine? Shall I smoke, drink, eat gluttonously, over sleep, under sleep, over work, or under work? Shall I go to church, shall I pray, shall I abstain from the world, shall I serve God according to the Bible, shall I crucify my flesh? In view of this testing fire, may you answer these questions remembering that the "wood, hay and stubble" must be consumed, while the "gold, silver, and precious stones" must endure.

"I will go where you want me to go, dear Lord,  
Real service is what I desire,  
I will sing a solo any time, dear Lord,  
But don't ask me to sit in the choir.

"I will do what you want me to do, dear Lord,  
I like to see things come to pass,  
But don't ask me to teach girls or boys, dear Lord,  
I'd rather just stay in my class.

"I will do what you want me to do, dear Lord,  
I yearn for the Kingdom to thrive,  
I will give you my nickels and dimes, dear Lord,  
But please don't ask me to tithe.

"I will go where you want me to go, dear Lord,  
I'll say just what you want me to say;  
I am busy just now with myself, dear Lord,  
I'll help you some other day."

Oh, may this attitude be foreign to the lives of all my audience tonight! Rather, may you now cry out, saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

Keith L. Brooks, the editor of "Prophecy" told recently of missing some tracts off his desk; suspecting that his little daughter had taken them, because of the colored picture on the front page, he stepped into the room where she was playing. She had all of her dolls lined up along the wall—rag dolls, china dolls, and even a Shirley Temple at the head of the class. In front of each of these,

she had placed a tract. When Mr. Brooks asked about the tracts before the dolls, she said, "I want them all to know about Jesus". May such a spirit characterize us as we build our temple-lives!

Many months ago I preached this message for the first time. At its conclusion, one of the best Christian men I have ever known said, "I wish I could tear down the shack I've been building, and start over on my life's temple." Perhaps many of us wish the same. Well, none of us can do so, but from this day we can begin to be more careful that we build of "gold, silver, and precious stones", and use less and less of "wood, hay and stubble".

Perhaps some unsaved one is listening, who never has begun to build properly. All of his life has been wasted. May the foundation tonight be put into your life, by repentance and faith, and now begin to build your temple for eternity.



## God's Jewels

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"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. 3:16, 17.

There are reasons why that God refers to each of the saved as "jewels". First of all, jewels are of all colors and they are found everywhere. Truly God's "jewels" are of all colors of mankind and found everywhere. When the artist had painted "The Children of the World", all of them were shown with white faces. In a dream, he saw an angel working by his easel changing four of these white faces to represent the other colors of the world. Whereupon, he arose from his bed, mixed his own paints, and finished the picture, showing the black, red, yellow, and brown child as being "The Children of the World" just the same as the white. In the days of His flesh, Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Regardless of color, and irrespective of location, wherever you find one who has trusted the redemptive work of Jesus Christ and who has been washed from his sins in the blood of Jesus, that one is one of God's "jewels".

Then, too, God refers to the saved as "jewels", since jewels are the most durable of mineral substances. Every watch-maker realizes that this is true, for the bearings, which are subject to the greatest strain, are always set in jewels. Regardless of how durable earthly jewels may be, they cannot begin to compare with the durability of God's "jewels". God's "jewels" endure forever. "His seed will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail" (Psa. 89:29-33).

### I

If it is interesting to note why God calls the redeemed "jewels",

it is even more interesting to notice how the "jewels" are found. Jewels are often hidden away in rocks and mud. It is much trouble to find them, and requires much difficulty to uncover them. God's "jewels" are lost and hidden away in vile sins and earthly habits. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23). They are shut up in hard stony hearts. The Old Testament prophet, speaking for God says, "And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26). No jewel was ever hidden away in more filth and muck than are God's "jewels". "Yea also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil" (Ecc. 9:3). When Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, he referred to their former condition before they were saved, declaring that they whom God had quickened once, "were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

Just as it is often necessary to dynamite in order to find earthly jewels, so God's "jewels" likewise must be dynamited to be found. The gospel is God's dynamite. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Note the expression the "power of God". The Greek word which is translated "power" is literally "dynamite". And isn't it true that the gospel has the same effect upon one's soul as dynamite has upon stone? Many evangelists and preachers resort to all kinds of clap-trap methods to get converts. They ask the inquiring sinner to come to the front, and shake hands with the preacher, to pray at an altar of prayer, to reform, to turn over a new leaf, to join the church, to be baptized, or to sign a decision card. All of which are human attempts to change the soul. I heard one of these religious racketeers some time ago, pause in the middle of his sermon and say, "What you ought to do is join the church; join the church even if you haven't got any more religion than a horse; join the church and get religion afterwards".

What a difference between such an hireling and the preacher who is content to use God's dynamite—the gospel of Jesus Christ—thus leaving the results in God's hands. For seventeen years I have been able to say with Paul, "For I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2). I remember many years ago a middle aged man came to the services which I was conducting one Sunday evening, with the avowed purpose of giving me a thrashing. He did not even intend to come inside the building. One of the brethren of our church insisted that he wait until after the service was over, and urged him to come inside the building. That night I preached on the following text: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18). I knew nothing at all about this man's intention, or the reason why



he was in our services. When the services were over he and his family quietly slipped out. The next Sunday night his boy was saved. The following Sunday night his daughter was saved, and the third Sunday evening he, himself was saved. Truly the gospel is the dynamite of God.

A sinner may go to church feeling happy and perfectly satisfied with himself. He may have come only out of curiosity or to please some friend who has invited him. It may be a simple message that is preached, but it takes a firm grip on his soul. He is not half as pleased with himself when he leaves the service as on his entrance. His good deeds don't seem nearly so good, and his righteousness even looks to him as though it might be somewhat unrighteousness. He comes back a second time, and goes away feeling even more miserable than before. His pride has given way to humility, and his self-trust to self-abasement, and self-abandonment. This experience is repeated again and again until he yields himself to the Lord, and is saved by grace and washed by blood. O what dynamite is the gospel of Jesus Christ!

During these nearly seventeen years of Christian experience I have seen harlots, infidels, drunkards, thieves, and the vilest of mankind and womankind turn from their sins to the Saviour for salvation. What is it that has caused them to cease in their rebellion, and has led them to renounce their sins and confess Jesus Christ publicly? It is God's dynamite—the gospel—the fact that Christ died for our sins.

## II

Are the reasons that we have given why God calls the saved, "jewels", interesting to you? Does the finding of the "jewel" by God's dynamite—the gospel—interest you? Then surely you will be interested in the fashioning of the "jewel". Even though the "jewel" has been found, it is not yet ready to be worn. It is placed in the hands of the great Artificer, the Holy Spirit, who cleanses and polishes it for God.

Just as a jeweler uses water and fire for the polishing of a jewel, so the Holy Spirit uses the same methods. What water does he use? In the Bible, the Word of God, itself is referred to as Water. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:25, 26). Just as each one takes a bath and washes away the filth of the body, so each of the redeemed needs to wash in the Word of God after he has been saved, and thus cleanse away the defilement of the world. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psa. 119:9). "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).



A young woman comes into our church building for the services today. Most immodest is her dress; high cut at the bottom and low cut at the top. It has a peek-a-boo front and decolette back. Her hands are weighted down with rings. Her hair is not only bobbed, but wind-blown, frizzled, and marcelled. She enjoys the things of the world; dances, cards, and movies are a part of her nature. In short she is just a modern girl. She has come to the service only because she has been invited; and to show her appreciation for the invitation, she decided she will attempt to endure it once. In the course of the sermon, the Word of God is carried on the wings of the Holy Spirit to her heart. The gospel is to her, truly God's dynamite. She is convicted, and in due course of time is saved. I tell her to make the Bible her standard for life, and request of her that she follow its teachings implicitly. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Next Sunday she comes forward and asks for believer's baptism. I ask her why that she desires to be immersed. Like a flash, she turns to the Bible that I have given her, which I requested of her to make her standard for life, and reads, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death" (Rom. 6:4). Then she reads the scripture wherein Jesus set the example of baptism. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:13-17). She says, "Pastor, I want to be buried in baptism just like my Saviour was". What's happened during this first week of her conversion? Simply this, she has been taking a bath in the Word of God. I notice as she makes her offering to the Lord Sunday after Sunday, and she cites as her reason for doing so: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:8-10). O, how badly do the anti-missionary crowd and the penny-givers need a bath just here! A few weeks later I notice that her bobbed hair disappears, and her dress becomes much more modest. I say to her, "You look so old-timey any more; you look like you were born 30 years too late. What's become of that pretty hair and those fancy dresses?" She replies, "Pastor, didn't you tell me the Bible was to be

my standard for life? Well, I could not follow it and dress as I have been". Then she reads, "Doth not nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (I Cor. 11:14, 15). "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (I Tim. 2:9, 10). I notice that her diamond ring, the sign of her engagement is soon removed, and I ask her the reason when I see her coming to church alone. She explains that her betrothed was a man of the world, unsaved, unredeemed, and unregenerate. And since the Scripture said, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (II Cor. 6:14), she had to follow what the Book said, for it was her adopted standard for life. I notice that her name no longer appears in the society stew as a partaker of all kinds of worldliness. The cards, dances, and movies which used to intrigue her have now lost their charm. She has a new affection. Her heart is set on the Lord Jesus Christ. I notice that she never misses the services of the church. I ask her why it is that she has given up the world, and why that she never misses any services in God's House. To all this she replies, "Pastor, you gave me a Bible, and told me to make it the standard of my life, it tells me how I ought to live before the world. "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). It tells me that I ought to go to church, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:25). Therefore I cannot do otherwise as long as I follow the Bible as my standard." Everybody asks, "What's the matter with her, what has caused the change?" The answer is simply this, she has just been taking a bath in God Almighty's bath tub, the Word of God. The Holy Spirit has thus been fashioning a "jewel" through the water of the Word.

The Holy Spirit though, has another method which He uses, namely, fire—the fire of affliction. In South America there is a flower which is only visible when the wind blows. It is of the cactus specie. Beautiful flowers protrude from lumps on the stalk when the wind blows against it. Sometimes it takes the fire of affliction to cause the flowers of grace to protrude from our otherwise barren lives. "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Psa. 119:67, 71). In the Salem Pioneer Register, I read a poem presumably written by parents who had lost an only child—a babe.

Only a baby's grave,  
A foot or two at most of tear-dewed sod,  
But a living God knows what this little grave cost.



Only a baby's life,  
Sweet as a perfumed kiss so fleet it goes,  
But our Father knows we are nearer to Him for this.

### III

Jewels are really valuable. Not many of my audience possibly possess much wealth in earthly jewels, but there are multiplied millions of dollars wrapped up in value in the jewels of this earth. The value of a jewel, first of all, depends upon its scarceness or rarity. If diamonds were as plentiful as dust, then they would be no more valuable than dust. It is their scarceness which makes them valuable. God's "jewels" are exceedingly scarce too. The majority of churches do not have to build annexes in order to take care of their jewels. We have plenty of church members. In many instances large numbers of these church members are so many unsaved hellions. True jewels—God's jewels—are exceedingly scarce and hard to find.

Again jewels are valuable because of their lustre or their brilliance in shining. God's "jewels" ought to be shining for the Lord. This was the experience of the early apostles. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Are you shining in such a way that the world is taking knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus, or is your life so clouded by the things of this world that the lustre of your life is lost behind a multitude of sins?

Don't forget: The value of the jewel does not depend upon the mounting. A diamond, itself, has just as much value mounted on a piece of lead as on platinum. God's "jewels" shine just as brightly clothed in calico as in silks. In fact some of the greatest Christians and noblest souls that I have ever known, have been those whose outward dress was very poor, but whose souls really shone for God.

### IV

Jewels must be guarded. Those who are fortunate to possess jewels of great value keep them under lock and key. How marvelous it is to know that God is thus protecting His own. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:5). "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). Twenty centuries ago Paul asked, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8:35). Shall Satan? "But he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not" (I John 5:18). Shall temptation? "There hath no temptation



taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13). Shall sin? "For sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom. 6:14). Shall the law? "For ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). Shall the world? "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4). Shall the believer? "THEY SHALL NOT DEPART FROM ME" (Jer. 32:40). As it was impossible for Noah to leave the ark after God had shut him in, so it is impossible for the believer to leave Christ. Someone asks, "Cannot a believer crawl off the Rock of Ages?" Beloved, where is the child of God who wants to crawl off the Rock of Ages? But listen! Paul mentions ten agencies and agents, including the powers of Heaven, earth and Hell, which he declares are unable to separate the believer from God. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword? As it is written, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35-39).

## V

How interesting it is to think about the wearing of the jewel. Kings and queens only wear their jewels on special occasions. All the jewels of the British Empire were worn at the recent coronation of the King of England. Some day the Lord Jesus Christ is going to be crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. Isn't it wonderful to consider our prospect? In that day those of us who are His "jewels" shall share in the honor of His coronation. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (II Tim. 2:12). "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). "And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5).

I imagine that some one in our audience may say tonight, "This message is not for me, I am not a 'jewel', I am just a common stone—an unregenerate man." Despair not, dear one, "For I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt. 3:9). "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26). May God grant to you the gifts of repentance and faith that you might become one of His "jewels".

## The Conclusion of One Who Tried the World

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“What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?”—Eccles. 1:3.

“Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.”  
—Eccles. 12:8.

What mighty texts are these! The first asks a question. The second gives the answer. The first literally says, “What good does a man get out of life if he lives only for what this world can give?” Solomon’s conclusion and answer to this first question is found in the words of our second text. “Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity” (Eccles. 12:8).

### I

Solomon, more than all men, had tried the world to see what it might offer. No individual ever had more experience with worldly things than had Solomon.

He tried first of all to find satisfaction in wisdom. Naturally wise to begin with, he became unusually wise as result of his prayer for wisdom. Of all the wise men of his day, he was wiser than them all. “And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chaleol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom” (I Kings 4:29-31, 34). “And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart” (I Kings 10:24). Solomon had received his wisdom from the right source and therefore the whole world sought his knowledge. He was wiser than anyone else, yet he was not satisfied, for he said, “All is vanity” (Eccles. 12:8).

Not satisfied with his wisdom, Solomon turned his attempt to writing. He became the world’s most famous writer. “And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five” (I Kings 4:32). The Germans have a way of saying that no man is a scholar until he has written enough books, that he can pile them up one on top of the other and sit on them, without his feet touching the floor. Surely on this basis Solomon was an outstanding scholar. No



one of his day wielded a pen so voluminously as Solomon. After a little while he tired of this, and becoming dissatisfied, said, "All is vanity" (Eccles. 12:8).

Solomon's next attempt to find satisfaction was in riches. He became the world's richest man. "Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred three score and six talents of gold (\$19,370,610). Beside that he had of the merchantmen, and of the traffic of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia and of the governors of the country. And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance" (I Kings 10:14, 15, 21-23, 27). It seems unbelievable for us to imagine the revenue of Solomon's kingdom, the splendor of which has never been equalled. Silver was of no more value than the stones of the street. Everything was made of pure gold. In fact they even used silver for the streets of the city, as I Kings 10:27 shows. Still like all others who are rich, Solomon found that wealth could not bring the satisfaction he desired. Eastman, the Kodak king, and Kreuger, the match king, and countless others have ridded themselves of that life which had become unbearable in spite of all their great possessions. At the end of an eventful life, with all that money might buy, Jay Gould said, "I suppose I am the most miserable devil on earth". Andrew Carnegie was often heard to remark, "There are no happy millionaires". Even John D. Rockefeller confessed that he got more pleasure out of his first \$1,000,000 than he did out of any \$10,000,000 he had made since.

Later Solomon attempted to find happiness in making his kingdom one of unrivaled splendor. Truly the like of it has never yet been equalled. "And King Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of gold went to one target. And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pounds of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there were stays on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and one on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom" (I Kings 10:16-20). "I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I



gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour" (Eccles. 2:6-10). But even position and fame and the splendor of an unrivaled court could not bring happiness. Lord Beaconsfield, who enjoyed an eventful share of each said, "Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, and old age a regret". Solomon had scarcely finished his labors in making his kingdom the richest of the world than do we hear him say, "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun" (Eccles. 2:11).

Having failed to find satisfaction Solomon thought of military glory and expected that great honor and praise would come to him by getting together a tremendous army especially of cavalry. Hence we read how he gathered horses and chariots by the thousands. "And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen" (I Kings 4:26). "And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem. And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means" (I Kings 10:26, 28, 29). However military glory with all of its horses and chariots cannot bring happiness. When Alexander the Great had conquered the world, he sat down on the shore of the Aegean Sea, and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. Does not this coincide with the words of Solomon, "All is vanity and vexation of the spirit" (Eccles. 2:17).

Solomon like every unsaved man continued striving for something that would satisfy. What a marvelous attempt he made in feasting and banqueting that happiness might be his. Did you ever notice the great store of provisions which was required for one day at Solomon's table. "And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour (300 bushels), and three score measures of meal (600 bushels), ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl" (I Kings 4:22, 23). Neither the high cost of living nor the cost of high living bothered him yet he was unsatisfied. After feasting, banqueting, and reveling you hear him say, "All is vanity".

Determined to find that which his heart was set upon, namely satisfaction, he turned to sensuous pleasures. "I said in mine heart,

Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure. I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life" (Eccles. 2:1-3). He became a 33rd degree sport. He galloped down the rose-lined avenue of sensuous pleasure. He experienced every thrill which human flesh is capable of entering into. If anyone should have found happiness or mirth, with his wine and women, Solomon should have found it. He became doubtlessly the greatest adulterer that has ever lived. Emperor Heile Selassi and all the kings of Ethiopia claimed relation to Solomon through the Queen of Sheba, who once visited Solomon. Doubtlessly "The half has never yet been told" concerning their relations together. Despite his sin he found no satisfaction. Lord Byron drank deeply of every cup this world could force to his lips, and yet this is his confession:

"My days are in the yellow leaf,  
The flowers and fruits of love are gone,  
The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone."

Is not this Solomon's confession. Hear him when he says, "Enjoy pleasure: and behold this also is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad" (Eccles. 2:1, 2).

Feeling that after all he might be making a mistake in leaving God out of consideration, Solomon began to think in terms of religion. Not knowing the true God he began groping in the darkness, serving idols. "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians and after Mileom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord as did David his father. Then did Solomon build a place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods" (I Kings 11:4-8). In this he violated the first and second Commandments and sinned against the light of two visits from God. Even this idolatry brought him more dissatisfaction and more unhappiness. It brings to mind the experience of Voltaire, the great French sceptic and free thinker, who closed his earthly experience with the shriek, "I wish I had never been born".

Just after Solomon ascended to the throne and destroyed his enemies and pretenders to the throne, his thoughts turned as do the thoughts of every young man toward marriage. "And Solomon made



affinity with Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David" (I Kings 3:1). Not finding the happiness which he desired in this one experience of marriage, he married again and again until he became the world's most married man. "And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines" (I Kings 11:3). Irrespective of the pleasures that come through marriage relations, those pleasures cannot produce happiness and satisfaction.

"Pleasures are like poppies spread,  
Touch the flower, the bloom is dead;  
Or like a snowflake on the river,  
A moment white, then gone forever."

Having failed to find the happiness his heart was set upon he turned his attention now toward a great building program. In all probability, though many of my audience know but little about the Bible, the majority have heard of the magnificence of Solomon's Temple. It required the labor of 10,000 men for 11 years to cut the trees which went into the temple. It took seven years to build it. The labor of 183,000 Jews and strangers was combined in its construction. 80,000 squared stones went into the building. It was built of white marble and when put together it resembled one stone, so perfect, accurate, and painstaking was the workmanship of it. The roof was of olivewood overlaid with gold. The temple courts and apartments when finished could house over 300,000 people. There were 1453 columns of solid marble. There were 2,906 pilasters or columns in the building. One billion dollars of silver was used on the floors and walls. Three billion dollars of gold was used in the whole building. When it was dedicated, Solomon offered 120,000 sheep and 20,000 oxen as an offering. Not contented with building the temple he built other marvelously beautiful buildings. "And Solomon built Gezer, and Bethhoron the nether, and Balaath, and Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land, and all the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion" (I Kings 9:17-19). He also built many other wonderful buildings. "And this is the reason of the levy which King Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. But Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house which Solomon had built for her: then did he build Millo" (I Kings 9:15, 24). He beautified Jerusalem with trees from every clime. "And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of Almug trees, and precious stones. And the king made of the almug trees pillars for the house of the Lord, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and



cedar made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance" (I Kings 10:11, 12, 27). "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits" (Eccles. 2:4, 5). Yet his conclusion remains the same, "All is vanity".

## II

After years of trying the world and finding that it couldn't satisfy, he found that which did satisfy—the knowledge of God and God's Son as his Saviour. Nearly an entire life was lived without this knowledge and in the close of his book of Ecclesiastes, he says, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccles. 12:13, 14). That which he had sought and failed to find in the world, he now found in God. Truly, this is the testimony of many others who have looked and lived from a higher viewpoint than from "under the sun". After a long eventful life, filled with serving God, Joshua said to the people of Israel, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15). Note the testimony of Abraham for he too had found that satisfaction which alone is found in God. "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). Listen to the words of the great law-giver Moses. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27). Or the words of Samuel, "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (I Sam. 15:22). Or those of Job, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25, 26). Hear the sweetest singer of Israel even David as he said of himself, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psa. 34:6, 7). Let the first Christian martyr speak. "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit" (Acts 7:56, 59). Or the Apostle Paul. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Cor. 5:1).

All these and many thousands have found that happiness is not to be found in the world. The world can never satisfy but the Lord Jesus Christ through His death on the cross pleased God the Father,

and by our acceptance of His sacrifice in our behalf, He brings that satisfaction and happiness to us that we can find nowhere else in all the world.

Leigh Richmond once visited a dying cottager. He asked as to her hope for eternity. She put her hand on her Bible, and said, "I have Christ there, sir". Then placing her hand upon her breast she said, "I have Christ there, sir". And then looking up toward the skies said, "I have Christ there, sir". What a wonderful hope is this—Christ in the Bible, Christ in the heart, and Christ in the skies, coming again.

"I have sought for satisfaction  
In the world both far and wide,  
But in vain, till I found Jesus,  
Now I'm fully satisfied.

"Tho' the sun may shine above me,  
Or the clouds His face may hide,  
Yet with sunshine or with shadow,  
I am always satisfied.

"All day long Christ walks beside me,  
All night long He doth abide;  
That is why I'm always happy,  
That is why I'm satisfied.

"Tho' my friends may turn against me,  
Tho' my enemies deride,  
Still I have my blessed Saviour,  
And with Him I'm satisfied.

"When I reach the mystic river  
Christ will bear me o'er the tide,  
And I know when I reach heaven  
That I shall be satisfied.

"Yes, I know that Jesus loves me,  
For it was for me He died;  
Yes I know that Jesus loves me,  
And my soul is satisfied."

## An Exposition of Matthew 23

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“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous. And say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell?”—Matt. 23:23-33.

The Lord Jesus never preached a bigger sermon in all His life. He was preaching to the greatest sinners He ever met and so He preached accordingly.

Here is an example for modern preachers. We need to be lion-like if we are to be Christ-like. Some preachers haven’t any more backbone than a fishing worm. No preacher needs a piece of “boiled spaghetti” for a backbone. Mr. Pacifist, Mr. Middle-of-the-Roader, Mr. Self-Complacent-Mollycoddle, that gelatin-like gentleman says that we ought to be sweet and gentle and never offend anyone, yet no man ever lived that was more lion-like than Christ. Thus in this chapter, 12 times Jesus Christ calls His audience fools, blind guides, and hypocrites. Finally with the most scathing denunciation of all, He says concerning the unsaved of His day, “Ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matt. 23:23).



## I

Jesus' audience was composed entirely of unsaved folk. The very fact that He said, "How can you escape the damnation of Hell?" proves that they were unsaved. To be sure they were religious leaders but that meant nothing in Jesus' day nor does it mean anything today. We have countless professors but very few processers. Many have churchanity but few have Christianity. When Moses was leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, we read that a "mixed multitude" journeyed with Israel. Israel was the redeemed people of God. This mixed multitude knew nothing of redemption but attracted by the miracles and manifestations of the supernatural, they journeyed along with the Jews. We have many, many thousands like them today who during the emotional excitement of a revival meeting have joined the church and have never known the meaning of redemption. It was this type of people that Jesus was dealing with in the chapter we have before us.

Jesus described them again in the parable of the tares sown among the wheat. "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:36-42). There are multiplied thousands today who as church members look like saints on the outside. They go to church with an air of piety. They sing sanctimoniously. They probably carry a song book and Bible under their arm whenever they go to God's House. Still their heart is far removed from God. They are tares—the Devil's imitation Christians, which he plants along side of the genuine in order to deceive the world. It was to this crowd that Jesus said, "Ye generations of vipers—(literally, you brood of snakes), how can you escape the damnation of Hell?"

## II

As we read this chapter we notice many characteristics which Jesus gives of his audience. They were first of all teachers of the law. "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat" (Matt. 23:2). Note the expression: "Sit in Moses' seat". This means that they were Moses' successors and thus were teachers of the law. Surely in this responsible place we should find saved persons. However our expectations are in vain. It reminds us of many hundreds and thousands today who are Moses' successors, namely preachers. Not ev-

everyone who calls himself a preacher is a God-called preacher and not all who prefix some ministerial title to their name, know the Lord. Fully nine-tenths of the preachers are unsaved if they believe what they preach, since they preach salvation by works or salvation by the cities water works instead of salvation by grace as taught in the Scriptures. But these unsaved preachers will come up to the bar of God unredeemed. Listen to Jesus' description of that scene. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).

These unsaved folk were strong believers in works. We have a description of their efforts, for Jesus said, "All their works they do for to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5). Like many moderns today, they thought their works would save. At least nine of every ten whom you meet are expecting to go to Heaven because of their works. Suppose you go out tonight and ask the first man you meet, "Are you saved?" He will answer, "I hope so", or "I think so". Ask him why he is expecting to go to heaven and he will say, "I am not a very bad man; I am doing the very best I can". You see he is depending upon what he is doing instead of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. In Jesus' day there were many who expected that they might be saved by their doings. They even said to Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:28, 29). Thus you see that Jesus settled for once and all time the plan of salvation by declaring that it was not our works but His finished work that gives us salvation. Yet in spite of His teachings there are multiplied thousands who, like the audience to whom Jesus was preaching, are depending upon their works for salvation. Sometime ago one of the members of our church visited a woman in the hospital who had been an active church worker for years. In the course of the conversation the lady from our church said, "But you aren't afraid to die, are you? You're surely ready to meet the Lord." To which the other, an unsaved church member, said, "I don't think I have done enough yet to be saved". May God help those of our audience tonight who are listening, to realize that salvation is not something that we do, but something that Jesus Christ has done on the cross. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: **Not of works**, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9). "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and **not by the works of the law**: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16).



"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5).

Those who composed Jesus' audience were also men of prayer. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation" (Matt. 23:14). We usually think that if a man is a praying member of a church, that surely he is all right, and that he knows the Lord. Yet this is no proof of one's salvation. Read the spiritual pedigree of Cornelius as described in the book of Acts. "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band; a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and **prayed to God alway**" (Acts 10:1, 2). One of his characteristics was that he "prayed to God alway". Still he was unsaved, for God said to him, "Send men to Joppa and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house **shall be saved**" (Acts 11:13, 14). Though a man of prayer, God knew that he needed to be saved.

Several years ago I held a revival meeting for a Baptist church in Ashland. One Sunday night an old gentleman sitting next to the front seat gripped the bench in front of him, as we gave the invitation song, as though he were already slipping into the jaws of Hell. After the service I said to the pastor, "Did you see that man's reaction to the sermon tonight?" The pastor replied in the affirmative but said, "He's all right; he is one of the charter members of this church; he's been a member of Baptist churches for nearly 45 years and has been a deacon for over 40 years. Why, he is one of our praying members." The next night the pastor met me at the door of the church and said, "You were right, for before I got out of bed this morning that man who was so agitated last evening came to my home and told me he had never been saved in all his life until last night. He said he had been a church member but that he had never seen that Jesus on the cross paid for all sins—past, present, and future—until last evening." I dare say that we have in our audience tonight many hundreds who are praying church members but who know not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Another characteristic of Jesus' audience is that they were personal workers. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matt. 23:15). I have always tried to show unsaved church members in my church or in any organization that they are lost. Sometime ago because I spoke to one who was a member of another church organization, I received a very scurrulous letter in which this verse which I have quoted was applied to me. I only wish that I were as zealous for my Master as these folk of whom and, to whom the Lord Jesus spoke. They were willing to "compass sea and land". That is, they were willing to go around the world in order to proselyte just one



man. Truly they were the greatest personal workers of whom I have ever read. With such zeal and sincerity we think that they must be saved. But may I remind you that one is not saved by zeal and sincerity. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:1-4). Though they were great personal workers Jesus said, "You are just a brood of snakes; how can you keep out of Hell?"

These folk further had great religious oaths and creeds. "Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!" (Matt. 23:16). They had a mental belief about great religious creeds. Still all that means but little. It is not head faith nor intellectual faith that saves, but a heart faith which brings redemption. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10). A man may believe all the ritual and rubric of his church, and yet be lost. He may know all that his church stands for and he may have memorized the "discipline", or the "findings of the presbytery", or the "tenets of the church", and after having memorized it he may still be a stranger to Christ. There are multiplied thousands of Catholics, Jews, Methodists, Presbyterians, Holiness, Campbellites, and Missionary Baptists who know everything their church stands for, but who know not the Christ of Calvary.

Jesus' audience were also liberal givers. In fact they were tithe-payers. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin" (Matt. 23:23). We usually think that if we can get a church member to bring his tithe to the Lord that surely he must be right with the Lord. When the Pharisee went into the temple to tell God of his goodness, one characteristic which he mentioned was, "I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:12). Yet Jesus' estimate was that he went down to his house condemned. Every man owes God one-tenth of his income. Still this has nothing whatever to do with his salvation.

Further, the outside life of those of Jesus' audience was clean. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outward appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Matt. 23:25-28). Outwardly they looked all right. This is all that man asks for. But man can

only see the outside. "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:7). You can whitewash a pig-pen or a manure pile but it is still a pig-pen or a manure pile. You can whitewash the outside of a typhoid pump but that does not affect the germs inside. A man's life may be scrupulously clean in the eyes of man and yet his heart may be exceedingly filthy in the sight of God. "Out of it (the heart) are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). Did not God declare concerning man's righteousness, "and all our righteousnesses are but as filthy rags"? (Isa. 64:6). If our best deeds look like filthy rags to God, what must our sins, our immoralities, and our evil deeds look like?

### III

Those of Jesus' audience thus had many good characteristics which we have enumerated:

1. Teachers of the law.
2. Strong believers in works.
3. Men of prayer.
4. Personal workers.
5. They had great religious oaths and creeds.
6. Tithe payers.
7. Their outside lives were clean.

Yet there was something that they lacked. "And have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. 23:23).

They lacked judgment. They had failed to pass judgment on their sins. Every man needs to judge himself a sinner. A man does not like to call himself a vile wretch or a sinner. That was true of Jesus' audience. They had failed to judge themselves sinners in need of salvation.

They also lacked mercy. That is, they lacked the mercy or love of God in their lives. The word "mercy" as used in the Bible means "grace". We love to sing the old song:

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!

Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.



When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun.

These folk to whom Jesus was speaking had omitted the mercy or grace of God from their lives.

They likewise lacked faith. No man can ever be saved unless he judges himself a sinner and then by faith accepts the mercy or the grace of God as shown in the death of Jesus at Calvary. It is saving faith in Christ which brings redemption to us. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Finally they lacked an inward cleansing. "Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also" (Matt. 23:26). I am sure that there are many, many within our audience who need such an inward cleansing. If we might see our hearts as God sees them tonight, many would be willing to heed the words of Jesus: "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again" (John 3:7). "I tell you, nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:5).

Years ago D. L. Moody closed a revival meeting in Birmingham, England. As a young man bid him good-bye, he said, "I am coming to America sometime and hope to preach for you". Six months later he wrote from New York that he would be in Chicago on Wednesday night and hoped to preach for him at that time. It happened that Moody had to be out of town. He left orders for the young man to preach and told the deacons of his church to be ready for he did not believe the young man could successfully conduct the services to a conclusion. The young man came and preached from the golden text of the Bible, John 3:16. His audience was deeply stirred. He announced an after-service and a dozen responded. They asked him to speak the next night. A larger audience greeted him on Thursday evening when he used the same text of the evening before, and 20 were converted. Then on Friday night 30 were saved, when he preached from the same text again. When Mr. Moody returned on Saturday his wife told him of the glorious revival meeting they were having. He said, "Revival? Why I haven't planned for a revival meeting and I don't think that the deacons would plan for one without consulting me". She replied, "It seems that the Lord has planned one without consulting you or the deacons either. I want you to go down tonight and get converted yourself." This was a shock to D. L. Moody. It was like a flash of lightning out of a clear sky, or like a dash of ice water in one's face on a cold night. He said, "Wife, I



have been preaching for 20 years. I have preached all over America; I have preached all around the world; don't you think I've got religion?" To this she replied, "That's just exactly what I think you have, and when you go tonight to the services you will understand". That night the young man preached again on John 3:16. And that night Moody was converted. Hitherto he had preached law and works. That night he saw the Truth that Jesus Christ had died for all of his sins and judging himself a sinner he accepted by faith Jesus' work at Calvary. They asked the preacher to continue the meeting. The next day—Sunday morning, he preached to 1800 people. For six weeks Harry Moorehouse continued this meeting until hundreds were saved.

Perhaps there may be some preacher in my audience tonight or some unsaved church worker who has been depending upon the law and upon his own works. Like Moody, may you tonight realize that Jesus on the cross fulfilled the law, satisfied God, and paid for all of your sins—past, present, and future. "Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus 2:14). "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

May you tonight judge yourself a sinner and accept the mercy of God offered you at Calvary.

## The Angel's Charge To Baptists

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"But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."—Acts 5:19, 20.

This text grows out of the second persecution, which was aimed at Jesus' infant church. It was instigated by the Sadducees. Through their efforts all of the apostles were put in jail. Immediately the Lord sent an angel who opened the doors of the prison, led the preachers out, and set them free.

Apparently this was God's answer to the Sadducees. They said in their doctrines, "There is no resurrection; there are no angels". But when they imprisoned the apostles for preaching the resurrection, an angel came from Heaven and loosed the apostles from prison. Thus God answered these enemies of His church.

Now that the apostles were freed, the angel gave them a charge—a charge to preach. "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).

### I

The angels of God are much interested in the work of preaching. "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (I Pet. 1:12). Note the expression: "Which things the angels desired to look into".

But this is nothing new. The angels have always been interested in this world and its events. That is, they are interested in the preaching of the Gospel. Away back in eternity when this world was created, the angels of God clapped their hands and shouted for joy. "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). They watched with evident interest as God fashioned man out of dust. From that time, the angels above and the angels below, angels of love, and angels of woe, concentrated their attention on the problems of man's earthly and eternal life. Then with horror, they listened to the fatal conversation between the serpent and Eve. If the angels of God can weep, how they must

have wept when sin came. They heard the promise which God gave relative to redemption, when the Father banished Adam and Eve from Eden. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Gen. 3:15)

From that time on the angels have been peculiarly interested in the Doctrine of Redemption. When the Ark of the Covenant was made, as a part of the furniture of the Tabernacle, figures of golden angels were carved as bending over the mercy seat and looking down where the blood falls, as if studying the meaning of the blood shedding. When Solomon's Temple was built we read, "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, unto the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above" (I Kings 8:6, 7). When the temple was built in the wilderness, under Moses' direction, on the veil which separated the Holy of Holies from the outer Holy place, the figures of the cherubims were placed, as if investigating the shedding of the blood. "And he made a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; with cherubims made he it of cunning work" (Ex. 36:35).

When we come to the New Testament we find that they are tremendously interested in all of its events, beginning with the announcement of Jesus' birth. It was an angel who announced Jesus' coming to Mary. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus" (Luke 1:26-31). It was the same angel that came to Joseph with a message announcing the birth of Jesus. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:18-21). Was it not an angel who preached the first Gospel sermon of the New Testament when he said to the shepherds, ". . . Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good



tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10, 11). Did not all the heavenly host join in a great angelic chorus to sing the first Gospel hymn at Jesus' birth? "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:13, 14). An angel sat at the foot of Jesus' cradle and warned Joseph to take Jesus into Egypt for safety. "Behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him" (Matt. 2:13). The angel kept close watch over the cradle during their stay in Egypt and it was an angel that led them when they left Egypt. "But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt. Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life" (Matt. 2:19, 20). The angels were all about the tomb of Jesus and it was a shining angel who first announced His resurrection. "And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt. 28:2-6). Even when Christ ascended, two angels spoke to the disciples saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

Thus we see that the angels have always been interested in the events of this world and particularly concerning the work of preaching. Now that Christ has ascended, the angels give this charge to the preachers: "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).

## II

The agents employed for the spreading of the Gospel though are men, not angels. Oh, the honor of being a preacher. It would seem that the angels, having been as interested in the work of redemption as they have, should be the ones chosen to the high honor. But not so! Ours, as preachers, is a work which angels can't perform. There is no office, no honor, and no position which can equal the work of a preacher. When Andrew Jackson was elected to the presidency, an office seeker who had worked for Jackson's election came to him for a position. Mr. Jackson said, "And what is your present work?"

When told that he was a preacher, Old Hickory said, "Man, go home and preach; if I were to give you my office it wouldn't be as great as the one you now occupy". Carey the missionary, had a son who professed to be called to the ministry. Later on, he accepted an appointment of an ambassadorship from England. Most folk consider this an honor. Especially the majority of preachers would think of it as such. When Carey heard it he said, "My son Felix has dwindled into an ambassador".

How wonderful it is to think that the agents who are employed for the spreading of the Gospel are just preachers—mere human beings. However imperfect as we preachers are, we are better preachers than the heavenly host with their perfect angelic righteousness. It is true that we preachers cannot sing with their celestial melody nor can we charm you with seraphic eloquence. But we do have a sympathy which they cannot feel, since they have known the infirmities of man.

And now please note that these angels who have always been so interested in the preaching of the Gospel, though they can't preach, go to church to hear the agents whom God has employed for the spreading of the Gospel. "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels" (I Cor. 11:10). That is, because of the presence of the angels. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10). The "principalities and powers in heavenly places" are the angels. They go to church to learn. Do you not imagine that the angels often wonder when they attend our services? When we recall that our commission of preaching was given by an angel to Jesus' preachers, why don't we carry out their charge more effectively than we do? Do they not often say, "Why do preachers neglect to preach? Why do they preach as though asleep? Where is their zeal for Christ in carrying out the charge we gave them?" Then they note men so eager in politics and business, yet negligent of souls. Are they not amazed when they behold the church split into factions which minimizes the power of the preacher as he tries to carry out their charge? Do they not say, "Why do they fuss?" Surely many times when they go to church to learn, they go away saying, "Oh, that God would let us preach!" Beloved, these angelic hosts must often feel ashamed of us. May I address myself now to any preacher in our audience or Sunday school teacher: "I charge you by the angels of God who are not permitted to touch this Holy work of teaching and preaching: 'preach the word; be instant in season and out of season'."

### III

It is interesting to notice what it was that the angels said for us to preach. "All the words of this life" (Acts 5:20). Life! The same word which is translated elsewhere eternal salvation or everlasting life.



Then I and all other preachers are to preach everlasting life. We are not to preach a religion that you can get today and lose tomorrow but rather everlasting life. Surely it is everlasting life for every saved sinner can never lose his salvation since he is kept by the power of God. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). "You who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:5). "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" (Heb. 7:25). "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). These texts teach us that the power to keep lies outside the sphere of personal ability, and that God keeps us from the power of external, internal, and infernal agencies. When the jewel of my soul is surrendered to God's keeping, He is responsible for my eternal security.

"Firm as His throne the promise stands,  
And He can well secure,  
What I've committed to His hands,  
Till the decisive hour."

I would be unsafe to attempt to walk the streets of any town with \$1,000.00 in my pocket. I hand it through the bank window to the cashier and he keeps it since he has the ability to do so. I haven't the power to keep my salvation, since the Devil is stronger than I, but I can commit myself unto God, who is "able to keep". The day that I was saved, I thus committed my soul to Him. Then do I realize: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1).

This life which we are commanded to preach is made everlasting by the covenant between God and Christ which secures the righteous. "Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty: I have exalted one chosen out of the people. Also I will make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him forevermore and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my laws, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the things that is gone out of my lips" (Psa. 89:19, 27-34). This covenant was made with Christ before the foundation of the world. When His children go astray, He promises chastisement and yet de-



clares He will not withdraw His loving-kindness nor suffer His faithfulness to fail.

When a believer is saved, He possesses eternal life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:26). "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is his Son. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:11, 13). The life Christ gives us is eternal—never ending. Forty-three times in the New Testament "everlasting" qualifies the life we receive when we receive Christ. Then it is a 43-0 hope that the believer is eternally secure. In Matt. 25:46, "everlasting" describes the punishment of the wicked. In Rom. 16:26, "everlasting" describes the duration of Christ in glory. In II Pet. 1:11, "everlasting" describes the duration of Christ's kingdom. Then as long as the wicked are punished, as long as God exists, and as long as Christ's glory exists, and as long as Christ's kingdom continues, just that long the believer has eternal life. If the punishment of the wicked can have an end, if God can have an end, and if Christ's glory and kingdom have an end, then the believer can perish. In view of this shall we not write in letters of gold across the heavens, that all may read: ETERNAL SALVATION!

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
That soul, tho' all Hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"

How can we ever forget this charge of the angel? Eternal life! Doubtlessly there are many of my audience who are preaching apostasy and are telling their congregation that it is possible for one to fall away, and be eternally lost after he has been eternally saved. The devil was the first preacher of apostasy when he lied to God, saying that Job would apostatize under his difficulties. God proved through Job that the Devil lied when he preached apostasy. Some day God will prove through each saved believer that every preacher of apostasy is a liar.

Isn't this something to make us rejoice? Just to think that the angels who have always been so interested in this world and its events, particularly God's plan of redemption, though they are not permitted to preach, yet they say to us whom God has commissioned: "Preach everlasting life". Shall we ever cease to thank God for calling us into such an elevated position? What rejoicing it will bring

to that individual who has been faithful to the charge of the angels when he meets them face to face around the throne of God.

“There is singing up in heaven such as we have  
never known,  
Where the angels sing the praises of the Lamb up-  
on the throne,  
Their sweet harps are ever tuneful and their voices  
always clear,  
Oh, that we might be more like them while we  
serve the Master here!

“Holy, holy, is what the angels sing,  
And I expect to help them make the courts of  
Heaven ring,  
But when I sing redemption’s story, they will fold  
their wings,  
For angels never felt the joys that our salvation  
brings.

“But I hear another anthem blending voices clear  
and strong,  
‘Unto Him that hath redeemed us and has brought  
us’, is the song;  
‘We have come through tribulations to this land  
so fair and bright,  
In the fountain freely flowing He hath made our  
garments white’.

“Then the angels stand and listen for they can-  
not join that song,  
Like the sound of many waters, by that happy,  
blood-wash’d throng,  
For they sing about great trials, battles fought  
and vict’ries won,  
And they praise their great Redeemer who hath  
said to them, ‘Well done’.

“Holy, holy, is what the angels sing,  
And I expect to help them make the courts of  
Heaven ring,  
But when I sing redemption’s story, they will fold  
their wings,  
For angels never felt the joys that our salvation  
brings.

“So, although I’m not an angel, yet I know that  
over there  
I will join a blessed chorus that the angels can-  
not share;

I will sing about my Saviour who upon dark Calvary,  
Freely pardoned my transgressions, died to set a sinner free.

“Holy, holy, is what the angels sing,  
And I expect to help them make the courts of Heaven ring,  
But when I sing redemption’s story, they will fold their wings,  
For angels never felt the joys that our salvation brings.”

Just a further word. In a moment you will be through with this message. Through with it until the morning of eternity. The question is: Are **you** sure **you** possess everlasting life? If not, then you need to heed the words of Jesus, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (John 6:47). May God help you now to trust Jesus’ death for your life and may you come to know that your past, present, and future sins are paid for by His death at Calvary.



## The Greatest Subject In the World for Consideration

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"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."—Heb. 3:1.

Consider Jesus Christ! Consider him who has been the subject of consideration both by man, and angelic hosts, and even the demons of Hell, for the past thousands of years. After considering him throughout eternity past, an angel of God announced the birth of Jesus to Mary, saying: "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:30-33). Prior to His birth the prophet Isaiah considered him and wrote: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6, 7). As a result of his considerations, the prophet Micah even declared the exact place where Jesus was to be born. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). When he came to this earth the wise men sat before the cradle contemplating him, with the result that, "They fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11). Even God the Father considering Him said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5). The audiences which heard His messages considered Him and appraised Him thus: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt. 7:28, 29). Even Pilate, the judge who per-

mitted his crucifixion, said concerning him: "I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it" (Matt. 27:24). Judas the betrayer declared: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matt. 27:4). Even the devil of Hell on considering Jesus in the days of His flesh cried out: "What have I to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not" (Mark 5:7). A thief who was crucified with Him, considered Jesus in his dying agony and shouted: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). Even the centurian whose business it was to crucify Him said: "Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47).

Thus the angel, the prophets, the wise men, God the Father, His audience, Pilate, Judas, the thief crucified with Him, the centurian, and even the Devil, on considering Jesus have declared themselves that He was, and is, the righteous Son of God, the Saviour of man. In view of their consideration and conclusion, I ask you to consider Jesus Christ.

## I

Consider Jesus Christ as creator. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:16). "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" (John 1:3, 10). "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1, 2). The only satisfactory explanation as to the creation of this world and all things therein is Jesus Christ. Evolution in an attempt to explain creation is built upon a system of guesses.

A few years ago about the time that higher criticism and German rationalism began to affect our denominational colleges, a farmer in Louisiana plowed up some large bones. On reporting his find, a little "two by four" scientist drove out to the farm and pronounced the bones as that of the missing link. Scientists of all kinds began flocking into that section of the state. Each declared that this undoubtedly linked man back to the lower animals. The newspapers carried this story far and wide. A few days later on old countryman with a blade of alfalfa dropping out of one corner of his mouth stopped in at the office of the newspaper and said, "What's all this I hear about this prehistoric monster? I owned that farm about 30 years ago where those bones were found. Barnum & Bailey's big circus elephant died when they showed here in town and I permitted them to bury him on my land." And thus the missing link is still missing, the lower animals still produce lower animals, and all forms



of life still beget life after their own kind, and we still believe that Jesus Christ is the Creator of this universe and all things therein.

## II

Consider Jesus Christ as the sinless Son of God. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the **precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb **without blemish and without spot**" (I Pet. 1:18, 19). "For he hath made him, who knew no sin; to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (I Pet. 2:22). For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26). These verses give to us the Scriptural pedigree of the Lord Jesus. When we consider that both Peter and Paul were writing under inspiration, then surely it would be impossible for us to believe that Jesus was anyone other than the sinless Son of God.

In this day of pure food laws, each company delights in advertising that its products are pure. Who is there of my audience but what recalls that Ivory soap is advertised as ninety-nine and forty-four one-hundredths per cent pure. Yet Jesus is greater than this. He is fully one hundred per cent pure and sinless.

A few years ago I had an attack of illness growing out of symptoms of an excruciating pain in my abdomen. The doctors thought I had a gall-bladder infection. I was not surprised for I had been told by many, who had heard me preach, that I had "too much gall". The doctor determined to make a complete examination. He gave me some Graham dye capsules and told me to go home to take these, eat no breakfast the next morning, and return to his office. He stood me up before a fluoroscope and looked at each organ of my body in its operation. He had said that if his supposed analysis of my condition were correct, that dark spots would show up on my gall. But to his apparent disappointment, there wasn't a single dark spot that appeared. You can put the Lord Jesus Christ to every criticism and analysis which is humanly possible you may turn the most powerful telescope or microscope upon his character, but there's not a spot nor a stain nor a blemish to be found. Truly He is the sinless Son of God.

## III

Consider Jesus Christ's love. It was love which sent Jesus into this world; it was love which caused Him to weep over Jerusalem, and caused Him to sweat blood in Gethsemane, and finally nailed Him to the cross. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life", never means as much as when we view the Son of God upon the cross. Then it is that we say with the poet:



"O Love that wilt not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in Thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be."

Look at Jesus on the cross. The rulers hated him; the soldiers mocked Him with vinegar; He was blasphemed even by one of those who was crucified with Him. "And one of the malefactors which was hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us" (Luke 23:39). Christ might have lifted his voice and hurled that angry, blood-thirsty mob into Hell with justice. He was still God and with the power of the Father, He might have slain them with His wrath. Instead, now that He has been crucified, his lips begin to move. As I gaze toward the blessed Saviour, I wonder what shall be the first words to fall from his lips. With justice may He pronounce a curse upon His accusers but instead we hear Him say: "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:24). As we stand and gaze upon this scene we lift up our hearts to sing:

"There is a wideness in God's mercy  
Like the wideness of the sea;  
There is a kindness in His justice,  
Which is more than liberty.

"For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man's mind,  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind."

Truly the greatest manifestation of the love of God is the cross of Calvary. I bow to Him who died and beg you to consider His love.

#### IV

Consider Jesus Christ's vicarious death. His death was no ordinary one. The thief on either the right or the left hand who died with Jesus were suffering for their sins and dying because of their own misdeeds. Yet Jesus, as we have already seen, had no sins. Why then was He dying? "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins** according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3). "For he hath made him, who knew no sin; to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5:21). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Pet. 2:24). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (I Pet. 3:18).

Yes, Jesus Christ died for our sins—your sins and my sins. What

a scene this was. The angels who had ministered so graciously to Jesus on so many occasions in the past had now taken wings and flown away to other worlds. The disciples that had pledged their allegiance to Him have now turned their backs and fled away in cowardice. Even God the Father has turned His back upon His Son and in the darkness Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). If you would listen carefully you would hear His blood as it drops from the wounds in Jesus' body. You can see His bosom as it heaves and falls from the pain He feels. The pain leaps through every vein in His body. His throat became so parched that He cried: "I thirst". Eventually His tongue became so swollen that He could speak no longer. Oh, what sufferings were these! And for whom did He suffer? "Christ died for our sins" (I Cor. 15:3).

Arnold Von Winkelreid of the Swiss army saw the solid phalanx of the enemies' army drawn up before him, and rushing forward he shouted, "Make way for liberty". Fully twenty of the enemies thrust spears into his body, but a gap was made, 20 feet wide or better in the lines of the enemies and through this gap the Swiss army passed to victory. The Lord Jesus Christ seeing the hosts of sin and Satan standing before us cried, "Make way for salvation", and by His crucifixion He opened a blood sprinkled path for us.

## V

Consider Jesus Christ as having completed the plan of Salvation. As He was dying He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Then there is nothing left for a sinner to do in the realm of salvation. This explains Titus 3:5; "Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost". It shows us the meaning of Eph. 2:8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast". When we stand by the cross we can sing:

"Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe,  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow."

Only a few nights ago I attended a class meeting which in reality was a social hour, prefaced by a pot-luck supper. That is, each person present brought a dish of food and when it was all placed together it meant a complete meal. Many have some such idea of salvation. They think that Jesus did a part on Calvary, that the church does a part, that the preacher in the baptistry adds his portion, and that the individual by his life and efforts continues to add his part and that all together they make up the plan of salvation. How utterly foreign to Bible teaching this is. I do not offer to sinners a pot-luck salvation but rather I preach Jesus Christ who died for our sins and rose again for our justification.



A few weeks ago I was invited into a wealthy home for dinner. In fact I was the guest of honor that evening. When we sat down to the table it was literally covered with delicacies, both in season and out of season. Suppose that as we sat there I had pulled out of my pocket a package of cheese and crackers and started to eat on this which I had brought with me. Suppose I had carried my insult to the host and hostess further by saying, "I was afraid you would not have enough to eat so I brought along this little lunch with me." Do you realize, beloved, that this is exactly the way the Lord of all grace is being treated today. He is inviting sinners to a banquet which He has spread. He offers the Bread of Life and the Water of Life freely, without money and without price. Yet many a sinner is trying to bring along his little "cheese and crackers"; namely, his good works, baptism, and human merit on his part. Such is an insult to Almighty God. Free sovereign grace is God's offer to man. I therefore urge you to consider Jesus Christ as having Himself completed the plan of salvation.

## VI

Consider Jesus Christ as our great High Priest. In the Old Testament dispensation, a priest was a necessity, for the priest represented man to God in the religion of the Jews. There was a veil in the Temple of the Holy of Holies which separated the Holy of Holies from the outer Holy place. Only the priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies. On the day when Jesus died the veil was rent from top to bottom as though the unseen hand of God had reached down from Heaven and torn this veil. This meant that Christ having paid the penalty for our sins, had become our great High Priest, and indicates to us that we have need no longer for any other priest.

This is the meaning of Paul's statement to Timothy. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). There is just one mediator to come between God and man and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. A Catholic priest or a priest of any other religion is a man 2,000 years behind time, for the priest died when Jesus died, since He is now our great High Priest, and each believer is his own priest under Christ.

Some time ago I was talking to a friend, a Roman Catholic, yet with all a dear friend of mine. He said, "I have put my salvation in the hands of my priest and he is responsible for it". To this I replied, "That is exactly where my salvation is too; it is in the hands of my Priest, the only difference is the priest; you have a man; mine is the Lord Jesus".

## VII

Consider Jesus Christ as coming back again. Some day He's coming again to this earth. He promised it in the days of His flesh. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in



me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again**, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). On the day of His ascension, the angel said to the disciples, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Every time we partake of the Memorial Supper in which the bread is broken and the wine is poured, we have a prophecy of Jesus' return. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:26).

I was in a doctor's office a few days ago and saw there a little notice relative to his absence. It was the face of a clock and on it were these words, "Doctor out, will be back soon". So it is with Jesus. He is away from this earth today, but He will be back soon.

In the course of my work I have to be away from home many, many times at night. I live on a high hill just back of town, surrounded by 3,000 acres of woodland with my nearest neighbor a half a mile away. It is often quite dark as I drive home at night. Being a home lover, no one knows the thrill when I see the lights of my home shining out of the darkness to greet me. It always makes me think of that time when the blessed Saviour is going to pierce the sky, to come for His redeemed, to receive me in that home of many mansions.

"I can see the lights of home,  
I can see the lights of home,  
Gleaming from the many mansions,  
I can see the lights of home.

"I can see the lights of home  
Far across the billows' foam,  
Gleaming from the many mansions  
I can see the lights of home.

"Home, home, sweet, sweet home,  
I'll soon be with Jesus,  
I'll soon be at home."

I ask you who have been considering Jesus with me tonight that you consider Him well, consider Him carefully, consider Him Scripturally, consider Him penitently, and then having considered Him, make Him your Saviour tonight. Truly we can say of Him that He is the

"Sweetest note in seraph song,  
Sweetest carol ever sung,  
Sweetest name on mortal tongue,  
Jesus, blessed Jesus."

## The Good Samaritan

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"And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." —Luke 10:30-35.

This passage is commonly called "The Parable of the Good Samaritan". The thought of kindness to a fallen brother is usually considered the reason why Jesus gave this incident. While it is true that it does answer conclusively the question, "And who is my neighbor?", I feel that there is a deeper meaning than that which appears upon the surface.

In this story four characters play their separate parts. The poor unfortunate, the priest, the Levite, and the good Samaritan in orderly sequence appear upon the scene. Together they illustrate the plan of salvation.

### I

Notice the poor unfortunate. "A certain man". This represents each of Adam's fallen descendants. Stand before a mirror and look at the visage you see therein. Lift the accusing index finger and say like Nathan of old, "Thou art the man". Your character thus appears in this portrait of the poor unfortunate.

"Went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." How careful the Scriptures are in their wording. The fact that this man "went down" pictures the course of each of Adam's descendants from childhood on. "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalm 58:3). "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness

rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). No man outside of Jesus ever gets closer to God, but rather, farther from Him.

"Fell among thieves." Every person in this world has fallen into the hands of the arch-thief of all times, even Satan himself. Look at the drunkard, who was once his mother's delight. Today he is a physical, mental, and moral wreck. What's wrong with him? Only one answer can be made; he has fallen into the hands of Satan and his manhood and sobriety has been stolen. Or consider the girl who makes her living through merchandising her womanhood. Once she was a proud mother's daughter, but now her modesty and virtue have been stolen by Satan. Even the moral man and the moral, refined woman have not lived up to their highest ideals. One conclusion remains, that whether moral or immoral, all have suffered loss at the hands of Satan, the prince of thieves.

"Which stripped him of his raiment." In the Garden of Eden, Satan stripped Adam and Eve of their righteousness. Their attempt to cover themselves with fig-leaves was an admission that their righteousness, wherewith they were clothed was gone. Their loss is our loss, for all from that day on have been born destitute of man's original righteousness and sadly in need of God's eternal righteousness. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Paul speaks of those who are "ignorant of God's righteousness" (Rom. 10:3). This poor unfortunate naked man only illustrates the spiritual nakedness of each outside of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And wounded him." Every sinner is wounded in the conscience. "Having the conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Tim. 4:2). The mind is also wounded. "Having the understanding darkened" (Eph. 4:18). Every sinner is a spiritual lunatic. No one is in his right mind until he becomes a Christian. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7). Likewise the imagination is wounded. "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. 8:21). Furthermore the heart is wounded. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).

"Leaving him half dead." Every sinner is conscious that death has already begun its work and that he is spiritually dead in God's sight. "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4).

## II

Look now at those who passed by. A priest walked by on the other side. He was a representative of religion. There is no hope



for any of Adam's fallen descendants in religion. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23). Jesus thus declares that there will be preachers who will appear at the Judgment lost and condemned. Then church record books, baptismal certificates, church letters and other paraphernalia of religion will be valueless, for, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). Peter Cartwright, a Methodist evangelist of days gone by went into a blacksmith shop in Missouri to talk to a man about his soul. The man said, "You're a Methodist, aren't you?" When the preacher answered affirmatively, he said, "Well I moved from Vermont to New York when the Methodists got too thick there, and then on to northern Ohio, and finally out here, moving each time to get away from the Methodists; I guess I'll have to move on again." Peter Cartwright said, "Yes, you may move on out on the prairies and you'll find Methodists there; you may go down to the golden gate and you'll find Methodists there; you may die and go to Heaven and you'll find Methodists there; you may die and go to Hell and you'll find Methodists there." And Peter Cartwright was right. There will be Methodists in Hell, great loud singing, hallelujah-shouting Methodists. There'll be Presbyterians in Hell, Presbyterians who could swallow the whole of the Westminster Catechism. And there will be Baptists and Campbellites and Holy Rollers and Catholics and Jews and folk of every denomination in the world in Hell, who thought that religion would save.

Isn't it pitifully strange that the world at large believes religion will save? A man stated to me recently, "It doesn't make any difference what a person believes so long as he is sincere in it; there are many roads to heaven". Then he went ahead to illustrate his idea by referring to the city of Washington, declaring that everything was built around the Capitol buildings, so that regardless of what direction you started from, North, East, South, or West, it would lead you eventually to the same spot, the center of the city,—the Capitol buildings. Thus his idea was that regardless of what plan of religion one espoused, eventually he would get to Heaven. He said, "As there may be roads leading to the one place so there are many roads to Heaven,—a Methodist road, a Baptist road, a Catholic road, or Jewish road". How sad that one could be so deluded! There is no Methodist road to Heaven, no Baptist road, no Jewish road, no Catholic road. There is only one plan of salvation and that is the Bible plan of salvation. There is only one road and that is the highway that is marked with the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Levite also passed by. He was a representative of the law.

Then there is no hope for any man in the law. "And by Jesus all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39). "Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. 3:20). "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of a sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5). "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9). Just as the Levite passed the poor unfortunate by so the deeds of the law pass every sinner by. What the sinner does is no part of salvation, for Christ completed the plan of salvation at Calvary.

A terrible fire was raging in Liverpool, and the fire engines had arrived. There was a man in the fifth story crying for help. A ladder was pushed up along side of the burning building but to the horror of the crowd, it fell short six feet. An old sailor who had sailed the seven seas and had climbed about the rigging of many a storm-tossed vessel pushed his way through the crowd and climbed up to the top of the ladder. He stood on the top-most rung of the ladder and placed his hands on the window sill above and the individual entrapped by the flames climbed down over his body to safety. To rescue that man in the fifth story required the length of a man. To save your soul and mine requires likewise the length of a man. Not an ordinary man, not an imperfect man, but an absolutely perfect man—the perfect Son of God. You can lift up your ladder of morality and goodness and good deeds as high in the sky as possible but it falls short of Heaven. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can save your soul and to do so He must die on the cross.

### III

Consider the Good Samaritan. "He saw him." Jesus sees every sinner every hour of every day. We are never hidden from His sight. "Thou God seest me" (Gen. 16:13). "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there: If I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there. If I take wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (Psalm 139:7-10).

"Came where he was." He didn't come part way and say to the poor unfortunate, "You come the rest of the way". Neither does Jesus do part of that which is necessary for our salvation and demand of us that we do the rest. He doesn't come half way to us and demand that we come the other half way to Him. Jesus has done everything necessary for our salvation. When He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30), there was nothing left for the sinner to do in the realm of salvation. In view of this, we do not sing,



"Amazing works how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me."

But we sing,

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me;  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see."

We do not sing,

"Jesus paid a part, and I,  
A part you know,  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
We washed it white as snow."

Instead we sing,

"Jesus paid it all,  
All to him I owe,  
Sin had left a crimson stain,  
He washed it white as snow."

He met the wounded stranger's present need. And what does every sinner need? Above all of his fancied needs, one paramount need stands out, that of salvation. The very hour that Jesus and a sinner meet, salvation becomes the sinner's possession.

He provided for the poor unfortunate's future needs, in that he paid the host of the inn to care for the wounded man, even promising further pay if such were needed. Salvation is not only a matter of time—it is of eternity as well. Jesus provides not only saving grace, but keeping grace as well. Our redemption is eternal as well as present, for Jesus has provided for our future sins as well as our present sins, at Calvary. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38, 39).

Dear sinner friend, suffer this closing admonition. Just as the Levite and the priest could not help this poor unfortunate, so the law and religion can not help you. Near Jackson, Kentucky, in old bloody Breathitt County, a murder was committed several years ago. The murderer was sentenced to life imprisonment in Frankfort. He was one of the most incorrigible prisoners in our state penitentiary. Punishments of various kinds, even physical torture was inflicted. His stubborn spirit refused to bend. "Big Jim," as he was called, continued to be the penitentiary's worst prisoner. One day a husband, wife and little daughter were being shown through the penitentiary. The little girl was tired from walking. The mother and



father were both tired from carrying the little girl and still the little girl begged to be carried. The warden who was taking them through the penitentiary noticed "Big Jim" in the corridor, called him to him, and commanded him to pick up the child and carry her. With a look of insolence upon his face as if to say that he would not do so if he did not have to, he came near. As he looked down she said, "Please carry me, mister, and I will give you a kiss". Perhaps it was the thought of a flaxen, curly-haired child at home or it may have been her innocence, or it may have been her kindness (probably the first he had known in months), but something gripped him, and he stooped over to pick up the child with tears streaming down his face while she placed a kiss upon his cheek. That day "Big Jim", the penitentiary's bad man, became a changed man. Never again was he recognized as the terror of the penitentiary. That act of kindness did for him what the law could never do. What the law fails to do for us, and what religion fails to do, the Lord Jesus Christ can do. You need the Good Samaritan, even Jesus. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

"If you could see Christ standing here tonight,  
His thorn-crowned head and pierced hands could view,  
Could see those eyes that beam with Heav'n's own light,  
And hear Him say, 'O, sinner, 'Twas for you.'  
Would you believe, and Jesus receive,  
If He were standing here?  
Will you believe, and Jesus receive,  
For He is standing here."

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