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CONTENTS

COVER—James Arminius (*See page 5*)

The Heart of Evangelical Christian Worship (X), <i>Editorial</i>	1
The Preaching of James Arminius, <i>James McGraw</i>	5
A Saintly Stubbornness, <i>Wilson Lanpher</i>	9
Christ's Second Coming, <i>Edward A. Johnson</i>	11
Gleanings from the Greek New Testament, <i>Ralph Earle</i>	15
New Testament Sources for Holiness (II), <i>Eric E. Jordan</i>	18
The Sermon Imperfect, <i>Athel V. McCombs</i>	22
The Place of Emotion in Evangelism, <i>Harold Volk</i>	26
While I Was Fishing, <i>Harley Duncan</i>	28
"Queen of the Parsonage," <i>Ruth Vaughn</i>	29
The Preacher of a Good Sermon (VII), <i>W. E. McCumber</i>	32
The Minister Looks at the Pew, <i>Marcellus Kik</i>	35
Wings to Accomplish Our Total Task, <i>J. L. Longnecker</i>	36
Sermon Workshop, <i>Nelson G. Mink</i>	38
Sermon Starters	39
Preaching Program	40
Book Briefs	47

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X. The Heart of Evangelical Christian Worship

AS WE HAVE noticed the extremes of worship, as represented by the liturgical on one hand and the non-liturgical, free worship on the other, we are impressed with the distance which separates the modes of worship within the bodies of the Church, all of which call themselves Christian. It is quite obvious that the various branches of the Christian Church have not interpreted the teachings of the New Testament in the same way nor have they found relevance in the same types of expressions of worship. As we noted, this is partially due to differences in theological interpretation. Other factors, such as background culture, racial heritage, personal dispositional traits, depth of religious experience, have a decided part to play.

In our consideration thus far we have suggested here and there what should be the norm of Christian worship. As could be expected, any statement which we would agree to would be conditioned by our own heritage as a Protestant, "free" church. That is, any definition of "normal" or "true" Christian worship would, of necessity, be cast in the theology and worship concepts of the individual group. However, after saying that, we will hasten to say that we believe and steadfastly hold to the conviction that we have good precedence and ample documentation that our definition of the essential nature of public worship is within the tradition of the New Testament Church and is in harmony

with the teaching of the Scriptures with respect to worship. So, with these allowances, let us see if we can find an acceptable description of the nature of evangelical Christian worship.

One of the finest presentations of the issues involved in public worship which is available today is Dr. Iliot T. Jones's book *A Historical Approach to Evangelical Worship*.¹ In his chapter on "The Nature of an Evangelical Cultus" the author accomplishes in a very thorough and convincing manner what we have suggested should be possible, that is, a definition of the characteristics of a public worship that could, without serious danger of being contradicted, qualify as New Testament, scriptural worship. Because this work has been so thoroughly done we could do no better than to make it the pivot point of our study.

To open up the consideration, Dr. Jones states:

"Evangelical worship means worship agreeable to the gospel as found in the New Testament. This does not necessarily imply worship that conforms precisely in every detail to the worship of the New Testament Church, even though, as we have seen, this is what it has meant to a number of reformed groups. Rather it is to be understood as worship that is in harmony with

¹Iliot T. Jones, *A Historical Approach to Evangelical Worship* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1954).

the revelation of the character and purpose of God found in the gospel. That revelation began with the birth of Jesus and ended when the Christian Church was established and firmly convinced of Christ's abiding presence and continuing power in the person of the Holy Spirit. That is, evangelical worship is based squarely upon the total teaching of the New Testament about God."²

Upon this foundation, Dr. Jones seeks to point up the characteristics of that worship which is built upon the whole of the New Testament. He suggests eight of these.

1. *Mature worship.* True worship, or the truest worship (if we are prone to keep comparisons in mind), would be that which is carried on by spiritually mature persons. It is not "primitive, childish, pagan worship." Here certainly the whole of the idea of spiritual perfection is brought to mind. Paul admonished the Corinthians concerning this and pointed out to them the relationship between spiritual "manhood" and spiritual "babyhood." True worship, then, is that which sees the worshiper using methods and modes which are mature rather than those which are childish.

2. *Spiritual worship.* We noted earlier that there is a positive, definite teaching of the Scriptures with respect to spiritual worship. Jesus gave this to the woman at the well in Sychar of Samaria.³ True worship is that communion that takes place when spiritual beings, men, approach the Spiritual Being, God. This includes not alone the spirit but the mind as well. It is that experience which begins and ends in finding the mind of God and bringing oneself into harmony with that mind.

3. *Didactic worship.* True worship should include the element of instruction or teaching, as the word didactic implies. "Didactic worship is worship intended to teach, to change people's minds through the instrumentality of human speech. It strives to put Christian content into minds. Its avowed purpose is to break through with the truth of the gospel into the thought-making and judgment-making citadel of the soul."⁴

There are three phases to this principle: The *first* has to do with content. Evangelical worship has been closely tied to the use of the Bible and the exposition of the Word. Here Calvin should be given credit for his part in the reformation of worship, for with him the declaration and exposition of the Bible were paramount. The *second* factor which should be taken into account, as Dr. Jones points out, has to do with the irresponsible worship which developed in the Early Church and about which Paul had to warn, particularly the Corinthians.⁵ That is, worship which becomes "speaking into the air" without edification is off center. Still the *third* of the issues has to do with what some have called a purely "objective worship." And many, even on the current scene, will talk much of worship that is wholly objective, that is, worship which concentrates only on God. Certainly worship must start here, and there is a real danger, particularly with the less formal patterns of worship, that worship will degenerate into a self-centeredness. However, worship cannot be wholly God-centered either. After all, there is a worshiper and it is impossible for him to wholly forget himself, his act of worship, his need before God, his

²*Ibid.*, p. 167. (Used by permission.)
³John 4:24.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 172. (Used by permission.)
⁵1 Corinthians 14.

praise to God for the benefits he has received at God's hand.

4. *Personal worship.* Here the issue between the group and the individual comes to the fore. The question is asked, Can worship be personal and corporate at the same time? Some patterns of worship have stressed the group at the expense of the individual while others have stressed individual worship at the expense of significant group worship. But true evangelical worship holds that both can be relevant. Group worship cannot be its best unless the individual worshipers are experiencing the presence of God. Like faith, this worship is not a mere human initiation. We do not "conjure up" a worship experience. But we can, by faith, respond to the movement of the Holy Spirit and have a worship experience just as we responded to the call of Christ and found salvation. Evangelical worship is that which, while not discounting the values which come from the group at worship, thinks ultimately of the value of that worship to the individual.

5. *Pneumatic worship.* This means worship which is Spirit-centered. As has been noted, the Early Church considered the presence of the Holy Spirit, both in the lives of the individual Christians and in the worship services, as the indispensable condition by which men were Christians and by which they worshiped. True worship, as true religion, is "heartfelt"; it is "experiential." And in worship this comes about by the active presence of the Holy Spirit. This "leading of the Spirit," this spontaneous moving in worship under the direction of the Spirit, is certainly one of the principal characteristics of worship that can rightly be called evangelical.

6. *Evangelistic worship.* Here again we come face to face with an issue of

worship about which there is much discussion today. We shall discuss this by itself later, but it has to do with the classification of services as "worship" on one hand and as "evangelistic" on the other. As if there could be a worship service that did not have the evangelistic thrust! But true worship does have this element. In the Early Church there was this constant presentation of the gospel story, not as a pleasant, devotional thought, but as an evangelistic thrust which by its very method of presentation demanded that the hearers do something about it. They "confronted" men with the gospel in such a way that they were forced to come to a personal decision with respect to it. The more relevant is the worship service in bringing men into the presence of God, the more force it has in the lives of those who have not yet accepted Christ.

7. *Ethical worship.* As Dr. Jones points out, we should not have to list this principle, for the time was when few thought of worship without thinking also of its twin, ethics. But in this day there is a type of Christianity which seeks to separate the two, that which believes there can be a pure worship which is separate and isolated from any human benefits, even morality. But this is certainly not the evangelical heritage. Worship and living are inseparably tied together. Not only must one approach God with "clean hands, and a pure heart" if his worship is to be acceptable, but there is the very cleansing which comes from the act of worship itself which touches the wellspring of action in the human soul and sends the worshiper from the house of God with the strength to live better in the week to come.

8. *Common worship.* The last of the characteristics of evangelical worship which Ilion Jones lists is that

which has to do with the rights and responsibilities, the privileges and the priesthood of every believer. In the Early Church there was a oneness of the people which must be captured in every day if worship is to be wholly Christian. There were no appointed "authorities," no "ministers," no "laymen." Some duties were assigned to jobs for convenience but no "job" gave any one power over another. Certainly, none were given the power of salvation over another. Here is the concept of the "priesthood of the believers" which the Reformation leaders recaptured in their day. It is one for which we must certainly contend in our day. Out of such a concept there issue a freedom, a spirit of individual joy, a spirit of commonness which are a constant tonic to Christian worship.

Dr. Jones fittingly concludes his chapter with the following challenge:

"It should be admitted frankly that evangelical worship makes a severe demand on the higher powers of human nature. It asks men to think, to worship, with their minds as well as with their hearts; to conceive of God in moral terms; to give the Spirit of God a chance to move their wills in the direction of their moral judgments; to put the emotions engendered in worship to work in their characters, in their ordinary human relations, and in their human institutions. It puts a heavy obligation upon all the deeper, higher, finer elements of human personality . . . [But we must] face the fact that unless worship is of this high type, avowedly and unashamedly of this high type, it is not truly evangelical."⁶

(To be continued)

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 181. (Used by permission.)

MY BEST FROM JOHN WESLEY

TWO METHODS have proved most helpful in my study of Wesley's *Works*. First, in Volume XIV the index serves as a guide to the systematic study of Wesley on a thematic level. This approach is essential if we are to grasp the continuity within his constantly developing thought on central Christian themes. Wesley must be grasped in his wholeness of perspective; this method allows it. For instance, I have just traced the theme of assurance throughout his works; currently I am studying another one, justification by faith. Second, Volume XIV has a scriptural index, making these works a useful commentary.

—TOM W. BOYD
Orange, Texas

The Preaching of James Arminius

By James McGraw*

THE THEOLOGICAL FACULTY at Basle University must have looked twice at the letter they read from one of their students upon whom they had offered to confer the degree of doctor of divinity. The letter contained the unlikely reply that the twenty-three-year-old student, in whose grasp was the highest academic honor attainable, thought best not to accept it. He thanked the faculty, but with superb humility declined their offer, giving as his reason "that to bestow a Doctor's degree on a person so youthful in appearance would tend to diminish the dignity and respect which should always attach to that sacred title."

That student was James Arminius. Paradoxically, very little has been said or written about him, although very much has been said and written about Arminianism, which has become one of the most fertile movements in the history of theology. One reason for the obscurity of Arminius and his heroic disciples, the Remonstrants, is that they laid a solid foundation, but the spectacular superstructure was erected by John Wesley and his followers. Thus in the journals of history the modest, humble, Christlike spirit of James Arminius seems to have placed his own life and works in the background, while others are given the acclaim and the attention that might have been his.

Only one available source of the life of Arminius has been written, and that by Caspar Brandt, translated into

English by John Guthrie and published in England in 1854 and in America in 1857. All other references to his life seem to have been derived from this source. His works have been published in English in three volumes; one edition translated by James and William Nichols and published in England, and another edition in America translated by James Nichols and W. R. Bagnall.

In recent years, Carl Bangs¹ has studied the life and writings of Arminius, and his findings have appeared in articles, papers, and theses. Much of the factual material presented here has been gleaned from these sources.

James Arminius was born in Oudewater (which means in English "Old Waters"), South Holland, in 1560, at a time when the Reformation was not yet over, the Reformed doctrine had not yet crystallized, and many of the theological controversies had not yet been resolved. The year of his birth was the year of Philip Melancthon's death.

The outstanding characteristic of this saintly man was his genuine humility, as typified by his refusal to accept the honor voted him by the faculty at Basle. At twenty-two, as a student at the Academy in Geneva, he withdrew because of the jealousy of the rectors of the school. His "crime" was that of using a different system of logic from the one taught by the professor of philosophy. To avoid friction, he quietly withdrew and left Geneva for study at Basle.

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¹Professor, Olivet Nazarene College, Kankakee, Illinois.

Throughout his life the same pattern seems to have been followed again and again. Persecuted, mocked, castigated unmercifully, he did what he could to stay out of the way of his critics; but his intelligent appraisal of theological problems too often clashed with their bigoted opinions, and their persecution toward him continued until his death at the age of forty-eight.

Intensely interested in theology, Arminius was also a student of other subjects. He delved eagerly into the realms of mathematics, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and the various branches of philosophy. He was interested in many things, and he never undertook a study which he did not master.

Peter Bertius, a fellow student and close friend of Arminius, gives a vivid description of his scholarly mind and virtuous character in a funeral oration quoted by Nichols in *The Works of James Arminius*. He states:

"From the moment when, together, we first entered within the walls of this University [the University of Leyden in Rotterdam], the greatest unanimity subsisted between us, and we were most intimately connected in our tempers, studies, pursuits, and desires. . . . If any of [the classmates] had a particular theme or essay to compose, or a speech to recite, the first step which we took in it was to ask for Arminius. If any friendly discussion arose among us, . . . we went in search of Arminius, who was always consulted. I well remember when Doctor Lambert Danaeus, our learned professor, paid him a public compliment and eulogized him for the endowments of his genius, and his proficiency in learning and virtue; he also urged us who were Divinity students, to imitate the example of Arminius, by the same cheerful and diligent attention to the study of sacred Theology."

Another of his instructors, Professor Grynaeus, of Basle, would often, when difficult problems were raised in classroom discussions, call on Arminius for help, saying, "Let my Hollander answer for me."

It was an unusual arrangement whereby James Arminius continued his education in Geneva and was later ordained a minister at Amsterdam. Donors in the latter city offered to pay for the continued studies of the gifted young man provided he would sign a contract pledging that upon ordination he would be amenable to the senate of Amsterdam for the remainder of his life. He was to preach either as long as he lived or preach elsewhere only by their permission. Arminius signed the contract, which was in later years to become a source of dissatisfaction to him, as anyone can well imagine it would.

It was on February 4, 1588, at the age of twenty-eight, that he was ordained in Amsterdam. Brandt writes of his earliest experiences at pulpit ministry: "His discourses were masculine and erudite: everything he uttered breathed the theologian—not raw and commonplace, but superior, acute, cultivated, and replete with solid acquisitions both in human and in sacred literature. This made him such a favorite both with high and low, that in a short time he attracted toward himself the ears and the hearts of all classes alike."

Brandt goes on to say that some of his listeners styled him "a file of truth," others a "whetstone of intellect," and others called him "a pruning-knife for rank-growing errors." He began his ministry by fulfilling in every respect the expectations of those who had been his patrons during his long and intensive education.

Carl Bangs believes that certain conclusions can be drawn concerning

Arminius' methods of study and use of the Scriptures in his preaching. He writes: "He was a proficient handler of the Biblical languages. This is evident from the accounts of his university education and from the constant references to the Hebrew and Greek scriptures in his writings. Second, his studies in the Bible were of a wide range. Perhaps this range would have been greater had he lived longer, but even in his comparatively short lifetime he published expositions of Jonah, Malachi, Mark, Romans, and Galatians, as well as separate treatises on the seventh and ninth chapters of Romans." Bangs expresses the opinion that his exposition of the seventh chapter of Romans is "the most thorough, accurate, and scholarly piece of exegesis ever written." A man who knew the Scriptures as James Arminius knew them must have been a thoroughly stimulating and challenging preacher of the Word!

There was rich content in Arminius' preaching, and there was logical presentation of the truth. His chief method seems to have been that of analysis. For example, in accounting for Adam's sin he lists the efficient cause, the external, moving, and principal cause, the instrumental cause, the accidental cause, the occasional cause, the antecedent cause, and the immediate or proximate cause.

There was substance and "meaty content" in Arminius' sermons. As an example of his method of marshaling supporting proof from every possible source, a survey of the three volumes of his published works reveals more than two hundred thirty quotations from more than seventy writers. His most frequently quoted authority is Augustine, with nearly seventy references.

Of his delivery, Caspar Brandt writes: "He rarely indulged in rhetorical garniture, and in the fragrant

fineries of the Greeks, either because his nature was averse to such artifices, or because he deemed it derogatory to the majesty of divine things . . . when the naked truth was sufficient for its own defence." He spoke simply and directly. His sermons were of the type someone has called "economical construction"—hardly capable of being condensed because of their straightforwardness.

As would be expected of a Biblical scholar of his stature, James Arminius preached mostly expository sermons. He enjoyed arranging his sermon plans in such a way that he could spend many months in a series on one book. When he first started preaching at Amsterdam, he alternated between preaching from the books of Malachi and Romans.

Dominic Baud is quoted by Brandt as describing the physical appearance of Arminius as that of a man of medium build, black sparkling eyes, serene countenance, and gracefully slender physique. His voice was musical and pleasant, yet sharp and fine. Pronunciation and intonation of the voice were thoroughly adapted to the sense of the idea expressed, and his general bearing was one of courtesy and affability toward those to whom he spoke. There were "harmless sallies of wit, by way of mental relaxation," and at the same time there was never any departure from "all that constitutes the man of gravity."

Little did Theodore Beza, the arch-Calvinist of the Theological College of Geneva under whom James Arminius studied, realize that this mere stripling of a man would someday become the founder of a scriptural system which would overturn and destroy the theories of fate and restricted grace that hyper-Calvinism had labored to invent and perfect. Yet, as James Nichols points out, such has been the result, and "the triumphs of

Arminianism are every succeeding year becoming more numerous." But Beza himself, before Arminius took opposition to his Calvinistic teachings, paid this high tribute to Arminius: ". . . God has gifted him with an apt intellect both with respect to the apprehension and the discrimination of things. If this henceforward be regulated by piety, which he appears assiduously to cultivate, it cannot but happen that this power of intellect, when consolidated by mature age and experience, will be productive of the richest fruits." Beza was much more a prophet than he realized when he wrote thus of his protege.

And so James Arminius died in 1609 in his forty-ninth year, but not before his life and ministry had begun a work that was to continue to bear fruit until the end of time. His preaching on the nature of God's power and will has earned for him a place among the great. His understanding of the true meaning of divine election and predestination as not destroying the freedom of man to choose to repent and believe has brought clarity out of theological confusion. And his abiding spirit of genuine humility in classroom, pulpit, and parish caused his friends to exclaim as he died, "O my soul, let me die the death of the righteous!"

Pulpit and Parish Tips

"Feed my lambs." "Feed my sheep." "Feed my sheep."

By E. E. Wordsworth*

These pertinent words of Christ to Peter should be remembered by every pastor and evangelist. The great Spurgeon observed, "I have noticed that if I consistently feed the flock I don't have to be constantly fleecing them." Shearing is all right once a year, but don't forget the whole wool is shorn from the sheep at one time. And it is never a public matter—just one sheep at a time. And then just a little carelessness in shearing will draw blood.

The minister must have a deep, personal affection for Christ and His sheep and love them as a close friend. I am not pleading for "mushy," soft sentimentality, but for tenderness, kindness, genuine heart love, and devotion. I have known pastors who thought it was their job to scold the congregation each Sunday morning. Such pastors are unqualified for the pulpit ministry. And some pastors' wives develop a "fussy," nagging, exacting attitude toward members of the church, in their personal lives and in their relationships to church affairs. Barnabas was called the "son of consolation" or "son of encouragement." It is always wise to be a Barnabas and not a pitchfork. No, you don't have to be always "lining them up" with a dictatorial, have-my-way attitude.

*Redmond, Washington.

A Sainly Stubbornness

By Wilson Lanpher*

SCRIPTURE: I Corinthians 2:1-5

TEXT: Verse 2, *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

Think with me, if you will, why a saintly scholar such as Paul would make such a forthright declaration that probably seemed very narrow to many of his contemporaries. Did it mean that he had lost his interest in philosophy, logic, and history? Did it indicate that henceforth he was the victim of a closed mind? No, none of these. As new areas of outer space beckon for exploration; as man rushes feverishly to know and see "some new thing"; as new words such as Sputnik, payola, Beatnik, lunar probe keep crowding in to mirror new vistas and old sicknesses, is there anything that saintly scholar could say that is pertinent for us today, and will continue to be regardless of change?

I. WHAT THIS DETERMINATION REVEALS ABOUT PAUL.

It reveals, not a closed mind, but a reverent mind in harmony with a passionate soul. It was not that Paul was done with philosophy, logic, and the sciences as he knew them; it was that he had gone beyond them, had seen their limits, and had seen the Christ as the Head of the universe. In chapter one he gives the background. Paul was much in favor of wisdom, never sloppy and never credulous, but his

very keenness helped him to see its limits. "The world by wisdom knew not God."

It reveals the power of determination. The vanity of intellectual fashions was as fickle as other fashions, but Paul knew that the message of a crucified Christ was timeless and redemptive. Think of the extremes in philosophy since Paul made this statement, and think of its power and appeal today. Committed saints have always troubled others by their stubbornness, their reluctance to trade "gold tried in the fire" for some new thought or lesser gospel. This personal knowledge of Christ sustained him through shipwreck, Jerusalem intrigue, prison, and kings' palaces.

II. BUT WHY A CRUCIFIED CHRIST? WHY DID HE ADD: "AND HIM CRUCIFIED"?

Why not Jesus and the beauty of His incarnation, the fact of His miraculous birth? Every Christmas recreates the mystic beauty surrounding the improvised cradle. Gifts from wise men, humble shepherds, angelic hosts complete a scene of simple beauty. And there is beauty in true religion. But men miss it when it is an end in itself. When the beauty of the ritual exceeds the beauty of transformed lives, men have lost the power of the crucified Christ.

Why not Jesus and the power of His miracles? Were these not great crowd-building, arresting events?

*Pastor, Washington, D.C.

Didn't they accomplish many wonderful things? Imagine what a modern press agent would do with them. Didn't they increase the faith of some? But the apostle would assure us they aren't enough. Some believed because of the miracles, but many only satisfy a creature curiosity. How persistent is the human desire to see a miracle, and build one's faith on this phase of Jesus' ministry!

Why not Jesus and the truth of His teaching? Wouldn't it be all right to know Him and His teaching? Truly "never man spake like this man." As grand as His teaching was, it wasn't enough. Men have looked with favor on His teaching for centuries, and equated Him with other leaders, but this isn't enough. And some in their honesty have gone beyond the beauty and power of His teaching until they found Him, and received grace to live as He taught.

The world knows Christ through history. The sinner knows Christ as he is released from guilt. But the believing Christian knows Christ through crucifixion, the Gethsemane of brokenness—the Calvary of utter abandonment.

So with a saintly stubbornness, Paul said, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

III. BUT LET US PURSUE FURTHER, "WHY A CRUCIFIED CHRIST?"

Because this tells the whole story about sin. It tells its desperate blackness, its will-numbing fascination (like a deadly, weaving snake). It confronts the love of sin, in every heart, as no other Christ can confront. We can be humbled and enthralled by His teaching, but only a crucified Christ makes us feel the wrath of a holy God.

It tells of its personal clinging quality. "He was wounded for our trans-

gressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12). Guilt forgiven; and clinging, inbred sin cleansed. Only a crucified Christ provided this grace.

But it tells the story of our complete redemption. We were kidnaped and made slaves by sin. Only One in all history was good enough and strong enough to effect our release. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save" (Isaiah 63:1).

Why crucified? Because it tells us about living the life of Christ in this world. It is grand to make a beginning, but does it really work in the tests of life? Paul in Galatians 2:20 and Galatians 6:14 says: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"; and, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." These were some of the reasons that Paul clung with a saintly stubbornness to his faith. It worked in his life. It survived his tests. And it will do the same for you.

Why crucified? Because it tells us of sure victory over death. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (I Corinthians 15:21). Without His crucifixion there would be no resurrection, and without His resurrection there would be no hope for us. No longer could we say by faith, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

May we like Paul see with a clear eye that we must know a crucified Christ by following Him all of the way—beyond the Incarnation, beyond His miracles, beyond His teach-

ing; and may that enduing power that comes when clinging sin is purged give us a saintly stubbornness to determine “not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”

Christ's Second Coming

By Edward A. Johnson*

SCRIPTURE: Luke 21:25-36 (R.S.V.)

In this passage the Evangelist Luke tells of the approaching end of the world. This is a concern for many in our age and time no less than in Luke's. Since the Scriptures clearly indicate that the wickedness of this world will grow more and more intense toward the end, seemingly knowing no bounds, and since we see how men today are becoming ever more desperately wicked, Christ's second coming surely cannot be far off. The presence of A-bombs and H-bombs, together with the constant publicity given to intercontinental missiles and the Russian Sputnik of 1957 flashed across the autumn skies, naturally increases speculation as to when the day of the Lord will finally arrive.

People scan the future anxiously. They scan the present to see what it might reveal of that future. Well might we say with the Scottish poet Thomas Campbell:

*'Tis the sunset of life gives me
mystical lore,
And coming events cast their
shadows before.*

(“Lochiel's Warning”)

So also with those to whom our Lord spoke, those who were eagerly

awaiting His triumphal return to judgment. Many believed that Jesus was about to eject the hated Roman legions from the Holy Land and re-establish the Davidic dynasty on Mount Zion in holy Jerusalem. Unless we see in the Biblical account something of this almost breathless anticipation of an event believed to be quite imminent, we shall not read the New Testament aright, but shall completely overlook many of the implications and vital nuances of its proclamation.

However, in Luke 21:25-36 Jesus probably is speaking not merely of the end of the world, but more specifically also of an event which was to come one generation after His time, in A.D. 70. In that year the Roman conquerors of Palestine, determined to put down their proud and rebellious Jewish subjects after a number of minor skirmishes and rebellions, moved their legions into Jerusalem and crushed the Jews in an extremely bloody and vengeful manner comparable to the Soviet action of 1956 in Budapest. The Jews already had had trouble with their hated foe when he had attempted to foist his ritual practices upon them, plant his pagan emblems and statues in their Temple, and force them to abandon their ancient worship of the one God of

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Israel; but the wholesale destruction of A.D. 70 surpassed even these outrages. It was then that the beautiful old Temple which the Jews had so painstakingly rebuilt after their return from exile in Babylon, and which had been the center of post-exilic Jewish life and worship, was completely leveled, never to be rebuilt.

All of this tore the whole fabric of Jewish life and culture so completely asunder that Judaism never has been the same since. Jewish religious life came to center, as it does even now, in the synagogues. The center of Jewish attention and interest shifted from the ritual in the Temple to congregational worship. Christians no longer worshiped in the synagogues but in their own homes and, still later, in the Roman catacombs. In the immediate wake of the Roman reprisals the infant Christian congregation in Jerusalem, which had boasted such notable leaders as the Apostle Peter and the Lord's brother James, had to flee eastward across the mountains and the river Jordan to the impregnable, fortress-like cliffs of Pella.

In our passage Jesus very likely was forecasting this complex of events—events so horrible as still to make Jews shudder at their mere recital. It may also be, as some affirm, that what happened in A.D. 70 was but a foretaste of some still greater cataclysm to come at the time of the end. The Jews, incidentally, were superstitious about just such signs as those Jesus describes. For about a year prior to the siege there reportedly hung over Jerusalem a giant, sword-shaped comet, a dread omen of even more dreadful events to come and perhaps of the enduring darkness in which the Jewish people must even now wander for their rejection of the Messiah (John 1:11-12).

In any event, when the day of the Lord comes, tremendous convulsions

will tear the entire creation asunder. Everything will be jarred loose from its moorings. The "perplexity" mentioned in verse twenty-five is not just simple bafflement, but the frantic and utterly bewildered despair of men who find nothing in this world to be any longer reliable or safe, and who can only expect worse things yet to come. This time not just Israel, but the whole inhabited world, will be involved. And just as the blossoming of the fig tree into full leaf is a sign that summer has come (v. 30), so these terrible experiences will be a sign that the long-awaited heavenly Kingdom is at hand. Jesus himself, of course, makes no attempt to fix the exact date. Only His Father can do that. The implication is simply that these events will occur within the lifetime of some of His hearers.

Our passage from Luke indicates something of the thinking of these early Christians. Many of them felt that only Christ's physical return to earth could justify their faith in Him and seal their promised triumph over both their pagan and their Jewish persecutors. They also were anxious to be alert and ready for Him when He returned, not drunken or sunk in stupor with the cares of this mortal life.

Now, going back, let us pick up three important strands:

1. Christ's second coming is still imminent. Even though, as we have said, its exact date must be left up to God, we are told that the full forces of evil will be unleashed just prior to the end in one last, unprecedented cosmic upheaval. We see every indication of this now, even though each generation always is tempted to think that no other generation ever faced what it faces (I Corinthians 10:12-13). What of the day when our intercontinental missiles will finally launch off into space with their fearful cargoes of death? What of the ominous

portents of such novels as Nevil Shute's *On the Beach*, which tells of the slow and terrible (and no longer improbable) annihilation of the earth by a strange radiation sickness?

Still more subtle and deadly is the rapidly mounting evidence of spiritual and moral decay in modern America. This shows up most vividly, perhaps, in our distorted sense of values, a necessary prelude to the dominion and increase of evil. The Sputniks of 1957 and their canine cargoes not only shocked us with the fact of Soviet superiority in the guided missile race but also exposed several glaring and inexcusable weaknesses in our educational system. In December of that year Dr. Truman B. Douglass, executive secretary of the board of home missions of the Congregational Christian Churches (United Church of Christ), told the National Council of Churches at its triennial assembly in St. Louis that "something is terribly wrong when Americans will give \$64,000 to someone who can come up with highly inconsequential dabs of information on a quiz program, yet force their educational system to get by on peanuts." Or when they will spend on cosmetics, tobacco, liquor, and amusements eight times what they pay their schoolteachers! No wonder young people flock to other professions! Or when they shower extravagant welcomes upon dignitaries from abroad, yet make many of their fellow Americans live in degrading squalor for having the "wrong" nationality or skin color. Or when, in my home state of Illinois, we never seem able to scrape together more than a bare minimum of operating funds for our schools and mental hospitals, yet always manage to scrape together enough for public works signs to plaster our highways with our governor's name every time someone tears up a

section of concrete. What tragic symptoms of our general national lack of perspective!

Some terrible day God's wrath will descend upon us for all of this. None can escape his own involvement in these sins, for all of us are involved by the very fact that we live here at this time. When God's judgment comes, there will be absolutely no escape (I Thessalonians 5:3).

2. Jesus said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (v. 33). The rabbis were then debating whether, in the world to come, the sacred Law would still continue in force. Jesus, not wanting His followers to waste precious energy haggling over such details, reminded them that His authority is far greater than that of the sacred Law. His authority springs, not from the printed page, but from His close, constant, and obedient relationship to His Father and from His resultant confidence that He knows fully what is His Father's will.

3. Consider the deeper aspects of all these things. Let us not be overly preoccupied with the physical details of prophecy or the mathematical determination of dates. One reason Jesus did not pinpoint the exact time of His second coming was that He did not want His followers bogged down on such relatively trivial points. The fact that my church, the Lutheran church, has appointed Luke 21:25-36 as one of its Epistle lessons for the Advent season preceding Christmas shows us, I think, a deeper truth concerning the approaching end: that while in one sense Christ's return to judgment is a future event, in another very real sense He is already here. Already He has come on earth, first at Bethlehem and then along the dusty roads of His native country, teaching and preaching and healing wherever He confronted human need.

Already, on the Cross and at the emptied tomb, He has sealed the final defeat of the forces of darkness. Already He has ascended to His heavenly home and has sent us the Holy Spirit as a Comforter and Counselor to “. . . teach you all things” (John 14:26). Christ even now dwells inwardly in the life of each believer. Now, while we struggle with the flesh, we are assured of His power and might and His ultimate victory. Now, by faith, we already see “. . . the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” (v. 27), even as we shall see Him physically at His return.

All this means that we need to make sure now, in the only time we have to work with, that we are on the Lord’s side as individuals and as a nation. We need, no less than did those earliest Christians, to keep awake and alert and on the job as our Lord’s workmen and stewards and witnesses, so as to meet Him at His return with “. . . clean hands, and a pure heart” (Psalms 24:4). We need to “. . . take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life” (v. 34) rather than centered upon God as they should be.

Not Quitting at 65!

Growing old, but not retiring,
For the battle still is on;
Going on without relenting,
Till the final victory’s won.
Ever on, nor think of resting,
For the battle rages still,
And my Saviour still is with me
And I seek to do His will.

Years roll by, the body weakens;
But the spirit still is young.
Breath of God—it never ages,
Is eternal, ever strong.
Rather, year by year it strengthens,
Gaining o’er the things of sense.
By Thy Spirit lead my spirit,
Saviour, till Thou call me hence.

Things of earth decrease in value;
Brighter shines the light above.
Less the power of human hatred;
Sweeter far the Saviour’s love.
Let me tell it to the needy,
Far and wide Thy worth proclaim;
That my closing years may praise Thee—
Glorify Thy blessed name.

—Anonymous

Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle*

Romans 9:19-33

FINDING FAULT OR BLAME?

IN THE NINETEENTH verse the apostle's imaginary opponent raises the objection: "Why doth he yet find fault?" The verb *memphomai* is found (in the best text) only here and in Hebrews 8:8. It means "blame." The question implies, "Why does God blame us for a condition for which we are not responsible?"

RESIST OR WITHSTAND?

Paul asks the question, "For who hath resisted his will?" The word for "resist" is *anthistemi*. Literally it means "stand against." Vincent prefers "withstand" rather than "resist." He writes:

"The idea is the *result* rather than the *process* of resistance. A man may *resist* God's will, but cannot maintain his resistance. The question means, who *can* resist him?"¹

Though Sanday and Headlam object, a number of the modern versions reflect this interpretation. Williams has: "For who can resist His will?" (Cf. R.S.V., Goodspeed.) Knox has, "since there is no resisting his will?" Moffatt reads: "Who can oppose his will?" The *Amplified New Testament* seeks to give the full force in its rendering: "For who can resist *and* withstand His will?" Probably the best translation is that found in *The Twentieth Century New Testament*.

It reads: "For who can withstand his purpose?" The perfect tense indicates: "maintain one's stand."

WILL OR PURPOSE?

The last word of this verse is not the common one for "will" in the New Testament (*thelema*, rendered "will" sixty-two out of sixty-four times in K.J.V.). Rather it is *boulema*, found only once elsewhere in the Textus Receptus. In Acts 27:43 it clearly means "purpose" and is so translated in the King James Version. In the earliest Greek manuscripts *boulema* is also found in I Peter 4:3 (the late MSS have *thelema*). On this passage Lenski comments: "*Boulema* is what one intends, hence 'counsel'; in v. 2 *thelema* is what one wills or has decided."² On its use here in Romans, Sanday and Headlam say that *boulema* "seems to be substituted for the ordinary word *thelema* as implying more definitely the deliberate purpose of God."³ It seems that "purpose" is the best translation here.

ARGUING WITH GOD

The opening words of verse twenty are unusually full and emphatic in the Greek. Robertson translates them: "O man, but surely thou who art thou?"⁴

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¹Vincent, *Word Studies*, III, 105.

²*The Interpretation of the Epistles of St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude*, p. 181.

³*Romans*, p. 259.

⁴*Word Pictures*, IV, 383.

The verb "repliest against" is a double compound, found only here and in Luke 14:6. It means "answer to one's face." The language is startling. The Berkeley Version reads: "O man, who are you anyway, to talk back to God?" That puts it well. *The Twentieth Century New Testament* says: "Who are you, frail mortal, who are arguing with God?" Vincent notes that the verb means "answer by contradicting."⁵

PLASMA AND PLASTICS

The giving of blood plasma and the manufacture of plastics are rather recent functions. But the words are old. The apostle asks: "Shall the thing formed [*plasma*] say to him that formed it [*plasanti*] . . . ?

The verb *plasso* means "form" or "mold." It is found only here and in I Timothy 2:13—"Adam was first formed, then Eve." The noun *plasma*, that which is molded or formed, occurs only here. The same is true of the adjective *plastos*, basis of the word plastic. First used as a substitute for glass, and now also for steel, plastics are so called because they are molded materials. In ancient Greek days the molding was done with wax or clay.

CERAMICS

This modern word also comes from the Greek. In verse twenty-one the word for "potter" is *kerameus*. The adjective *keramikos* is found only once in the New Testament (Revelation 2:27). It is from that the word ceramics is taken directly.

ALTHOUGH OR BECAUSE?

Perhaps the greatest single defect in the Greek language is its abundant use of the participle. This very often makes for ambiguity of interpretation. In English we use clauses instead. But

the problem that faces us frequently in New Testament exegesis is this: How shall we translate the Greek participle? Often there are half a dozen possibilities: as, since, because, although, while, in order that. Which is the one to choose? Robertson writes:

"Does a given circumstantial participle bear the notion of 'because' or 'although'? Only the context can tell, and men do not always interpret the context correctly."⁶

The participle "willing" (v. 22) is a case in point. Sanday and Headlam say that "most commentators" prefer "because God wishes to show his wrath."⁷ Perhaps partly because of the dominant influence of their monumental work on Romans, this statement would not be true of most recent commentators. Quite the opposite is the case. Almost all are agreed that "although" is preferable. Sanday and Headlam interpret the verse thus: "God, although His righteous anger might naturally lead to His making His power known, has through His kindness delayed and borne with those who had become objects that deserved His wrath."⁸ Robertson agrees that the participle should be taken as concessive rather than causal.⁹ The last clause would seem to demand this.

FITTED OR READY?

The verb *katartizo* ("fitted") occurs thirteen times in the New Testament (only here in Romans) and is translated eight different ways in the King James Version. This is the only place where it is rendered "fitted."

Abbott-Smith lists this passage under the meanings "to furnish completely, complete, equip, prepare."¹⁰

⁵*Grammar*, p. 1125.

⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 261.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Word Pictures*, IV, 384.

⁹*Lexicon*, p. 238.

⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 106.

The form is the perfect middle or passive participle. Most commentators and translators treat it as passive. But Arndt and Gingrich suggest it might be taken as middle, with the meaning: "having prepared themselves for destruction."¹¹ This rendering would have obvious advantages theologically.

In any case, the sense seems to be "ripe and ready." That is Moffatt's translation. Goodspeed has, "already ripe." Weymouth reads, "who stand ready," bringing out the full force of the perfect tense (existing state resulting from completed action). The idea is that these disobedient ones are ready and ripe for the destruction they deserve. It definitely is not said that God has made them thus.

AFORE OR BEFOREHAND?

In verse twenty-three Paul says that the vessels of mercy were "afore prepared." The correct form now, of course, would be "prepared beforehand."

Attention should be called to the change of verb, as compared with verse twenty-two. This one is *proetoimazo*. The only other place in the New Testament where it occurs is Ephesians 2:10. There it is translated "before ordained." But that seems an unjustifiably strong rendering. The simple verb *ketoimazo* is found forty times in the New Testament. It is rendered "prepare" twenty-nine times, "make ready" ten times, and "provide" once. The verb does not seem to carry the connotation "fore-ordain," for which another verb is used. Denney comments: "How much is covered by *proetoimasen* is not clear, but the text presents no ground whatever for importing into it the idea of an unconditional eternal decree."¹²

OSEE AND ESAIAS

There are a few hints for the public reading of the Scriptures which everyone should heed. One of them is highlighted by these two strange names, which occur in verses twenty-five, twenty-seven, and twenty-nine. It is this: Always use familiar Old Testament forms of Old Testament characters' names. If you read "Osee" some of your hearers will not catch the connection at all. So by all means say "Hosea" and "Isaiah." And that goes for Elijah instead of Elias, Elisha instead of Eliseus, Jeremiah instead of Jeremias, and so for many others. The pattern is set for us in Nehemiah 8:8—"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." Following the above hint will help.

REMNANT

The doctrine of the remnant bulks large in Isaiah and Jeremiah. Paul quotes twice from the former (vv. 27, 29).

Some Greek manuscripts have *hupoleimma*, some *kataleimma* (both only here in New Testament). The former means that which is left over, the latter that which is left behind. A remnant, but only a remnant, of Israel will be saved.

COMPLETELY

Two interesting verbs occur in verse twenty-eight, *syntelon* and *syn-temnon*. The first means "bring to an end"; the second, "cut off." Robertson takes the prefix *syn* as intensive, meaning "completely" finished and cut off. Vincent takes it in its literal sense "together" and says it means "summarily." Both could be true. These two words suggest that God's judgment will be conclusive and concise.

¹¹Lexicon, p. 419.

¹²EGT, II, 665.

ATTAINED

Two different Greek words are translated "attained" in verses thirty and thirty-one. The former is *kate-laken*, the latter *ephthasen*. The first means "grasped, seized, overtook." The second signifies "arrived at." Vincent comments: "The meaning is substantially the same, only the imagery in the two words differs; the former being that of *laying hold of*

*a prize, and the latter arriving at a goal."*¹³

STUMBLING

The verb "stumbled" (v. 32) is *proskopto*, which means "strike (one's hand or foot) against." It almost suggests the idea of stubbing one's toe and falling as the result. The tragedy was that the Jews stumbled over Jesus, their Messiah.

¹³Op. cit., p. 110.

Preaching Holiness

II. New Testament Sources for Holiness

By Eric Jordan*

LAST MONTH WE LOOKED at some of the background principles, which should guide us in our preaching of holiness. Let us now turn to the sources for holiness preaching.

Obviously, our main—and really only—source is the Bible. There are "helps" which may be used with the Word. The Bible is a holy Book and it is a Book on holiness. It has, I believe, adequate source material for preaching holiness in the several areas mentioned.

Because of the limitation of time, we shall turn our attention to the New Testament to illustrate what I believe to be a bottomless mine for holiness preaching. I would say, however, that the Old Testament is also full of possibilities by direct teaching, by type, by inference, and by example.

One of the richest sources for holiness preaching is the Sermon on the

Mount. Of this, John Wesley says (and incidentally, why not read Wesley's sermon on the Sermon on the Mount?—you will get ideas, I am sure), "This divine discourse, delivered in the most excellent method, every subsequent part illustrating those that precede, is commonly, and not improperly, divided into three principal branches: The First, contained in the Fifth . . . [is] the sum of all true religion . . . laid down in eight particulars; . . . in the Second are rules for that right intention which we are to preserve in all our outward actions, unmixed with worldly desires . . . in the Third are cautions against the main hindrances of religion."⁷ The Sermon on the Mount is surely the ideal for all Christian living.

The superstructure of the holy life taught in this sermon is based square-

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⁷Wesley, *Works*, V, 251.

ly on the foundation stones of the Beatitudes. Poverty of spirit—the realization that there is no good in us, and the recognition that our lack is due to the presence of a sin nature—is the first stone. The realization and the recognition lead to mourning, genuine sorrow on the part of the unsanctified for his sin nature. Here you have, homiletically speaking, the problem, the paradox, and the promise. Wesley's sermon on "Blessed Are the Meek" will give you many starting ideas. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" yields this homiletical outline: the righteousness, the requirement, and the response. Make a study of that word "righteousness" as Jesus used it and you will find it means holiness of heart and life. And so on with the Beatitudes.

Now get into the sermon proper. Beginning in verse twenty you have six contrasting statements. "Ye have heard that it was said . . . But I say unto you . . ." Why does the believer mourn? Because in this passage (vv. 20-47) Jesus holds up a standard of holy living whereby the believer sees his imperfect association, imperfect reaction, and imperfect motivation.

The believer mourns further for his sin nature when he hears the truth of chapter six. Here he is faced with secret pride, in his doing good deeds, in his prayer life, and in his self-denial. He sees his secret worldliness—an inordinate love for things. In chapter seven he sees his secret self-judgment of others; that "plank" in his eye gets bigger and bigger. He sees his lack of faith, his unbelief. He also sees his secret self-will, having his own way while professing to do good deeds in Christ's name. All this and so much more are in the Sermon on the Mount. From chapter 5:20, ". . . except your righteousness shall

exceed . . .," I find the basis for a sermon on "The Exceeding Righteousness." First, from Luke eighteen I get a picture of a "good" Pharisee—one of the best of his day. How can I go beyond his righteousness? The answer is found in Luke 11:39-44 and Matthew 23:25-29. This Pharisee was inwardly unclean and lacked the motivation of love—both elements basic to the doctrine of holiness. I am fully persuaded that the Sermon on the Mount is a veritable gold mine, rich in holiness teaching. To get you off the ground, try reading Oswald Chambers' little book *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, 1915. There is a new book out by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, Eerdmans, 1959. In the preface the author says, "I am profoundly convinced that the greatest need of the church today is a return to expository preaching." This is what he practices in the book. Better still, read Wesley. Best yet, get down on your knees; open up the New Testament to Matthew, chapter five; ask God to first of all give you a willing heart ("He that will do the will of My Father shall know the doctrine," the Author of the sermon said); then read and reread it. Begin to court the ideas that come. It won't be long until that sermon sparkles anew.

Another part of the New Testament rich in holiness preaching potential is the Gospel of John. It is the "Gospel of the Spirit." Chapter three, of course, is the birth of the Spirit. But chapters four and seven tell of the indwelling Spirit. Chapters fourteen and sixteen speak of the Comforter and the Spirit of Truth. Chapter fifteen has several possibilities to me. First, in verses one through thirteen we have the joy of the Holy Ghost, which homiletically speaking, is personal, plenteous, and permanent. Verses fourteen through seventeen

talk about Christ's friends. They are called chosen, commissioned, and commanded. Back in chapter 13:34-35 we find Christ speaking of divine love implanted. Verse thirty-four speaks of its degree; verse thirty-five, of its demand. I need not speak of John seventeen—the great high priestly prayer. Its message is, "Sanctify them."

Romans is not an easy book to understand. Yet it yields fruit to patient, consistent study. Briefly, chapters one and two tell us of the sinfulness of man, both Jew and gentile. Chapter three continues the same message but points man to his only hope, righteousness by faith. Try an expository sermon on 3:9-20, "All Under Sin." Here we see how sin affected the whole of man's nature: heart, mind, will, and body. In verses thirteen through eighteen Paul quotes from the Psalms to give a five-fold description of the "filth" that "exudes" from an unclean heart. Chapter four uses Abraham as an illustration how "faith" can be imputed or accounted for righteousness. ". . . it was not written for his sake alone . . .," we are told, "but for us also . . ." Chapter 5:1-11 speaks of the justified life; what it is, who may be justified, how, why, and when. Then we are informed this experience is that relationship to Christ necessary to enter into the "standing grace," where ". . . love . . . is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost . . ."—surely an obvious reference to the second work of grace. Chapter six, the battleground of the theologians, tells me in verses one through eleven of the three tremendous, yet simple, steps to being "made free" from sin—realization, identification, and appropriation. In verses twelve through twenty-three we have the contrast of the "yielded" lives—yielded to God through His

Spirit, resulting in righteousness; or yieldedness to sin, by the "instrument" of our bodies, resulting in "unrighteousness." Chapter seven starts me off on an outline that ends in 8:2. Sin was dead, sin revived, sin indwells, sin is doomed, sin is destroyed. Chapter 7:14-24 gives me this outline; (I) The realization of indwelling sin resulting in my inability to be good or do good; (II) The recognition of that sin principle as a power—a presence—which has power to bind, to blight, and to blast; (III) The recognition of the plan of God to deliver me from the "body of this death" through Christ.

Chapter 8:1-11 challenges me with the question, Am I pleasing to God? He who is "in the flesh" cannot please Him. Sin in the flesh, Paul tells me, is condemned, can be conquered in the sense of complete deliverance from, and can be continuously cleansed through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 8:11-39 gives me an outline on the place of the indwelling Spirit. Because He abides, I am enabled to live better, that is, purer; I am led by Him; He is the assurance of adoption, witnessing to my own spirit. He also helps me in my prayer life. There are at least fifteen references to the Holy Spirit in Romans eight. Each will bear sermonic fruit if investigated.

In chapter twelve I find the requirements and the results or evidences of the life of holiness. In verses one and two I see the inspiration for the consecration which means a differentiation and a transfiguration which is a glorious realization. The results found in 12:4-21 are summarized in sober thinking, sincere loving, and redemptive living.

Ephesians has always been a challenging book to me. Chapter one is a bulwark against Calvinism. We are

“chosen” in Christ before the foundation of the world to “be holy and without blame before him in love.” We are predestined, not to be saved or lost, but to be adopted into the family of God. In Christ we not only have forgiveness of sins but also “after we have believed” we were sealed or anointed by the Spirit. He is the “earnest” of our inheritance, a down payment or token or pledge of our eternal inheritance. Paul’s prayer in 1:15-21 tells me that I can have the same degree of the power of the Spirit in my life as God expended to raise Christ from the dead. No limitations there. Chapter two, I entitle “From Chaos to Character.” Chaos represents the being dead in trespasses and sins; character comes when one is quickened together with Christ, made a part of the true Church, thus is “. . . an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Chapter four is one of the strongest holiness passages in the New Testament. The purpose of grace, Paul says, was to bring us to a “perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” This means we become stable and mature in our relation to God, the sin nature being cleansed; the result is a holy life or walk, of which Paul gives eight examples in verses twenty-five through thirty-two. Verses twenty-two through twenty-four definitely teach the truth about sin, that we are to “put off” the old man and “put on” the new man. This new man is a “creation of God”—a divine work; it is “after” God, in its moral uprightness; and it reveals itself in righteousness and real, not fake, or make-believe, holiness. It is, in other words, a nature infused, imparted, created of God, not just an imputation, as our Calvinist friends would say. And what of chapter five? Here are “the walks” of the Christian life; here is

a message on “The Spirit-filled Life”; here is a message on “The Glorious Church.”

Moving over into Philippians, chapter two intrigues me, for here I read of the humiliation of Christ. The subject is “The Mind of Christ.” It is seen in His “emptying” of himself. He was in the form or nature of God; He possessed a glory which was His alone; but He looked “. . . not . . . on his own things . . .”; He looked on mine. He emptied himself of that glory, took on Him the form or nature of a servant, humbled himself still further and went to the Cross. When I see the Incarnation in perspective, I fall to my knees and beg for the cleansing of myself from pride. There can be no pride in the heart of a true Christian. He too is possessed of a servant nature.

Let me give you a closing illustration of what one brief passage of scripture contains. In Colossians three Paul speaks on the “Hidden Life.” There are eight qualities, homiletically and by alliteration, arranged thus: determination, consecration, mortification, subtraction, addition, relaxation, indoctrination, and motivation. That is the first time around. Now analyze mortification; distinguish from crucifixion, and illustrate the difference by reference to any one of the five examples offered by Paul. Dig still deeper into the nature of the “new man” and we find from verse ten that it is an instantaneous work, a spiritual remaking; it is in the image or likeness of God, and in our knowing. More than enough ideas for a holiness message.

What shall I say of the rest? To bypass Hebrews, First and Second Peter, First and Second John, Jude—any of those I have not mentioned—is to acknowledge that the possibilities for preaching holiness in the New Testament alone are unlimited. Add

to this the potential of the Old Testament and the words of Bishop Foster ring clearer than ever:

"It breathes in the prophecy,
Thunders in the law,
Murmurs in the narrative,
Whispers in the promises,
Supplicates in the prayers,
Sparkles in the poetry,
Resounds in the songs,
Speaks in the types,
Glows in the imagery,
Voices in the language,
Burns in the spirit of the whole
scheme
From alpha to omega,
From its beginning to its end.

"Holiness! Holiness needed, holiness required, holiness offered!

"Holiness obtainable, holiness, a present duty, a present privilege, a present enjoyment, is the progress and completeness of its wondrous theme.

"It is the truth glowing all over, weaving all through revelation; the glorious truth which sparkles and whispers, and sings and shouts in all its history, and biography, and poetry, and prophecy, and percept, and promise, and prayer; the great central truth of the system. The wonder is that all do not see, that any rise up and question, a truth so conspicuous, so glorious, so full of comfort."

The Sermon Imperfect

By Athel V. McCombs*

IT WAS A GREAT day for me. All of my life I had felt that I was destined to wear ecclesiastical robes. Now, at last, someone had recognized my ability. I was well on the way to becoming the pulpit orator that I had always visualized myself to be. True, the church was only a small suburban congregation from which the pastor had resigned, leaving it without a minister. Another pastor had been called, but the parishioners were not sure when he would arrive. So the person responsible for pulpit supply, not knowing whether the new minister would be at the church for the Sunday evening service, asked me to preach. That was ample proof to me, at least, that the ministry was my destined life's work. So I accepted the invitation

with alacrity, feeling that my golden opportunity had arrived.

At that time, now more than twenty years ago, I had never heard of the five general ends of speech. Homiletics and hermeneutics were merely words as far as I was concerned. But such trivialities bothered me not one whit as I prepared my sermonic masterpiece. The great, foremost thought in my mind was that I had been asked to preach. I searched diligently through my father's theological tomes, and dug out my father's secondhand sermon outlines. I felt that just anything wouldn't suffice—this sermon must be a stirring, emotional classic. Had not Jonathan Edwards by one sermon inspired fourteen hundred people to a definite decision? Surely I could convince this group of forty or fifty of the error of their way if I

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chose the right sermonic material. At last, after hours of reading—some of it pretty dry—I selected a subject sufficiently profound and scholarly. I would speak upon the relative merits of Arminianism and Calvinism. I didn't know exactly what these terms meant, but that's what the book said. My firstly would be conditional or eternal security. From that basis, I would discuss predestination or free will, and would climax with a stirring discussion of perfection as compared to man's natural propensity to sin. It sounded wonderful to me. After copying the outline in my new notebook, bought especially for the occasion, I felt that I was ready for my pulpit debut.

That is—except for one thing. I was not certain of the proper attire for this event. However, I had noted that on certain important occasions my father would wear a black coat and striped trousers. Now I was sure that the auspiciousness of this occasion far surpassed any in which my father had participated. Surely, I reasoned, striped trousers were proper. I knew that Dad would leave for his appointment before I had to leave for mine, so I waited until he had left, and then hurried to his wardrobe. There hung the trousers. I took them from the hanger and draped them over myself. Yes—draped is the proper word, for at that time I weighed about fifty pounds less than my father. But I pleated about three inches of excess trousers in back and under my belt, where it could not be seen under my coat, and after surveying myself in the mirror, I was quite pleased with my appearance. I felt that not only was I well prepared mentally, but I was sartorially correct for this critical experience of my life.

I placed my Bible under my arm and my notebook in the side pocket of

my coat, as I had seen other men of the cloth do, and started for the church. Since I couldn't afford to pass up any detail that would make successful this first step toward my life's work, I timed myself to arrive a little late. The preliminary part of the service was in progress when I arrived, so I sat down in the back of the church. The person in charge of the service (just as I had planned) came back and escorted me to the pulpit. With all of the ecclesiastical dignity that I could assume I walked up the steps, laid my notes on the lectern, and sat down until time for me to speak.

At last my big moment arrived. I walked up behind the pulpit desk, assumed a pious mien, read my text, and started to deliver my theological masterpiece. I had stated my first point, supported it well with evidence, and was well launched into my secondly when I walked the newly appointed pastor. To say I was nonplused is a gross understatement. My knees became as water, my mind a confused blank, and my tongue like a poker. Full well did I know that my concepts of theology were at considerable variance with his creed and dogma. Quickly I decided to support my contention by vigorously stamping my foot and pounding the lectern. That was my undoing, for dad's pants were never intended for such antics. I felt something slipping, and realized too late that I wasn't big enough to fill my papa's "britches." Fast action was my only recourse. I grabbed the top of the striped pants with one hand, my stirring, emotional pulpit masterpiece with the other, and started for the nearest exit.

I never became a preacher, but I learned one bit of nonscriptural truth that has been of help to me: Always be yourself, for the height of folly is to wear another man's pants or preach another man's sermon.



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The Place of Emotion in Evangelism

By Harold Volk*

THE CROWNING aim of preaching is to lead men to action toward God. Subjective psychology is the philosophy of action. A knowledge of it will teach the preacher how to touch the springs of action—emotion, desire, and will.

There is a pathetic and often tragic gulf between knowing and doing. It is the preacher's crucial work to bridge that chasm. Jesus realized this when He said in closing the Sermon on the Mount, "And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not . . ." (Matthew 7:26).

Knowledge, feeling, and will make up the threesome that move and direct life. Neither one of them apart from the rest is effective—at least not normally nor permanently effective.

Knowledge, feeling, and will are the triumvirate that move and direct life; the verdict of no one of them apart from the rest is effective.

Feeling alone is inoperative and unproductive. It is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. The history of emotion is to arise, to increase, to culminate, to recede, and to vanish; and this history is usually very brief. The will has no originating or self-determining power, but is under the stimulus and control of emotions.

It is the preacher's task to carefully study the co-relation of the emotions and the will, for of these he must in a sense become master. There is no

work so sublime as to influence souls, and its responsibility is infinite.

There are some general considerations of the psychology of emotions that every earnest preacher must know.

Emotion is a tremendous power; it may be called the electric spark of the moral life—a wonderfully magnificent and perilous element. Under the direction of a skillful leader of men, emotion may motivate the conversion of an individual or a nation. Illustration of that fact is seen in Savonarola, who from his pulpit transformed the Florentine republic from moral debauchery to a theocracy, and amidst the wildest enthusiasm had Christ proclaimed "King of Florence." Sacred songs superseded ribald ballads in the streets, and the carnival of depravity gave place to festivals of religious chastity. On the other hand, Robespierre and his theists, also working on emotions, turned Paris into a pandemonium of incredible crimes and enthroned a prostitute as tutelary divinity under the name of "The Goddess of Reason."

The excitement of emotions may lead to faith or fanaticism, according as it is guided by the moral intelligence.

Unscrupulous preachers, or possibly ignorant ones, have seized this susceptibility and wrought up excitements and harmful manifestations. On the other hand, anesthetic preach-

*Evangelist.

ers have suppressed emotion to the extent of the producing moral atrophy and spiritual paralysis. There are innocent young sermons that touch the emotions as a breeze wakes a faint note on a harp, that exhaust themselves in a sigh; and there are storm sermons that gash the soul like lightning, sending awful reverberations through the soul in its depths. Between these extremes there are all degrees of the emotional element in sermons. The preacher who addresses himself to the reason should not be destitute of this feature (at least it should appear in the application or peroration), while they who appeal chiefly to the affections should be controlled by reason, metaphysics, and sentiment—both equally efficient in producing soul energy.

Men are led to action in all spheres of life by the excitement of emotion. The very word carries that meaning. Love, hate, delight, dread, sympathy, contempt, joy, grief, etc. are essential and potent factors in the drama of souls. Emotion, like music, is a simple element. Love is love whether it embrace sin or holiness; it is awakened in the same way by that which is lovely (or seems so) and it acts in the same way, drawing its subject towards the object.

When God's Spirit acts through the Word so as to reveal the soul both in sin and in holiness and the heart of God in their true character, the corresponding emotions are awakened and act characteristically. It is not the emotions that are changed, but "the eyes of the understanding" are changed to see things in a new light.

Our higher emotions are of extreme value as the greatest aid we naturally have in the pursuit of all that is truthful, beautiful, and good.

The place of emotion in religion is clearly defined. The state in which they are absent must be that of a

fatally maimed moral nature. To be "past feeling" is, in the Scriptures, equivalent to being past hope. Therefore appeals intended to arouse the emotions from a feeble to an active state are in the highest degree reasonable and important.

The preacher must not trifle with the emotions. Temptation to do this springs from two sources, to show one's power or simply to gratify the hearer; for some are pleased to be wrought upon by the pulpit in the same manner that others are pleased with an exciting play or novel. But the preacher must have a serious aim. When he excites emotion, it must be to win the heart and to build character. He is responsible at all times to produce a healthful action, a life in harmony with God, and a symphony of service.

The sermon aims at the will. The philosophical treatise may attain its end in reaching the understanding. The aesthetic discourse appeals to the taste and sentiment. But the sermon achieves its mission only when it rouses the will to action.

As preachers we must always bear in mind that, while the will is governed by fixed laws, the element of a perverted nature must always be reckoned with. The heart is so full of errors, prejudices, and delusions that the most excellent things are rejected through the deceitfulness of the heart.

As physicians of souls we have to deal with settled habits of levity, indolence, and neglect. To arouse the will in such conditions requires intense vitality, and startling, alarming, pathetic, and vehement preaching. Like the prophets of old, we must at times awaken terror. A phenomenon worth studying is the almost entire absence from the preaching of today of the appeal to fear of "the terror" of which Paul speaks.

While I Was Fishing

By Harley Duncan*

I AM NO OUTSTANDING FISHERMAN, but we landed one a few Sunday nights ago that thrilled us all, especially this pastor that likes to hunt and fish. For about a year and a half I went hunting and fishing with George with a double purpose in mind each time—to enjoy the deep satisfaction of hunting and fishing in the great out-of-doors and to witness of Christ to George and try to win him. Every time I thought it was wise, I spoke to him about becoming a Christian. We learned to like and respect each other and shared many pleasant hours together.

George's wife is one of our faithful members. With her constant invitation, the invitations of others, a men's teacher that was highly respected, and the pastor's regular invitation, he began to attend church and Sunday school in the morning, later regularly in the evening. His interest and attentiveness increased rapidly in these services as our people prayed for his salvation. Often on Friday noon I would pray for George's conversion, and as I continued praying and being with him, my faith was expectant.

On a Sunday night with a rather small congregation I gave the invitation and asked for hands of those who needed Christ. Immediately George's hand went up, and I knew the victory was won. Knowing his personal

characteristics, I knew he meant business. With the little encouragement that I gave when I went to his seat and took his hand, he stepped out to the altar and was converted in a few short minutes. He arose to give a simple testimony of thanks to God for saving him.

After two experiences of counseling with him during the week, he was ready to join the church the next Sunday morning. As his wife stood by his side, and we received him into the church, it blessed the hearts of our people. We took the time to march around to extend to him the hand of fellowship, and this unemotional man in his seventies broke down with tears of joy. I gave to him a church *Manual* and a box of tithing envelopes, saying, "Good Nazarene Christians live in accordance with God and His Word, in accordance with the *Manual*, and pay their tithes."

Last Sunday George took Communion for the first time. It was a good service. While visiting after church, his wife said, "I used to not be able to get George to come to church. Now I can't get him to go home."

I sincerely love to hunt and fish. I love to win a soul for Christ. Tomorrow morning I'm going to try my luck again. I am going to take some of our Sunday school boys fishing. I'll bait some hooks in hope of catching a fish and a boy for Christ.

*Pastor, Trinway, Ohio.

"QUEEN of the PARSONAGE"

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

Supplied by Ruth Vaughn*

Portrait of a Queen

MANY CALL HER "Mrs. Paul Updike" and bow and smile at the loveliness they see . . . but those who know her closely see a much deeper beauty—and they call her "the woman with the understanding heart."

In the parsonage, those of her husband's parish could come with all of their woe and sin knowing that she would listen sympathetically, advise wisely, and love them in spite of their weakness. As a mother, her two children came with childish woes, teenage confusion, and young adult problems, always feeling a sense of security and well-being in their mother's understanding. In her home, her husband goes at each day's new task with a glowing sense of vigor because he knows that "Mary" understands his burdens and problems and is helping to bear their weight. These people call her "the woman with the understanding heart."

Many look at her as she stands before the Northeastern Indiana District N.F.M.S. convention as its president, observing and complimenting her capacity for efficient service . . . but those close to her know of her capacity for joyous living. She looks upon life with a smile. She has always had time for her children, considering them more important than

menial chores. She endeavors to keep a spotless, cozy home, decorate it cheerfully, cook delicious meals, be an enviable hostess, teach a Sunday school class, pray for each member of the church and all their relatives, call on the sick, healthy, old, young, rich, and poor, and carry each responsibility with poise and give to it her best. In time of joy or testing her eyes shine forth bravely, her lips curve in a smile of love, her voice tells of encouraging things, her heart bestows love on others throughout each day. She is a woman with a great capacity for life.

Many listen to her testimony and admire her devotion . . . but there are some who know of the depth of the spirit of prayer maintained by this saint of God. Mrs. Updike's consecration has held steady through the tempest and storm of years. Perhaps its greatest testing began when her husband was called from the life of a public school administrator to the ministry. Moving to a home mission church in a hall up over the post office and adjusting the family budget to fit the meager salary was indeed an almost insurmountable obstacle . . . but her consecration was adequate for the situation. During these twenty-eight years in the parsonage her motto has given her faith, hope, and strength. It reads:

*Amarillo, Texas.

"Prayer changes situations." And this she has proved time and again. Many know her as the woman with the prayerful spirit.

Because of her life, the world is richer. Because she has lived, the world bears a more lovely sound of tender song and chords of sweetest harmony. Because of the sparkle of her personality, many fainting hearts have received strength to rise again. Because of her unswerving devotion and loving spirit, many have seen Christ personified. Because of the touch of her hand and the sound of her voice, those souls whom she has touched will have a song resounding within them always.

Truly this is a portrait of a queen!

ROYAL COOKBOOK

From the state of Illinois came this recipe telling how the wonderful Italian people fix eggplant. This proved to be delicious in Texas. You'll find it will be good in your home too!

Peel one eggplant and cut in thin slices. Beat one egg and one tablespoon milk; dip pieces of eggplant into this mixture, then in $\frac{2}{3}$ cup bread crumbs. Fry in five tablespoons drippings until golden brown. Place in a baking dish. In drippings, brown one onion; then add two cups tomatoes, juice, and salt. To this mixture add $\frac{2}{3}$ cup grated cheese and pour over eggplant. Sprinkle remaining crumbs and $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cheese (grated) over top. Bake in a moderate oven 350° F. for thirty minutes or until done.

OVER TEACUPS

Rev. Claud Burton has written a very fine paper on "The Preacher and His Family." We are continuing with the third portion of this very sound and helpful discussion by Mr. Burton.

"I would like for us to consider the

family altar. Of course, every preacher has one! This is, perhaps, the most important ingredient in happy, successful home life. There are only three things concerning this prayer time that I will mention.

"1. If you do not have a family altar, start one immediately!

"2. This is the best place in the world for a child to learn the desirableness of prayer. So do not make it a boring, tiring time for the children. When they are little, for the sake of their understanding, read Bible stories from such books as *Egermier's Stories of the Bible*. Make all reading as interesting as possible so that the child will learn. When you read from the Bible, read only those passages that you feel the child can profit by. When you pray, pray so as to reach the child's understanding. Around the family altar, the children are the most important people. You can read and pray to suit yourself in the secret place.

"3. Here is something important—when you pray, pray for the children but never at them. They have the same feelings that you do. When a brother repents for you, publicly, by saying, 'Lord, help our preacher to get on the beam; we need our souls fed. Help him to feed'—it makes a preacher feel bad, doesn't it? That is not the way to pray. Leave your child's repentance to himself. Pray for God's guidance; pray for the Holy Spirit to make him wise and willing, but leave the sin naming to the child. Many children have been warped because the parents used the prayer time to tell God how ugly they had been acting. When praying with a child, hold the same respect for his feelings as you would if you were praying with your general superintendent. His self-respect is just as important to him."

BOOKSHELF WITH LACE

In the role of "parsonage queen," you will be confronted many times with questions concerning the reasons for and the importance of our denominational rules. To help you answer these questions is a booklet entitled *Let's Look at Our Rules*, by W. Shelburne Brown. This devotional look at our rules considers them as guides for Christian living. Get this booklet in the hands of your own teenagers and those of your church. They need to know and understand our rules. This booklet may be purchased for twenty-five cents at your publishing house.

THE KING'S HOUSE

Are you always looking for some twine, and when located, it is knotted and tied beyond redemption? This problem can be solved by purchasing a tin funnel. Paint it the color of your choice to blend in with your kitchen decor. Apply a decal to the front—or an attractive magazine print may be glued on for decoration. Place on a nail or towel-rack arm. Place your ball of twine within and allow the end to come through the small part of the funnel. This is a decorative and useful gadget to have about the parsonage.

HEART TALK

I feel that the greatest and most important thing that I can offer to my

people as their minister's wife is—love! I work very closely with my people and become acutely aware of their faults and failings. But during each church service I look out over the congregation and whisper in my heart: I love you! I love you, for you are mine! You are my church family. I must be as loyal to you as I would those who are physically a part of me. You are my responsibility. You are my opportunity to serve my God. You do not know Him well—I want to show Him to you . . . and I cannot do that through impatience or harshness. That is not His way. I can only show you my God through love, patience, forbearance, and tenderness. You are growing, my people. You are learning step by step to know Him better. I love you . . . for you are my people!

And then when I ponder upon the awesome responsibility of trying to show forth my Master—and realize my own weakness and humanity—I forget their faults and failings as my heart surges with prayer: O God, may my intense desire for sight not be so great that I stand in someone else's light! May I not look upon my people—knowing their sins—understanding their weaknesses—and forget that I too am made of clay—that I too have made mistakes. O God, as a minister's wife, grant that I shall have the most important of all virtues; may my heart be filled with wisdom, understanding, and love.

SALARY

No amount of pay ever made a good soldier, a good teacher, a good artist, or a good workman.—JOHN RUSKIN, *Social Reformer* (1819-1900).

VII. The Preacher of a Good Sermon

By W. E. McCumber*

SINCE PREACHING is the communication of truth through personality, a final word is due concerning the preacher himself, but in relation to his sermon and congregation. I think it was Bushnell who said, "The soul of preparation is the preparation of the soul." A brilliant mind and an eloquent tongue are never substitutes for a clean heart. The strength of good sermons can be tragically dissipated by the example of an unworthy man.

My remarks at this point are really a summation of precepts and principles previously stated or implied. And I know of no better way to present the case than by appealing to the recorded example of an illustrious Old Testament preacher, "Ezra the scribe." A reading of Nehemiah 8 will reveal that loyal scribe's fidelity to three cardinal rules for preachers and preaching.

I. STAND UP TO BE SEEN!

We read that "Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood . . . in the sight of all the people." That was a distinct advantage physically speaking. Some of the old-fashioned jack-in-the-box pulpits that hid a preacher up to the top button of his coat were detrimental to effective speaking. Evidently the church architects took seriously the Psalmist's words, "The Lord taketh not pleasure in the legs of a

man." Ezra and his co-workers had better sense.

But standing up to be seen has implications graver than physical posture. It reminds us that every preacher is put on trial by the truth he proclaims. His life is under the scrutiny of a congregation which rightfully expects him to be the incarnation of Christian principles. He should be his own sermon in shoe leather.

A lot of pious nonsense is prayed about hiding the preacher behind the Cross. It cannot be done. He is there to be seen and will be seen. Indeed, it is the Cross that flings a searching and unsparing light upon his character and conduct. To the measure that he is "crucified unto the world" he will preach with authority, but an unholy alliance of his heart with anything condemned and forbidden by the Word of God will render him a modern Samson shorn of power.

It is through the gospel that God shines into the hearts of men to give them a knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. And light travels in straight lines; it will not shine through a crook! The preacher's primary task, therefore, is to avail himself of the redeeming grace he commends to others, that by his being transparent in holiness, the light of the gospel may shine through him unto his people.

A very suggestive phrase describes Ezra's position on the occasion we are noting—"for he was above all the

*Pastor, Thomasville, Georgia.

people.” Of course the words refer to the height of his pulpit, but they may well sound a spiritual challenge to all who would minister the Word. We may argue ourselves breathless against the idea of a double moral standard for preachers and laymen. The adamant and unyielding truth remains that people do expect more of the preacher, refusing to excuse in him the moral defects they readily overlook in others. No minister will continue to preach sermons that influence his listeners Godward if he is unwilling to live on an ethical plane far loftier than the average morality of the congregation.

Of this man Ezra we read, “. . . Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it” (Ezra 7:10). The time spent in preparing sermons is wasted if a preacher fails to prepare his soul. He must seek the Word of God, not merely to discover a happy text for Sunday morning’s sermon, but to renew his acquaintance with the Lord’s guiding principles for his own daily living.

The Apostle Paul exhorted the church, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (I Corinthians 11:1). The preacher who cannot address a similar challenge to his people deserves to be tarred and feathered. I knew one preacher who continually employed the threadbare dodge for loose morals, “Do as I say, not as I do.” I fervently hope his congregation followed that advice, for the lecherous rascal died one night from a heart attack while parked in a secluded grove with another man’s wife!

Stand up to be seen! Buttress the uncompromised truth with a blameless life. Be the man you think others should be, “. . . sincere and without offence . . . filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of

God” (Philippians 1:10-11). Your sermon may be a homiletical jewel, but its luster and radiance will be dimmed or destroyed in the setting of a cheap and insincere life.

II. SPEAK OUT TO BE HEARD!

Ezra and his co-workers “. . . read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.” Speaking up to be heard is more than a matter of church acoustics or the volume of a preacher’s voice. It means preaching the truth so plainly and clearly that people understand the sermon.

The eccentric Sam Jones once declared, in defense of his plain preaching, “I aim to spread my fodder right out on the ground, where anything from a giraffe to a jackass can get at it.” That attitude will be scorned by a preacher who craves a reputation for intellectual superiority, or by the minister who thinks himself called to enhance the world’s elegant literature by his sermons. But the preacher’s business is to speak with such clarity that no man listening can parry the thrust of the truth. It is an easy matter for people to withstand the gospel if they cannot understand the sermon that transmits it. The oft quoted and seldom heeded warning of James Denny—that no man can give at one and the same time the impression that he himself is clever and that Jesus Christ is a mighty Saviour—bears repetition.

This is no plea for crude language, slangy expressions, or sloppy delivery under the guise of preaching “down where people live.” It is rather a protest against “purple patches,” multisyllable words, technical jargon, and a conscious straining after oratorical effect. These serve only to burden the sermon with a crippling sense of

unreality when it encounters a listener's mind.

Neither do I present a brief for preaching feeble, anemic, and "kindergarten" ideas. The great truths of scripture, massive themes which have filled the theological shelves of a minister's library with the results of scholarship's wrestling, must be preached. A congregation cannot be nurtured to spiritual manhood on a steady diet of mental Pabulum. Still, the preacher must toil and sweat to develop, in some imperfect measure, that ability to preach profound themes in simple language which Jesus exercised in perfect degree.

Any preacher who is inclined to careless thinking and speaking could well profit by an intense study of such masters of diction as Jefferson and Jowett. But every step of improvement taken in this direction should be counterbalanced by strict attention to Jowett's insistence that a good sermon sends the congregation away saying, not, "What a splendid speaker!" but, "What a glorious Saviour!"

Pity the congregation whose reaction to a sermon is that of a harried pedestrian who, frantically dodging a drunken motorist, cries, "Just what is he driving at?" Remember that fog is just as fatal to sermons as dust. Both must be swept away by refreshing winds of logical thought and comprehensible statement if preaching becomes effective. Paul reminded a church that five words with "understanding" exceed the value of ten thousand in an "unknown tongue." Today many churches, verging on despair, would like to remind the ministry of that fact!

Clear speech, wedded to clean living, is a powerful weapon in the arsenal of fruitful gospel preaching. Labor, my fellow ministers, to be understood!

III. SIT DOWN TO BE APPRECIATED!

Reverting once again to the ancient record about Ezra the scribe, note these suggestive phrases: ". . . until midday . . . And on the second day . . . Also day by day." Ezra wisely fixed a limit to his service, realizing that something more could be said on another day.

Let us honestly face this fact—a long-winded preacher is an ordained bore! I know we can preach "sermonettes" and develop "Christianettes," but we can also prolong a sermon until the congregation is physically at church and mentally gone home.

Of course the length of a sermon depends on a number of things. The occasion is a conditioner. You may safely speak longer at camp meeting than in a funeral parlor. I recall a funeral message so lengthy that we who listened began to envy the corpse! The subject handled affects the length of your sermon. Great themes demand more time for adequate development than do lesser ones.

Whatever the subject or occasion, have the good sense to quit while the people are still listening. A pastor's congregation should return to church each Sunday under some nobler compulsion than a slavish sense of duty. Make them want to come by sermons crammed with rich spiritual content and adapted to the time limits imposed by the interest-quotient of the congregation.

Somewhere I read of a minister who entered the pulpit one Sunday morning with cheeks plastered with Band-aids. He apologized, explaining, "While shaving I was practicing my sermon and cut my face." When he finally terminated his message a blunt parishioner met him at the door and said, "Next Sunday practice your shaving and cut your sermons."

If your congregation seems restless, either cut your sermon or preach in a more interesting manner. Effective preaching demands two things of a minister. He must be a man of God, but he must also exercise good com-

mon sense. Pray without ceasing, but do not preach likewise!

Stand up to be seen. Speak out to be heard. Sit down to be appreciated. Bring to the task of preaching your Spirit-filled best, physically, mentally, spiritually!

The Minister Looks at the Pew*

By Rev. Marcellus Kik

MIxed feelings possess the minister in his appraisal of the pew, the source of his joy and distress. The virtues and excellencies of the congregation sustain his spirit; the defects and imperfections weigh down his soul. The pew displays the paradoxes of loyalty and indifference, knowledge and ignorance, humbleness and pride, generosity and covetousness, warmth and coldness, sincerity and hypocrisy, good and evil.

Of inestimable value to church and minister is the inner circle of spiritual Christians found in every congregation. They hunger and thirst for the Word; they hold up the ministry in prayer; they serve generously with their tithes and time. Appreciative, not critically tolerant—they form an oasis in what sometimes seems a barren land.

. . . the majority in the pews have no desire for a deeper knowledge of the Scriptures. . . . The minister must make the message light and airy to sustain interest. He knows that nominal Christians prefer vague generalities, enhanced by the eloquence of Athens, and have no taste for the soul-searching truths of Jerusalem.

Puzzling is the pew's attitude that the battle for souls and the fight against evil should be waged by the

minister alone. The notion prevails that the preacher alone must draw the sinner into the church and cleanse the community of evils. Military battles are not fought by the officers alone. Yet the battle against evil is a thousand times more important and difficult. Christ gave no statement, "The ministry is the salt of the earth." Nor did He command, "Go ye, clergy, and make disciples of all nations."

The empty pew cannot be overlooked. It confronts the vision of the minister constantly. It is a silent yet expressive witness of a preference for the radio and television above the pulpit. It attests to the increasing number of Sunday leaves of absence. . . . Like a tombstone, the empty pew gives cemeterial atmosphere to the church. It witnesses of the dead.

Bitterness, wrath, envyings, strife, faction, and divisions pervade the Church in the twentieth century as well as in the first century. . . . Until the world can say, "How these Christians love one another!" instead of, "How these Christians dislike one another!" Christianity can make no deep impact on the life of the world.

(*Editor's Note—The above is an excerpt from an editorial appearing in *Christianity Today*. It was written by the associate editor.)

Wings to Accomplish Our Total Task**

By J. L. Longnecker*

THE CHURCH is the divine agency charged with the responsibility of translating the mighty power of God into the lives and souls of men and women and to carry out the gigantic and all-important task of bringing a lost race back to God. How best to do this task is the number one problem that faces the Church.

We all are convinced that neither papal supremacy and domination motivated by fear and ignorance nor government of full episcopal authority in its strictest sense is the answer. There are left then but two major plans!

One is the congregational form, which leaves the responsibility largely on the local church for determining what procedures will be followed. The other is a combination of congregational and episcopal, which we seek to follow.

The former of these tends to localize the vision of the church and the results accomplished to the abilities of a few. But the program of the Master is too great, too far-reaching, and vastly too important to be restricted by the vision and financial ability of an isolated few.

For example, in a local church where this writer was a pastor, we went home from the assembly and presented our new and amended budget list of apportionments to the

church board, whereupon a trustee arose and calmly made the motion that we reduce our apportionments by 50 per cent. How glad I was that the government of our church would not permit this! For the budget had been established through the procedures set by our government and authorized by an assembly to which our laymen were delegates. This man had not heard the anointed messages of the general superintendent or the heart-rending messages of a missionary who had lived in such close proximity to the appalling needs of the mission field. His vision was limited to the local church.

As I sit here at my desk in the church office writing this paper, my eyes come to rest on a large globe of the world. Immediately it flashes anew on my mind that this world is my parish and not merely the town of 6,000 people where I serve. As I see this I thank God for the privilege of having a part in reaching the world by being a part of a church which has spent over fifty years in co-operative effort to reach the millions of earth for the Master. How happy I am that our form of government not only incorporates the strong points of the congregational idea but also provides an organized outreach which is an integrated, interlocking part of all we do! Thus a local church is unable to lift its vision to include those of all races.

*Pastor, Flora, Illinois.

**Condensed from paper presented at 1959 Preachers' Meeting.

It has been said that "the wings of our vision are crippled if not strong enough to fly across the sea." Our form of government gives us a trio known as local, district, and general. The local churches are made up of members who once a year meet to elect officers to care for the business of the local church for the coming year. They also elect delegates to the District Assembly. They with the district officers care for the work of this area of our work. Each four years the districts elect delegates to the General Assembly, who elect our general officers to care for the needs of the entire denomination. These general leaders are charged with the task of planning for the entire church. They travel to the farthest end of the world to find out for the church what should be the extent of our missionary work, how much it will take to finance the program, and where the money and men will come to carry out the program. This is authorized through the General Board and Assembly, which represent the entire church. They check each district to determine how much of this total load each district will be able to carry. The total program is then relayed to the district level and then in turn to the local level. Hence the success or failure of the program rests with the local pastor and church. The pastor is responsible to catch the vision of the general and district leaders in order to lead and formulate the plans for the local church. It is the pastor's responsibility to become involved in the plans of the general church because he is a part of the general church.

I am an elder in the Church of the Nazarene. I received my elder's orders from the hands of a general superintendent, not from my local congregation. This makes me an elder commissioned by the general church.

Hence, as a minister of a general church I must catch the spirit of the whole church and be able by my preaching, spirit, and actions to translate this vision to the hearts and minds of my people, who in turn will follow with their money, prayers, talents, and labors. Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no vision, the people perish," could be translated to mean that "where the preacher has no vision of what the general church is trying to accomplish, and refuses to assume his responsibility to co-operate with our general leaders, the people will perish." Not only will the local church become dwarfed and finally perish, but the lost of the earth will perish, and finally the preacher will become so dwarfed and small that he too will wither and die. Such a limited vision makes a pastor so self-centered and small that he really cannot be trusted with even the responsibility of caring for the local church. This type of preacher is usually found criticizing the church, finding fault with our general leaders, and is generally out of harmony with everything that is done. Such a spirit is spiritual and ecclesiastical suicide.

My personal prayer is this: Dear Lord, so fill me with a love for my church that I will give my life in service for Thee through the channels of service provided for me through the church. Inspire me with a spirit of confidence in the men elected to fill the general offices of our church. Finally, dear Lord, so fill these leaders with Thy Spirit that they may give me a challenge that will require my best efforts and Thy greatest help. May they through the guidance of the Holy Spirit give the church a program that is owned and blessed of God, and may I as a part of the church have determination and grace to follow that program. Amen!

Contributed by Nelson G. Mink*

YOUTH FOR CHRIST

It is interesting to know that all sixteen men who have served as general superintendents in the Church of the Nazarene from 1908 until now were converted as teen-agers! This includes the five men now in office—the first eleven have all gone to their reward.

These sixteen men were soundly converted at an average age of seventeen and one-half years.

On an average of one year later, each was sanctified and called to preach.

COME TO CHURCH

"Church members ought to be trying to fill our pews—if for no other reason than it costs to support the empty ones."

—Pasadena, Texas, First

A THOUGHT ON VISITATION

"God has indeed commanded us to 'go ye into all the world.' May we be willing to go next door, or around the block for Jesus."

A MOTORIST'S PRAYER

Teach us to drive through life without skidding into other people's business. Preserve our brake linings that we stop before we go too far. Help us to hear the knocks in our own motors and close our ears to the clashing of other people's gears. Keep alcohol in our radiators and out of our stomachs. Absolve us from the mania of trying to pass the other fellow on a narrow road. Open our eyes to the traffic signs and help us keep our feet on the brakes.

—Anonymous

*Pastor, Connell, Washington.

PREJUDICE

"Prejudice is a great time-saver. You can form opinions without having to get the facts."

—Wisconsin Journal of Education

OVERHEARD AT A SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION

"After experience there must be expression revealed in service.

"Some people would rather win an argument than to win a soul.

"The two basic relationships in life are: surrender to God and surrender to others in service. The church is full of willing people: 20 per cent are willing to work, and 80 per cent are willing to let them."

SENTENCE SERMONS

"The family that prays through stays through."—Dr. Edward Lawlor.

"The old-timer is a fellow who has made the last payment on his house."

"Faith without works is dead." So is a church!

A new speed record: Junior finished disassembling his toys at 8:14 a.m. Christmas morning, cutting thirty-seven minutes off the time Daddy took to put them together at 2:00 a.m.

—Selected

DR. J. B. CHAPMAN said at the 1942 superintendents' conference: "Our church ought to strip the decks, take off the bright colors, put on the battle gray, and man the guns for a spiritual crusade as intensive and extensive as the 'All out' of the United Nations against the enemies of freedom."

Delay Is Dangerous

TEXT: Galatians 6:7-8

- I. Opportunity given (Deuteronomy 30:15, 20)
 - II. Opportunity denied (Acts 26:28)
 - III. Opportunity gone (Luke 16:24-31)
 - A. Reward of delay
 - B. Delay is dangerous
- M. D. CLINE
Cayce, South Carolina
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“Arise, Go”

SCRIPTURE: Joshua 1:2

INTRODUCTION: The call to cross Jordan was not a call to peace, but to warfare.

- I. IT IS A CALL TO SACRIFICE.
 - A. Self-denial.
 - B. Separation.
 - C. Certain limitations (God's will).
- II. IT IS A CALL TO SUFFERING.
 - A. Some must give their lives.
 - B. Many must leave their easy chairs.
- III. IT IS A CALL TO HONOR GOD (Moses, Numbers 20:7-12).
- IV. IT IS A CALL TO TRUST (Joshua 1:9).
- V. IT IS A CALL TO VICTORY FOR BOTH JEWS AND CANAANITE.
 - A. For the enemy, a change in rulership.
 - B. For the enemy, a change in rules.
 - C. For the enemy, a change of environment.
 - D. For the Jew, it means a new peace.

—DELMAR STALTER
Churubusco, Indiana

One Thing

1. ONE THING I DESIRE (Psalms 27:4).
2. ONE THING I NEED (Luke 10:38-42).
3. ONE THING I KNOW (John 9:1-25).
4. ONE THING I DO (Philippians 3:12-14).

—LEONARD J. DEAKINS
Selma, California

Why Jesus Wept

TEXT: Luke 19:41

1. Because of the sentimentality of the people
2. Because of the lack of understanding of the disciples (John 12:16) and unbelief (John 11:35)
3. Because of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (John 12:19)
4. Because of the curiosity of the Greeks (John 12:20-23)
5. Because of the irreverence for God's house (Luke 19:45-46)
6. Because of men's attitude toward Him (symbolized by the city) (Isaiah 53:3a; John 1:11)
7. Because of human sin

—LEONARD J. DEAKINS

A Clear Witness

TEXT: John 18:20-21, 34

- I. Jesus spoke openly to the world (v. 20).
- II. Jesus spoke words easily understood.
 - A. v. 21.
 - B. Is our witness clear?
- III. Jesus spoke inquiringly.
 - A. v. 34.
 - B. Is it our witness or is it of others?

—M. D. CLINE

A Great Gift

SCRIPTURE: Acts 3:3-12

- I. Gift expected—silver and gold (v. 3)
- II. Gift given (vv. 6-7)
 - A. Unexpected
 - B. More than asked
- III. Gift received (vv. 8-11)
- IV. Gift manifested
 - A. Healed (v. 11)
 - B. Witnessed by many (v. 12)

—M. D. CLINE

Morning Meditations in the Fourth Gospel

I. The Beloved Disciple

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Significant that the Gospel which most fully reveals Jesus as the Son of God was written by one who knew Him most intimately as a true Man.
- B. Illustration: One of the surest signs of normal, balanced humanity is desire for and appreciation of friendship.
- C. Jesus needed "group" friendship—the disciples; and close personal friendship—John, the disciple whom Jesus loved. This was not a jealous, exclusive companionship which would have limited His ministry to others. A union of heart brings mutual strength and comfort.
 - 1. Enabled Jesus to commit His mother to John's care.
 - 2. Enabled John to inquire when others hesitated, to endure when others fled from the the Cross.

I. THE FOUNDATION OF THAT FRIENDSHIP

- A. Family bonds: John, full cousin to Jesus (Mary and Salome sisters), half-cousin to John the Baptist (Mary and Elisabeth cousins). Family relationships can be a help or hindrance to faith. Illustration: The brethren of Jesus did not believe on Him. In John's case, a blessing, foundation of faith.
- B. Faith's response:
 - 1. Call to discipleship. John left hired servants; mother had substance, own house, friend of high priest; all of man with prospects. No reserves in answering call of His Saviour-Cousin.

- 2. Call to apostleship. From learner to instructor, across path of natural modesty to limelight of publicity. The compensation? A transforming- friendship!

II. THE FRUITS OF THAT FRIENDSHIP

- A. Love for prayer (Acts 3). No record of Lord's Prayer in John's Gospel, no parables of prayer. Prayer deeper than forms or words but rooted in regular habits and fellowship.
- B. Willingness for suffering (Acts 5). ". . . rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer . . . for his name" (outcome of being with Jesus); still companion in tribulation in Revelation 1. Illustration: Time when he desired to sit on throne; now willing to sip the cup of suffering.
- C. Missionary vision (Acts 8). Went down to Samaria. Cf. time when going through desired to call down destroying fire; now prays for sanctifying fire for people once despised! No need to go overseas for vision like this.
- D. Loyalty to responsibilities (Galatians 2:9). Pillar in the Church. Not way of flesh for John; brother died in this position by Herod's sword, but no weakening for Lord and brethren's sake. Great honor to be a pillar, but carries much weight; if fails, building in danger.
- E. Submissive to the will of Jesus (John 21). Life governed by words of Jesus, "If I will that he tarry till I come." By that will reserved to write a Gospel for the Church, a portrait of the Son of God as seen through the soul of His closest friend. In every miracle the glory of Jesus revealed; in every controversy His divine knowledge shown; in every conversion His glory manifest.

CONCLUSION: Are you lonely? Here is the sinner's Friend, the Christian's eternal Friend.

Are you going down the hill of life? Your best work may be reserved for your later years, for only a mature apostle could write this Gospel.

Are you a church member? Make your church a society of friends, of personal and group friendships as wheels within wheels; free from cliques, with consecrated friendship for all.

—ALBERT J. LOWN
Lisburn, North Ireland

II. The Eternal Word

SCRIPTURE: John 1:1-14

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The sincere longing for a simple Gospel plain and easy to be understood by the average man. From one standpoint simple to "receive" (v. 12), in essence a friendship. So profound takes me back to "beginning." My Friend is the Word who was God, and was with God.
- B. The meaning of the "Word." Speech or utterance? In this sense used thirty-six times in Gospel; a familiar term to John's readers, for no explanation is given. The answer to man's universal problem, "How can a holy God have fellowship with sinful flesh?" Answer: a living Word from God—a Being who is the expression of God's wisdom and power, having God's nature and authority, and man's nature also; the "image of God," the Revealer and Reconciler by reason of His person and work. The expectation of the advent of the Word permeated the ancient world. Illustration—Acts 14:11.
- C. Jesus, declared John, was God (Deity), with God (distinct from God), in the beginning with God (eternal as God is). Hence the key words of the Gospel, "I am."

Jesus lives, speaks, and acts in all as God would (Hebrews 1:1-3; Philippians 2:5-11; John 14:9). Jesus as God gives a fourfold revelation of God.

I. THE LIVING WORD AND CREATION (vv. 3, 10)

- A. The whole marvel of created things was wrought through and by the Word, exclusively.
- B. He is the Architect, Builder, and Keystone of the universe (Colossians 1:15-17).
- C. Light and life, the essentials of all creation, were given by Him. As the Christ of creation, Jesus reveals the eternal power and Godhead of the Father (Romans 1:20).

II. THE LIVING WORD AND CONSCIENCE (vv. 4, 9)

- A. Beyond the book of nature God has planted in every human heart "light" that comes from Jesus, the origin of man's sense of right and wrong; the source of all love and loyalty; the spring of all good and human life.
- B. He plants an inward witness to the revelation of God in the world around.
- C. Every virtue, victory, and thought of holiness is His alone.

III. THE LIVING WORD AND THE CHOSEN NATION (vv. 10-11)

- A. Jesus was in the world as the "light" of the human mind—also, in personal appearances to selected men as "the angel of the Lord," the theophanies of the Old Testament.
- B. Illustration: Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and Daniel.
- C. Finally, as a Jew (Romans 9:5), He came to His own nation and it received Him not.

IV. THE LIVING WORD AND THE CRADLE (v. 14)

- A. God's revelation through nature, conscience, and law was preparatory but insufficient because of a sin-created weakness of the flesh.

- B. God's masterpiece was a perfect life full of grace and truth.
1. Grace by itself could lead to weakness.
 2. Truth by itself, to severity without mercy.
 3. The blend of both produces a character that cannot be explained by ancestry, environment, or evolution. As we behold Him as the only begotten Son of God, we must recognize that His is a life that demands a Virgin Birth.

CONCLUSION: As in creation so in the gospel: light and life through the Word, awaiting faith. An indictment of the world's sin. The darkness understood not (the blinded mind). The world knew Him not (the alienated affection). His own received Him not (the stubborn will). Will you receive Him by believing on His name?

—ALBERT J. LOWN

III. A Voice and a Vision

SCRIPTURE: John 1:15-34

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Jesus himself assesses the greatness of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:11). Great preaching, in spiritual fullness, in courage and humility, above all in his witness to grace and glory of Jesus (1:15-18).
- B. In his own estimation, "a voice" in the wilderness of the world's sin and unbelief. A herald-slave in the estimation of John, writer of the Gospel. In Jesus' estimation John the Baptist was a burning and shining light—a life blazing and burnt out in witnessing to the fourfold glory of Jesus.
- I. AS THE SERVANT OF THE LORD (v. 23)
 - A. Soaked in the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah, he sees Jesus as the Sovereign who comes to His throne via suffering, the King who is both Servant and Shepherd.

- B. He comes to His throne through the miracle of prophecy. The mission of Jesus as a righteous Redeemer is perceived, His transforming work portrayed as the creation of a highway of holiness in human life.

II. AS THE LAMB OF GOD (v. 29)

- A. John did no miracle, but as a priest's son, a Jewish student of divine promise and covenant, a man burdened with human sin, proclaims the greatest miracle of all, God's Lamb, who takes man's load.
- B. The Servant of the Lord is the sacrificial Lamb of Isaiah 53.

III. AS THE GIVER OF THE SPIRIT (v. 33)

- A. The Spirit descends and remains upon Jesus, not in the measure known to limited human capacity, but all the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwells in Him.
- B. The fullness of God is available and inexhaustible for all who will accept His cleansing baptism. Every other baptism is inferior to this as man's to God's, water to fire, sacramental to sanctifying, momentary to abiding.

IV. AS THE SON OF GOD (v. 34)

- A. As Jesus identifies himself with publicans and sinners, John identifies Him with God, His mission and person.
- B. The Spirit's coming and the Father's voice inspire John's testimony.

CONCLUSION: This witness was given in power, bore fruit in other lives, endured to the end because: (1) It was given in humility, a man who recognizes his limitations (vv. 20-21, 31, 33), a man who reveres revelation and yet (v. 37) counts himself "not worthy." (2) It stood the test of criticism. As to his standing (v. 21). There will always be those who question the right to witness. As to his methods (v. 25). Justified as a preparation for men to be introduced to Jesus. (3) It was given in faith and confirmed by a

token (v. 33). Filled with the Spirit, illumined by the Word, announcing in faith, John still needed to see. What God communicates to the heart He will confirm in life. Do you know Him? Witness to Him? Baptized by Him?

—ALBERT J. LOWN

IF!

SCRIPTURE:

Mark 1:40-45; Matthew 8:2-4; Luke 5:12-14

INTRODUCTION:

- A. This word of two letters has a familiar and outstanding place in life and speech, thinking and conversation, so important that Rudyard Kipling based one of his most magnificent poems upon this one word.
 - B. Scripturally, too, this wee conjunction is often a vital word. John 11:40, a challenge to faith; Daniel 3:17, the highest mark of consecration; II Chronicles 6:24-37, a condition of revival—in this story a summing up of the burden of doubt that afflicts the souls drawing near to Christ. No doubt of His power, unsure of His willingness.
 - C. Not a criminal but pardonable doubt (cf. II Kings 7:2), a nobleman scornfully doubting the power and provision of God—"if," the pardonable doubt of a man whose problem and burden seems too great: Will He really do this for me? Can He stoop to one such as I?
- ### I. THE CAUSES OF DOUBT
- A. The first leper to be healed. A measure of natural doubt always attends the application of power to a new end. (Example: the Wright brothers, the first satellite.) Faith comes easier after the evidence of a first success in any realm. Hitherto no evidence

that the power of Jesus applied to lepers. "Will He, like others, shrink or be afraid?"

- B. The foulness of the disease. Not first stage of disease, but full of leprosy—white as snow, as Miriam (Numbers 12:10); Gehazi (II Kings 5:27). When the leper saw Jesus, he fell on his face. We never feel our foulness as much as when face to face with Jesus. Illustration of John Bunyan's temptation is solved by John 6:37.
- C. A fellowship of despair—the lepers were never found alone (Luke 17:12). Nothing to feed faith in society of outcasts; conversation of the doomed. "IF" sums up tumult of thoughts, questions of the mind, and tragedy of the years. Could have kept him from Jesus, but drove him to Jesus. Doubt can be a sin or a spur. If, as with John the Baptist, it drives us to Jesus, we shall find:

II. THE CURE FOR DOUBT

- A. Break through the barriers, of people, public opinion, etc.
- B. Cast oneself upon the mercy of Jesus—no explanation or excuse. None can perish at the feet of Jesus making personal requests for a perfect cure.
- C. Have faith in the word of Jesus.
- D. Welcome the touch of Jesus.
 1. Compassionate. Courageous as He put forth His hand.
 2. Cleansing took place immediately and was conditional as he was charged to obey the law and prove reality of work to most unbelieving for own spiritual good.

CONCLUSION: Disobedience caused inconvenience to Jesus and His work. Illustration: The ministry of a touch—specialist, blind man, etc.

—ALBERT J. LOWN

Christ's Words

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 11:28-29

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Have been thinking and praying about revival. Asked God what would have me preach on this night.
- B. As prayed, this scripture seemed to come to me. May think it a bit strange for a pre-revival message, but do believe has meaning for us.
- C. Naturally divides self into two parts:
 1. Verse twenty-eight, the promise.
 2. Verse twenty-nine, the way to fulfillment of the promise.

I. THE PROMISE

- A. The word of invitation.
 1. After verse twenty-seven might be somewhat frightened, but Christ extends golden scepter as King Ahasuerus did to Queen Esther.
 2. It is an invitation to come now, present tense.
 3. Means coming "from" someplace "to" someplace.
 4. It is a personal invitation, "unto me," and means He is accessible.
 5. Christ is the only One who can issue such an invitation (I Timothy 2:5).
 - a. Job 9:33.
 - b. Christ is the "daysman" of which Job spoke.
- B. The word of identification.
 1. Greek here means compound of labor and trouble, which equals weariness.
 2. Believe Jesus here means just that: not only physical labor, but drudgery of sin.
 3. There are both power and guilt in sin.
 - a. Prodigal son said to have wished to fill his stomach with hog food, the power of sin.
 - b. He also said that he was no longer worthy to be called the son of his father, the guilt of sin.

4. It is to such that the Lord Jesus Christ identifies His call.

C. The word of impartation.

1. Bible clearly teaches God made man in His own image and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And man then became a living soul. Would seem to be logical, then, since God made it, that only He could give it rest.
2. Jesus promises rest from terror of sin, in peace of conscience; rest from power of sin, in regular order of soul; rest in God, with complacency of soul.
3. Illustration: artist who won prize on subject of "Peace" with painting of mother bird calmly feeding babies beside a roaring waterfall.
4. Further, this is rest without lethargy, rest without inactivity, rest from weariness, rest without confinement, rest without leisure. (That is, this rest is not temporary, as when one has to hurry back to work; it is eternal.)

II. THE FULLFILLMENT

- A. The word of inclusion.
 1. Does it sound like adding burden to burden?
 - a. I can share in the active work of Christ's kingdom.
 - b. I can share in the spirit of the missionary work.
 - c. I can share in the rewards of both types.
 2. Paul the apostle was called a "love slave" for Christ.
 3. How does Christ teach?
 - a. By His Spirit.
 - b. By His Word.
 - c. By His example.
 4. Philippians 2:5-8.
 5. Might be another meaning here also: yoked to one another; therefore be careful to keep up communion of saints in Christian fellowship.
- B. The word of imitation.

1. Look where He chose disciples: not scholars or in kings' houses; from seashore and shop.
 - a. Because He is meek and lowly, has mercy on us when others might rave and rant.
 - b. Begins with us as babes.
2. The lining of the yoke. Illustration: Old Eskimo man in Nome, Alaska, carrying water in summer with a shoulder yoke, padded it to keep from chaffing his shoulders. The love of Christ for me and mine for Him pad my yoke. No more a burden than a bride's ring is to her.
3. Imitate Christ as fledgling artists do great masters.

C. The word of illumination.

1. This is ultimate desire of every human—to find rest and deliverance.
2. Is one thing common to all races in all parts of globe.
3. The Christian upon being saved suddenly finds this great illumination, "I'm free!"
 - a. Affections are abundantly satisfied.
 - b. They are quiet and assured for eternity.

CONCLUSION: Revelation 22:17.

—CLARK H. LEWIS
Sitka, Alaska

The Work of the Holy Spirit

SCRIPTURE: John 14:16-17, 26

TEXT: John 16:18

INTRODUCTION: The Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity. Essentially He has the same attributes as God the Father and Son. Eternal existence (Hebrews 9:14); omnipotence (Romans 27:23); omnipresence (Psalms 139:7); omniscience (I Corinthians 2:10); special reference to Romans 8.

- I. THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS PERSONALITIES (v. 9).

A. Assuring salvation, sanctification, etc.

B. Assuaging our fears of judgment.

- II. THE HOLY SPIRIT INVITES US TO PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (v. 15).

A. He guides us in the way.

B. He guards us in the wilderness.

- III. THE HOLY SPIRIT INITIATES US INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD (v. 15).

A. He inscribes us with a new name.

B. He informs us of a new life.

- IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT INSURES US OF THE GLORY TO BE EXPECTED (vv. 18, 21).

A. What we should expect (we know).

B. What we should enjoy (we shall appear with Him in glory).

- V. THE HOLY SPIRIT INTERCEDES FOR THE CHILDREN OF GOD (v. 26).

A. His interest is in behalf of His children.

B. His intercessions are in harmony with the will of His children.

- VI. THE HOLY SPIRIT INTERVENES FOR THE GOOD OF HIS CHILDREN (v. 27).

A. In times of uncertainty.

B. In periods of testings, etc.

- VII. THE HOLY SPIRIT INDUCES THE CHILDREN OF GOD TO PERSIST IN PRAYER (v. 26).

A. Enabling us to prevail in prayer.

B. Enabling us to persist in prayer.

CONCLUSION: The Spirit of God works in mysterious ways for the good and welfare of all those who have in faith turned themselves over to God. May this encourage us to be led by the Spirit. Amen.

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

The Greatness of the Gospel

SCRIPTURE: Acts 4:33; 5:11

INTRODUCTION:

A. We are living in an age of great things: automobiles, airplanes, radio, television, atomic energy, satellites, etc.

B. But the greatest thing this world has ever known is the gospel.

Our scripture mentions three great things concerning it.

I. GREAT POWER

A. Jesus told His disciples to tarry for and they would receive power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8).

B. We need power in the pulpit.

1. If ministers are to have power, they must stay in constant touch with the source of power.

2. The Psalmist said, "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God" (Psalms 62:11).

C. We need power in the pew.

1. A powerless laity has no right to expect a powerful ministry.

2. Combine power in the pew and power in the pulpit and you will have a powerhouse for God where souls are saved and hearts sanctified.

3. Spurgeon was asked the secret of his great power. He pointed to a room where 300 Christians were gathered in prayer and said, "It is in that room that you will find the secret of the blessings."

D. God's power is available.

1. Greatest unused power in the world is the power of God.

2. God will not send His power to you unless you are willing to be an outlet for that power. (Illustration: Electricity will not pass through a body until that body is grounded and the power has an outlet.)

II. GREAT GRACE

A. Because of their submissiveness to His will they were enjoying the unmerited favor of God.

B. They also found favor in the sight of those who love God.

C. This grace is available to the world if only they will take advantage of it.

III. GREAT FEAR

A. These Christians and unsaved

ones alike had witnessed the great power and grace of God, and now in two brief instances they witnessed the judgment and wrath of God, and great fear came upon them.

B. If Christians could for a brief instance witness the wrath of God:

1. They would gladly pay their tithe and give offerings.

2. They would eagerly attend revivals and other regular means of grace.

3. They would pray and agonize until their loved ones and friends were safe in the fold.

C. If sinners would catch a glimpse of the wrath of God, our churches would be packed and our altars lined.

CONCLUSION: Has your life been endued with power? Are you in possession of great grace? "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. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found" (Isaiah 55:1, 6).

—RALPH E. WEST
Waco, Texas

The Faithfulness of God

TEXT: I Corinthians 1:9a

I. FAITHFUL TO FORGIVE THE SINS OF THE REPENTANT SINNER (I John 1:9)

II. FAITHFUL TO SANCTIFY THE CONSECRATED CHRISTIAN (I Thessalonians 5:24)

III. FAITHFUL TO KEEP FROM THE POWER OF TEMPTATION (I Corinthians 10:13)

IV. FAITHFUL TO SUPPLY ALL OUR NEEDS (Philippians 4:19)

V. FAITHFUL TO ESTABLISH US IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH (II Thessalonians 3:3)

VI. FAITHFUL TO REWARD THE FAITHFUL ONES WITH A CROWN OF LIFE (Revelation 2:10)

—BOB BREEDLOVE

Book of the Month Selection, August, 1960

HOW TO GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH

A. Donald Bell (Zondervan, \$2.50)

Let it be said instantly that the selection of this book as the choice for the book of the month was not made because your Book Editor felt that you personally were having a difficult time getting along with people in your church—perish the thought! But he thought it was the kind of book you could have on hand to tactfully offer to persons in your church who are having trouble getting along with other people in your church.

However, I must hasten to say that the problem of getting along with people is not a problem only of the laity. We ministers have it and we are smart to admit it. So the book is for us. This book is practical, without being technical. It has been written by a man with a broad background of study in the field of counseling and years in the classroom.

You will be impressed by the variety of approaches to an equally great variety of people. It has a spiritual tone throughout and when you have finished reading it and underlining it, as I am sure you will do, it is still the kind of book that if some leader in your local church were to ask for help, he could borrow it and read it himself with distinct benefit.

May we ever remember that breakdown number one in the ministry, as in the lay leadership in the local church, comes most frequently from a failure to get along with people.

RELIGIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD

Howard F. Vos, ed. (Moody Press, \$5.50)

Here is a presentation of world religions as found at the mid-twentieth century. In fifteen chapters, each of the religious groups of the world is covered by different writers, all of whom are thoroughly conservative. Most of them are people who have given years of missionary service in the particular part of the world about which they write.

This is not only academically sound and carefully documented, but here are writers who are thoroughly Christian, and who write with a friendly approach to the gospel everywhere. That is perhaps the outstanding contribution of the book: the warmth of its friendliness toward conservative Christianity.

It deals in careful discrimination with the problem of communism, and Roman Catholicism, in the present world situation. The chapter on Protestantism is sketchy, but quite fair in the appraisal of the contributions of both Calvinistic and Arminian groups.

This is a very worthy book for the minister's library when he wishes to have ready reference material on the vast religious panorama of the world.

POINT OF GLAD RETURN

Lance Webb (Abingdon, \$3.50)

An unusual book by an unusually good author. The author suggests that the "point of glad return" is meeting Christ face to face in all of the vicissitudes of life. It is a clear-cut recommendation for those who have frustrations, frailties, and failures to confront Christ. He is not only Saviour, but One who can help amid the perplexing problems of life.

The arguments are convincing, the entire discussion is wholesome, the life situations are pictured, and are effectively illustrated. The book deals with everyday people in this our everyday world. Special help for a counseling ministry.—E. E. WORDSWORTH.

THE PURPOSE AND WORK OF THE MINISTRY

Gabriel J. Fackre (Christian Education Press, \$2.50)

A gifted and experienced pastor deals with the complexities of the ministry as it is known today. The minister as administrator, educator, organizer, counselor will find help in this book. Vividly and pictorially the activities of the pastoral ministry flash before your eyes as the book is read. It will be a good book to place in the hands of that layman (and there are quite a number in this category) who wonders what a minister does with all of his time, apart from preaching twice on Sunday, and conducting the midweek prayer meeting.—E. E. WORDSWORTH.

THE DAYUMA STORY: Life Under the Auca Spears

Ethel Emily Wallis (Harper, \$3.95)

The Dayuma Story, with subtitle "Life Under the Auca Spears," deserves a prominent spot on the review sheet of any periodical.

Having read eagerly the previous three books in the "Auca" series (*Through Gates of Splendor*, *The Shadow of the Almighty*, and *Jungle Pilot*), I acclaim this the best of them all. One is taken into a detailed description of day-by-day life in the terror-ridden jungles of the Auca territory.

You will discover a haunting fascination in the pitiless, inhuman repetitions of slaying, of murder, infanticide. It will seem impossible to you that any human beings could exist under such a dreadful pall of hate and fear.

Against that bitter, black background there shines the light of Dayuma, the first Auca to escape from her jungle home to find a different pattern of life in the outside, and little by little come to the knowledge of saving grace in Jesus Christ.

This is really the story of Rachel Saint, sister of Nate Saint, the hero of *Jungle Pilot*, and Dayuma. Rachel Saint will undoubtedly gain a stature as one of the missionary greats of the twentieth century, and Dayuma will live long in the hall of fame of missionary nationals.

You will thrill at the conclusion of the story as it ties in with the original massacre of the five missionaries on the Curaray.

This is a book that every Nazarene should read—both ministers and laymen—it will make you love your Blood-bought freedom more; it will stir you to deeper prayer for the benighted areas of the earth.



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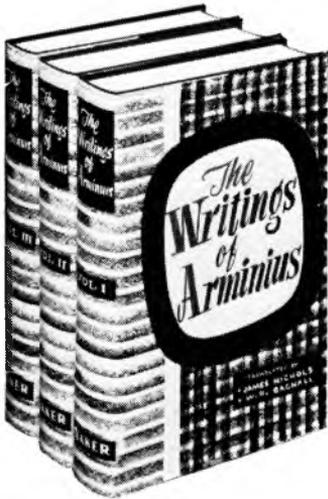
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