

[\(Click here for Index\)](#)

THE
LIFE AND WORKS
OF
CHARLES MITCHELL PULLIAS

Compiled by

M. KURFEES PULLIAS

GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
1948

Copyright by
GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
1948

PREFACE

For some years, many in the churches of Christ have been asking that some of the works of the great evangelist, C. M. Pullias, be left for posterity. It seemed wise, in view of the urgency of the requests, that such a work be attempted. Therefore this book has been compiled, not for the purpose of making a financial gain, but that those who in years past may have heard him preach the gospel may hear his great voice again, and that those who are not privileged to hear him in this generation, and the generations to come, may be able to read these great sermons and articles and meditate upon them.

May this book be a blessing in leading many to a better understanding of the Truth, and the consequent enhancing of their hope of Eternal Life. The material in this book remains as delivered and prepared by C. M. Pullias. Typographical errors and stenographic failures have been eliminated as far as possible. Changes only have been made as necessitated by the existence of such errors that the thoughts may remain those of this great preacher of the gospel.

M. KURFEES PULLIAS.

DEDICATION

This book is lovingly and affectionately dedicated to my beloved wife and lifelong companion, Martha Jane Hearn Pullias, to whom I owe so much for her faithfulness and loyalty in my life's work.

C. M. PULLIAS.

INDEX

(Click on Title for article or sermon)

	PAGE
Preface	3
Dedication	5
Biography of Charles Mitchell Pullias	9
Account of Conversion, L. S. White	20

GOSPEL ADVOCATE ARTICLES

Bible Interpretation	25
Bible Speaks, Where the	27
Blame, Who is to	29
Blessings in Disguise	32
Books, Why So Many	34
Brethren, Unity Among the	37
Christ, The Betrayal of	39
Christ, The Gospel of	41
Christ, The Spirit of	44
Christ , Temptations of	46
Comfort, The Words of	48
Constructive Criticism	51
Church and the World Relation of the	53
Church Versus Denominations, The	56
Church and the Home, The	58
Church, Popularizing the	61
Digressive and Sectarian Literature	63
Division, Responsibility for	66
Doctrines, Some False	68
Drifting, The Danger of	71
Evangelizing the World	73
Evangelism, Concerning World	75
Evil Men and Seducers	78
Faith, Adding to Your	80
Faith The Unity of the	83
Foundation, The	85
God, Calling Upon	87
God, The Love of	90
God, The Peace of	92
God, The Things of	95
Kingdom, the Church, the Body, The	97
Kingdom Question, The	100
Kingdom Some Lessons on the	102
Liberalization	104
Liquor Question The	107
Lots Choice	109
Lord's Supper The	112
Millennium Theories, The	114
Money That Will Be Spent for Beer, The	117
Moses, The Choice of	119
Mothers and Cigarettes	121
Observations and Reflections	124
Old Testament History Some Lessons in	126
Preaching	129
Prophecy, Some Reflections on	131
Question, A Serious	134
Reasons Why We Should or Should Not	136
Saints, The Assembly of the	138
Saints, The Meeting of the	141
Salvation, The Great	143

	PAGE
Scriptures Say, What Do the	145
Scriptures Say on Enmity, What the	148
Seeing Alike and Speaking the Same Things	150
Serving Others	153
Spirit Leads, How the	155
Spirits in Prison, The	157
Spirituality	160
Teaching, The Necessity of	162
Teaching Again, The Necessity of	165
"World, This Present Evil"	167

SERMONS

(Orally delivered, stenographically recorded)

Apostles' Doctrine	171
Apostles' Doctrine, Continuing in the	186
Beginning, The	203
Christ, In	221
Christ, The Authority of	235
Christ, The Blood of	252
Church, Purpose of the	268
Death of the Righteous, Let Me Die the	283
Faith, Walking by	298
Lot's Choice	312
Love	327
Life, He That Would Love	340
Lord's Day, The	355
No Middle Ground	367
Salvation, Growing Unto	381
Sin, Salvation from	396
Spirit Saith Unto the Churches, What the	407
Safety, The Way of	418
Scriptures, Fulfilling the	433
Self-Control	446
Truth, Established in the Present	461
Truth, Handling Aright the Word of	475
Written, That Which Is	491
Will Be Done, Thy	508

MISCELLANEOUS

Acts of Apostles, Synopsis of	519
Advice to the Young, Solomon's	535
Christian, What is a	538
Elders	540
Elders, Overseers, Bishops	543
God's Things and Our Things	545
Judgment Day, The	547
Overseers, Bishops, Elders	550
Religion Today, Authority in	553
The Church	556
Woman's Dress and Demeanor, The Bible Teaching on	556
Excerpts from <i>The Watchman</i> (paper published by Pearl and Bryan Streets Church of Christ, Dallas, Texas)	561

BIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES MITCHELL PULLIAS

In the gently rolling hills of Tennessee, in the county of Trousdale, near Hartsville, Charles Mitchell Pullias was born, April 5, 1872. His father, M. A. Pullias, was a Greek immigrant, having been born on one of the islands off the coast of Greece in the Archipelago, not far from Athens. By profession he was a sailor on the high seas in his young life. In the Crimean War he fought with Greece and Britain against Russia, in which he received a wound causing the loss of one eye. When that war was concluded, he came to America, leaving forever his homeland. In this country M. A. Pullias was engaged in steamboating on the Mississippi River and her tributaries. He married Mary Ann Crank, the mother of Charles Mitchell Pullias. A farm was purchased near the Cumberland River, on Rocky Creek, where Charles Mitchell and four other boys were born.

The parents of Charles were poor. The father continued his steamboating in season and farmed in the summer. The educational opportunities of this day and community were poor. As a result C. M. had little formal education. At school age he attended the country, one-teacher schools three months each year. Textbooks were a scarcity and consisted of whatever one happened to possess on the particular subjects of arithmetic, English, geography, spelling, etc. Each pupil was promoted on his merit, and C. M. made considerable progress by this method. For a few months he attended the Masonic Institute, Hartsville, Tennessee, and was under the tutelage of Professor S. A. Mynders. The results of these meager educational advantages were a fair foundation in elementary subjects, which was to be extremely helpful in later years in gaining more knowledge.

After Charles Mitchell Pullias obeyed the gospel, there possessed him a great desire to improve his education and to be of worth-while service to his Saviour. Hence there followed a period of intense study, both of secular books and the Bible. Every worth-while book he could find or borrow he read by the crude coal-oil lamps of his youth. This study continued after his marriage and the birth of some of the children. Before his marriage his mother often would awaken after midnight to find him still deeply concentrating upon a book of a religious nature or the Bible. He



would not be aware of the lateness of the hour and hurry off to bed.

Charles Mitchell's power of concentration was a great asset in gaining the fine knowledge that he possesses of every secular and Biblical subject. Oblivious of the noise of the children playing on the floor, or in later days the piano practicing, or the radio, he gleaned from the pages he was reading the thoughts contained and stored them up for future use. Today at the age of seventy-four years he is able to discuss intelligently and fluently most any subject, whether ancient or modern. Today at a ripe, old age, when most men are satisfied with what they have learned, he continues to read and study. This is, no doubt, the secret of his perpetual progress and growth from an infant in the family of God to a stalwart, valiant soldier of the Cross

Mary Ann Crank, the mother of Charles Pullias, was a member of the church of Christ from her youth, having obeyed the Gospel at the age of seventeen. His father was Greek Orthodox, having been born in a country where this is considered to be the national religion. However, late in life, at the age of eighty-one, M. A. Pullias was buried with his Lord in baptism and lived faithfully thereafter. In this divided religious environment no important spiritual impression was made upon the life of young C. M. At the age of twenty he began steamboating with his father on the Cumberland. He continued at this work for three seasons. In 1894, at Antioch on Rocky Creek in Trousdale County, Charles Mitchell Pullias obeyed the Gospel under the preaching of Brother L. S. White, then a "boy preacher." Soon he began leading the singing for L. S. White. During these periods of labor he was studying the Bible and gaining the knowledge he soon, by chance, was to use. In a meeting in a schoolhouse, in northern Wilson County, Brother White became ill and could not continue the meeting. C. M. took his place and filled the pulpit twice daily for a week. From that time forward he had many calls in meeting work and monthly appointments. From this humble start he developed one of the greatest preachers of our time.

The first located work of C. M. Pullias was done at Lebanon, Tennessee, when still a young preacher. Here he labored for six years. In this period of work four of his children were born. From Lebanon, he and his family moved to Lewisburg, Tennessee. His sojourn with this congregation was twelve years, during which time the remaining three children came into the world. After an absence of twenty-four years from this congregation he returned, from the state of Texas, to work with them four more years. In this absence of more than two decades, he was located at Huntsville, Alabama, one year; West End, Birmingham, Alabama, four years; Murfreesboro, Tennessee, seven years; Pearl and Bryan Streets, Dallas, Texas, seven years; Longview, Texas, five years. He now lives at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and preaches for the Westvue congregation of that city. It is one of the most pleasant and profitable labors of his entire career.

C. M. Pullias was successful in his local work. Being of a versatile nature, he was able to approach every Bible subject intelligently and ably and preach year after year without repetition. His

located work carried him into some of the largest congregations of the church. Though he enjoyed working with congregations, his first love was the evangelistic field. It is his delight to go into a new field, meet others of like faith, and preach to a variety of audiences. He has held meetings in many of the states of the Union. Wherever he goes, North or South, East or West his efforts are blessed with fruits of his labors, and always a host of friends are left behind.

C. M. Pullias was an able debater. In his younger days, when debates were the rule rather than the exception, he met many opponents of the Truth. With his wonderful knowledge of the Bible and ability to quote it accurately, passage after passage from memory, he was a great champion of the Faith. He also moderated in many other debates, particularly for Brother L. S. White.

For many years Charles Mitchell Pullias was on the staff of the *Gospel Advocate*. He wrote the first page articles for this religious paper for a considerable period of time. He also was song book editor. A number of books were compiled by him for the *Advocate* which are still in general use by the churches

When radio preaching was still somewhat of a novelty, C. M. delivered many sermons over radio station KRLD, Dallas, Texas. He possessed a fine radio voice—deep, mellow and well modulated. Much good was done through this medium of preaching the gospel. Acknowledgments were made of the broadcasts from many states, and many were led to the Truth

In 1922 he was made Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Directors of David Lipscomb College. He had a great love for the school and a great interest in the young people who attended. On moving to Dallas, Texas in 1928 he resigned from this office. In the last several years he has been one of the regular speakers on the Annual David Lipscomb Lectureship Program being given one of the best spots on the program. Through the years he has appeared many times at the chapel service and currently, once a month, is addressing the young preachers of the school. He also has appeared on the lectureship at Abilene Christian College Abilene, Texas

In the first Tabernacle Meeting held in Nashville, Tennessee, Charles Mitchell Pullias led the singing. A difficult decision had to be made as to who would do the pi caching N. B. Hardeman

and C. M. Pullias were put before the churches sponsoring the meeting. The deciding point was that C. M. Pullias, being a masterful song leader, would lead the singing and N. B. Hardeman do the preaching. The meeting was advertised as the "Hardeman-Pullias Meeting." The meeting was a great success in every way. C. M. led the singing throughout the entire meeting without the aid of a pitch fork, or pipe, or any other aid. He did not make a single mistake throughout the meeting. The singing was inspirational. From the throats of more than six thousand persons each night sounded the great songs the church has sung so long. The melody filled that vast auditorium, and tears welled in the eyes of many being moved by hearing the praises of God sung by this great audience.

C. M. Pullias was never taught music formerly. An old lady in the community where he grew up as a boy, at his request, showed him the names of the shaped notes. From this humble start he learned the keys and the round notes and became an able sight-singer of music. He could pick up a new song and sing it in a few minutes. These things he worked out by himself. He also wrote the stanzas to some songs that are now in use in the churches.

That little baby, Charles Pullias, born in Trousdale County, Tennessee, grew to be a fine specimen of humanity. When he reached manhood he stood six feet, three inches, and weighed more than two hundred pounds. He was blessed with black, expressive eyes, usually, and twinklingly pleasant, which sometimes, in moments of stress, become deep, quiet pools of sadness. He inherited the dark complexion and black hair that is prevalent among the Grecians. His tender, compassionate disposition drew the multitudes to him and caused him to be loved everywhere he labored. From his youth he was extremely fond of music, and he possessed a very sensitive ear for it. He learned to play the "fiddle" well, and, before he obeyed the gospel, played for the community dances. When he came into the church he sold his violin. He thus purposely disposed of his greatest means of temptation. He realized the truthfulness of "Shun the very appearance of evil" and "Evil companionships corrupt good morals"

As a boy Charles Pullias was called by his brothers and friends Charlie or Bud. Even now, late in life removed more than two-score years from these scenes and acquaintances, when he returns to these familiar haunts, he is saluted by these nicknames. As a youngster he grew up on the river and in the woods. He loved the great outdoors. He developed into a master marksman, and his prowess as a fly-fisherman was well known among his friends. One of the greatest means of recreation to C. M. was the fox chase. He delighted to hear the hounds "give mouth" in pursuit of "Red Reynard." In many meetings, when the service at night was over, the moonlit evenings of summer and early autumn would find him and some friends on the slopes of the cedar-shrouded hills of his beloved Tennessee, listening to the race. It was sweet melody to his ears. No doubt in those quiet evenings, amidst God's beautiful and inspiring creation, many a great sermon was born in his mind soon to fall upon the hungry ears of an audience. In later years, when the finger of time began to take its toll, some of these things he enjoyed so well had to be foregone. He delights today in relating the events of those wonderful days of vigor and strength when he roamed the woods and waded the streams in quest of recreation. Because of these things the nature of C. M. Pullias was well rounded. None were despised in his sight. He made no distinction between the poor and the rich. His estimate of man was how well he served humanity and his Maker. He could rejoice with those who rejoiced and weep with those who wept. In his tender and affectionate way he could put his hand on the shoulder of the sorrowing and, in his deep, mellow voice, bring words of consolation to assuage the tears and relieve the pangs of an aching heart

Charles Mitchell Pullias had the soul of a poet. He was fond of good literature. In his library, besides the books of a religious nature, were several volumes by well known authors, of prose and poetry. So distinctly the memory remains of the open fireplace with its myriad scenes—mother mending some child's garment, the children huddled around on the floor in rapt attention as Dad read a poem of sweet words and tender sentiment, the deep pathos of his voice enthralling all. These scenes remain but memories in life's rugged way never to be lived again. Oh, pity

the soul having none of these to remember and in reminiscence live them again!

After obeying the gospel, Charles Pullias continued another season steamboating. Because of the ungodly environment, and hence a handicap in living the Christian life, he left this work. At this time he was twenty-three years old. Soon after returning home he married Miss Sallie Scoggins of the neighborhood, a lifelong acquaintance. Thirteen months later she passed away, leaving a two weeks old baby. His mother took the baby to rear it, but it also passed away six months afterward. Thus early in life the cloud had cast its shadow upon this young man. He bore his burdens and labored hard to pay his debts, which he did with the aid of his friends. In this period of his life C. M. began to preach. In one of his protracted meetings he met Miss Martha Jane Hearn, of near Watertown, Tennessee. After a period of courtship, they were married July 11, 1898.

Martha Jane Hearn Pullias was reared in a Missionary Baptist home. As a young lady in school she came under the influence of the Truth. One of her professors, a Mr. Gross, would teach the children Bible stories. It eventually led to a teaching of the full story of the Cross. Martha Jane was convinced the church of Christ was the New Testament church. She revealed her intentions of obeying the gospel to her parents. They, of course, bitterly objected. They were biased toward the church and referred to it as the "Campbellite Church." She, however, was determined to obey the gospel. One week end she visited a girl friend. Brother L. S. White was holding a meeting in this community Martha Jane borrowed some of her friend's clothing, made the good confession, and was baptized. Her home life for a time was not pleasant after this. The subject of religion could not be discussed, but her parents were readers of the Bible. As Martha Jane would read it she would mark the passages that teach the plan of salvation. Her parents began in this way to be led to the Truth. Sometime after she married C. M. Pullias, her parents wrote that they desired to be baptized into Christ. Hence the deed was done, and this young lady was instrumental in leading her own parents to Christ

Martha Jane was a beautiful young woman. She had light brown hair and eyes. Her complexion was fair and remains lovely

even now. She was a real helpmeet to young C. M. Without her loyalty and devotion, he could hardly have succeeded. There fell upon her shoulders the responsibility of the management of the home, because her husband was away from home so much in protracted meetings. As the children came along, the problems and responsibilities of discipline were also hers. She was a firm disciplinarian, as she needed to be, with five boys to oversee and control. Yet in all her dealings with her children she was kind and gentle. She loved her children dearly. Long hours of toil were spent in keeping the home, which was always spotlessly clean. She was a fine seamstress, and while the children were young she made most of their clothes. She also made many of her own dresses and hats. She was gifted with a talent to create these things. Everyone admired her ability to create and make these things so beautifully. A lasting memory to her children are the cakes and cookies she used to make. They were of the finest and were rationed out to the children. At Christmas and Thanksgiving she always made several cakes—coconut, chocolate, caramel, and angel food. The latter she would often decorate beautifully with rose buds, violets, and other flowers she made of colored icing. She was an exceptionally good cook. Large quantities of food had to be prepared, because the family was large; but it was always well-seasoned and palatable. Usually none was left by the growing children when the meal was finished.

Martha Jane Pullias was a wonderful wife and mother. She made many sacrifices for her family, especially her children. Many times she did without that they might have. Her interest in their welfare was exceedingly great. None can appreciate the anxious moment of a mother except a mother. When one of the children would be late coming home, while the rest of the family was asleep she kept a lonely vigil awaiting the child's return. When Sutton, one of the twins, was at death's door in the hospital at Dallas, Texas, for days she did not remove her clothing. She would only eat in response to the most insistent urging of her husband and children, then obviously the food was not relished. When he finally passed away after several days of illness, she resigned herself to the loss of her first child in the spirit of the Master, "Father, thy will be done." Always afterward, when the family was together, and it came time to eat, a shadow would fall upon her

face tears would well up in her tender mother eyes. All would know her mind had turned back to The Garden of Memories in the distant city where the dust of her departed son was at rest.

C. M. Pullias has paid her many tributes, giving to her the credit for the good he has been able to do by preaching the gospel and saving souls. She was the anchor of his life, for he knew, regardless of how far away he might be she was at home keeping the home fires burning. Now the fire on the hearth has gone out, the last peal of childish laughter has ceased to echo the finger of tune has written its story and these two beloved characters lean upon one another. Their lives are closely entwined by almost forty eight years of love and devotion, shadows and sunshine, good fortune and bad. Now, in the sunset years they are inseparable. Wherever the voice of duty calls they answer together, hand in hand.

To the marriage union of Charles Mitchell Pullias and Martha Jane Hearn were born seven children—Charlotte (Charlie), the twins Sutton and White Paul Kurfees, David Lipscomb (D. L.), and Mary Ruth. All survive except William Sutton. He passed away in Dallas, Texas, April 24, 1938. All the children are members of the body of Christ. Marshall Kurfees Pullias, the fifth child of the family gives his entire time to preaching the gospel. At the time of his birth, his father was in a meeting with Brother M. C. Kurfees at the old Campbell Street church, now Haldeman Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky, hence the name. The children are all married and live in the South and Southwest.

Charles Mitchell Pullias became a masterful speaker, employing a unique style in his preaching. He has never used notes of any kind. This great preacher was blessed with a great mind, possessing an ability to retain all that he learned. He has what might be called a photographic mind. Often he has stated that he can picture the words, pronunciations, verse numbers and location on the pages of the Bible the passage to be quoted. In delivering sermons he never opens the Bible but quotes and accurately, the text oftentimes as much as an entire chapter and the related scriptures as well. His sermons are logically arranged and presented in a simple yet eloquent way. C. M. acquired a fine vocabulary and though he had little formal education his rhetoric is excellent. Blessed with a deep, powerful, yet gentle voice he was easily

heard regardless of the size of the auditorium or audience. It is said by excellent judges of speaking and the preaching of the gospel that he is one of the most versatile of all who proclaim the Truth. There is not a theme of the Bible with which he is not familiar and in power and logic able to discuss and teach. He stands among the greatest in the brotherhood of Christ. Now, even at the age of seventy-four, his mind is alert and his power of proclaiming God's Word undiminished.

Charles Mitchell Pullias never compromised one principle of the Truth. His love for it causes him to abhor a wresting or twisting of the Holy Scriptures in any effort by man to support a peculiar tenet, or practice. He despises and denounces sin and any attempt to pervert the gospel of Christ, both in and out of the church. He oft has said privately and from the pulpit: "I want to have friends, but not at the sacrifice of the Truth. I'd rather die friendless and a pauper, if such is necessary, and be loyal to the Word of God."

Today there is a crying need for men of his caliber and loyalty in the world; men who will proclaim from the housetops the "unsearchable riches of Christ" without fear or favor; teaching "the pattern of sound words" unmoved by popular pressure.

C. M. never used any jokes, tales, or personal experiences in his preaching. He has maintained the Bible is all-sufficient and that every illustration necessary pertaining to spiritual things is found in the Word of God. His sermons were filled with meat; there was no dross. The audiences were instructed and edified in spiritual things. Thus a lasting impression for good was left upon his hearers.

It surpasses the ability of man to estimate the extent of the influence for good of the godly life of this man, or of others who have lived by the precepts of the Lord. Wherever the churches of Christ exist the name of C. M. Pullias is known. In the Southland his name is a household word in Christian homes, but the glory is God's. This man "presented the members of his body as instruments of righteousness unto God." This great influence for obeying the will of God will not cease in this generation, but will continue on in our children's children. In the Pullias family several nephews of C. M. are preachers of the gospel and educators. Athens Clay Pullias, President of David Lipscomb College;

Irby Pullias, Hartsville, Tennessee; and Earl V. Pullias, Dean, George Pepperdine College, are sons of John G. Pullias, Castalian Springs. From their earliest childhood they have loved and respected Uncle Charlie and often have come to him for advice. Marshall Kurfees Pullias is the only son of C. M. Pullias preaching the gospel. He is now located with the church at Clarksville, Tennessee.

C. M. Pullias was not one to boast or advertise the fruits of his labor. He has no record of the number of meetings he has held or persons he has baptized. Those he has assisted in obeying the gospel would number in the thousands. He purposely refrained from keeping such records lest he boast. The record is in the Master's hands, and the treasure where moth and rust doth not consume. Today he has a host of friends, but few enemies. Seldom a week passes that he is not called to conduct funeral services for old friends departed. Though it taxes his strength, he never refuses. He seldom eulogizes the deceased, but exhorts, in eloquent and gentle words, the living to live "righteously and godly in this present world."

This great man is now in the evening of his life. The sun is going down, but he labors on untiringly in the Master's vineyard, unafraid, though the night of death is near, for he looks to that Land of Fadeless Day where there shall be no more labors or tears, only eternal rest under the shade of the trees, in the home of the Soul.

M. KURFEES PULLIAS.

ACCOUNT OF CONVERSION

When I was what the world calls a "boy preacher," after I had been preaching only three months for full time, I did the preaching in a meeting at the Antioch church in Trousdale County, Tennessee, near Hartsville. After the meeting had been going on for a week, I was told about Charlie Pullias. His father was born and reared in Greece and was a "Greek Catholic." His mother was born and reared in America. The family lived only a few miles from the Antioch church, and Charlie was attending the meeting. I soon learned he was a leader among the young people and was very popular with them. He was a fine musician. He played well on the violin and played for many dances in that section. He was a good baseball player and helped the young people have much worldly fun. That night I made it a point to meet him and talk to him a while. In my first conversation with him I said to him: "Anybody that can lead people in the wrong direction can lead them in the right direction. And now I am asking you to obey the gospel and make a preacher of the gospel. There is no telling how much good you can do in preaching the gospel, and I will be glad to help you in every way I can." I never saw a young man who seemed more surprised. He studied a little bit before saying a word and then said to me, "I'll think about it." Exactly a week later he confessed his faith in Christ, and I had the pleasure of baptizing him into Christ. He was the last and the thirtieth person to be baptized in that meeting. Two of his brothers and many of his special friends were baptized in the same meeting. His father was "mate" on a large steamboat, and C. M. also had a position on the same boat. In a short time he quit working on the boat and wrote me that he did not consider it a suitable place for a Christian to work. So he came home. He sold his violin and would not play for another dance. He immediately became very much interested in the church and church work. He also was a close student of the Bible. He soon was taking a part in prayer meetings and singings. A year later he married a fine girl that I had baptized and that he had known all his life. I had the pleasure of baptizing her and marrying them. She only lived a short time, and of course her passing was of much sorrow to the young husband. At that time I was living at Watertown, Tennessee, on a farm. I held many meetings in

schoolhouses where the gospel had never been preached and where, of course, I could not expect much support. When I found out that Brother Pullias was a good singer, I commenced taking him with me; and in Wilson, Trousdale, Jackson, and Smith Counties, in Tennessee, we held many meetings. We would sweep the houses, light the lamps, cut the wood, and build the fires when the weather was cold enough to need fires. He would lead the singing and I would do the preaching. He soon got to where he would read a chapter, or offer prayer, or both. I soon saw that he was a fine prospect for a preacher, and I went to work in that direction. We would room together in those mission meetings and spend some time every day studying the Bible. I began talking to him about making a preacher, and he didn't seem, for a time, to think he could. But I saw he was rapidly growing in that direction. I would ask him many questions about the Bible, and that would give me further opportunity to teach him. We had many remarkable experiences in those meetings—experiences that have been very helpful to both of us. We got opportunities to talk to many people and teach them what to do to be saved and how to live the Christian life. We also had many fine examples set before us by seeing how people made their homes what a Christian home should be.

Here are the circumstances under which C. M. Pullias actually began public preaching: He had been leading the singing, and we had been working together about two years and were in a meeting in a schoolhouse in Wilson County, Tennessee, near Hunter's Point. On Tuesday night, when the meeting had been going on three days, I was taken quite sick and the remainder of the week was unable even to sit up. Next morning Brother Pullias went to the schoolhouse and preached, and he went back and preached morning and night till the following Sunday night and helped care for me also. He made good impressions which were very encouraging to him as well as myself, but he continued going with me and singing for some time after that. After I got well and back preaching, we were together in a meeting with a small country congregation, and one day, soon after dinner, a man came several miles in a buggy and asked that I go with him and baptize a sick man who was very ill and wanted to be baptized. I asked Brother Pullias to go and baptize the man, and he did.

That was the first person he ever baptized. The next year we held a meeting where I got sick and where he preached his first sermon. Quite a few people obeyed the gospel in this meeting, and we carried them to the river at the Hunter's Point Ferry. We had to cross the river in a "ferryboat," and it was just crowded with people. As we were crossing the river to get a suitable place to baptize, Brother Pullias asked the crowd to sing, and he led them in singing that beautiful song, "We Shall Reach the River Side Some Sweet Day." It certainly made a good impression. After we crossed the river and got ready to baptize several who had made the confession, we started with the youngest, who was twelve years old, and the last one baptized was seventy-five years old. While I was leading each one out of the water, Brother Pullias would lead the audience in singing a verse. They were singing the good old song, "How Firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord," and when I baptized the woman who was seventy-five, as we were walking out of the water he sang the verse of that song, "Even Down to Old Age All My People Shall Prove." Then we all got back in that big ferryboat and crossed the river, and while crossing the river Brother Pullias led the crowd in singing, "Let Us Pass Over the River and Rest Under the Shade of the Trees." A group of people who had just come to America stood on the opposite bank of the river, listened to the singing, and watched the people being baptized. After we got back to where they were across the river, they asked me several questions as to what it was all about, and it gave me an opportunity to teach them some truth they had never heard before.

About that time the section foreman of a railroad at Brush Creek, in Smith County, sent for me to hold a meeting in a school-house near there. I had my time all taken for that fall and could not go. I sent Brother Pullias. He had never held a meeting, and had only baptized the one person already named. He went. At the first service that railroad man obeyed the gospel and led the singing throughout the meeting. Eleven persons were baptized in that, the first meeting C. M. Pullias ever held. And that is not all the story. In that meeting he met a beautiful young lady and fell in love with her, and she fell in love with him. Her people, including herself, belonged to a denomination and had never been taught anything else. Brother Pullias began teaching her the

truth, and a few months later she came down to Watertown, confessed her faith in Christ, and I baptized her. Then soon after that I had a four-day debate at Brush Creek with a prominent preacher who was old enough to be my father. She attended the debate, and the next week she and Brother Pullias came to our home and I married them and they spent the first night there. He was my moderator in that debate. And I will add here that he was my moderator in at least a dozen debates, and was certainly a good one. Usually he would come to my home and we would study together a few days getting ready for the debate.

Soon after his marriage, Brother Pullias began preaching for the church at Lebanon, Tennessee. Soon after that time I was called there for a meeting and stayed in his home, which was a happy occasion to me. Brother Pullias has held many meetings in several states.. He has also done much local work in Tennessee and Texas. On his first trip to Texas he was one of the speakers at the annual lectureship at Abilene Christian College. I was the only preacher present who knew him, and Brother Batsell Baxter, who was then President of that college, got me to introduce Brother Pullias. So I got to hear his first sermon in Texas. At a later time he moved to Dallas and for several years worked with the Pearl and Bryan Streets church and did much good. Then he took work with the church at Longview, Texas, and preached there for some years. He is now at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Westvue congregation, devoting full time with that splendid church. And I will say here that I never associated with a preacher who was a better student of the Bible than C. M. Pullias. He surely does love to preach the gospel and he loves to sing. He was selected to lead the singing in the first one of the "Tabernacle Meetings" in Nashville. N. B. Hardeman did the preaching. I have been told that several thousand people were present each service and that C. M. Pullias led over two hundred different songs and never got the "pitch" wrong a single time.

It was my pleasure to baptize all his brothers except one, and he is now a Christian. Brother Pullias has several nephews preaching the gospel. He also has one son, Kurfees Pullias, who is now the minister of the church at Clarksville, Tennessee. Two

of the nephews of Brother Pullias are doing fine work in school, one at David Lipscomb College and another at George Pepperdine College. Another nephew is Superintendent of Schools at Hartsville, Tennessee, and all three of them are fine preachers. I am not acquainted with all the children of Brother Pullias, but I hear that one of the boys was named for me, and of course I appreciate that. It is a great source of joy to me to think what it has meant to the cause of Christ to break into the Pullias family, lead them into the truth of the gospel of Christ, and see the tremendous influence for good that has resulted from the same, just as it is a great source of joy to me to see the number of fine preachers who obeyed the gospel when I was doing the preaching. These preachers are living in several states, and I love them all. But that is not all. When I think of more than nine thousand people I have seen come forward to obey the Lord, and to think of the great work many of them are doing, my soul is overflowing with joy; and, among other things, it makes me want to work harder than ever. May God bless my beloved son in the gospel, C. M. Pullias, and give him more years to lead others to Christ and to enjoy the love and kindness of his good wife and children and his thousands of good friends. "God be with you till we meet again!"

L. S. WHITE.

Gospel Advocate Articles

BIBLE INTERPRETATION

The interpretation of certain passages has been influenced greatly by what the interpreter believes or is practicing. I am quite of the opinion that the great majority of questions that are asked about the Scriptures and religious practices and disturbances are not asked for information, but to justify some belief or practice. It has been very destructive to seek to justify one's self. We ask questions and make arguments to justify the positions we hold. We even read the Bible to this same end. This has resulted in much bad interpretation.

We should ask questions, read the Bible, and engage in argumentation only to learn the truth of God. We should always be aware that the word of God settles all questions, and not what I say or think, nor what any other uninspired man says. The temptation seems to be strong to do this very thing when we are caught in error. We at once begin to seek for justification, and in doing this we bring the Bible into it by ruthlessly wrenching passages from their proper connections and making them prove that which God never intended. For anyone to thus use the word of God is to invite swift destruction and damnation upon himself. It is serious to pervert the word of a man, but much more serious to pervert the word of God. It should be remembered that the word of God is the same regardless of what anyone may say about it, and by it everyone will be judged in the last day. People are constantly trying to prove their positions now by what some uninspired man has said, and not even then giving his true position, but garbling and plainly misrepresenting him.

ARE THE COMMANDMENTS GRIEVOUS?

They are only made so by our practice or disposition to do something not taught. Perhaps this is why the apostle warns so against "foolish and ignorant questions." No passage that has to do with human conduct would be at all hard to understand but for this disposition. Had people been disposed to do the will of God and had not fallen into the habits or some fads of the age, no commandment would be grievous at all. Not even the question so agitated on women cutting their hair. There would be no

trouble to understand this, had they not cut their hair. Trying to justify what we do by the word of God is hard. Trying to make the Bible fit such practices only makes the Bible hard of comprehension. People who take the Bible and the Bible only— people who believe what it says, regardless of whom it is for or against—will have but little trouble learning the truth. But when we set out to make the Bible fit our practice, we are courting trouble from the beginning. Even when we read the Bible we should not read to find justification for what we believe or do, but to know the truth, with our minds made up to do it when discovered. Let us do some real fundamental work in our own hearts to the end that we shall have a mind to do the will of God before ever we read a line. Then God will help us and bless us in our reading. But to read it to justify our practices, we go alone and without God's help.

Out of all the men who did wrong found in the Holy Scriptures, only one sought not to justify himself, and that one is said to be after God's own heart. Adam sought to justify himself; Eve sought to justify herself. But neither was successful. Both were condemned. Saul, the first king of Israel, sought to justify himself in his first offense—that a sacrifice must be offered before the battle, and that Samuel was not there, who was the proper person to do it, for he was the priest, and, therefore, it was an emergency; so he offered it himself. But he was severely condemned by Jehovah. There is, therefore, no emergency today which would justify the setting aside of the word of God. It is often said that we just had to do something. But let me remark that nothing can arise that will justify acting independent of the law of God. This is the argument that is made to justify mechanical instruments in the worship. "We cannot sing; we must do something." Therefore, we have the innovation. It is argued in favor of all human organizations that the church will not do anything, and we must have these human societies. It is better to do it this way than not at all. This is a subterfuge and a deception. And be it further said that this excuse is given for every untaught thing in religion. It does not matter if there is no one who does what God requires in all the world, we are still not justified in changing, or substituting for, the word of God.

Prejudice and bias by early training and predilections have much to do with shaping out ideas, especially in religious matters. Let no man deceive himself. God is not mocked. Anyone with a New Testament, uninfluenced by anything taught him by uninspired men, will easily learn the truth. No one would have one bit of trouble in learning from the Bible, and that alone, what baptism is and why people should be baptized. If uninspired men had not substituted sprinkling for baptism, no one would have ever heard of it, for the Bible nowhere intimates such a thing. But it is argued: "If baptism is immersion and a condition of salvation, what will become of the thousands who have never been immersed?" This is but an effort to justify sprinkling. Let us learn to be more like David—when we are wrong, say, "I have sinned," instead of seeking some deceptive excuse for its justification. This is true not only among denominationalists, but within the ranks of the church. Be it remembered that majorities or minorities, nor anything else of the kind, decide anything. The word of God only is authority. Nothing is settled till it is settled right, and it is never settled right till settled by the word of God.

WHERE THE BIBLE SPEAKS

I prize the *Gospel Advocate* for its work and marvelous history. The fight it has made for pure Christianity appeals to me. Its former owners and editors have fallen asleep. I am happy to do my little part to carry on the work they so nobly began. Some opponents are reported to have said years ago that they could do nothing till there were some funerals in Nashville. The funerals are history, but the stubborn opposition to their innovations continues. There is no indication that a compromise will ever be effected.

There is no middle ground between the word of the Lord and human device. We are, therefore, uncompromisingly opposed to all things not taught by the apostles of Christ in religion. Anything the Lord did not teach through his apostles, and the New Testament church did not practice, is to be regarded as intolerable. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." This will put

an end to all untaught things which have divided the churches through all the years. No one has a right to write a thing or teach a thing, contrary to this passage, which has to do with human life and destiny. For "whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Let us never depart from the revealed things, therefore.

The Bible is the greatest book in the world. It bears the same relation to the world of books that the sun bears to the universe. If the sun should be taken away, every star would go out and the moon could not shine. Without the Bible, men would be groping their way in darkness without God and without hope in the world. We live by faith, and by faith we overcome the world; and faith cometh by hearing the word of God. If it should be taken away, what would we do, therefore? How indispensable is the Bible and a knowledge of it! How glad we are that the Book has been preserved to this day! Let us read the Bible, therefore, and be governed wholly by what it says in all matters of faith and practice.

We can all go hand in hand so long as we go by what the Bible says. Jesus prayed that his disciples might be one. Paul exhorted brethren all to "speak the same things" and to "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." If we have due respect for the word of God, this unity is possible.

"Where the Bible speaks, let us speak; and where the Bible is silent, let us be silent," is a good saying. The word of the Lord is all-sufficient in "all things pertaining to life and godliness," to the end that "the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The time is now when men should "preach the word" and leave everything else alone. No man has any right to give his "views" on anything in religion or to tell what he "thinks" about it. All visionary and speculative preaching should be avoided. A fearful responsibility is resting on those who teach and preach. God said through Moses: "The prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even

that prophet shall die." James said: "Be not many masters [teachers], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." Every teacher and preacher is tempted at times to speak without authority. Let us pray that we may in such hours stop on the side of known truth. We should remember the words of one of old: "I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." No insurance company ever settled a policy by what the agent said, but by the conditions in the policy. Our destinies will be determined, not by what men say, but by the things that are "written." To the Corinthians Paul said: "That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." To teach and practice things in the name of Jesus Christ that he never commanded is a plain usurpation of authority, and the Lord will not hold him guiltless who does so. To hear and do the word of the Lord is to build on the rock against which no storm can ever break to our dismay.

There are many people who are trying to go to heaven on what the Bible does *not* say. They seem to be thoroughly satisfied to do things because the Bible says nothing about them. One who travels the highways must be guided by what the official signboards and markers *say* and not by what they *do not say*. If one should try to reach his destination by what the signboards do *not* say, he would never reach it. It is not what the Bible does *not say*, but what it *says*, that is our guide. What it does not say is too uncertain. It does not say so many things. What it says is limited and specific. Those who would keep in the "strait and narrow way" must observe to do *all* that it says and *only* what it says. He who ignores what it says imperils his life: for "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"; and "without faith it is impossible to please him."

WHO IS TO BLAME?

An article in one of our exchanges complains of the failure of world evangelism. It is deplored that those who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God are not all united in one effort to

accomplish this most desirable task. Its writer is of the opinion that inasmuch as all denominations are agreed upon this great fundamental truth, other matters upon which they differ should not prevent affiliation to this end. None who love Jesus Christ can do other than deplore the divided condition that exists among those who believe that he is the Christ. Jesus prayed that "they all may be one, . . . that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Many people have lost faith in all religion because of these divisions. The article sets forth the view that doctrinal differences are a minor matter and should be forgotten for the sake of unity. The things that divide are not in the Bible. They are matters of opinion. Division cannot be justified on such ground.

Who, then, is to blame for division? The doctrine of Christ is plainly presented in the Bible, and we are admonished to, "Mark them that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." When John wrote of the "doctrine of Christ" he admonished: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." When one brings some other doctrine, and division results, who is to blame? Both those who bring the foreign doctrine and those who permit such doctrine to be brought violate this Scripture.

Since there are those who bring strange doctrines, and we are commanded to "turn away from them," can we obey God and not do it? How much of what he commands can we ignore and still obey him? Who taught us the art of separating the commands of God into two groups, the essential and the nonessential? Who will dare to draw the line? Offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom they come, is the warning of the Savior.

Now, who destroys oneness in Christ? Those who preach and practice that which he does not teach. Who makes it impossible for all who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God to cooperate in the evangelization of the world? Those who preach and practice that which Christ never taught. We ask that all people lay down their man-made creeds and doctrines and take the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the rule of faith and practice. All agree that this is right in word, but in works they deny it. On the Bible we are

ready to join with everybody in the evangelization of the whole world, but on no other ground.

When one confesses that he believes with all his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, he is under obligation to accept the whole Bible. That is what the confession means. No one can believe this great truth and at the same time reject any part of the Bible. Neither can one who so believes add anything to it, or do anything he has not commanded, for he is the "author and finisher of our faith." Preachers cannot sprinkle water on people, even infants, as a substitute for baptism, in the name of Jesus Christ, for Christ never commanded any such thing. Water only —unmixed water—was never sprinkled on anybody for any purpose by the authority of God, since the world began. Yet we are asked to ignore this for the sake of unity. We are asked to lay aside what the Bible teaches in order to have union and cooperation. The only ground of union is the Word of God. We stand ready always to unite on that basis, but on no other. Does one who believes with the *whole heart* that Jesus is the Christ introduce unscriptural things into the worship, and organize human societies for doing the work of the church? Are not such actions indicative of a lack of respect for the authority of Christ? These things, they say, are not of sufficient importance to cause trouble. Then why not leave them off?

A Baptist paper reports that there have been two million people baptized into the Baptist Church within a given period. Why should they baptize any, since according to their doctrine they can be Christians while they live and go to heaven when they die and not be baptized at all? If baptism is nonessential, so is the Baptist Church. If there are blessings in the Baptist Church that cannot be had out of it, then baptism is essential to reaching these blessings, and the unbaptized cannot enjoy them. But if there are no blessings in the Baptist Church that cannot be had out of it, Baptist baptism and the Baptist Church are worthless things. Why baptize anyone into an institution when he can do as well outside of it? There is not a single blessing necessary to the salvation of the soul in any denomination in the world that cannot be had out of that denomination. Therefore, the denomination itself is a non-essential. This puts all denominations on a par with each other. Not one of them is necessary to salvation.

The blood of Christ and all spiritual blessings are in Christ, and we are baptized into him. (Gal. 3:27.) To be in Christ is to be in his body. (Eph. 5:30.) To be in his body is to be in the church. (Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1:22, 23; 1 Cor. 12:13.) These blessings are essential to salvation, and baptism is essential to these blessings, for we are baptized into Christ. The unbaptized are out of Christ and cannot enjoy them. All spiritual blessings are in Christ, in his body, the church. (Eph. 1:3.) All Christians are new creatures, and all new creatures are in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17.) Whatever it takes, therefore, to make one a Christian, it takes to make him a member of the church.

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

James said: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Patience never would be developed in us but for these temptations that so severely try our faith. The work of patience is to develop perfection, to the end that we are to be "entire, wanting nothing." No one enjoys the burning fires of temptations and the anxiety and pain of trial. But the result in our lives is altogether delightful. They serve as chastisements of the Lord, perhaps so that "afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Patience, perfection, entirety, lack of nothing, and the peaceable fruits of righteousness are the result of temptations, tribulations, and trials that overtake the children of God. For this reason, perhaps, Jehovah said: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." These trials bring us down upon our knees and make us realize our absolute dependence upon God. Our hearts are hard and callous, and yet they hold sweetness. These trials are designed to break the heart and release the sweet things that are locked up within. The sweetest song, the softest prayer, and the richest service can be rendered by the heart that is crushed. We come closer to God and closer to our fellows. Have you never listened to the voice of one on whose home or heart the shadow had fallen? Did you not observe how sober and serious the person? Even the tone of the voice

carried significance. Jehovah overrules everything to the good of his faithful children. He has designed that temptation and tribulation work much the same end in us—that is, to train the tendrils of our hearts about his throne and pick open the petals of our hearts to fill the world with fragrance. Our hearts are somewhat like the alabaster box of ointment in the hands of Mary—it was a blessing to no one till it was broken. It was costly, but it had to be broken before its sweetness could fill the room. God said to Abraham: "I will bless thee, but be thou a blessing." So, therefore, he must leave his people and land and be a stranger in a strange land.

James again said: "Behold, we count them happy which endure." The road is hard and flinty and beset with difficulty on every hand: temptation, and sorrow, and tribulation, and trial, and sacrifice, and self-denial, all of the way. "Strait is the gate and narrow the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The road to achievement is "strait"—difficult—and not many find joy in it. But they are happy who have traveled it. The thing that stimulates people to break the ground, cast the seed, and cultivate the growing crop, is the hope of the harvest when autumn comes. People who behold the prolific yield count the harvester happy. He is only reaping what he has sown. Moses "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: *for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.*" Moses suffered many unpleasant things in Midian and in the wilderness wanderings, but these all are as nothing compared to his reward in heaven. The road that leads to heaven is not easiest, but by the help of God we can travel it.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Everything else that we do may be in vain. We may acquire earthly possessions and they may fail us. We may build a dwelling and live to see it taken from us. For "the time is short: it remaineth, that both they

that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away." Therefore, all earthly things will fail us. No doubt this is the reason that we are exhorted to "set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth," and "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." We can secure abstracts for our real estate and hoard our personal belongings, but such will not suffice. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" In view of this, it is exceedingly encouraging to know "that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." When our earthly goods are piled in heaps of ruin and their charred remains only mock us, whatever we may have done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will stand in perfect preservation. It is on the Rock. This being true, no sorrow should drive us from God's service. There is no price too great to pay, and we should find a real joy in the greatest sacrifice that we may be called upon to make. We should never be discouraged, for we know that our reward is sure. With such assurances, let us press on to the prize of the mark of the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." If when we are dead one must go to the burying ground to find that such one ever lived, our lives have been a failure.

WHY SO MANY BOOKS?

Solomon said: "Of the making of books there is no end." The same thing seems to be true of religious papers today. Why so many? One would conclude that their object is to tell people about the things God forgot to put in the Bible. Most of them contain little of what is in the Bible. Jesus said and did many things that "are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Since people can believe and be saved through the name of Jesus Christ without knowing the things not written, why seek to know them? What advantage would it be to find them out? The things Jesus did.

"if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." The mails today are loaded down with periodicals, tracts, and books which carry to the people things not found in the Bible. These are but chaff compared to the wheat. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." They are taking the people's time and money that should be given to the word of God and to publishing from press and pulpit the gospel of Jesus Christ. Religious books and journals filled with untaught things further strife and contention. The church is essential, for no one can be saved out of it. The gospel is essential, "for it is the power of God unto salvation." The things revealed are ours, "that we may do all the words of this law." The secret or unrevealed things are the Lord's. We are told to avoid "untaught questions." They "gender strife."

"Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Men should never organize any institution or teach anything for which we have not a "thus saith the Lord." Paul said: "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men." No publication should promote organizations and institutions of men in the realm of religion. These exalt men rather than God, and bestow lavishly their praises on the works of men. The New Testament church was never found fostering such societies, nor publishing tracts and papers to fasten them upon the people of the Lord. But for the printing of untaught things, they would soon perish. Much is said about personal liberty and individual rights. But no one has the liberty or the right to fill the world with the doctrines of men. No one has a right to publish anything in religion that the Bible does not teach. No one has a right to his opinion to the extent that he can push it to the division of the Lord's church. The world would be better off if there were no books or papers that teach the opinions of men. If every book and paper would tell only "the story of Jesus and his love," teach the plan of salvation, and "speak to the people all the words of this life," the world would be blessed by their influence. Let those who write or teach, write and teach only such things as the Bible contains and stop at that. Every untaught thing men try to propagate calls for additional publications and contributes materially

to the confusion already filling the world. Let the story of the cross of Christ be the light of every nation and the power that draws a weeping world to his feet, where "the burden is rolled from the heart and the mist cleared from the eyes."

There is not one untaught thing practiced in religion that does not make void some commandment of God. The Pharisees asked Jesus: "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?" Whereupon, Jesus answered: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" He then added: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Anything, therefore, not taught in the Holy Scriptures, when practiced in religion, makes some command of God of "none effect."

Take human societies through which to do missionary work. They supplant the church, the Lord's only institution for such work, and make it of "none effect." If infant baptism should be universally practiced, then believer's baptism would be made void and impossible. This would make void the great commission, which says, "Preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; for all would be baptized before they believe. The preaching, believing, and baptizing would all be "made of none effect." All such, then, are found to fight against God. God's order must be observed and his work carried on in his own way. It is strange that thousands of publications and enormous sums of money are spent in the name of religion, teaching things people do not have to believe or do to be Christians while they live and go to heaven when they die. Let the people pay more attention to God's Word and less to men and their books. Let us fill the earth with the pure Word of God; be like the early disciples, who "went everywhere preaching the word," and nothing else. "And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus." "We are all here ... to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord." "And they spake the word of the Lord unto him." "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine."

UNITY AMONG THE BRETHREN

It is a shame that those who claim to be Christians and nothing else are constantly in a fuss and disagreement over one thing or another. One of the outstanding things of the Bible is: "Be at peace among yourselves." The apostle to the Ephesians said: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Now, bear in mind "the unity of the Spirit," not any kind of unity. There can be no unity among the brethren when the Spirit is left out of it. The Spirit is left out when we leave the teaching of the Spirit out. That means what the Bible teaches. Strife and division over little jealousies are exceedingly annoying and distasteful. No one who claims to be a Christian can afford to allow himself to be influenced and controlled by such. Yet these jealousies seem to be the cause of most of the friction. Those who would justify themselves are constantly finding fault and making accusations.

Abraham said: "We are brethren." It means something to be brethren in the Lord. It means much to be in Christ. "For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." That is, we are spiritual brethren, and that means much more than those in the flesh. If Abraham and Lot could not afford such disagreement, neither can we. The church is the blood-bought institution, and must be preserved at any cost. To see it marred and ruined by brethren striving over selfish things where there is no sacred truth involved is too much. This sort of thing has gone too far. Selfishness, or lust for power and supremacy, is the exact cause. One passage, if practiced, would remedy all this: "Let each esteem other better than themselves." We would soon learn that "no man liveth to himself," and that we are members one of another. One member of the human body will soon perish when it is severed from the other members of the same body. So also in Christ's body. Would to God we could learn it!

The apostle said the members we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor. The proper consideration for one another is essential to the happiness and progress of the church. These little spiteful criticisms and jibes have hurt the church mightily. Not one bit for God has ever been accomplished by any of them. Such has almost destroyed the usefulness of religious journalism. There are scores of good people who will not

read the religious papers for this very reason. Now, do not misunderstand me. Honorable controversy is quite a different thing. Where issues of truth are involved, the church owes its existence to just such. Jesus was the greatest controversialist that ever lived; but he never engaged in controversy for personal aggrandizement nor for pecuniary reward. To make an issue where there is none is a sad mistake. Ever so much as we may like public or even private controversy, we are not justified in making such issues. No member of the church of Christ should ever debate a proposition that does not clearly and expressly state the issue. The truth is always hurt and imperiled by such a course. Neither should anyone ever strain any passage beyond its natural setting to prove or even disprove anything. Nor should anyone seek to justify one unscriptural practice by another unscriptural practice. Each practice or proposition should stand or fall on its own merits. One wrong cannot be made right by another wrong. No one can make a certain argument as long as he practices the same thing. A parallel in this way is a deadly argument. No one is consistent when he preaches one thing and practices another. Happy is the man, then, that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. Looking through eyes green with jealousy, we never see things in their right light. We feel justified in any sort of procedure to carry the point. What is needed above everything is to "let love be without hypocrisy"; and "above all things put on love, for love shall hide a multitude of sins." Be it remembered that love is a rule of action or a course of conduct. That course of conduct must be according to the commandments of God, for "love worketh no ill to his neighbor." When you see someone run into print to expose what he conceives to be his brother's faults, you can be assured that there is a lack of love. The Savior said: "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone"; for "if any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." But how is it, brethren? Instead of going to him we run to the papers and give it all the publicity possible, and instead of restoring him we try to destroy him. All this among brethren! Sometimes we try to destroy a brother because he is a competitor. Therefore, "Let us follow after peace and things whereby one may edify

another." "Ever follow that which is good both among yourselves, and to all men." "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." These things done, and all such bickering and backbiting will disappear. We should note that if we backbite and devour one another we will be consumed one of another. Therefore, those who will "love life and see good days" must "refrain their tongue from evil and their lips that they speak no guile." They must "eschew evil and do good." They must "seek peace and pursue it, for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ear is open to their prayer."

THE BETRAYAL OF CHRIST

That the betrayal and crucifixion of Christ was necessary to the salvation of the human race is admitted by all who accept the Bible as the word of God. Why he should be thus treated, we do not propose to say. The Word of God teaches that it was impossible to save humanity any other way. "The way of the cross leads home," they say, and "the old rugged cross" is the power of God unto all who are saved. He was betrayed and crucified in fulfillment of the prophetic predictions which said that he would be the Redeemer and Savior of all men. Besides him there is no other. He came, therefore, "by the door into the sheepfold," and all that came any other way were thieves and robbers. These things do not concern us so much in this article, however, but rather that this betrayal was in the house of his friends. No others seem to have been in a position to render this service to his enemies, except those who were closest to him and had been favored most by him.

It may seem strange that Judas Iscariot had no more appreciation of the blessings with which Jesus had favored him than to betray his Lord for thirty pieces of silver. But while we marvel at that, let me remind you that those "who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," are those who have crucified "the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Any man

who preaches anything the Savior never taught, or lends encouragement to anything in the work and worship of the church he has not authorized, to hold his job, has sold his Lord for money as did Judas of old. Jesus is "put to an open shame," therefore, in the house of his supposed friends today again and again. The infidel cannot touch him, but those who have been redeemed by him can.

Those whom God had favored above all other people were the principal actors in the drama of his crucifixion. The Jews were those to whom God had sent John preaching in the wilderness, and from among them he chose his disciples. The adoption pertained to them, the giving of the law, the promises, and the covenants, and yet this is the treatment that the Son of God received at their hands. He had delivered them from the cruel bondage of Egypt in the long ago. He brought them through the Red Sea as upon dry land. He fed and clothed them during the entire wilderness wanderings, over a period of forty years. He delivered them from kings and kingdoms and gave to them the land of promise. They were all thoroughly familiar with these facts, and yet this is the treatment Jesus received at their hands. They bit the hand that fed them. They were a most ungrateful people, but no more so than some today whom God has favored. God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ, and they are so unthankful as to betray him and crucify him afresh. Those who are nearest to him now, and whom he has favored most, are those who can give him the greatest trouble. They can divide his blood-bought church and bring into disrepute his glorious name. No one else can. How careful God's children should be, then! If the church is ever disgraced, we will have to do it. If Christ is ever wounded, it will be in the house of his friends.

Let it be observed that the Romans did not take the initiative. They never tried to influence the Jews to do this dastardly crime. Neither did the Greeks or any other Gentiles. But the Israelites, the favored and blessed, took the initiative and influenced the Romans to do this terrible thing. It is a terrible thing to see the church today making overtures to the world and taking steps for an armistice of peace. The world is impotent to compromise with the church, for it has nothing to compromise, but the church can compromise with the world. The doctrine of compromise is

vicious and dangerous. The world does not want to fight it out, but to compromise, any time the church will lay down its arms. It makes no offer, but will persuade the church to make the offer so it can quickly accept.

It is now as in the days of old when Balaam came to curse the people of God and could not. A compromise was proposed by his counsel to Balak, and was all too successful. Twenty-four thousand of the Israelites fell on account of it. Peace is a great thing to have, but not at any price. Jesus said: "I came not to send peace, but a sword." Peace with sin is nothing more than a compromise, and a betrayal of Christ again, and a recrucifixion of him. That church or that individual Christian who is not willing to fight sin and the world is not a friend of Christ. That church that casts the olive branch to the enemy is itself an enemy of the world's Redeemer. The world is waiting for the church to offer its terms of a compromise. It sometimes appears that the church is rapidly rounding into this state of mind. The New Testament writers are plain on this point. One of them said: "Be not conformed to this world." Another said: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Still another said: "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Jesus said: "You are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you." Which will it be—a friend of Christ or a friend of the world?

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

The gospel of Christ is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It is the only power, therefore, and the perfect power. God has no other power to save men. It is folly to try anything else; to add anything to it; or to take anything from it to make it more efficient. Just as well try a tallow candle to help the sun to give light on a clear day. The sun is the power of God to rule the day and needs no aid. A man speaking of human organizations in religion once said: "These societies are not the church, but are to make the church more efficient." The idea of such a thing! The church is God's institution through which he carries on his work among men; for he "gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the full-

ness of him that filleth all in all." That is to say, he fills everything everywhere with himself through the church. So, also, is the gospel the only instrument by which he converts and saves men. He allows no other means, for "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." The inspired preachers "preached the gospel"; they "preached Christ"; they "preached Jesus"; and they preached "the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." They never ventured beyond the things written, nor stopped short of them, but "declared all the counsel of God." It is called "the gospel of God"; "the gospel of Christ"; "the gospel of peace"; "the gospel of your salvation"; "the gospel of the grace of God." So, then, when we preach the gospel, we preach "God," and "Christ," and "peace," and "salvation," and "the grace of God"; for "the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." But can you identify it? Can you distinguish it from the doctrines and commandments of men, as you could wheat from chaff? We are told that "the word of God is quick and powerful" —that is, it is full of power. It can contain no more power; therefore, Jesus said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," or "preach the gospel to every creature," in order that the nations might be saved. If the gospel is not sufficiently powerful to accomplish this task, then Jesus made a mistake. He never provided the apostles with anything else; and they never relied on anything else for their success in evangelizing the world. By the power of his word Jesus drove disease from the afflicted; and stilled the stormy sea; and I am persuaded that it is able to save those who believe it.

The gospel is also glad tidings or good news. It is the glad tidings of God. It is glad tidings to all men, inasmuch as it bears a message of salvation to all nations.

To those who have obeyed the gospel and are living as it requires, it is said: "We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep, that you sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope." This is very comforting to those who believe and obey the gospel when such hours of distress and grief

befall them. The gospel, then, primarily means glad tidings. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

What is it to obey the gospel? The gospel never saves those who are disobedient. The power and glad tidings of the gospel, then, are shared only by those who believe and obey it. So the question is all-important. Paul said to the Corinthians: "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain." And then he adds: "I delivered unto you that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he arose again the third day according to the scriptures." This the apostle calls the gospel. In order to obey it, the facts must be believed, the commands must be obeyed, and the promises are to be enjoyed. "They have not all obeyed the gospel," shows clearly that the gospel has commands. When Jesus conies he "will take vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel." One cannot obey facts or promises. Facts are believed; promises are received. We read of the Romans that they "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered, . . . being then made free from sin." A form is a likeness, a pattern, a mold. The gospel is "how that Jesus died, . . . that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day." (1 Cor. 15:4.) The form of that would be a death, a burial, and a resurrection. We are not left in doubt as to what is meant; for "how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" That is to say, we become dead to sin when we cease to live in sin. This is effected by faith and repentance. The apostle then adds: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Jesus died on the cross; we die to sin by ceasing to live in it. Jesus was buried; we are buried with him by baptism. Jesus was raised from the dead; we are raised up in baptism like as he was raised. Thus we have obeyed the gospel, and to go to heaven we must live "in newness of life" thereafter. The end of our earthly affairs depends on our obedience to the gospel, for God will take vengeance on all that

obey not the gospel. Therefore, let your manner of living be becometh the gospel.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

The Spirit of Christ is the most talked of and the least understood of almost any Bible subject. It is usually understood to mean to compromise with error and contend for nothing—to either agree with everybody and everything or be quiet and take no issue. Christ was the greatest controversialist that ever lived. He never allowed an error to pass unchallenged if it had anything to do with human life and destiny. He never waited to be challenged. He challenged. And yet there are those who think a man is not Christlike who would challenge anybody in error today. But those who have the Spirit of Christ are never too timid to oppose error and condemn those who teach it. The Spirit of Christ will tolerate no innovation and wink at no sin. The Spirit of Christ clings tenaciously to things that are written. When Christ was tempted of the devil in the wilderness, he met every temptation with "It is written." To do anything in religion without Bible authority is not the Spirit of Christ. People are led by the Spirit only as they mind the things of the Spirit, and the things of the Spirit are those things the Spirit reveals in the Bible. To do anything the Spirit does not teach is not being led by the Spirit. The Spirit of Christ is manifestly lacking in any case where the work and worship of the church is not according to the things written in the New Testament. It is not "progression" to deviate from the work and worship of the church as revealed in the New Testament.

The Spirit of Christ calls things by the right name whether it is liked or not. Christ called the Pharisees "hypocrites" because they were. As a result, they persecuted him. The Spirit in the apostles was to "convict the world of sin." The Spirit in the apostles never failed to condemn and to convict the sinner. Those today who would be such diplomats as to side-step an issue and say nothing that would cut the errorist to the heart cannot claim the Spirit of Christ. Contrast the preachers in New Testament times with preachers of today. Must one be passive, affable, agreeable, noncombative, a pacifist, to have the Spirit of Christ? Cer-

tainly not. Jesus cleansed the temple twice. He said: "My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves." When his disciples heard it, they remembered that it was written, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Had Jesus left error alone, he would have lived. But the Spirit of Christ cannot leave error alone. Perhaps present-day preachers are afraid they will be "eaten up" if they oppose all error! Jude said: "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." This verse exhorts us to contend earnestly for what is taught. The Spirit of Christ never contends for anything not taught, but uncompromisingly contends for things that are taught. The Spirit of Christ "reproves" and "rebukes" as well as "exhorts." It is unsparing in its denunciation of evil. The most scathing and denunciatory things in the Bible are the words of Christ. He said the Pharisees were like whited sepulchres outside, beautiful, but inwardly full of dead men's bones. He said they compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, and made him "twofold more the child of hell" than themselves. Compare this spirit with the sentiment against plain teaching today.

The Spirit of Christ is always definite and clear, and is no ' respecter of persons. With it no denomination is recognized and no clan or faction indorsed. It seeks no compromise with those who have gone away after the "doctrines and commandments of men." It never plays hypocrite in a friendly pretense. Paul said: "By the grace of God I am what I am." Just so the Spirit of Christ will act in us today. May the word of Christ dwell in us with all wisdom and that we be filled with his Spirit.

It is argued that we must have more constructive work and less destructive. That we need constructive work there is no doubt. But how are we to construct anything without first clearing away the rubbish? Decidedly the biggest task before the gospel preacher today is clearing away the false teaching and practices of the religious world. No building will stand that is built on the sand. We must excavate and find a solid foundation for the erection of a great building. The church of Christ being the greatest building of all, we must, therefore, do much of clearing away by reproof and rebuking in all long-suffering. It is utterly impossible to preach the gospel and not expose error. There are some who want us to

preach "a positive gospel" — that is, preach Christ and say nothing about the devil. Any gospel preacher who yields to such whims needs overhauling. He is the most dangerous man to be found. The church is being filled with weak sentimentalists who think more of denominational friendship than they do of the truth of God. They apologize to sectarian friends when a strong, uncompromising preacher of the gospel declares the whole truth. They will take sides with people who have opposed the truth always, against a brother who has fought its battles. They say • "He is a fighter. He is not constructive." It would be folly to construct anything on denominationalism or even on its ruins. Jehovah took away the Mosaic economy root and branch and built the church on an entirely new foundation. But we are told that there are some Christians in the denominations. If so, let them come out. If they know the truth, they will.

TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST

From the temptations of Christ, recorded by Matthew in the fourth chapter, we learn that people can only be tempted in three points. Jesus Christ was in "all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," and is able to succor us when we are tempted. God, therefore, knows how to make a way for our escape to the end that we may be able to bear any temptation that we may meet. The three points of temptation are summed up in these words: "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." There is in every human being the same three things. There is the part and the counterpart — that which is in me, and that which is in the world. Temptation brings the part and counterpart together. Immediately after the baptism of Jesus he was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. It should be remembered that it was when he was baptized that God said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now, Satan is doing his best to make Jesus prove false. He is endeavoring to thwart his purpose and to foil his power.

Jesus came into the world for a specific purpose. He was no drifter. He came to do something definite, and he did it. He left Nazareth to be baptized of John, and he was. Now the same definiteness leads him into the wilderness. No one will ever sue-

ceed who halts between two opinions. We must make up our minds. There is nothing too hard for those who decide to do it, if it can be done at all. We can successfully meet any temptation if we have decided that we will not yield. It is no sin to be tempted, but it is a sin to yield. Temptation is very dangerous, for it is so deceptive. We should, therefore, pray, "Lead us not into temptation." Still, it may prove a great blessing when endured, for "each victory will help us some other to win." And "blessed is the man that endureth temptation." It was a blessing to Jesus, for it enabled him to be a blessing to us; for he is able now to succor us when we are tempted. His great heart is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

The tempter did not come to him at once. He waited forty days and nights, during which time Jesus was without food and water. He was alone and exceedingly hungry, Satan waits till the time is opportune. The whole physical being of Christ was calling for bread, and hence he said: "*If thou be the Son of God*, command that these stones be made bread." He sneeringly insinuates by this: "I do not believe you are the Son of God; but if you are, prove it." Jesus did not parley with him, but said: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." What a pity many professed Christians cannot learn this lesson! They must have bread, it seems, to the loss of their souls. Bread is necessary to temporal welfare, but the word of God is indispensable to the soul's welfare. Satan is busy getting people to look on the temporal side, to the neglect of the soul. The alarming thing is, he is succeeding too well.

The next temptation, according to Matthew's account, is an appeal to vainglory. "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down." To jump from the pinnacle of the temple would be a dare-devil attempt, just to get the applause of men. It would be trying God. God will take care of his children, but we had better not put him to trial.

The third temptation was an appeal to the "lust of the eyes." All the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them were shown Christ. Not one word about him being the Son of God this time,

for it did not suit his purpose. This time he said "I will give them all to you if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus again unsheathed the same mighty weapon when he said, "It is written." Satan was driven from the field for a little while. He was vanquished by the word of God, and nothing else. Be it observed that Jesus used only just such power as we have. He was divine and could have wrought miracles for his relief, but he steadfastly refused. By this he has left us an example as to how to successfully meet temptations. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." But no one can successfully resist him except with the word of God How important, then, is a knowledge of the things that are written! Jesus said "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." These things had been written since before the death of Moses, and it was left to Jesus Christ to use them first, hundreds of years afterwards. How many conflicts with Satan would have been won had these things been familiar to the people. But now we have no excuse, since Jesus has shown us the way.

It is also to be noted that this terrible struggle took place immediately after Christ was baptized and God had said, "This is my beloved Son." Therefore when we are baptized and are born into the family of God we should not be alarmed at the fiery trials that shall overtake us Baptism is the dividing line between the church and the world, between the believer and the unbeliever, and between the saved and the lost. Of course, Satan will try every scheme known to his skill for our fall. Be it remembered, however, that when the three temptations were over, the angels came and ministered unto him It was like the harvest time The work is all done and the harvest has come. The angels will come when it is their time. It is our time now, and let us make the best of it by faithfully discharging our duty

THE WORDS OF COMFORT

All the words of comfort and consolation that we can have in our troubled hours are found in the Holy Scriptures Efforts have often been made to comfort the distressed with other words On funeral occasions much has been said and done that did a distinct injustice to the truth, and the deceased as well Funeral services, as a whole, have done more harm than good They have

made gospel preaching impotent, in that we preach men must obey the gospel to be saved, and when someone dies who never obeyed the gospel, we proceed to look for some means of his salvation in order to comfort the bereaved family. If we can find nothing else, we will say he is in the hands of a just God. Shall we preach that men must believe and be baptized to be saved to the living, and reverse it when they are dead? Of course he is in the hands of a just God, and for that reason we must say to the living and the dead what he says. Can anyone afford to lend encouragement to waywardness? Anything that is not fit to live by is not fit to die by, and anything that is not fit to die by is not fit to live by. You are saved by the gospel, "if you keep in memory what I preached unto you."

To mutilate the truth of God to comfort the living is too great a price to pay. To sympathize with men in their troubles and share with them their sorrows is Christlike, but not to the extent of doing violence to the truth. No man is any better while he lives than his manner of life will permit, and just because he is dead the facts are not altered, and he is no better. Men are just as good when dead as they were while alive, and no better. "Let me die the death of the righteous," therefore. No one can die the death of the righteous unless he lives the life of the righteous. The kind of life he lives determines the kind of death he dies, and this decides his destiny. All the eloquence and tears and flowers at his funeral cannot change it. The only thing that decides destiny is character. Character is decided by conduct; conduct, by what God commands. Anyone, therefore, who would have the right character and go to heaven must "do his commandments." If one dies without doing his commandments, he cannot go to heaven. The preacher is helpless to comfort the family in such cases.

It is sweet to say nice things over the dead and pay the last tribute of respect by placing flowers on the casket to wither and die. No one could lawfully object to these things, if they come from pure motives. But still there might be a better use made of them. Words of comfort might be spoken to the living and flowers might brighten their lives. Neither can do any good to the dead. Many a heart is pining for a soft, kindly word, and many a withered soul might be revived by a bouquet of flowers. But men have chosen rather to do service for the dead. The

sweetest verses in the Bible are used only after men die, but they were all written for living, struggling men and women. Put the twenty-third Psalm and all the other verses together, and then read: "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Since the dead cannot be comforted by them, he must mean the living.

God never made the flowers to grow for the dead, but for the living, to bring cheer and blessing with their beautiful petals and sweet breath to the tired and weary. It cannot be wrong to put flowers on the graves of our dead, but it is a great mistake to save them all for that purpose. In the midst of life we are in the midst of death, and we need comfort and cheer as the days are going by. May God help us to do good unto all men, but especially to the household of faith. May we ever cleave to that which is good. If we would love life and see good days, let us refrain our tongues from evil and our lips that they speak no guile. 'Tis a sweet realization to know someone has fallen asleep to whom you were good while he was yet with us.

Let us remember if people live right they die right and will go to the right place. No one can live right unless he keeps the commandments of God. Our hearts go out in the deepest sympathy for the grieved and distressed, but we love the truth of God. It is exceedingly dangerous to not love the truth sufficiently to contend for it. Nothing should ever tempt us to alter it or tone it down. People cannot hope to go to heaven who do not obey Jesus Christ. We may desire to go, but we cannot expect to go. Hope is both to desire and expect. All may desire to go, but all cannot expect to go, for the reason that all do not the commandments of God. How can people hope for something not promised? Is it not a fact that all of God's promises are made upon conditions? There are none of them unconditional. The condition must be obeyed. For instance, Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The promise is salvation. Who can expect to be saved, then, who does not believe and is not baptized? Not believe only, but believe and be baptized. The unbelieving and unbaptized, therefore, cannot hope for salvation.

Now, just because someone is dead, as serious as it is, we cannot afford to try to preach him into heaven. People do not go that way. It seems the Catholics claim to pray them out of purgatory, and the Protestant preaches them out in the modern

funeral sermon. As long as we preach to the living one way, and about the dead in another, we will never be taken seriously in our pulpits, Let us preach the word to the living and also over the dead. May the Lord help us to be true to him always.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

We are told that there is constructive criticism as well as destructive criticism. This, no doubt, is correct. But criticism might be misjudged by one who is concerned. It is not destructive criticism to censure and even vehemently condemn and disapprove unscriptural and wicked practices in the church or out. Condemning sin and ungodliness has never destroyed the church or even society. It is very wholesome to point out evil in the church and practices that threaten its existence. Those things which tend to the destruction of good morals and purity of life should by all means be severely criticized. Those who are guilty of infractions of the law of the Spirit of life—the New Testament—should be criticized and such practices exposed. Publicity is perhaps the greatest destroyer of evil. The Lord Jesus said: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." Therefore, the greatest detergency of evil is the light—publicity—which some are pleased to call "destructive criticism." The only thing such destroys is evil and the evildoer.

THE POWER OF LIGHT

Whenever the light is turned on, the creatures of the night scamper away to their dens of hiding. They are afraid of the light. But the Christian is not a creature of the night, but of the day. He, therefore, is glad for the light to shine, for he is a child of the day. Why should anyone in the church—or out, for that matter—be afraid of the truth, which is the word of God? The truth has nothing to fear. Neither do we if we walk in the light. But "if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in

darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Only such as are walking in darkness—who are living lies, who substitute for the word of God and practice untaught things in the service of the Lord— object to the light. They will squirm under its searching rays. They will call it "destructive criticism" or "unwise procedure." It is this kind of pressure which has kept back criticism till it is too late. False doctrines and corrupt practices have divided the church and poisoned its life stream till it has become death dealing, because criticism has been withheld too long for policy's sake.

When the church becomes cluttered up with worldliness and spiritual wickedness, it is impotent to help in the salvation of souls. It can no more be the light of the world and the salt of the earth. And to see the godly sit by, say nothing, and do nothing! And, what is more, the religious journals are also silent in the exposure of such men and practices. The tragic thing is that the daring and brave men and women who oppose and expose all such are made to suffer and the real offender goes scot free in many cases. No one who lives and is acquainted with the preachers and churches of today can play ignorance of this situation, for it is spread far and wide and easily discernible. We had rather look for the good and pleasant, of course; but when evil things threaten the church of Christ, we must be quick to discern and sound the warning. In fact, the Bible helps us in these words: "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornication, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." Who would dare say that this is "destructive criticism" and against the best interest of the church? The tendency to cover up and shield people in their sins is the most destructive thing of all. If the church can live and thrive by such practice, much of the Bible is worthless.

EVIL MUST BE REMOVED

Also we should observe that the church cannot be built up until all such filth is removed. There is no way to remove it but by floods of the light. Both the evil practice and the evil person will be destroyed by the power of God's word, which is the light. Anyone who preaches and teaches the word of God without compromise and whose life is a living example of his teaching and

preaching will be the victim of slander and persecution. The man who opposes liquor will be opposed by all who engage in the sale of it. So all who oppose ungodliness and evil in the church can expect nothing less than the opposition of the worldly and ungodly.

But we are told that "in many things we all stumble," and, therefore, no one is in position to correct another. This is the most destructive I have yet heard. But to anyone who thinks that way about it I will say: It is one thing to *stumble* and quite another to *lie down and wallow in the mud and mire*. Of course, in many things we all stumble, but it is a different thing for one to purposely do a thing. A continued practice of it is quite different. No such excuse can possibly justify us in refraining from criticism when it is needed. I am aware of the fact that one who criticizes another should be in the clear himself. Paul told the elders of the church at Ephesus to take heed unto themselves and then to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. Also he told Timothy to take heed unto himself and to the doctrine. When one is out of harmony with what he is teaching others, he will never succeed; but when one is pure in life, it is no marvel that he will be accused as the troubler, as Ahab did Elijah. The Galatians became the enemies of Paul because he told them the truth. Others said Paul taught that you must do evil that good may come. There is no depth to which the ungodly will not go to destroy the influence of him who dares to criticize their wickedness. So let us have criticism when it is needed and pay the full price without complaint. It cost Jesus his life, and it will cost us much discomfort. But the servant is not greater than his Lord. Since he suffered, so must we.

RELATION OF CHURCH AND WORLD

What the Bible says on this subject is clear. No one can misunderstand. What the disciples do about it today is another matter. Jesus first introduced this subject in the Sermon on the Mount, when he said, "Ye are the light of the world," and, "Ye are the salt of the earth." A city set on a hill cannot be hid. There is no way that the church can be the light of the world save by contrast only. If the church is like the world—until there

is no appreciable difference—it cannot be the light of the world. This refers chiefly to conduct—manner of living. So the apostle says: "Be not conformed to this world." The word "world" here is age. The argument is being made everywhere that times have changed and that, for the purpose of justifying the church in its worldly manners, to be "conformed" means to be like. If we become so much like the world that we blend perfectly with it, how can we be the light of the world? The only hope of the church is to be different.

It is not enough for the church to preach "sound doctrine"; it must be sound also in the practice of it. Those who preach the "sound doctrine," therefore, should be sound, or else the church cannot be the light of the world. The church sustains the same relation to the world that the eye sustains to the body. Jesus said that if "the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" He also said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works." Therefore, the church is the light of the world, not in doctrine only, but in life—in practice. Christ himself said: "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." He is no longer in the world, save only in the presence of his church, which is his body. His church must, therefore, reflect his life by walking in his footsteps. He suffered to leave us an example for this very purpose. And for the church to conform to this world or age is unthinkable. Instead of conforming to the world, we are to be "transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." This done, and at once the church becomes the light of the world and the salt of the earth. Perhaps one of the chief troubles today is the effort of the church to please the world—to do as the world does, to blend into everything around it, to be a sort of chameleon.

The brethren today can hardly stand to be different to the denominations. Our only hope to be of saving value to the world is by being a separate people and dwelling alone. If the day was not different to the night, we would lose all the light we have. So also with the church. It must be different to its surroundings. It cannot conform to the world and be different. Our relation to the world, then, is to be unlike the world. This is impossible as long as we do as the world does. There are many passages in

the Bible which give some members of the church much trouble, not that they are hard to understand, but the fads and styles of the present age make it necessary to nullify these passages. There would be no trouble at all in understanding what Paul meant when he wrote on women cutting their hair if it was not stylish and fashionable to cut it. So also with many other passages on different points.

The disciples who contend for the Bible, and it only, have adopted the same method of the denominations in the defense of their doctrine and practice. Certain passages must be explained away. If people would strive as hard to get people to do what the Bible teaches as they do to keep them from it, the world would be much better off. Inconsistency destroys the power of the church and eclipses its light totally. Let the church cease to think of how the world does and how the denominations carry on, and turn to the New Testament in everything.

Moreover, we are told by the beloved John that "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." Think of the church then conforming to the world! Would it not be a nice aspect! How could it be the light of the world? Impossible. He further said that the world passeth away and the lust. So if the church becomes like the world, it will pass away also. The love of God, according to John, is not in that church that loves the world and the things that are in the world. This is rather severe, but God says it. It must be so. This word "world" means arrangement, beauty. The church and all its work is arranged after the heavenly ideals and wisdom. A young woman recently, talking with me on what Paul said about women's hair, said: "A million women could not be wrong." Certainly they could. All men might be wrong. A majority, great or small, does not make a thing right. The Bible is right, because God wrote it, and God cannot be wrong about anything. If any church is bent on doing something the Bible does not teach, do not double the offense by twisting the Bible to support it. It is bad enough to do wrong, but much worse to make the Bible justify it. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a heavenly institution, and may God forbid that it should suffer in the house of its supposed friends.

Another very strong, striking passage is given by James. He said that "the friendship of the world is enmity against God," and that "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Instead, therefore, of trying to make the services and work of the church after the fashion of the world, let us do our best to make it after the heavenly pattern. The architecture of the world is one thing; that of heaven, another. God said to Moses: "Make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount," Let us do as God commands, therefore.

THE CHURCH VERSUS DENOMINATIONS

The denominations dispute and debate on what they are pleased to call the mode of baptism, and yet they all claim that it is not necessary. Then, what difference does it make how it is performed, or whether it is performed at all or not? When Methodists and Presbyterians say sprinkling or pouring is baptism, they do it on no higher authority than the Pope of Rome, and that amounts to no authority at all. The Baptists teach that one can be saved without being baptized, but he cannot be a Baptist without it. Therefore, according to Baptist doctrine, it is easier to get into heaven than into the Baptist Church. Then, if one can get to heaven without being a Baptist, why be a Baptist? All the denominations teach the same thing. Then, why be a member of any denomination? What is the advantage? Why should anyone be called upon to go through the routine of alien prayer, direct operation of the Holy Spirit, and joining-the-church system, if one can stay out of all of them and go to heaven? What more should one want than to be a Christian while he lives and go to heaven when he dies?

To teach that men can be saved out of the church is to teach that which is not only without divine authority, but that which is opposed to the New Testament. The New Testament teaches that one is saved in Christ; and to be in Christ is to be in his body, which is the church. If, then, one can be saved out of the church, he can be saved out of Christ. One can be in Christ and not be in any denomination at all. But no one can be in Christ and not be in his church, his body. For "we are members of his body," and he is "the head of the body, the church," and he is "head

over all things to the church, which is his body," and "there is one body," and "now there are many members, yet but one body."

The word "church" is used in two senses in the New Testament. First, to include all the saved on earth; second, to include all the saved of a given locality. It is used one hundred and ten times. Ninety-two times it is used to designate the saved of a locality and eighteen times to include the saved of earth in their intense aggregate. When there is a geographical term to restrict its meaning, it applies to the given locality; but when there is no geographical term to limit its meaning, it refers to all the saved. Since no denomination is large enough to include all the saved on earth and too large to refer to the saved in a particular locality, no denomination can be the church of the New Testament.

Another point for emphasis is that one may join a denomination, but no one can join the church of Christ. The church is the house of God. (1 Tim. 3:16.) The house of God is his family, which includes all of his children. Children do not join a family; they are born into it. So Jesus said: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." That is just another way of saying that "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." No man can show where he ever added anyone to a denomination.

The doctrines and commandments of men are responsible for every denomination under the sun. Christ and the apostles did not build them. Had men always spoken as the oracles of God, there would never have been a denomination in all the world, and there would be no division among the people of God. A thing that isn't *in* the word of God cannot come *from* it.

Fleshly Israel was commanded to dwell alone and not be numbered with the nations. Just so long as they obeyed this requirement they were invincible in battle and a glory to Jehovah. There was no "enchantment against Jacob." Neither was there "any divination against Israel" so long as they were a separate people. But when they were lured into a compromise, they were easy victims for their enemy. God forsook them and no longer fought

their battles. In the matter of Baal-peor they were snared to the end that twenty-four thousand fell. Balaam tried in vain to curse them. So long as they were separate, Jehovah turned every curse into a blessing. But they listened to a false doctrine, the doctrine of compromise. Balaam taught Balak how to do it. Be neighborly. Thus "Balaam taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication," and they "fell in one day three and twenty thousand." A horrible slaughter of the people of God, and all on account of their folly. The disposition to be broad in one's views and popular with the masses by condoning evil and compromising with the opposition is very dangerous and destructive.

The apostles warned against all alliances with the world or any of its parts. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," and "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." Joining affinity, making alliances, entering into any kind of agreement that would put the church on a par with the denominations, is manifestly in error and contrary to the "doctrine which ye have learned." These so-called "union meetings" are stepping-stones to a compromise. Calling on sectarian preachers to pray and to participate otherwise in the meetings of the church of Christ is a great handicap to the church in fighting error. The church has all to lose and nothing to gain by such.

THE CHURCH AND THE HOME

That the church is drifting from the pure word of God in worship and work, no one can deny. One brother said: "If loyal preachers can save the church, they will have done a wonderful work." Save it from apostasy; save it from drifting; save it from collapse.

There are too many preachers who are trying to build up the church on "good mixing" and "organizing" rather than on the word of God. Any church that is built on the popularity of the preacher is on a sandy foundation and cannot long endure. When

young men without experience "take charge" of churches, we can expect nothing but calamity.

The divine order is that elders shall have charge of the church. When the preacher takes charge, the "pastor system" is developed, and all of its attendant evils are sure to follow. Many churches of Christ are dangerously near the edge of this system. Unless there is a halt, they will be carried away with the tide.

"Great oaks from little acorns grow." Churches have been ruined by things regarded at first as insignificant. When the church permits one unauthorized thing in work or worship, it has pitched its tent "toward Sodom."

My attention has been called to advertisements of the Y. P. M. (Young People's Meeting) in announcements of churches of Christ. I am not an alarmist, but the trend of things is wrong. Young people's meetings are fine within themselves, but the Y. P. M. movement is really alarming. Our young people need training, but they do not need to be brought up in a brooder under artificial methods apart from parental care and the oversight of their elders. If we cannot have young people's classes without organizing a Y. P. M., with president, secretary, and all the trimmings that belong to the denominations, we had better abandon them.

That classes should be arranged according to grade and age, no one will question. But if this divides the church into groups and factions, separating young people from older members, and develops these meetings into human organizations and societies, we had better not have them.

There has been much said about the conduct of high school students of late. School authorities excuse themselves, saying that the homes from which these students come are to be blamed and not the schools. That the home is largely broken down is without question. But children from the best homes in the world may be subjected to the wrong associations and be ruined.

A home where card tables and wineglasses are frequently seen wields a dangerous influence over the young. A home where movies and dances are patronized contributes nothing to the moral stability of our youth. If we would have pure men and

women, useful citizens and Christians, corrupting influences must be removed from our homes.

The home, the school, and the church must cooperate in the moral salvation of the young people. The difficulty is found in the fact that when homes ban the dance and other degrading things, the school features them with all their accompaniments. Churches also are giving dances and bridge parties. Elders not only suffer such in their homes, but permit such to be held in the church buildings. How can we censure the delinquencies of youth?

Let the homes be cleaned up and the hearthstone flushed with the pure water of life. Let us return to Bible reading and hymn singing where children are born and reared. Let us have less of the movies, dances, and all revelry. Let parents attend prayer meeting and take their children to the Bible classes—not send them. Then we can stop the mouths of those who would blame the home for the disgraces of society "that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation [manner of living] in Christ."

What the church needs today is an intelligent leadership—men who know the truth and are not afraid to stand for it. An efficient, capable, strong eldership is indispensable to the welfare of the church. Their qualifications are not social standing, wealth, business success, and college education; but the knowledge of the word of God, faith, and piety.

Churches of Christ are a bit too much inclined to do things the denominations do. Many things are being done to get a crowd, or to hold the young people. Churches are celebrating Christmas ; having Christmas programs, with Christmas trees, mangers of straw, piled full of gifts—and that on the Lord's day! Easter services likewise are being held, with all the worldly trimmings, to make a show and to "keep the young people from going to the denominations."

A church that cannot make the gospel sufficiently attractive to hold the people has evidently "lost its savor." Any substitute will be a failure. The gospel needs no additions; and when the church preaches and practices it, the people will not go elsewhere for the foam and froth of the worldly-minded. There is nothing so attractive as the church robed in the habiliments of "the bride

adorned for her husband." To see the church, "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," is the greatest attraction of all.

It is a difficult thing to keep the churches from doing things God has not commanded; and it is no less difficult to get them to do the things he has commanded.

POPULARIZING THE CHURCH

The church of Jesus Christ is suffering today as much from its friends trying to make it popular as any other cause; indeed, it may be the greatest peril to its purity of anything at all. Any effort to make the church popular is antagonistic to the very doctrine of the New Testament. To popularize the church is to popularize the doctrine of Christ. His doctrine does not meet the approval of the multitude. Anything that will tend to make it popular with men is vicious and antagonistic, for Jesus forbids his followers to do anything to be seen of men under any circumstances. All worship and service to God, therefore, must be in "spirit and truth." The word of God is truth.

Any service that requires a change in the word of God or in the worship and service that it teaches is to be carefully avoided. The disposition to conform to the world or any part thereof is condemned. The preachers and pulpits and the people and the pew must be content with that which is written. We must not be imitating the denominational world or system. The inclination of the churches today to be like the "nations" is destructive. The only way the church can be the light of the world is by contrast. If it shall be like the world, or even the denominations about us, then Christ has died in vain. It must, therefore, be different to anything else. When efforts are made to popularize the church, they are to make the church just another denominational institution.

Many cannot stand the idea of being alone. Yet Jehovah has always required that his people be a separate and peculiar people. While they are in the world, they are no part of the world. Not only so, but our source of supplies is from heaven. Everything, therefore, that we do or need in the work and worship of God must be from above. All that is needed in the adornment of the

church to make it attractive and powerful comes from God—the word of God. The church in the world in its majestic purity is a most wonderful institution, but the world in the church is most destructive and horrible. Therefore, we read: "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." The devitalizing influences of the world tend to destroy the church or render it impotent to carry on for God and humanity. All efforts to popularize it are but to devitalize it. The glory of God and His presence depart from it. The doctrine of Christ has never been popular, and, therefore, to make the church popular we must popularize the doctrine.

Who would dare to undertake such a task? That person who would put his hand upon the word of God to change it in any particular shall be condemned. Not only would such be a violation of the spirit and teaching of the New Testament to conceive such a thing, but an effort to make the word of God justify such is to be guilty of a double crime. In the language of Jesus, how can such "escape the damnation of hell"? There are many who think they cannot worship God today unless they have a fine house with art-glass windows and polished pews. So they have set about to satisfy this mistaken conception. The result is costly church buildings which are dedicated to doubts and debts. Such churches are buried beneath heavy debts, grievous to be borne, to the end that they cannot do more than pay a little interest and declare moratoriums. We have built fine plants for schools and orphan homes and local Bible-class work, and the result is that we cannot break out into open fields of the adult world and preach the gospel to the perishing millions. We cannot raise money enough to meet our already heavy obligations. Like all human institutions, when the overhead is paid there is little or nothing left for the preaching of the gospel where it is so much needed. It will be understood that there is no objection made to caring for the orphans, or educating the people, or building a church building, but to making a show and competing with the denominations around us.

Ostentation for worldly recognition is to be condemned. If the church has no other claim for its existence but a fine church building, with its classrooms, dining room, and kitchen, and enough dishes to run a hotel, it had just as well take out. This seems to

be that in which some glory today. All this to make the church popular with the lascivious and simpering sentimentalist! Doing things to be seen of men will get us nowhere with God. If we would be strong with God and men, we must cling to the simplicity which is in Christ, regardless of what the people want and like. We must not be vainglorious or filled with pride. All things done to the glory of God must be void of all such. Every act of worship and service should be after the New Testament pattern. Therefore, no solos, duets, trios, quartets, or choirs should enter into the service of God today. These are to popularize the church and make it attractive to men. "Without faith it is impossible to please him," we are told; and faith comes by hearing "the word of Christ." We may worship God in any way we may choose, but will God approve it and bless us? Our worship, therefore, must be by faith and according to what Christ commands. What we think about it and the way we feel does not make it acceptable. It takes faith to make it acceptable to God, and faith comes by hearing the word of Christ. Anything Christ has not taught, and hence is not in the New Testament cannot be pleasing to God.

Cain offered a sacrifice and gift to God that was much more pleasing to men than was that of Abel, but God was pleased with Abel's and displeased with Cain's. So also today. Let us make the church pleasing to God in everything; for if we would please men, we cannot be the servants of Christ. Let the preachers preach the gospel and the churches worship according to the New Testament.

"DIGRESSIVE AND SECTARIAN LITERATURE"

In the *Firm Foundation* of March 21, 1933, under the heading of "News and Views," Brother John Straiton takes this writer to task for what he had to say in a recent issue of the *Gospel Advocate* concerning the use of digressive and sectarian literature in the Bible-class work of churches of Christ. He says: "I don't like Brother Pullias' way of introducing his subject." Not only so, but he does not seem to like the subject itself. I was satisfied when I wrote it that some of the brethren would not like it. I made no "serious charge of subterfuge and clandestine conduct"

against anyone. All I meant by saying "it has come to light" was that I did not know of such being done till of late. It was a distinct surprise to me. Brother Straiten seems to have known of it all the time. Did he object? His criticism of my article indicates he did not. He says, "I travel fairly extensively and have the opportunity of sharing in the work of many schools"; yet he never wrote a word to correct such conduct of any church, but he writes a criticism of a brother who is trying to correct such error.

Does Brother Straiten believe it safe for the churches to use "digressive" and sectarian literature in their Bible-class work? If so, let him say so.

Brother Straiten's reference to what I have in my library is foreign to the question. There is quite a difference in having a hook in my library and making it a textbook in Bible-class work of the church. When such literature becomes a textbook, even though the contents should be acceptable, coming from those who are in error, it makes a link that leads to a compromise. It is dangerous and unsafe. I again state that "the use of sectarian literature imperils the soundness of the church."

Brother Straiten puts the literature published by the Gospel Advocate, Firm Foundation, Word and Work, and Christian Standard all on the same plane. No difference. That which comes from the Standard emanates from the head of digression. That from Word and Work emanates from the head of the future-kingdom doctrine that is disturbing the churches. He is very anxious, he says, "to watch against error," but still he does not see any danger in using literature that emanates from the hotbed of error. Can the church act wisely and do it? He quotes from Brother E. A. Elam and Brother C. A. Norred to prove that the use of such literature is all right. Brother Elam never said anything that indorses such a course. That which he quotes from Brother Norred and Brother Elam does not touch the issue. I believe what they say, as quoted, regarding the correct way to handle literature. But to quote these good brethren as approving "the use of sectarian literature in the Bible-class work" is a plain misrepresentation of them.

The more I see of present conditions in the churches, the more am I convinced that strong, uncompromising teaching is much

needed. Let no "man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." They will come saying they think "both sides are extreme" and they have an "open mind," but they are found in company with those who hold error, and criticize those who speak against it. All who believe the use of instruments of music in worship to be wrong, and organized human societies in church work unscriptural, and the doctrine of Christ's return to earth to reign on David's literal throne a thousand years in Jerusalem to be false teaching, should manifest no sympathy for such things by the use of literature published by those who hold to such teaching.

The church needs strong elders today to feed the flock of God. Elders that permit the flock to be fed upon "digressive and sectarian literature" are not "holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Those who "cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine," are to be "marked" and "avoided." Can one use their literature and at the same time obey this injunction? We are told that he that "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God"; and "if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed." If we use their literature in the Bible-class work, do we not violate this teaching?

Our brother says: "I know of one school where they used some literature from the *Gospel Advocate* and some published by the *Christian Standard*. One brother objected to the latter. The order to the Standard Company was discontinued and *the same, exactly the same*, literature was ordered from the Advocate Company. Thereafter there was no objection. He then adds: "*No doubt it was immunized by passing through the hands of the good brethren at Nashville.*" What a charge against "the good brethren at Nashville"! Yet he complains that I have charged "an indefinite number" of good brethren "of subterfuge and clandestine conduct"! Does he not charge *a definite number of good brethren* with the same charge? Brother Straiton should inform himself before he repeats such charges. He has recklessly published to the readers of the *Firm Foundation* that the *Gospel Advocate* is getting its literature from the *Christian Standard*; that the only differ-

ence is, in one case it comes directly from the *Standard*, and in the other it comes from the *Standard* through the *Gospel Advocate*; and that it is "*the same, exactly the same, literature.*" Brother Straiton should correct this, and the next time he rushes into print be sure that he is stating the facts.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIVISION

Who is responsible for division in the body of Christ? With introduction of untaught things into the work and worship, the answer is not difficult. Since it is not the things in the Bible that divide the people, but the things that are not in it, the responsibility for such division rests upon him who ventures beyond the things that are written. Where the Bible speaks, we must speak; but where it is silent, we must hold our peace. This followed, and division will end. There are two sides to every question—the right side and the wrong side. The side opposed to untaught things is the right side.

It would be unfair to demand one to override his conscience to have unity on anything. Such is impossible with an honest heart. One who cannot worship with mechanical instruments of music nor use human organizations in the work of the church should not be required to yield to one who admits that he can work and worship without them as well as with them. If the New Testament teaches these things to please God, he must use them, then would he have ground for his advocacy of such things; but since he admits that the New Testament does not require their use, the responsibility for division is on those who use them. Certainly, if God commands a thing, we cannot *do without* it. Neither can we *do with* anything in the work and worship of the church he has not commanded. Does the New Testament teach the use of mechanical instruments of music? If so, somebody should know *where* it is taught, and the proof is all that is needed. Let them produce it and the trouble will be at an end. But if they cannot produce the proof, let them cease the practice and the trouble will end. Do they think more of these human devices than they do of unity and the fellowship of Christians? If so, let them cease their feigned pleadings for unity, fellowship, and a fraternal spirit. If they do not, let them lay aside these untaught things and prove

the sincerity of their love for unity. Neither Christ nor the apostles ever taught the use of instruments of music and organized societies in the work and worship of the church, and no New Testament church ever used them; then why should we use them now? Do you say they are expediencies? Then it is expedient to divide the body of Christ! Do you say it is like "eating meat"? Then, "for meat destroy not the work of God." "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably." This fixes the responsibility beyond doubt, and those who have caused the trouble can heal the breach by withdrawing that which they have introduced without divine authority.

It is a serious matter. The responsibility is fixed. Jehovah said: "The prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, . . . shall die." That which God commands the church to do to carry on the work and worship of the Lord is just as essential as what he commands alien sinners to do to be saved. If we would obey him, therefore, we must do what he says in all matters pertaining to salvation, for he is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

The plea is that an organ is too small a thing to quarrel over to the division of the church. But any untaught thing brought into the service and worship of the church makes the way for all things not taught. No one can consistently oppose an innovation if he practices one himself. To correct the errors of denominationalism, we must repudiate every untaught thing ourselves. If we teach and practice things unknown to the New Testament, we are condemned with the world. There is, therefore, no legitimate argument to be made for anything the New Testament does not teach. To correct the errors of the denomination, the church must stay on the Book, with no addition and no subtraction. The church is no better than a denomination when it uses untaught things in its work and worship, or in any way departs from the teaching of Christ. This accounts for the oft-repeated exhortations in all the Epistles of the apostles. Warnings are sounded

against false teaching and teachers as well as against all derelictions in duty. The church is the light of the world only by contrast. If the church does as the world does, it cannot be the light of the world. "Abstain from every form of evil," therefore, lest your light go out.

Many schemes have been laid and plans formulated by men to carry on the work of the Lord. If people would scheme less and study the word more, plan less and obey God more, conditions spiritually would improve. What the New Testament teaches is not so difficult to understand, but men are vain enough to think they can improve on it. We hear of suppers, parties, and programs to raise money for the Lord. Just at the time when the sectarian world has failed in its claptrap methods of religious work and worship and is ready to give it up, shall the church of Christ take up their schemes and lose her greatest opportunity? Churches are building fine meetinghouses and equipping them like hotels. Here they meet, not for worship, but to eat and have a social time. None of these things tend to spirituality. These things, perhaps, may hold the timeservers and pleasure lovers, but will not promote the spirituality of the church.

SOME FALSE DOCTRINES

The doctrine that God yet appears to men in a miraculous way to reveal his will, is still being promulgated. Even wretches in human flesh can give the most exciting experiences and tell the most fabulous stories of Jehovah's appearance to them. Do you believe, if God moves in any such fashion now, that he would come to the meanest, and not to the best? This idea originates in the doctrine of total depravity, which is the seed bed of all such fake teaching. Infant baptism originates here, as does the practice of the mourner's bench, and direct operation of the Holy Spirit. The idea is that the sinner is dead, and dead men cannot hear; therefore the necessity of miraculous aid. Jesus said: "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear [hearken] shall live." What is the sense of preaching to the dead if they cannot hear? People are dead in sin when they love and practice sin, and to them the word is preached, and those who hearken—

believe and obey—shall live. Why send men everywhere preaching the word, as Jesus did, if they cannot hear?

You do not find a single conversion, in Acts, that was not wrought by preaching the word. No one is converted until he understands, for Jesus said: "Understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them." But how is it now with these modern evangelists? Converted first, then understand, if ever- at all. People cannot be converted without faith, and they cannot have faith without understanding the testimony that produces it. And that testimony is the word of God. Therefore, "preach the word."

In the days before the flood, all men had forgotten God and turned away from his worship—every man's altar had fallen down and its fires had gone out. One man was faithful, and Jehovah appeared to him to tell him what would happen. Noah was the only man in line for such a revelation. All the rest were unfit. He was the best man in the world, and to him, therefore, God appeared. If Jehovah had anything to reveal to the human race, not in the Bible, or any appearance to make to anyone for the good of all, do you think he would come to some wretch? By whom was the Bible written—the good or the bad? When all were faithless, Noah was faithful. He was righteous. He was perfect in his generation, and walked with God. So God appeared to him. And then it is said: "According to all that God commanded him, so did he." So he "found grace in the eyes of God," when the flood came and swept all the ungodly away.

When Sodom and Gomorrah were to be destroyed, Jehovah sought the best man on earth to whom to reveal it. Why did he not appear to some other? God said: "I know Abraham; I know he will keep my covenant and that he will command his children after him." How different to this modern doctrine that would have God coming to the wicked to reveal his secrets!

When Jesus came on Pentecost, with his kingdom and power, he came to the best on earth. They were faithful and loyal and true. They had been trained for this event.

It is claimed that the Jews are going back to Palestine, and that Jesus is coming back to them to establish the kingdom which he declined to give them once. The Jewish nation is anti-Christian, and divided into incompatible factions. They are asking

only for that which is material—nothing spiritual—and that gratis. They no longer look for the Messiah. They only want the old fleshly kingdom back as it once was. They have never done anything for Christ, since they crucified him. They persecuted his disciples, putting many of them to death, and are in no better condition, in any way, to do better by him now. They do not believe on him, nor trust in him for anything. The idea that Christ will come to a people like that to set up or establish his kingdom, so long delayed, is preposterous. He came to the Jews once, and they rejected him, as a whole. What assurance do we have, if he should come again to them, that they would accept him now? Some received him then, a remnant, and the rest were blinded, and still are, and will forever remain so, if they do not believe the gospel and obey it. It was said: "All day long I have stretched my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people," and: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you [Jews]: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." That does not mean that a Jew cannot be a Christian, but it does mean he will have to accept the gospel if he would be saved. It is argued that the "Jew first" means that he has an advantage. But not so. There is no partiality with God. "God has put no difference between us and them."

Balaam said "if" my way is wrong, I will go back, after the Lord had withstood him three times. But, be it observed, he never went back. He was so intent upon going that nothing could turn him back. He "loved the wages of unrighteousness" more than he did the Lord. So it is with advocates of error today who refuse to see truth. The users of instrumental music in worship even go so far as to retranslate the Bible to give to a word a meaning that no standard version of the Scriptures contain. Why? Simply to justify themselves in the use of an unscriptural practice. So it is, also, with those who hold the future-kingdom doctrine. They wrest the Scriptures in an effort to prove their arguments.

THE DANGER OF DRIFTING

Some say we are drifting; others deny it. No one can reach heaven by drifting, for we always drift from it. The apostle sounds a warning against it, saying: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them." There is, and always has been, great danger in drifting from the pure word of God. People in the various ages of the world have drifted from the counsel of the Almighty to their own sorrow and destruction. After the church was established on the day of Pentecost, it drifted away to such an extent that the Dark Ages came over the whole world. Since the church is the light of the world, it is highly important that it remain true to all of God's counsel. After it drifted far away, it returned in a measure after a long time, and now we find the tendency of drifting again asserting itself. The church today is fast drifting from the pure word of God and the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus.

To leave the word of God is to leave all. We are told, therefore, he that goeth on, and "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God"; but, on the other hand, if he abideth "in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." The drifter is without God and Christ, and the Holy Spirit also, for the Spirit is with no one who leaves the word of God. The Spirit operates through the word, and dwells in people to the extent that the word of God dwells in them. That church, therefore, that drifts away from the word of God is without the Spirit of God; and as the church is the body of Christ, and the body without the spirit is dead, so that church is dead. It is not the extent that one drifts away that is condemned, but drifting at all.

The Hebrews were exhorted: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Those who depart from the word of God, depart from God. Who would say today that the preachers and elders and churches are as well rooted in the word of God as they once were, or that they are taking the proper care to avoid drifting away? No one can "take heed," and be indifferent to the present tendency. The effort to popularize the church today is evil, for it leads away from Christ. The only hope of the world is the church, and the only hope of the church is for it to take "heed to

the things which we have heard." My observation is that the preachers as a whole and the churches are not as careful as the case merits. In another passage we are told to look "diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled," and the church be full of "fornicators" and "profane persons" who sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. The only way to prevent it is to "take heed," "looking diligently," lest we find ourselves in a condition from which our tears and penitence can never deliver us.

There are the smoldering ruins of thousands of once prosperous congregations of disciples all over this fair land of ours. They became extinct long ago. Why? They drifted from the pure gospel of God; they either left off something or added something. The church for which the Lord gave himself will soon become extinct all over the world, unless we cling to his word. Therefore, "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." If the time ever comes when there is not a simple congregation of disciples on the earth, it will still be in the seed, which is the word of God. We must look to the seed now, and refuse anything unauthorized in the work and worship of the church; we must not only love the right way of the Lord, but hate every false way. Churches which are so tender-footed that they do not want debates are on the way to annihilation.

The spirit of compromise is the spirit of the age. A compromise cannot be effected without a sacrifice of the truth. The pure word of God always results in a pure product. A compromise is a mixture—an amalgamation. Preachers or elders who cater to this sort of thing are the enemies of the church. We certainly know enough about history to have it said to us: "Seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." That the churches are indifferent is appalling, and the greatest sign of danger. No one cares to be an alarmist, but no one can be true to his trust and not sound this note of warning. All the apostles who wrote did it. Especially Paul would say that after his departure "grievous wolves would enter in among you, not sparing the flock," and that from among themselves would "men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them";

and again, "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtility, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

Men today who have given their lives to the study of the word of God, and who have no interest but to maintain the pure word of God, are called "extremists" and "cranks" when they oppose these destructive things, and are refused the pulpits of many of the churches. These same pulpits will invite those who are wholly overtaken in error. Men who love the truth and preach the truth in its power are not wanted in many of the congregations. It is no uncommon thing to hear it said: "We want a good organizer and a good mixer; we don't care whether he can preach much or not." And, still, some say we are not drifting. When anyone runs to the defense of such a course, he is only seeking to justify his own practice.

EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

Missionary work is an indispensable work of the church of Jesus Christ. No church can do its full duty and be indifferent to it. There are multiplied thousands living today who have never heard of Christ, and the church cannot rest until at least, an effort has been made to carry the gospel to them. Men have divided the work into home and foreign fields. Some have concluded that if they can keep the work going at home it does not matter about preaching the gospel abroad. But with Christ and the Bible there is but one field, and that is "the world." Since "the field is the world," we cannot stop till the work is done. That means we will never stop.

The work of the church is not complete till the whole world is evangelized. Men have made divisions, and organized societies which the apostles and New Testament church knew nothing about. The church in New Testament times, with no field but the world and no organization except the church, succeeded. In less than forty years the gospel had been preached to the whole creation, to the extent that it was said that the gospel had been "preached to every creature" which is under heaven. Since it was done once, without any of these human devices, it can be done again. In fact, it cannot be done with them at all, because they

drive God out of the work and make it wholly of men. The combining and organizing of a number of congregations is also a violation of New Testament teaching. There are only two ways in which the work may be done. It may be done as an individual Christian, or as an individual congregation of Christians. God's way will succeed, but human wisdom will fail. All such, therefore, are hindrances and not helps.

Anything in religion, or the work and worship of the church, God has not commanded is wrong. The order of the work at the first was, "beginning at Jerusalem." The Savior said to the apostles in Acts 1:8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and then to the whole world. The wisdom of God was that the work nearest to hand was first in order. This is in accord with the parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven." The leaven influences that which is nearest first. So is the kingdom of heaven.

Beginning with the second chapter of Acts, the work was confined to Jerusalem, till we reach the fourth verse of the eighth chapter. From the scattering of the disciples to the close of the twelfth chapter, we have the work in Judea and Samaria. Beginning with chapter thirteen, we have Paul's missionary tours carrying the gospel to "the uttermost part of the earth." The work nearest to us is too much neglected. There are thousands of Mexicans in the cities of the West and Southwest, and little is being done toward their conversion. Let us use the same wisdom and judgment in carrying on the Lord's work as we would in our own. There is a very fine Mexican brother in Dallas, doing work among his own people. We are doing all we can for him under the circumstances. A little help to him from other congregations would be a blessing to him.

When the Israelites left Egypt, their success traveled before them. At the end of the forty years in the wilderness, they reached the crossing of the Jordan. When the spies were sent to Jericho, Rahab said she had heard how their God had destroyed their enemies, and the people's hearts melted in them because of such news. The church in its march through the world should be the same way. Modern evangelism is a failure, because it

courts the popular favor of the masses instead of antagonizing it. Let the church gird on the whole armor of God and go out to the battle, and the people's hearts will melt when they hear and see what God can do through his church. They may also say, "It is everywhere spoken against," but that will only be a recommendation. There are millions in our country who have never heard of the true church. All churches are alike to them. They judge there is no difference. Let the church of Christ dwell alone; let it be separate and apart from all religious denominations; and in a short while the people will again hear of the Lord's presence with his people. Paul said of the church at Rome, "Your faith is spoken of throughout the world." It is *faith* that should be broadcast, not prestige.

We have received many letters of commendation on the contents of this page, and, it is but fair and just to say, we have received several criticisms. If all should commend what we write and preach, we might have occasion to feel badly; for Jesus said: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" No one can teach and preach the gospel to the satisfaction of all. If we would go to heaven when we die, we must please God while we live. Enoch pleased God, and God "took him," for before his translation he had this testimony: that he "pleased God." Even so, "without faith it is impossible to please him." Therefore, we must "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Any effort to please men is out of the question. We have made no such effort, and by the help of God we shall make none. The church in its purity must be preserved. To do this, nothing but the word of God must be preached and taught.

CONCERNING WORLD EVANGELISM

That the whole world was evangelized once there can be no doubt. It was said: "Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Again: "The gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven." All this before the last of the apostles were dead. It was testified by an

unbeliever that there were six million Christians in the Roman Empire before the death of the last of the apostles. This was done by the disciples of Christ when they were poor in this world's goods, before they owned a single piece of real estate or property of any kind of which to speak, before there was a single human organization to aid them. They had no colleges nor college graduates. Therefore, they were not cumbered with great and burdensome debts nor troubled with moratoriums and accumulating interest.

They did it without modern facilities of communication and travel. They never boasted of their property values, for they had none. All this goes to show that the world can be evangelized again when we go about it in the right way. Modern methods are manifestly a failure. With all our human organizations, fine church buildings, and property values, the world lies out there like a neglected garden or an unkept lawn. Our possessions seem to be the cross upon which the churches are nailed and dying today. We are leaning upon material things for power and recognition in the work of the Lord. With us it is numbers. It is additions. It is the building of a fine meetinghouse equipped with a Sunday-school plant. The result is that we are weighted down with our own armor. The armament of the world has never made the church efficient, but rather destroyed its usefulness. In the language of the apostle. "Put on the whole armor of God," and "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Let the churches lay aside Saul's armor and go to the field in the name of the Lord.

Whenever people cannot worship God until they have a fine house with art-glass windows, they cannot worship him at all; for "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We can never have too much spiritual equipment. Be it here remarked that nothing is spiritual that is nowhere mentioned in the New Testament. Since this is a spiritual work, and the work must be accomplished by a spiritual institution, and the church is the only spiritual institution (for it is the only one mentioned in the New Testament), all human organizations are hindrances and strangulation cords that take its life. They rob the church of its place in human redemption. "Unto him be glory in the church, . . . , throughout all ages."

The apostolic method of evangelizing the world is to teach the nations and baptize them, and teach them to observe all things that Christ commands. It requires no organization except the church, and puts it where every member can function. So the apostles went everywhere preaching the word, and in less than forty years the gospel had been preached in all the civilized world. They had no message but the word of God. They were filled with the love of God and fired by the Spirit. It was an individual matter in those days, and every member of the church was a living sermon by his consecration and devotion to the cause for which Jesus gave his life. God has said: "They shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." This was the only course pursued by the New Testament church, and was a success. Since it worked then, it will work now. It is a somewhat common saying now: "When they are taught more, they will do more." Certainly; but taught what? Nothing but the pure word of God. Not only should we heed the character of teaching, but the thing taught especially. Jesus came teaching, the Holy Spirit came teaching, and the apostles were instructed to teach the nations. In fact, all the disciples were to be teachers after sufficient time.

It appears today that the churches are too dependent, as well as the preachers and teachers. They must have everything made ready to their hand by someone else. Such procedure is too much like reciting a memorized speech. The lesson taught must be from the very heart of the teacher. The preacher must know his lesson before he can teach it to others. The modern evangelist is loaded with a stock of human experiences and observations and jokes to be used at the crucial moment. Modern evangelism smacks of high-pressure salesmanship. Apostolic evangelism was unostentatious, but strong and firm. It proposed no compromise and it accepted none. It contended earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. It fought the good fight of faith, therefore; and since faith comes by hearing the word of Christ, they used only the word, which is the sword of the Spirit, both offensively and defensively. The modern evangelist contends very little for anything and does not believe in fighting. There are many today who carry on after the apostolic order of evangelism, for whom we are thankful. They have faith in God and

believe his word. They believe the most powerful and pungent sermons are in deeds and not in word only.

It is argued that times have changed. Very well do we recognize that fact. But the Bible is the same; the gospel is the same; the church is the same; Christ is the same; the Holy Spirit is the same; and we might remark that human nature is the same. All the changing that time may experience will not, therefore, warrant the changing of any of these things.

EVIL MEN AND SEDUCERS

Paul in his last letter to young Timothy said: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." No one could conclude from the existing facts that the number of "evil men and seducers" is any less today, but may be infinitely increased. Neither can we say they have toned down in their effort to work evil and deceive. They seem not only greater in number, but more determined to carry their deceptions to the end of the world. The church, however, is better prepared to withstand such onsets than when Paul wrote this to Timothy. The New Testament was not fully revealed or written then. From the time the church was established till John wrote Revelation it was edified by spiritual gifts. This period was spoken of as "that which is in part" in contrast with "that which is perfect." The Corinthians were told to "covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." The "more excellent way" refers to "that which is perfect" and that was to "come," "seeing face to face," "putting away childish things," and knowing "even as also I am known."

In the Ephesian letter the same apostle said that when Christ "ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning

craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Since the last word has been revealed and we have access to the Bible in which all is written, there is the least excuse for anyone being deceived by "evil men and seducers."

CHRISTIANS ARE TO GROW

We are no more children, but full-grown men and women; and with a Bible in hand we should be able to defeat any deceiver, even tear away the mask of evildoers and expose their cunning and craftiness.

We know there are men in the religious world who juggle the word of God, handling it with great "sleight" for no purpose but to deceive. But God's children now are not supposed to be deceived by such. Why not turn a deaf ear to what men say, therefore, and learn not to "think of men above that which is written." There is no use saying that we will pay no attention to such men. We are forced to do it. No one can be true to his trust and not do it. They are busy every day poisoning the minds of the people against the truth with their deceptive doctrines. Paul in all his epistles gave much space to such by warning against it, and not only so, but in his public utterances. He said to the elders of the church at Ephesus: "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Since there are perhaps as many "evil men and seducers" as in any age of the world, why should not these same warnings be sounded with frequency—yea, with regularity? It is not quarreling, nagging, or fussing, but merely discharging the obligation that Jehovah has made to rest upon the shoulders of his servants. The apostle called such "grievous wolves." Jesus spoke of them as "wolves in sheep's clothing." Paul said men would arise from "your own selves," speaking perverse things, *to draw away disciples after them*. Shall we stand by and let them do it? Certainly not. We should withstand every false doctrine with the word of God. False doctrines are only intended to deceive.

We are told by the beloved John that "many false prophets are gone out into the world," and, therefore, we are not to believe "every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God."

THE ACID TEST

The acid test of everything in religion is the word of God. Let us see what the Book says and abide by it. We should never try to make the word of God justify anything that men do, but instead try to get all men to do what the Bible says. No apology for error can be pleasing to God or beneficial to men. It is, therefore, the pure word of God or nothing. Another very interesting point about this passage is that it says "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse." Therefore, we conclude that men are not totally depraved. Not only men, but "evil men and seducers." If men were totally depraved, they could not get any worse, for the total of anything is all of it. If "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse," so also can all men. Therefore, none are totally depraved. If so, they could get no worse. If "evil men and seducers" can get "worse and worse," then good men and godly can "wax" better and better. If not, why not? A rule that will not work both ways is no good. Therefore, when people become Christians they are not full grown, but are babes in Christ and are expected to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Even "desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Since one can grow unto salvation, he can fall away to damnation. All this shows without doubt that no man is totally depraved. The most important point about the reading is how to withstand such men. The apostle said: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." The source from which we get our learning seems to be very important here. This, no doubt, is a reference to the "apostles' doctrine." Anything in religion, therefore, must come to us through the apostles.

ADDING TO YOUR FAITH

There is no reason why anything should be added to your faith if you are saved by faith only. Certainly, Jehovah would not add a burden merely for the sake of doing it. If there is no profit in it at all, why do it? What more can be done for the soul than to save it? When one is lost, he is out of proper relationship with God; when saved, he is in proper relationship with God and all

good things. The fact that we are required to add to our faith is evidence that there is something wrong with the faith-alone theory. These additions are made to our faith as the apple is added to the tree—by a healthy growth. Those who do not "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," will never succeed in adding to their faith these Christian graces. In the first place, faith must be obtained before you can add to it. No one can add to something he does not possess. Those to whom this letter was addressed had "obtained like precious faith." Since they "obtained" it, everyone else can. Just when they obtained it and how, is the question. This passage tells us: "Through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ."

The next question is: What is the righteousness of God? The Psalmist said: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness." No one can obtain anything, then, through the righteousness of God without the commandments of God. These commandments must be obeyed, for "he that doeth righteousness is righteous." "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of him," and to be saved is to be born of God. We are "born of him" by doing God's righteousness, and "all thy commandments are righteousness." These people to whom the apostle was writing had obeyed the commandments of God. By this they obtained the faith to which they were required to add. They are required to "give all diligence" to make these additions. This places the responsibility on the individual. It not only can be done, but it must be done. There are certain conditions that men must obey to become sons of God, or to "obtain" this faith. These are the things that God has commanded the alien sinner to do to be saved. Till these are obeyed, he has no faith to which he can add. A great deal of care and all faithfulness should be exercised, therefore, in teaching the world its duty to God. That men must hear the word of God and believe, no one doubts. That all men are required to repent, or else they cannot be saved; that they shall confess Jesus as Lord, or else Jesus will not confess them before the Father and the angels; that they must be baptized for the remission of sins, are just as true. By this we obtain faith; and if we stop at this, we have faith only. Since we are not justified by faith only, we can see the need of adding to our faith.

The mental act of believing is not "faith only." That is what is meant by the advocates of the faith-only theory. They maintain that one is saved "at" faith; therefore, without obedience. We are saved "by faith," but not by "faith only." It is the faith that obeys that saves. Nowhere has faith ever blessed people till it has expressed itself in action. Faith that does not obey is not saving faith. Those who teach that justification "by faith only" is "a wholesome doctrine and full of comfort," teach error. The one who teaches that we are saved by faith before and without baptism is teaching a false doctrine. Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Therefore, Jesus put salvation after baptism. He made baptism a condition of salvation. In baptism we are not only buried with Jesus in baptism, but we are raised with him to walk in newness of life. The old things are done away, and all things have become new. He is a babe in Christ, having been born into the kingdom of God. He must begin to grow, and thereby add to his faith. He must take the sincere milk of the word to grow unto salvation.

The things to be added are named in the same text. There are seven of them. The first one is "virtue"—moral courage, godly fear. Do right because it is right. Too many wait to see what others will do first. Knowledge is the next—to be informed, to know your ground, to know what the church stands for and why. This is acquired by a study of the word of God. Then we have temperance—self-control. Since knowledge has a tendency to puff up, temperance is needful. It serves as a sort of governor to control. Next, we have patience—steadfastness. Godliness is next required—to be like God. Then, brotherly kindness—love for the brethren. And the last is love. This is the bond of perfectness.

The apostle then adds that if "these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is fruitfulness that God desires in his church; for, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Faith cannot bear fruit to the glory of God, therefore, without "these things." Hence, the importance of adding them to your faith. "He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." The difference between those who have "these things" and those who do not is marked. One is

fruitful, the other is barren; one can see, the other cannot; one is lacking, the other is not; one is idle, the other is busy. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

THE UNITY OF THE FAITH

That the church from its establishment in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost was looking forward to the unity of the faith admits of no doubt; but it is manifest that since the New Testament has been fully written, no one can entertain that idea, for it has already been attained. They looked forward to the completion of the revelation, and we look back to it and rely upon it for all we can know of things that pertain to life and godliness. Therefore, since John wrote the "Amen" to Revelation there can be nothing added to it nor taken away from it. When the New Testament was finished, the unity of the faith came. No Christian is justified in contending for anything not recorded in the New Testament. Therefore, things not recorded there have caused all the divisions among professed Christians.

To avoid division we must avoid everything not taught in the New Testament, for we have the unity of the faith in the New Testament. This is manifest since faith comes by hearing the word of Christ, and the New Testament is that word. This rule applied, and the people will all believe the same thing and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. From this standpoint the apostle was speaking when he said that there is "one faith." All must be of one mind and one faith and all speak the same thing. There is no other solution to the whole situation. The conflicting doctrines will be silenced overnight, and all the creeds, with all the doctrines and commandments of men, will be destroyed. Creeds cause the division among the people.

It will be observed that the apostle in the discussion of spiritual gifts said: "Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." The next chapter launches into a discussion of love. When he reaches his point that "love never faileth," he adds that prophecies shall fail, tongues will cease, and

knowledge will vanish away. All other spiritual gifts were destined to the same end. From the time the church was established until the New Testament was completed it was admonished and edified by these gifts. The oral word of these inspired men then was to the church just what the New Testament is to us now. During that time they knew "in part" and prophesied "in part" ; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is "in part" shall be done away. Therefore, when the New Testament was completed, spiritual gifts had served their intended purpose and were done away. He further refers to that time as being the childhood age of the church, saying that when he became a man he put away childish things. So when the New Testament was fully revealed, they no longer looked through a glass darkly, but face to face; they no longer knew in part, but fully.

To further illustrate this point the apostle said: "When he ascended up on high, , , , and gave gifts unto men." He then tells what these gifts were in part at least: "Some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." There can be no doubt, then, as to when these gifts were made. It was when Jesus ascended to heaven from Olivet. This is in harmony with what he promised the apostles while he was yet with them. He ascended from Olivet and sent the Spirit on Pentecost following to guide them into all truth and teach them all things. This he did miraculously till the New Testament was completed. Be it observed that the Holy Spirit reduced to writing his teaching in the New Testament, which is to control in all matters pertaining to the work and worship of the church, individually as well as collectively.

It is also as easily ascertained as to why these gifts were made: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," which is the church. Therefore, all these gifts were for the building up of the church pending the full revelation. During this regime they were constantly pointed to the future—to the more excellent way—to that which is perfect. How long these were to carry on is just as easily understood: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with

every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

There is little excuse to be disturbed now on the teaching either by word or letter. All have the New Testament and can test all things by it. There are men who are cunningly crafty today, and they possess great sleight in juggling the word of God by ruthlessly wrenching passages from their true connection to prove doctrines as false as night. The apostle evidently directed men to study to rightly handle the word of truth and give no indorsement to the false teacher. We must obey God in this also.

THE FOUNDATION

There is but little or no attention given to the workers who are laying the foundation of any building. They are down in the ditch rolling the wheelbarrow, casting the molds, and pouring the concrete : making ready for the structure. They are mud-spattered and not very inviting, yet, but for their work, nothing could be erected. A good foundation secures the whole structure. Carelessness here imperils everything. The foundation should be laid by the most trustworthy of all the workmen. Later people pass by and see a man with a little paint and plaster putting on the finishing touches, and lavishly bestow their praises on him for his wonderful work, when, in fact, if someone had not laid carefully a foundation, his work would be impossible.

This shows how people overlook the real worth of men. Men went into the open country, into schoolhouses, and brush arbors at their own charges; preaching, debating, and fighting their way to establish congregations here and there after the New Testament pattern. Their clothing was cheap and their persons without polish, in many instances; but the foundation another builds on today was laid by them. In many cases the one who did the foundation work would not be allowed to preach in the fine edifice that now adorns the spot where he suffered to plant the Master's

cause. It is no longer an old ragged tent, or brush arbor, or schoolhouse; but a fine pulpit, expensive pews, windowed walls, fretted roof, and climbing arches that drive the poor out into the streets and refuse recognition to the most Christlike people on earth. Instead of the man of God, clothed with the whole armor of God, we see the preacher with his costly attire, his college degrees, and sermonettes, his high-sounding phrases, and poetic recitations; putting on the polish and making the church popular by worldly-wise methods, by organizing this, that, and the other; doing little or no good preaching; banning debates; fighting nothing; and doing all in his power to compromise with every false way. Such a preacher is called the great power of God when, in fact, he is the enemy of the truth and the greatest foe to the church. No objections to degrees and the like, but they cannot take the place of the gospel.

Paul said: "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." Paul laid the foundation in Corinth, and that by preaching "Christ, and him crucified." He did this without mixing anything with it. He refrained from "enticing words of man's wisdom" that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men." He said, therefore, that he "came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God"; but he did come "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," in order that their faith might stand "in the power of God." Thus did the apostle lay the foundation in Corinth. God laid the foundation in Zion, and "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." God said: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone"; and it is also said, "the stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner"; and that "you are coming unto a living stone"; and that you "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

Christ must be preached in every community as the foundation of the church in that community. The structure cannot be erected without a foundation; and since Christ is the only solid rock upon which salvation is made secure, and faith and hope rest, he must be preached. We are just here reminded that Philip preached Christ unto the Samaritans, and "when they believed Philip

preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." With reference to the establishment of this church it is said: "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." This resulted everywhere Christ was preached in New Testament times, when the people believed the preaching. Peter preached Christ to the Pentecostians, and they were baptized; Philip preached Christ to the Samaritans, and they were baptized; he preached Jesus to the eunuch, and he was baptized; and Paul preached "Christ, and him crucified" to the Corinthians, and they were baptized. But, how is it, brethren? Here comes a big evangelist and preaches Christ, he says, and people believe all he preaches, and no one is baptized.

Not only did the apostle say he laid the foundation as a wise master builder, by the grace of God given to him, but he also said, "and another buildeth thereon," and then added, "let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon." Christ is not only *supreme* authority in all matters of faith and practice, but he is *sole authority*. Anything upon this foundation in the way of an organization, or a doctrine, cannot stand the test and will be destroyed.

The only way any preacher or teacher can save his own soul is by faithfully discharging his duty in declaring the whole counsel of God. Faithfulness to the Word of God is indispensable to the salvation of the soul.

More care should be taken lest the church be corrupted by things unauthorized. Christ, his church, his body, his name, must be preserved blameless and nothing mixed with the word of God, if we would be saved. Oneness, union, and harmony can be had only by loyalty to the gospel.

CALLING UPON GOD

It is said many times in the Scriptures that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." But "how then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? ... So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

(Rom. 10:14-17.) People must hear, believe, and call upon God to be saved. Hearing is indispensable to salvation. To preach the word is, therefore, the sole task of the preacher. Hearing, believing, calling upon God, and salvation, is the order.

The Corinthian letter was addressed to the "church of God," to the "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints," and to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ." We know they had heard of God, for "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." Since salvation is placed after one calls on the name of the Lord, and Jesus said, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" it follows that people are saved after they obey him and not before. He is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." No one, therefore, can call upon him in the light of these passages except as he obeys him.

Saul of Tarsus was commanded to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." We know that Jesus commanded him to be baptized, for he could not have done anything in "the name of the Lord" that the Lord had not commanded. Jesus placed salvation after baptism. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." But the Scriptures place salvation after calling on the Lord; therefore, we ask, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Did Jesus say for people to be baptized? Can one call upon the name of the Lord, then, to the salvation of his soul, and not be baptized? Why should those who refuse to be baptized call him "Lord," since they have not done what he said? Jesus said: "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." It is not everyone who worships him that shall be accepted, but he that is a "worshiper of God, *and doeth his will.*" It is not everyone who says, "Lord, Lord," but he that doeth his will. When we worship God, we must worship him by doing the will of God. When we call upon God, we must call upon him by doing his will. Otherwise our worship will be in vain and our calling an abomination. "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." It is possible for one to call upon God and at the same time rebel at his word. No one can reject his word and at the same time be

justified by faith. No one can act by faith where God has not spoken, for faith comes "by hearing the word of God." Salvation, then, is inseparably connected with the word of God.

The whole Bible was written for one purpose—namely, to teach man obedience to his God. Everything in it, therefore, is incidental to this purpose. It contains a world of subject matter on various themes, but all are contributory to this one thing—obedience to God. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "Without faith it is impossible to please him"; and faith comes "by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If God hath not spoken, then it is without faith, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." It is, therefore, utterly impossible to obey God in doing what he does *not* say. Taking liberties with the word of the Lord by doing what it does not say is a very dangerous course to pursue. Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Anything the New Testament does not teach is not obedience to him. Hearing and doing the sayings of Jesus, we build on the rock; otherwise we build on the sand, which building is destined to fall.

We are not so much interested in the dictionary meaning of the word "worship" as we are in the New Testament use of it. For "in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Paul speaks of will worship—a worship coming from the will of the worshiper. Anyone who worships according to what he thinks, or by creeds and disciplines and teaching of uninspired men, is wasting his time and effort, for all such is "in vain." The "true worshiper must worship him in spirit and in truth." Jesus said: "Thy word is truth." All worship, then, must be according to the word of God, revealed in the New Testament. The word of God is our guide in all things pertaining to life and godliness. Think how-inconsistent it would be for the church to be "the pillar and ground of the truth" and at the same time practicing things not once mentioned in the New Testament.

Men can worship God in any way they may choose. But the question is: Will God accept the worship and approve the worshiper? Cain and Abel both offered their gifts to God, but God accepted one and rejected the other. Why? One did what God commanded and the other did not. So, today, those who do his commandments in their worship will be accepted and those who do anything else will be rejected. For this reason musical instruments and human organizations are to be rejected in the work and worship of the church, since they are not commanded in the New Testament.

THE LOVE OF GOD

The love of God is preeminently the greatest subject of all. "Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfect-ness," and "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," and "have fervent charity [love] among yourselves: for charity [love] shall cover the multitude of sins." This helps us to understand how God "is above all, and through all, and in you all," for "God is love." Love removes all sin by providing the efficacious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ through the plan of salvation.

It was from the prolific womb of love that the material universe came into existence for the abode of man. It was Love's plastic hand that made the first man from a batch of clay, and her sweet voice that called from his opened side a woman with all her loveliness and beauty and fitted her to be the helpmeet and companion for man, to share with him life's sorrows and honors. Love made them bone of one another's bone and flesh of one another's flesh, and her strong cord bound them together till death should part.

It was also Love's hand that led the Lord to the cross and to carry our sins with him there. Love enables one to live through all of life's storms and endure to the end. Love has heights that have never been scaled, depths that have never been fathomed, lengths that have never been reached. It has never been fully comprehended by men.

Viewing the subject mentally is somewhat like looking out over the vast plains where the earth and sky seem to meet; but they really never meet—it is only as far as you can see. So if we would see farther, we must advance more and more. The more

we "grow in grace," the deeper into the withering depths of God's boundless love can we see. We must be content, therefore, to wait till Love's hand shall open the door of our dwelling and let us fly away to the soul's habitat where we can "read the meaning of our tears" and "understand it better."

The love of God sometimes means the love God has for us, and again it means the love we have for him. As to his love for us, we suffer no uneasiness. For, "though we forget him and wander away, yet he doth love us wherever we stray." Here we rest in God's love for us.

Our love for God is the problem for solution. We are sometimes weaned from it by the ways of the world. What the Bible says on the point is worthy of our most serious consideration. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" "is the first and great commandment"; "and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"; and "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." The Ten Commandments were by these commandments divided into two. To love God is duty to God. To love thy neighbor is duty to man. The first four commandments of the Ten Commandments constitute duty to God; the next six, duty to man. The whole duty to God and man, therefore, is embraced, for "on these two-commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

It is made clear in the New Testament that one must have love to be anything. (See 1 Cor. 13:1-3.)

Whatever one may accomplish or achieve intellectually or otherwise goes for naught in the absence of love. What, then, is love? Jesus said: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." No one can love Jesus and not keep his commandments. It matters not how one may feel toward God, it is impossible to love him and not keep his commandments. Likewise the brethren. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore *love is the fulfilling of the law.*" To love your neighbor, the brethren, even your enemy, is to obey the law concerning them.

Love is both positive and negative. Purposely or incidentally, it is a fact that in the wonderful chapter on love there are eight

things love does and eight things it does not do. The positive: Love "suffereth long," "is kind," "rejoiceth in the truth," "beareth all things," "believeth all things," "hopeth all things," "endureth all things." "Love never faileth." The negative: Love "en-vieth not," "vaunteth not itself," "is not puffed up," "doth not behave itself unseemly," "seeketh not her own," "is not easily provoked," "thinketh no evil," "rejoiceth not in iniquity." One who loves, therefore, is admirable, but one who does not is despicable.

This is not all that the Bible says love does, but it is enough to show how love makes men. Without it man is nothing, regardless of all else he may have or do. Everything else will fail, but "love never faileth." One who stands on any other foundation is destined to fail, therefore. Let us remember that "this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments"; and be assured that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

Love is like that mysterious gulf stream that carries the warmth of the tropics to the far North, making flowers to bloom where otherwise perpetual winter would prevail. It also brings back the coolness of the North and makes it possible for life to exist amid the tropics. Love comes from God through this sea of cold humanity, returning to the place from whence it started, carrying life and peace and redeemed souls upon its bosom.

May we be filled with the love of God, therefore, that we may serve him and humanity better. Bitterness and hate have never helped a soul on to God, nor advanced the cause for which Jesus died.

THE PEACE OF GOD

When Jesus was born, the angels sang, "Peace on earth." He taught peace and insisted on it. The Spirit, through the apostles, taught that we should "follow peace with all men," and that we should "seek peace and pursue it," if we would "love life and see good days." Also, that we should "follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another,"

"live in peace," and "be at peace among yourselves." The wisdom which is from above is "first pure, then peaceable; . . . and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." Jesus said: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." All this, and much more, is said to show how indispensable peace is among the children of God.

However, this should not throw us off our guard to the end that we should seek peace at any price and on any terms, for Jesus again said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword"; and, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." These passages are not in conflict with the first group, but they teach that peace can be had only on the terms of peace which God prescribes. Peace effected by a compromise is no peace at all. It cannot be had by playing mum on the plan of salvation. The peace of which the Bible speaks is purchased by the price of war with sin. Any man who winks at sin is no peacemaker, therefore. All such peace, if it be lawful to call it peace, is but a sham. A warning is sounded against all such in these words: "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."

There is, therefore, a marked difference in peace. Jesus said, "My peace I give unto you"; and the apostle said, "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." God's peace must be had in one body, therefore, and that body is the body of Christ, which is the church. There is no peace in any other, and on no terms except those necessary to entering that body and maintaining full fellowship in it. All who would have peace by compromising with the opposition are enemies of the truth. We read of "the gospel of peace." The gospel of Jesus Christ is the gospel of peace only when it is believed and obeyed. It is God's only power to save men, and thus make peace on earth. Since no one can obey the gospel till he believes on the Lord with his whole heart, repents of all his sins, and is baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins, there can be no peace until these have been done. Those who insist upon this are the peacemakers, and those who pursue any other course are the peace breakers. Since one must be

baptized to obey the gospel, and he must be immersed to be baptized, there can never be any peace with those who practice sprinkling for baptism. A compromise is unthinkable. The only ground of peace, then, is easily understood. Since the children of God are peacemakers, they must seek peace only in the terms of the gospel. Anyone who would seek peace by shunning to declare all the counsel of God is the enemy of the cross of Christ. In other words, the gospel must be preached, believed, and obeyed in order to have peace—that is, *the peace of God*.

We note again that "justified by faith, we have peace with God." Faith comes by hearing the word of God. Where God has spoken, there may be faith; but where he has not spoken, there is no faith. It is, therefore, the things introduced into the work and worship of the church which the Bible does not teach that have from of old disturbed its peace and caused separation. There is no peace with God without justification; no justification without faith; no faith without the word of God. So, then, we "are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" and "peacemakers." Woe to the man that would disturb the peace of the church of the Lord Jesus with his untaught and unrevealed things! Not only do such destroy the peace of the church, but no one can be at peace with God and follow such a course, "for without faith it is impossible to please him."

We read in the Scriptures of the "way of peace," and that way is clearly marked out by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. We are told that to be "spiritually minded is life and peace." No one is spiritually-minded till his mind is filled with the Spirit's teaching. This is in contrast with the carnal mind. There is no peace possible on fleshly-mindedness, for the "carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The only way of peace, therefore, is the way the Spirit leads. Now, since those who are led by the Spirit are sons of God, and the peacemakers are children of God, it necessarily follows that peacemakers are led by the Spirit's teaching. Things not taught are in the class of carnal things. These disturb the peace and harmony of the church; the things revealed never do. After all, it resolves itself to one question: What does the Bible say? No one is spiritually-minded who uses carnal things—that is, untaught things in the work and worship of the church to its dis-

ruption. We cannot sacrifice the truth, or in any way imperil the church of the Lord, to have it. We are told that the fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace," but only the peace that results from spiritual-mindedness. God is said to be "the God of peace" repeatedly, but never did he compromise to have peace. Peace must be had on his terms, and not ours.

THE THINGS OF GOD

We are positively told that no man knoweth the things of God. (1 Cor. 2:11.) Then why ask men to tell us these things? Men by their wisdom have never known God. We must know the things of God to know him; and since "the things of God knoweth no man," it is utterly impossible to know God by what men may tell you. No man should venture to go beyond that which is written. "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." "Therefore let no man glory in men."

Too many are searching for what men say rather than what God says. The time and effort would be better spent in searching the Scriptures. Paul said to Timothy: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Then people had better read the Scriptures than to ask men who do not know the things of God.

Abraham refused to send Lazarus from the dead to tell the rich man's brothers not to come to that place of torment, but advised that they "hear Moses and the prophets." When the rich man said, "Nay," Abraham said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." I have all respect for the opinion of godly men who have given their lives to the study of the Bible, but no respect for the saying of anyone who is not warranted by the Holy Scriptures. The only hope of union and unity among men is to adopt the word of God as the only source of authority in matters of religion. That which will go further toward the unifying of the races of men than anything, is to all speak the same language, speak the same things—"a pure language." (Zech. 3:9.)

This same passage tells us that only the Spirit of God knows the things of God. There is, therefore, no need to look elsewhere to find out these things. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Then we must look to the revelation of the Spirit to find out the things of God. The Bible contains all that revelation. We are told, therefore, that the anathema of God is on those who preach any other gospel. The Bible, then, not only contains "the things of God," but *all* "the things of God."

For this reason we have said: "The people are not divided over what the Bible says, but over what it does not say." "The things of God" have never divided the people. Had nothing ever been introduced in religion except that which the Bible contains, there would not be a division in the world today. No one can successfully claim a thing to be of God in religion that cannot be read in the Bible. That there are many things not revealed, no one will question. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." And "many other signs," truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. What the "secret things" are and the things not written, we have no way of finding out. We can find out the things that are written, but no more.

The Spirit makes this revelation always in the same way— through men. He has revealed nothing to men since the last apostle passed away. The conditions of salvation, therefore, can be learned only as we consult inspired men. The apostle, speaking of "the dispensation of the grace of God," said it "was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Then the apostles and prophets of the New Testament spoke things that had not been revealed, even "the mystery." It is now a revelation and not a mystery, since the Spirit has spoken. In Old Testament times God strove with the antediluvians through Noah. He testified against the Israelites and gave them instruction by "his Spirit in the

prophets." So now he gives instruction by his Spirit in the apostles. David said: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." The apostle Peter said of the things the Spirit in the prophets signified when he testified "beforehand the sufferings of Christ, . . . which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Only the Spirit knows the things of God. He came down upon the apostles on Pentecost and made these things known unto men. The New Testament is the product of their labors as they were guided by the Spirit. The churches, then, must hark back to the apostles' teaching, or else be lost in the rubbish of the denominational world. The Spirit reveals that one must believe with the whole heart, repent of all his sins, confess Jesus as Lord before men, and be baptized in his name for the remission of sins in order to become a Christian. We must, therefore, tell people just what God says: "Repent, and be baptized" ; "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins"; and all the word of God says.

THE KINGDOM—THE CHURCH—THE BODY

These three terms are all applied to the same institution in the New Testament. They do not mean the same thing, and are, therefore, not synonyms. They are used to illustrate different features of the same institution. The word "kingdom" is used many times in both the Old and New Testaments. But in all cases it denotes government, and features that idea. The kingdom of heaven, then, must be understood to mean the government of heaven. It also indicates the kind of government. It differs, therefore, from a republican or democratic form of government on the power of rule in the people or representatives of the people. A government of the people or by the people cannot be the kingdom or government of the New Testament; for it is a kingdom— an absolute monarchy. And Jesus Christ is the king or autocrat. We are told that "where the word of a king is, there is power." Jesus Christ is the king, and the New Testament is his word. This is true whether it be a fleshly kingdom or a spiritual one that the word of the king controls.

In all forms of government there are three branches: the legislative, the judicial, and the executive. One makes all laws, the

other judges all laws, and the other executes all laws. All these are combined in Christ, our king. He is the sole legislator or maker of the laws of his kingdom. He alone judges these laws and executes them. No cabinet advises him and no group of judges pass on the constitutionality of these laws. And he alone "shall judge the living and the dead" "according to their works" in the light of his law. He has "all authority in heaven and on earth," and he is "the author and finisher of our faith," and, therefore, "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hence, the pungent, powerful statement on the mount of transfiguration to "hear ye him." No word but his is to be considered, no "private interpretation" of anything he says, and his words "shall judge him in the last day."

Since the New Testament is the word of our King and the law under which we live and by which we are to be judged, all the affairs of life must be according to the New Testament. Anything not found in the New Testament has no place in the work and worship of the church today. It is, therefore, folly to use things in religion the New Testament does not teach. We have a mighty and glorious kingdom. Christ, the Lord, is King, and his word is sole authority in all acts of worship and religious endeavor. No subject of his kingdom can be approved by the king who ventures to go beyond that which is written in the New Testament to conduct the affairs of his church.

While the word "kingdom" signifies government, the word "church" denotes the called-out idea. All who are called out of the world by the gospel of Christ and assembled into "one body in Christ," which is his church, over which he is head and in which every Christian is a member, are that which is called the "church" in many passages. The word "church" is used one hundred ten times in the New Testament. Eighteen times it is used to designate the saved in the aggregate. Ninety-two times it is used to denote the saved of a given locality. This is true only when some geographical term is used to circumscribe or limit its meaning to the called out of that locality. But in every case it features the called-out idea. No denomination in the world can, therefore, lay just claim to being the church of the New Testament, for there is no denomination that is not larger than a local congregation and smaller than all the saved, according to its own admis-

sion. No denominational church can be used in either New Testament use of the term.

The kind of church must be determined in the light of the call that is made. Whose it is depends on whose call it is. The doctrine preached is the call. The doctrine of the Mormons makes the Mormon Church; the doctrine of the Catholics makes the Catholic Church; the Baptist doctrine makes the Baptist Church; the doctrine of the Methodists makes the Methodist Church. So also with all the rest. The Mormon doctrine might be preached all over the world, but it never would result in a Baptist or Methodist or Catholic Church, neither a church of Christ. The kind of plant we get depends on the kind of seed we sow. "The seed is the word of God." God speaks to "us by his Son." What he says is his doctrine. The doctrine of Christ, therefore, produces the church of Christ. Paul said to young Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; . . . for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." The first church "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine." John said: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." The doctrine of Christ produces the church wherever preached and obeyed. Also its continued existence depends upon continuing in his doctrine. Any people, therefore, who depart from the doctrine of Christ cease to be the church of Christ, for "the church is subject to Christ" in all things. False and strange doctrines never produce the church of Christ. Whenever the time comes that the people cannot or "will not endure the sound doctrine" the church will become extinct.

The word "kingdom" denotes government; the word "church," the called out; the word "body," the idea of union and unity. The kingdom is the church, and the church is the body of Christ. The body is not one member, but many. All the members have not the same office or work to do. Hence, we are "one body in Christ and every one members one of another." Let no member think more highly of himself than he ought to think, "for God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." One member cannot do everything. There is a limit to every man's ability. Every one is responsible as far as he is able. Not only so, but he will be held responsible for not being more able. Let every member of the

body learn his dependence on every other. Let each function in the place for which he is qualified. Then peace, concord, love, and agreement will prevail. The church will be attractive and powerful.

THE KINGDOM QUESTION

It is being freely argued that the kingdom of Christ has not come as yet, and when it comes it will be the cure for all our ills. They say it will be the end of "the church age, as well as the banking age, and general business, under the old destructive systems that sustain us no longer." This they claim for the millennial age. It is nothing more than a dream. There is no more authority for that than there was for William Miller's prediction that the world would come to an end and Christ would come soon, which he said would be in 1843. All this we hear now is but an echo of the same false doctrine. In fact, the Seventh-day Adventists had their origin here, and today we have mixed it with some of Russell and Scofield. It is a general mixture without Scriptural foundation or fact. The surprising thing is that many preachers and members of the church of Christ have been "carried away with their dissimulation." The theory puts the church on a par with "banking" and "general business." God made the church, and men made banking and business. I should not be surprised to find an end to "the banking age, and general business," therefore, but I would be greatly surprised to find an end to the church age while time lasts. The church is set for the salvation of the souls of men, and as long as there are human souls to be saved the church will carry on. The theory classes the church with "the old destructive system," along with things which men have arranged. Jesus said: "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." God planted the church; Jesus bought it with his own blood and loved it so that he "gave himself for it." It is "God's husbandry." It is "God's building." Yet they say it belongs to "the old destructive system." "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that built it." That is to say, what God builds will stand, and what man builds will fall. I would not labor to build an institution or a doctrine or a theory of my own or that of any other man, therefore. All such is of

"the old destructive system." "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth forever." "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." Let us be careful to look out the word of the Lord, then, and do his will, so that when "the rain" descends and "the floods" come and "the winds" blow the building will stand, for it is built on the solid rock.

PREMILLENNIALISM OR MODERNISM—WHICH?

It is persistently argued by the premillennialist that anyone who does not accept the theory is a modernist. In our last resort we turn to the Bible for succor and aid, but not to the advocates of such a theory, who would lay down their "manifestoes" to save themselves from interference in their propaganda to fill the churches with strife and division. The theory is that Christ will come and set up his kingdom and reign on David's throne in Jerusalem a thousand years on earth before the end of time; that the Jews will be gathered back to Palestine and be nationally converted to be the subjects of this kingdom, and the thousand years will be the period between the first and second resurrections. That means that the kingdom has not been established and will not be till Christ comes; that he is not on David's throne and will not be till he comes; that the church is not the kingdom; that this is "the church age," a part of "the old destructive system that sustains us no longer," which ends when Christ comes. Anyone who teaches such a conglomeration of error should not call anyone a "modernist." It is a multiplied misapplication and misuse of Holy Writ. It denies the cardinal doctrine of the New Testament.

WHERE THE TROUBLE IS

One of the troubles in Bible study today is that men give a meaning to some symbol or hard passage and then proceed to interpret the plain passages in the light of their notion as to what that difficult passage means. It seems to me that people are applying this method to the study of Revelation. They have an idea that Revelation means a certain thing, and they proceed to

interpret the whole Bible in the light of what they think it means. This is the wrong idea of interpreting language. When a meaning is given to a difficult passage or any figure of speech that is not in harmony with any plain statement, the interpretation is wrong. All parables and difficult passages must be understood in the light of plain statements. This followed and much of the difficulty is eliminated and the misuse of Bible statements will be avoided. In speaking of Israel being as the sands of the sea, the apostle said "a remnant shall be saved"; but we are not to understand that "a remnant" will be saved without obedience to the gospel, for it is said that "the gospel of Christ" is "the power of God unto salvation; ... to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Therefore, any Jew who does not obey the gospel cannot be saved. When Jesus comes, he will take "vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore, "so all Israel shall be saved" must be understood in the light of the foregoing passage.

SOME LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM

Premillennialism is understood to mean that Christ will come and establish his kingdom and reign on David's throne in Jerusalem a thousand years before the end of the world. * The Bible says nothing about premillennialism or postmillennialism, but there are many who hold a doctrine that necessitates the coining of these words. Those who hold that Christ is coming back to reign on the earth a thousand years before the end must have some way of designating themselves from those who hold that he will not. Hence the words "premillennial" and "postmillennial." The former of these is the greatest disturber of the churches now. The theory makes the kingdom of Christ of this world, the very thing Jesus said it was not. "My kingdom is not of this world," Jesus said; but if the Jews are to be gathered back to Palestine and Christ reign over them on David's literal throne, it is "of this world." The fleshly Jew is as much of this world now as in Christ's day; and if to make a kingdom out of them then would make it of the world, it certainly could be no more than of the world now. The people were looking for this kind of a kingdom in those days, but it never came. They were so anxious and

determined then that they tried to make Christ a king by force. Since these things are true, by what process of reasoning can we deduce the conclusion that the kingdom was delayed, and that for all this time, and then established out of flesh and blood, making it "of this world"? This is plainly contradictory of the Savior when he said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Any doctrine that contradicts the Savior is wrong. Any doctrine that necessitates the use of words and phrases not found in the Bible must be wrong. We must be able to talk about Bible things in the language of the Bible; and if we find we cannot, we must have something to talk about that the Bible does not contain. How can we "speak as the oracles of God," when they have not spoken? But they say the idea is there. How can the idea be there, since the word is not there, and since words are signs of ideas? Any doctrine that makes it out that John the Baptist and Christ were mistaken in saying "the kingdom of God is at hand"; that the kingdom never came, has not yet come, and will not come till Jesus comes and sets up his kingdom; that he is not on David's throne and will not be till then; that he will reign on David's literal throne in Jerusalem a thousand years; that this reign is to be on earth and over the fleshly Jew; that Israel will be nationally converted, and "so all Israel shall be saved," is without foundation in fact and must be opposed by all lovers of God's truth. The gospel preacher is not only to "preach the word," but to oppose and correct all error. Any effort to preach the word and not do it is a failure. On this there is no compromise, for it contradicts the cardinal doctrine of the Bible. It is said that one has a right to his opinions, if he will hold them to himself alone. This is perhaps correct; but when one holds a doctrine that plainly contradicts the Bible and necessitates a general overhauling of it, he has no such right, even though he may call it an "opinion." One must believe with his whole heart to be saved. But one who believes that John the Baptist, Christ, and the apostles were mistaken is not saved by such faith, even though he believes it with all his heart. What must one believe to be saved? "If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins," said Jesus. Can one believe that Jesus is the Christ and at the same time believe that Jesus was mistaken when he said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"? Can one believe that Jesus is the Christ and not believe

that Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, since Jesus said he was? Certainly not. And if one believes that Jesus was mistaken on what he said about the kingdom, he cannot believe that Jesus is the Christ; for since Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, he cannot be mistaken about anything. His word is infallible. Jesus said: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Was it. or was it not? He said: "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." Did they, or did they not? He again said: "Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Did he. or did he not? He said again: "My kingdom is not of this world." Is it, or is it not?

A doctrine that requires such a reckless handling of the word of God cannot be tolerated for one moment. It takes with a ruthless hand many prophecies from their historical setting and gives to them a meaning entirely foreign to their natural import. Many of them pertained to fleshly Israel, others to the establishment of the church, and still others to the destruction of Jerusalem. The Seventh-day Adventists, the Russellites, the Scofieldites, an element in the church of Christ, and a part of the Baptist Church who are pleased to call themselves "Fundamentalists," and perhaps others, are doing all they can to fill everybody everywhere with their "visions and dreams." Anyone who opposes them is a "modernist." The churches they control are kept under this influence exclusively, while they are very much hurt if they are not allowed to go and fill the churches everywhere with this divisive teaching. It not only requires a wresting of the Scriptures, but clearly makes God a respecter of persons, in that he so favors the Jew over the Gentile, when God says "there is no difference."

LIBERALIZATION

Any effort to broaden the teaching of the Bible so as to justify or permit the practice of untaught things is destructive. We are fast coming to the time when we think we must be liberal—that is to say, so interpret the word of God to be pleasing to every religious practice and custom. This is called liberalism. I firmly

believe in liberty, for the Book says: "Ye have been called unto liberty." And, therefore, we are exhorted to "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." We are further told that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The Spirit of the Lord is only with his teaching. Any alteration or change in the teaching is destructive. Instead of liberty, then, it again happens that we are in bondage. Christ came to set the captives free. This was done by his teaching. To alter that teaching, add to it or take from it, for any reason, is to destroy "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Christ died to break "clown the middle wall of partition," and any creed or doctrine and commandment of men puts up that which Christ died to destroy. The word of God must stand as it is given, whatever may be the consequences. Let no man touch it, therefore, to tone it down or change it to justify anyone's practice.

SELF-JUSTIFICATION

The relation that people as a rule sustain to a passage today depends on what they are doing or want to do. Very few questions are asked for information, but for self-justification. The one asking the question has something to put over, and he puts enough coloring in it to get an answer suitable to his purpose. It is a mighty serious thing to so use the Bible or any part thereof for such purposes, for they that "wrest" the Scriptures do it to their own destruction. Whether they do it ignorantly or because they are unstable, it matters not. the result is the same—destruction.

This is often done as a move toward a compromise with the denominations. One can preach nothing but the truth to any denomination in this country, and that for an indefinite time, and leave them to build up in their error. But he has not preached the whole truth—all the truth. For the sake of affinity certain passages are diplomatically side-stepped. No one can be free from the blood of his fellows who does not declare all the counsel of God. Anyone who shuns this responsibility is guilty before God. We like friends and friendship, but not at the expense of what God says. Any effort at compromise does this very thing. Any effort to make peace with the denominations is to violate the ethics of Scripture teaching. There is too much peace of that kind today.

"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." Let the line be drawn between truth and error, and keep up the fight till Satan is routed and the church victorious. The church cannot be at peace with sin. So long, therefore, as there are sinners and sin, we must fight. A removal of sin from the earth will stop the fight and relieve the church of any further obligation. The church is the seed of the woman which was to bruise the serpent's head. If the church does not do it, it will never be done. It cannot be done by compromise or liberalization, but by fighting day and night with the sword of the Spirit—the word of God. This is our weapon both of offense and defense. All effort to soften the teaching of God to make it acceptable is to destroy the Bible and will soon result in the annihilation of the church.

FUNDAMENTAL—INCIDENTAL

An effort has been made in certain circles to show that we are agreed on the fundamentals, but differ on the incidentals, meaning by that that we are agreed on how to become Christians, but disagree on how to work and worship. The former is fundamental; the latter, incidental. But that which the Bible teaches the church to do in its work and worship is just as fundamental and basic as what it teaches one to do in becoming a Christian. No leads can be taken on what the Bible teaches. It is all the word of God. The first church continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; and had the church done that to this day, there would not have been a single innovation in the church. Not a mechanical musical instrument would have ever been used, for no apostle ever taught such and no New Testament church ever practiced it. But in the course of time the church departed by degrees from the apostles' doctrine and worldly things filtered into it until it has been torn to shreds and bleeding at every pore.

It will be found impossible to successfully oppose error while we are in error ourselves. The church of Christ cannot successfully oppose the pastor system of the denominations and at the same time practice it. There cannot be any objections against a man preaching for a church for a given length of time or indefinitely. But it is a sad picture when that church gets to the place that the preacher must be there all the time because they are paying him to do it. The church should support a man to preach the

gospel where it is needed. It seems that if the gospel is ever preached in the byways the God-fearing and God-serving preachers will have to do it at their own expense. Let the preachers preach the word and the churches learn to hold up their hands while they are at it. Instead of trying to be like the nations around us, let us strive to be separate and become just like the New Testament church. We have no right to make anything out of the church, not even to make the church fit into anything; but all things should be changed to fit the New Testament church by thorough conformity to the New Testament teaching. The denominations have no right to take a Christian and make a denominationalist of him. We should take, however, all denominationalists and make out of them Christians only. Let us avoid "divers and strange doctrines" and cling to the New Testament as our only rule of faith and practice.

THE LIQUOR QUESTION

In its issue of September 24, 1932, the caption of "The Lost Audience," the *Christian Standard* said with reference to the liquor question:

If we could be convinced that this attitude is the result of a cool, deliberate weighing of the evidence upon prohibition and a determination to find a better way to restrict the liquor traffic, we could take some courage. It is manifestly no such thing. It is frankly managed as a stampede, engineered by those magazines and newspapers that have all along been the champions of "personal liberty," gambling, race-track betting, and "wide-open" cities. They have carefully glorified disrespect for and defiance of the law. These newspapers and magazines are the champions of license under the name of "liberty." Backing them up are the millionaires who frankly say they want to be relieved of taxes. In other words, the country will go wet, not because it sees a better way to deal with liquor, but because a lot of people want to glorify licentious living and a group of millionaires who want to collect more millions have used the papers and magazines and movies and radio to stampede the people.

The people are again disturbed over the liquor question. It has always been a live issue, though some politicians said some years ago that it was settled. The propaganda is that the only way

to stop liquor violation is to repeal prohibition laws. Then the only way to stop sin is to repeal all law; for "where there is no law, there is no transgression," and "sin is the transgression of the law." Christians have been praying for the widows and orphans ever since we can remember. Now they are called upon to vote to bring back the lawless liquor traffic which has made more orphans and widows than all wars combined. It has dealt misery and brought suffering to the innocent and helpless. It has taken the bread from starving children and sown seeds of poverty and distress. It has emptied the savings account and stripped the home of its furniture. It has stolen the honor and credit from the husband and reduced the wife to rags and the children to waifs. It has dethroned reason and damned souls. It has taken the lives of men and shed the blood of the innocent.

The people who lived in the days of the saloon have not forgotten the damning influence of liquor. There is no compromise, for there is no middle ground on such an issue. When a Christian prays for widows and orphans and casts a vote for whisky, it is inconsistent. Christians should vote as they pray. If the majority wants liquor, we should remember that moral issues are not settled by majority rule, nor shall we follow "a multitude to do evil."

We are told that prosperity depends on the repeal of prohibition. This is not true; but if it were, no such price should be paid for it. If our government cannot stand without a whisky barrel for its chief corner stone, it ought not to stand. We are told that it interferes with our personal liberty and individual rights, but no one has any personal liberty or right to do anything that endangers his neighbor. The same is true of state rights. No state has any right to do anything that is a menace to another state.

If the repeal of the antiwhisky laws will stop drunkenness, why is it that the repeal of the anticigarette law did not stop smoking? There is more smoking than ever before. What assurance have we, therefore, that there would be less drinking if the liquor laws were repealed?

Adam and Eve violated God's prohibition law in Eden. Is that prohibition law responsible for all the sin that has followed? Did its author make a mistake? Or does not the blame rest upon the ones who disobeyed it?

The *Standard* also speaks editorially on this wise:

Moreover, the schools have been increasingly impregnated with a positivistic philosophy. Pupils have been led to believe that one's life consists in the abundance of things he can possess. He is taught that he is descended from an apelike ancestor and all his actions are but the result of animal impulses. Morality is only a general understanding among men; there is no absolute right or wrong. Even if the teacher does not say this, no bright pupil can miss the significance, especially one whose sexual impulses are being highly stimulated by the movies and the advertisements and the magazine stories and the dances fostered by the school leaders. As a result, it is alarming that we have much evidence of the practice of birth control in the high schools and with no apparent sense of wrongdoing.

Whenever our youth is corrupted, the fountain is contaminated and the whole stream is poisoned. The Bible is being barred from the schools, while the buildings are turned into dance halls. The gospel is not allowed to be preached in these buildings because the taxpayers are divided on religious matters and there would be objections. Do all the taxpayers agree that the dance is all right? Certainly not. The dance is one of the greatest evils of the day. Yet our public schools, which are supposed to be a protection to our boys and girls, are teaching dances, and churches have lifted the ban on dancing. It has been dignified with a place in the curriculum of education and the people are hoodwinked. Is it possible that the people are supporting such schools with their money, whether by taxation or otherwise, which "make infidels out of our boys and prostitutes out of our girls?" Do the parents know this and say nothing? Does the school trust have such a deadly stranglehold on the people that they are helpless? Or are the people lacking in moral courage to oppose it? Will they meekly submit without resistance? Let Christian men and women observe these things and save some.

LOT'S CHOICE

The things recorded in the Old Testament are "for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Some of the greatest lessons of warning are found there; some great lessons of faith, as in the case of Abraham; some

wonderful lessons of fortitude and endurance, as in the case of Job; others of moral courage and innocence, as in the cases of Joseph and Daniel. Here is a great lesson of warning. Everyone is called upon to make a choice sooner or later. To be able to make the right choice is necessary to the right ending. Lot chose all the plains of the Jordan. It was selfish. It appealed to his appetite that had already been whetted keen for earthly acquisitions.

The plain of the Jordan was well "watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest to Zoar." It was, therefore, exceedingly inviting. However, for him to accept it, or make the choice, necessitated a separation from Abraham. The best man in the world and the best surroundings must be sacrificed for the inviting plains of the Jordan and the wicked inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. To this Lot seemed to be blinded. Usually greed blinds people's eyes and deadens their senses to all religious and spiritual ideals. Men have sought to justify themselves in crime of every kind on the same ground. Human life has been taken and the property of others claimed for the same reason. Avarice and greed, inordinate affection and selfish desire have dethroned reason and perverted judgment in every age of the world. Personal aggrandizement and earthly acquisitions outweigh all religious fortune with a great many.

Lot was otherwise a good man. He never got to the point where he was not considered righteous. Neither did he ever become so accustomed to the "filthy conversation of the wicked" that he could tolerate it. This never occurred to him till he was in it. He could only see the material things, the plains well watered, and dream of getting rich quick. It never occurred to him that his wife and children would be exposed to that foul place and the influence of the most -wicked people in the world. What a pity people do not look ahead! They go out into the world away from the church and Christian influences for the hope of earthly gain. They carry their families with them. Oftentimes they lose their families to the church, and also that for which they go. No one can afford it.

Society is the greatest mold of human character at all, perhaps. Those with whom we associate wield an influence over us that

we are unable to resist. Those who would absent themselves today from the meeting of the saints for pleasure or earthly profit should study this subject well. Just think of men leaving the place of prayer and worship, where God meets them to bless them, for anything! Lot listened to the voice of the world; he was lured by its blandishments; he was intoxicated by ephemeral and delightful things. It was the flesh and its ideals, not the Spirit and its ideals, that influenced him. Just so today. The "flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: ... so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The question is, which will gain the supremacy?

Why anyone would choose to leave God and all that he means to us to company with sinners is more than I can understand, especially since we know there is no compatibility or congeniality between the world and the church—between Christians and sinners ; for even then, as now, "he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." What can any servant of God hope to gain by such a choice? No one can associate with the wicked and not have his garments spotted. Perhaps this is why James said one should "keep himself unspotted from the world." Let's conquer greed.

I do not believe that Lot ever intended to go all the way to Sodom; but he pitched his tent toward Sodom, and as a result it is not long till we find him there. A great lesson here for the people of God. If you don't aim to go to Sodom, never pitch your tent in that direction. Any church, therefore, that permits one unauthorized thing in its work or worship has pitched its tent toward the Sodom of innovations and digression, and the chances are that it will never be able to stop until it is overwhelmed in its slime pits of worldliness and sin. Any young man who would not be a drunkard should never take the first drop of any intoxicants. He who does is not wise. Don't take the first step. Any young girl that permits one of the opposite sex to fondle and handle her has pitched her tent toward Sodom, and as a result she may find herself ruined and forever disgraced. Don't see how close to the edge you can get without falling off. Get as far away as possible. Don't even look that way. Many a person has been lost because he looked—David, for instance.

None of us mean to go to ruin and disgrace. Neither did Lot mean to go to Sodom, but he did. Look at Lot in his last days—stripped to the last penny that lured and tempted him to Sodom! He is an old man now. He has lost his wife. He has lost his children. He has lost every earthly treasure. His earning days are over. Opportunity and life are behind him—beyond recall. He is fleeing to the mountains with his remaining two daughters, where a cloud of domestic gloom settles over him in his cave home—a terrible ending, but it is nothing comparable to that which may and will be experienced by us if we do not profit by such a lesson.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The night before the crucifixion, when Jesus had eaten with his disciples the last passover supper, he instituted this Supper to be observed in memory of him. He said: "This do in remembrance of me." It is implied that Jesus would go away, and the disciples would meet together, and in such meetings they were to eat this Supper. The proper stress is not always given to the assembly. The Lord's Supper cannot be taken until we have the assembly. This is true of other acts of worship, just as in Old Testament times there were certain things which could not be done outside of Jerusalem. The assembly in the New Testament is indispensable to the eating of the Lord's Supper. When someone gets "miffed" at some brother and stays away from the assembly—stays at home and takes the emblems with his wife or family—he has failed to scripturally observe this sacred institution. The assembly is first and essential to taking the Supper.

This was perhaps in the apostle's mind when he said: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." This is also brought out by the statement: "When the disciples came together to break bread." We take it that the bread could not be broken till the church assembled. Another statement is: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him." This shows they were all in an assembly for some purpose. That, no doubt, was to eat the Lord's Supper. Even with so devout and divine purpose, we read that people then abused it. The apostle said to the Corinthians, "That ye come together not for the better, but for the worse"; and, "When you

come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper." It is possible, then, that we might assemble and not be able to eat the Lord's Supper, but it is certain we cannot eat it unless we do assemble. Those who neglect the assembly for pleasure, or any other reason, certainly do not understand, or else are very reckless with sacred things.

In many places the Supper is spread at the evening service for those who could not be present at the morning hour. I have observed some staying away from the morning hour for frivolous excuses, even to attend a ball game or to go fishing. They know they can come at the evening hour and take the Supper, and thus satisfy themselves. I do not believe that is worship at all. Those who cannot come because they are providentially hindered will be excused, as God never requires impossibilities; but those who could, and chose to do something else, will be held to an account for their absence. I have known brethren to go on such jaunts, stop in at some little wayside church and take the emblems, and rush out and jump in their car and speed away. They seem to think they have done their whole duty. This is irreverent, if not sacrilegious. I knew of one case where a brother was going off on a fishing trip on Saturday to remain over Sunday. He made inquiry as to where he could go to take the emblems the next day. I do not believe that is worship. Anyone who willfully forsakes the assembly of the saints on the first day of the week need not bother about taking the emblems at all; for if you disregard with impunity part that is required, why not all?

If one wants to go on a fishing trip, let him take one of his own days. God gave us six, and only reserved one for himself. Why not take one of our days and let God have that which is his? Jesus said a long time ago, "Render unto God the things that are God's"; and, "Render to all their dues." Here we are taking God's things and appropriating them to our own selfish use. Let not that one think that he shall escape the damnation of God. The Lord's day, the Lord's house, and the Lord's Supper are too sacred to be trifled with in any such way. They are all crowded into one solemn day, and let's see if we cannot be sober and serious just for that day, at least.

There is no time, perhaps, that we are closer to him and he is closer to us than when we assemble about the Lord's table. It

was here that John leaned on the Savior's breast, and we, too, can lean our weary souls upon his breast and listen to the heart of the Master as it throbs for us in our pilgrimage here. No one knows the fullness of the Father's love. It is not a matter of our love to him, but his love to us, in that he gave his Son to die for us. This Supper is monumental to that great fact. The apostle said: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." Just to think that one would neglect the opportunity of making this proclamation of his death! This would indicate a lack of gratitude and appreciation for what he did for us.

It does not mean that if we take it now and then we will have done our duty. It is not talking of the frequency of doing it, but the manner. They continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread in the days of the apostles. The first day of the week was the time, and "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." No other day can be considered. None but the disciples are required to meet on that day, but all of them are expected to be in that assembly. This is the teaching of the New Testament under which we live. Some say they do not feel worthy. If they did they would not be eligible. Such feeling would make them unacceptable before God. The word is "unworthily," and indicates the way it is to be done.

THE MILLENNIUM THEORIES

There has been much said and written about the millennium, and it all seems to no avail. It has not brought the people together, but rather has further divided the church. It has developed into sects. One is known as premillennialist and the other as postmillennialist. Then we have by this peculiar doctrine two groups. It is necessary that each shall be named so as to distinguish them. Anything that results like this must be unscriptural. God intends that his children be one, and every one members one of another. This prevents such grouping—even makes it impossible. Why should one be called "pre" and another "post"? Just because they teach doctrines that differ to that extent. Do you believe that if the people teach only the doctrine of Christ we will have any such thing? When you have two names and two sects,

you have at least two different doctrines taught. But when the doctrine is one, you will have one body and one name. There will be no necessity for any other. The only thing that makes it necessary to have these names is a departure from New Testament teaching. When we abide in the doctrine of Christ, we will be one in Christ. There will be no "pre" nor "post," for the doctrine of Christ recognizes neither. It seems to me that those who love Jesus would strive to see his prayer answered. He prayed that all believers might be one. We should be of the same mind. Every one whose heart is right will strive to that end. He will rejoice that God's will may be done and not his own. One who contends for unauthorized things in religion does not abide in the doctrine of Christ. There is no other doctrine that can make one out of the people, for it is the only ground of union.

Those who press these doctrines to the division of the churches of Christ are manifestly in error, and should be so considered by all. They should be "marked" and "avoided" as the Lord advised. They are a distinct menace to the progress and peace of the church. They are responsible for division and strife where it should never be found.

All this seems to me strange. "Pre" means before, and "post" means after. *Before* what, and *after* what? The word "millennium" means a thousand. From Revelation, the twentieth chapter, it is contended that this thousand years means a reign of peace on the earth, and that Christ will reign in person over his saints. "Pre" then means before this thousand years begins, and "post" means after it is over. One writer claims you must be either a "pre" or a "post." There is nothing else to be, he thinks. One who claims he is neither "pre" nor "post" is "nothing," therefore. All of this is on the assumed premise that there will be a thousand years of peaceful reign on earth before the end of time. Who can prove any such thing? Now let someone prove this imaginary thousand years of such a reign *on this earth* before he says you must be a "pre" or a "post." Do you say it is in the book of Revelation, chapter twenty? Then I call your attention to the fact that it says nothing about a reign of any kind *on this earth*. It says "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years," but not one word about the living and reigning being on the earth. This thousand years of such a reign on the earth is

wholly imaginary. No one can prove it, and until this is done, there is no "pre" nor "post."

That Christ is coming again no one doubts. He is coming "to give every man according as his work shall be," to take "vengeance on them that know God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," to be "glorified in his saints," and that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." No one doubts these things, so far as I know. But to say he will come and set up his kingdom and reign on earth a thousand years is wholly unwarranted.

The theory is that when he comes he will set up his kingdom. This is premillennial—that is, Christ comes before the thousand years. The other theory is that he will not come till after the thousand years are over. But let me remind you that the thousand-year period is assumed. It is not established at all. No one can prove such a theory, because the premise cannot be proved. The twentieth chapter of Revelation has been greatly abused and wrested by those who would prove this millennium theory. It says nothing about a thousand years' reign on earth. It says nothing about a bodily resurrection, nor a thousand years between two such resurrections.

It is argued that Christ will come, and the righteous dead will be raised, and this peaceful reign, on earth will begin and last for one thousand years, and then the wicked dead will be raised. To prove this, one writer used the -statement in First Thessalonians, which says "the dead in Christ shall rise first," but the rest of the dead will not rise till the thousand years are finished. Anybody ought to know better than that. Such an argument is wresting the Scriptures. Anyone who can read should be able to see that the living shall not "precede" those who are asleep.

The verse just preceding the one the writer thus quotes reads as follows: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep." The dead, therefore, shall rise first—that is, before the living righteous shall ascend. When one holds a theory unwarranted, he is forced to misconstrue the Scriptures. The kingdom has been established, and Christ has been reigning on David's throne since the day of Pentecost, and we are reigning with him now.

"THE MONEY THAT WILL BE SPENT FOR BEER"

Under the above caption one of our great daily papers, speaking editorially, said: "Where the money that the public is expected to spend for beer is to come from is puzzling some persons who are speculating on the economic effects of legalized brew."

It should not be hard to tell where it will come from, and there is no need for anyone to be puzzled over it. Those who remember the old days of legalized liquor know very well where it came from then, and all reason should teach that it will come from the same source again. There is no need for it to be "puzzling some persons who are speculating on the economic effects of legalized brew." Everyone should know it will be the bread money of women and children. Many a pitiful sight was pictured of the wife and babies hovering over dying embers in the little old tumble-down shack while the breadwinner was lolling in the grogshop, wasting his earnings on strong drink. Many a time did the wife, and sometimes the child, go to such places and bring the drunken breadwinner home in the dead hours of night. The bar, with its brass rail, foaming stein, stained windows, and orchestra, has destroyed more homes, made more widows and orphans, sent more men to drunkards' graves and more souls to hell, than any other one thing. And it is coming back! It is unthinkable. I rejoiced when it went away, and now I weep to see it coming back. It is the deadliest monster and the most merciless beast of them all.

But where is the money coming from to buy it? It will be the money that should go to buy warmth, groceries, and clothes, and to pay house rent, and to put away for the rainy day when one's earning powers are gone. Of all the calamities that have befallen this beloved land of ours, this is the climax. As it seems to me, the government can ill afford to raise its revenues by taking the bread out of the mouths of helpless children. I cannot imagine that such can long endure.

When the saloon was closed and legalized sale of all alcoholic liquors was barred from every state in this Union, a great wave of prosperity at once began. Savings accounts sprang up everywhere, jails were emptied, and the earnings of the laborer went for

the comfort of his family. We have every reason to believe that the reverse of this will soon be seen again.

It is claimed that the government will realize in revenue one hundred and fifty million dollars from this sale alone. But many times that amount must be taken in for the business to continue. This enormous sum must come in the main from the people who have nothing to spend in that particular traffic. The rich and hoarders will not be depended upon for it.

No one should be alarmed at the course the politicians have taken in the matter, but all right-thinking people should be doubly alarmed at the support and encouragement that the churches and professed Christians have given to it. Any church or professed Christian that supports the liquor traffic by ballot or otherwise lacks much of being "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world." This is distressing!

To lift the ban on evil of any kind by the church and to tolerate the deadliest evils without a protest or effort to prevent it is no less than alarming. Some of the great denominational bodies have lifted the ban on dancing and wink at other evils that strike at the morals and spiritual vitals of men and women. Not only so, but even churches of Christ permit such things without an effort to save them from such rottenness. Even more serious still, the elders and deacons (the leaders), the supposed examples to the flock, are often found playing cards and other games for prizes. Such is only *respectable* gambling. What is the difference in playing for money and playing for what you buy with the money?

The reason sometimes assigned for not opposing these things publicly is that it will drive the members away. Has it come to pass that in order to hold the membership evil must be tolerated? Anyone who leaves the church because it stands against all forms of evil and condemns it ought to leave. The sooner the church rids itself of timeservers and pleasure seekers, card players, gamblers, and all evildoers, the better. Some churches have gone after numbers—quantity rather than quality—forgetting that Gideon's three hundred were much stronger and more acceptable to Jehovah than his thirty-two thousand. God is not with those who live after the flesh, though there be a multitude of them. Two or three and the Lord are much better.

Beer and saloons are coming back because the church in a large degree has lost its savor. It requires a century of sacrifice, prayer, and hard work upon the part of the best men and women in our country to rid it of the saloon, and now it returns in so short a time. Once more will be seen the deadly liquor lobbyists with their millions, strangling legislation and otherwise perverting justice. To this traffic no Christian or church can afford to lend one bit of influence. If the professed Christians and the churches had not fallen down, the return of beer and the saloon would have been impossible. Let parties and political affiliation go, but let us fight evil. What can the future hold for the coming generations if the church has failed? God help us lest we, "being led away with the error of the wicked, fall. . . ." Beware!

THE CHOICE OF MOSES

Moses, when he was forty, was called upon to make a choice that involved his whole destiny. He was born in a slave's cabin. Under the kindly providence of God, he was brought back to his mother for her training, after he had been cast out upon the river. Thus we may see how some of the brightest lights have come from obscurity. What we call advantages, therefore, may not really be advantages. We also learn the necessity of proper training for children while they are yet tender. God would rather have him in his mother's arms while a baby than in the house of Pharaoh or anywhere else. No one else can possibly reach the heart of a child as its own mother. God refused to let Pharaoh's daughter have him till Jochebed, his mother, had taught him. Sometimes we want to know when to begin to train our children. This story might help us. Not only so, but the training began before the birth of the child. Paul said Timothy had the faith that was in his mother and grandmother. One like this is in condition to make a choice when the crisis arises. He has the right background for the right choice. The untrained and untaught do not have. It is not only necessary to have the lessons of life taught in word, but in example also.

It is a crisis in anyone's life when he must make a choice. His happiness here and hereafter is involved. The choice that Moses made was the choice of wisdom. All can see it now. Had he not

been taught the story of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he would never have been able to so choose. He had heard of the promised land. It had been rooted and grounded in him when a child, and all the glamour of the courts of Egypt was unable to rid him of it. He was favored and educated in all the learning of the Egyptians by Pharaoh's daughter, as she had adopted him for her very own. He owed his very life to this woman. But when he came to be forty years of age, he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

Be it observed that he "refused" a certain thing. So we must learn to refuse before we can make a proper and wise choice. This also reflects the power of early training. Moses knew the right and the wrong. He never learned it in Egypt. He got it from Jochebed, his mother. Moses made this choice after he had arrived at maturity. He knew what it meant. He gave up "the pleasures of sin for a season"—all the wealth and honor of Egypt—to be identified with the people of God. This not only reveals his early training, but shows his character. He was one of the most admirable men in all history. He was strong enough to deny himself and wise enough to choose between the world and heaven. It is said that he esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." There are those today who esteem the world and its pleasures more highly than they do heavenly things.

We live in the sunlit age of the world. Moses lived before there was a line written. If under those circumstances he could make such a showing, it appears we should do much better. He refused the wealth and honor of the world to choose the promised land. We are clinging to the world with one hand and trying to hold on to the promises of God with the other. Perhaps we have not yet learned to have proper "respect unto the recompense of the reward."

What do you think of the heavenly home, dear reader—of the land where the sun never goes down? If a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul, what does it profit him? Nothing at all. People do not have enough respect for heaven now. If they did, they would at once leave off every doubtful thing.

This refusal and choice of Moses, though wise, never rendered him immune to hardship and suffering; in fact, it seemed to invite them. As a result, he must flee for his life into the land of Midian, where he is buried forty years in obscurity. He attends upon Jethro's flock. He has no connection with current events and is wholly ignorant of what is happening. When he left Egypt, he thought he was the right one to deliver God's people from that cruel bondage; but God did not think so. Although he had made such a noble choice, he was unfit. Experience is necessary. This he did not have. At forty he was willing and ready, but at eighty he is not willing to go. He said: "Who am I?" Those who prize themselves highly are not fit to lead the people of God. God wants humble men, who will lean on the everlasting arms, and not look to their own ways and wisdom. Moses, when he was eighty, made several excuses; when he was forty, he made none.

Moses, armed with a shepherd's staff, finally went into Egypt to deliver God's people. With that staff he wrought havoc in Egypt by the ten plagues. Yet not Moses, but God. He led the Israelites out of bondage across the Red Sea and through the wilderness. He drew the water out of the rock and brought the quail for their meat. His devotion to his charges and determination to reach the promised land stand out. He was one of the most magnanimous and unselfish men of history. He built no political machine and left no fortune for his own family. He was a hundred and twenty years of age when he came to the river.

MOTHERS AND CIGARETTES

An exchange gives a bit of data on "cigarettes killing babies." Not that babies smoke them, but they are born of "cigarette-smoking mothers." It gives testimonials from three physicians. One of them says that "sixty per cent of all babies" born of such mothers "die before they reach the age of two," and their deaths "due to nicotine poison." Another said that "many are born dead" and others "die in their first year." The exchange says: "The third physician refuses to take charge of any confinement case where the prospective mother is a cigarette addict."

The mortality among babies was once alarmingly large, but by proper care for infants, with inoculation, vaccination, and quar-

antining against fatal children's diseases by statute, the mortality has been greatly reduced and the average of human life raised appreciably. Why not have some statutes on this peril, too, and protect children even unborn, if these things be so? Advertisements are seen in newspapers and on billboards, as well as heard over radios. Every means of publicity gives prominence to cigarettes, featuring cigarette smoking by women and girls. If these physicians are correct, race suicide is not far away, when the girls become addicts of cigarettes.

The alarming thing is, there is nothing being done about it. There may not be "a cough in a carload," the "humidor" pack may be safe, and the special "toasting process" may not irritate the throat, but the nicotine kills babies—if we are to depend upon the physicians who claim to know. They are death-dealing! A distinct peril! When men and women engage in any practice that imperils their children yet unborn, they shall not escape the damnation of God. If it involves no one but the individual, it is bad enough; but when it involves the innocent and helpless babies, it is indescribably bad. Every sin that man may do involves others, for "no man liveth to himself." I am aware that it is not popular to oppose such practices; but "if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

We observed recently this statement: "Millions have gone to heaven without food, fortune, fame, friends, but not one without faith in Jesus Christ." This is true, and no one can deny it. Therefore, the principal duty of the church is made plain to "preach the word"; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The church, then, is "the pillar and ground of the truth"; and Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." There is danger in the churches losing sight of this important point, for they are fast becoming institutional. To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and provide some means of relief for the suffering and unfortunate is a good thing, but to do all this and not Christianize them is nothing. No one can go to heaven without being a Christian, but he can go to heaven without bread or clothes. It is unreasonable and antiscritptural to say we can make Christians out of people by feeding and clothing them. They must know the Word of God to be saved, and the church must teach it to

them. The church is God's only institution to Christianize the nations of the earth or to minister to them in any way; for "Unto him be the glory in the church throughout all ages." When the church fails, God cannot be glorified. And the church has failed when its first duty is anything other than teaching and preaching the word of God to men. We, therefore, may feed every hungry man on earth, and educate every ignorant one, and not make a single Christian out of any of them. All such is a failure. To take little children and put them in a home and feed them, clothe them, and educate them, and not make Christians out of them, is a tragedy. Jesus told the disciples to "make disciples" of the nations; and Agrippa said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"; and Peter said, "If any man suffer as a Christian." All this shows the purpose of the church and the specific work of the disciples. Preaching the gospel is the first duty of the church, therefore, and all other things are secondary.

The whole Bible was written for one thing, and that is to teach man obedience to his God. While there is a wide range of subject matter, it is all for this purpose. Every subject discussed is a tributary to this leading thought. Even "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" on this very point. Every commandment of God likewise has one aim or purpose. So also does the gospel and the church. "Now the end of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." This shows the aim and end of every commandment, and that when this end is overlooked or lost it is disastrous. The church stands for something definite, therefore. When men turn from this "end," it is to "vain jangling," to the end that they are without "understanding," even ignorant of their own affirmations. This also shows that such characters are "desirous to be teachers of the law" when they are wholly incapacitated. We are also informed in this connection "that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." But we are left to understand that it is dangerous when improperly handled. Since the law and the gospel and the word are the same thing, we should "study to show thyself approved

unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Some weeks ago we had something to say about the young people's meetings. We have received many letters of commendation, some asking for more on the same subject. Some of these letters were from strong gospel preachers. They sense danger in the movement. We want to avoid extremes, but at the same time we want to stand upon the truth. We have no desire to play the role of hypercritic, but we must be true to the gospel. Young people meet, organize, and arrange their programs mainly for entertainment, not for edification. Classes of young people in which to study the word of the Lord are commendable, and should be encouraged; but the organized Y. P. M.—Young People's Meeting—differing in aim and purpose from such Bible classes, is wrong. We have observed a number of young people's meetings from several congregations, all come together in a selected place, and have one big meeting. They have a president and a secretary, and young women making public addresses. They are rapidly forming into a society of young people within the church. We love the young and have the deepest interest in them, but we love the church more. When the conduct of young or old threatens the church of my Lord, I must take the part of the church. This movement is dangerous, and should be halted. Let competent leaders look after the work, and brave men speak the truth on all matters pertaining to our spiritual welfare.

The church needs strong, uncompromising preaching. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot carry on without such plain and wholesome teaching. It will be numbered with the denominations when we fail in this. Abbreviated, short-sleeved, low-necked preaching is destined to failure. We need a full gospel, delivered in power. Nothing else will save the church from destruction, and nothing else will make the church strong in faith. The character of preaching done will determine the character of the membership of the church. Christians are the product of their faith, and faith is developed by positive preaching.

Much of the preaching of today is taken up with observations, experiences, current events, world disasters, economic calamities, and political problems. These things do not contribute an ounce of spiritual strength to the hearers. The church needs preachers who will "preach the word" as the apostles of our Lord preached it. Some do not want that kind of preaching, but that is the kind that they need. Must not the preacher give the people the kind of preaching that they need, instead of the kind they may want? The true preacher must warn the people or perish himself. His commission is from above, and he must be true to God, or he will destroy both himself and his people. God must be pleased. That, our objective must always be.

Another thing needed by the churches is an efficient and capable eldership. An unqualified, inactive eldership is a hindrance to the church. No church can rise above its leaders. Let the elders be examples to the flock in everything. Capable teachers, and sound in the faith, may be a handicap to the church because of their life and example. Elders are to do more than merely "hire and fire" preachers. But if some elders are not what they should be, and have no conception of their duties as elders, it still does not prove that the eldership in the church should be abolished. The Israelites made this mistake. In order to get rid of two bad men, they rebelled against the rule of the judges, demanding a new form of government, and in so doing they rebelled against God's order.

The qualifications and duties of elders are plainly taught in the Holy Scriptures. The Holy Spirit makes overseers, or elders. The Holy Spirit makes them by his teaching. One who does not comply with the teaching, who does not develop the qualifications contained in the teaching, has not been made an overseer by the Holy Spirit. Let the elders first take heed unto themselves, and then feed the flock.

I am reminded of the apostolic saying: "What shall we then say to these things?" Do you think, under the circumstances, it is a time to be silent? The church is being attacked from within and from without. Everyone who loves the Lord Jesus Christ should buckle on his armor and fight. Do you say that there is no conflict? Do you think it is only a "rumor of the night"? The deadliest foe to the church today is the pacifist. The non-combatant neither helps the church out of error nor onward toward

God. The true servant of the Lord must speak out and oppose things which threaten the welfare of the church without equivocation.

Some are trying to build up the church by being nice to error. Some things deserve no consideration. A snake does not appreciate petting. He does not know what it is. Take a cold snake into your house and warm it into life, and it will bite you for your kindness. Error in religion is as bad as the snake. Be nice to error, warm it into existence, and it will take your meetinghouse and turn you out on the street. It will not hear your protests any more than the viper will listen to the cries for mercy of its victims. It has happened many times. Yet brethren cannot seem to remember it until it is too late. An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, it is said, and I believe it is true in religion. The only sane way to deal with error is to act promptly, directly, and effectively at the very beginning of its inception.

SOME LESSONS IN OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

The history of Noah is perhaps the most interesting of any Old Testament character. He lived in two worlds. He lived six hundred years in the old world that was destroyed by water and three hundred and fifty years in the new world after the flood. His father was one hundred and eighty-two years old when he begat Noah, and he was seven hundred and seventy-seven when he died. Therefore, Noah lived with his father, Lamech, five hundred and ninety-five years. He lived with his grandfather, Methuselah, six hundred years. His father lived contemporary with Adam, the first man, fifty-one years, and his grandfather lived contemporary with Adam two hundred and forty-three years. Thus we see the close proximity of Noah to the Garden of Eden, the fall of man, and the creation of all things. With a knowledge thus acquired, he could pass it on to others accurately. Only two generations are necessary to bring all this history down to the flood, a period of sixteen hundred and fifty-six years, and extend it three hundred and fifty years after the flood to within two years of the birth of Abraham.

No other person in the history of the world has ever had such an experience and opportunity. It was said of him that "according to all that God commanded him, so did he." His moral courage and determination to do right under the most trying circumstances make him one of the outstanding men of all time. His refusal to yield to the majority when sin was rife and the whole world filled with violence, when men's thoughts were evil only and only evil, commands respect. From the creation to the flood, a period of sixteen hundred and fifty-six years, the world was so corrupt that Jehovah said: "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." For all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. Noah lived through it all and demonstrated his heroism. He had opportunity to see Adam and Eve, to observe the sons of God and the daughters of men as they married in reckless regard for the purity of the race, the giants that sprang from these marriages, and the corruption, transgression, and wicked disregard for all of God's laws till the whole world was condemned to be destroyed by the flood of waters. He was the one man in line for Jehovah to reveal his plans. He was the only trustworthy and faithful man to be found. He built the ark of gopher wood and preached righteousness to the end. The fire on his altar was burning when all other had gone out, and it took the waters of the flood to extinguish them. He was faithful while all others were faithless. He continued in righteousness and obedience till the day he entered the ark with his family, and all the rest were given over to "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage." Thus they continued in their lascivious, licentious, ungodly ways till the flood came and took them all away.

Noah's preaching had little or no effect on his hearers, but by his faithfulness he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." He lived after the flood contemporary with the first nine generations, and died two years before Abraham was born, at the ripe old age of nine hundred and fifty years. He is, therefore, the most wonderful link on the human race.

The outstanding lesson is the salvation of the righteous and the destruction of the ungodly. Today people are as indifferent to the call to righteousness as then; but now, as then, a few will heed

the call and receive the warning. The people ignore all exhortation, and even scoff and laugh at rebuke. All the powerful preaching Noah did by the Spirit of God was unable to turn a single one of them from their ungodly ways. Noah, however, never quit, nor did he propose any sort of a compromise. He was faithful, steadfast, and loyal to the end. He could save none of them, but he saved himself and his family. Just so with us today. We may not be able to save others, but we can save ourselves by faithfulness to the word of God. Noah would not have "found grace in the eyes of God" had he weakened, used the "soft pedal," and courted the favor of that ungodly race. He cried aloud and spared not. He was not at all popular with the masses, for he opposed their wickedness. Jesus said: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" Someone has said: "A man is best known by the enemies he makes."

After the Deluge this interesting story continues, linking Noah with the next nine generations by personal contact. He lived with them three hundred and fifty years, and with Terah, the father of Abraham, one hundred and twenty-eight years. Methuselah lived with Adam two hundred and forty-three years. Noah lived with Methuselah six hundred years. Shem lived with Noah ninety-eight years before the flood and three hundred and fifty years after the flood, and with Abraham one hundred and fifty years, dying when Isaac was fifty years old. This brings us within striking distance of Moses, who wrote the first five books of the Old Testament during the wilderness wanderings. Shem had been dead ten years before Jacob was born; but Abraham, who lived with Shem one hundred and fifty years, also lived with Jacob fifteen. years, thus bringing the story of creation and the history of the world nearer to the writer of the Pentateuch. While these genealogies bring history within the reach of Moses, we must remember that the Bible historians were guided by the Spirit of God to safeguard the records from error.

Some allusions in the New Testament to Noah and the ark lend an additional interest. (See 1 Pet. 3:19-31.)

PREACHING

Preaching is indispensable to the salvation of mankind. The promises of God and the hope of life depend on it. The church is to be built up thereby. It is said that after the world by wisdom knew not God, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." It is impossible for those who disbelieve to be saved, for "he that believeth not shall be damned." When John the Baptist came to "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers," he came preaching. When God sought the salvation of the old world, he sent Noah as a preacher of righteousness. He sent Jonah to Nineveh to preach to the wicked Ninevites. Jesus commanded the apostles to preach in all the world, and they "preached everywhere, . . . confirming the word by the signs that followed." The only part the signs performed was to confirm the preaching—to show it was of God.

THE PULPIT

The pulpit is designed and dedicated to preaching the word of God, and that only. Whenever used for anything else, it has been prostituted from its high and lofty purpose. To relate experiences of one's self and exploit his own observations is but to bury the pulpit with chaff and disgrace it and make it a laughingstock to an onlooking and honest world. It is no place for display and overtures of compromise. It is the most dynamic and militant point of attack upon sin. It is the most prolific hand of gospel seed sowing, offering salvation to the lost and comfort and hope to the weary and disconsolate. Let us never forget that preaching is God's method of salvation.

PREACHING WHAT?

Paul's solemn charge to Timothy was to "preach the word." This is the sole purpose of all preaching whenever, wherever, and to whomsoever done. The word of God, therefore, is all-sufficient in all matters pertaining to life and godliness. To preach the word of God is to preach the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes—to the Jew and Gentile alike. To preach the gospel is to preach Christ, who is our peace and has made both Jew and Gentile one in Christ. To preach Christ is to preach the things concerning the kingdom of God and the

name of Jesus Christ. To preach Christ is to preach the Scriptures, for "he opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." No one can preach Christ and not preach the Scriptures. In Acts 8 we have these expressions: They "went every where preaching the word," and "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them," and "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women," and he "opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Paul said he preached the gospel to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians he said: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

Certainly all preachers, then, should be careful. Be it observed that Paul expressed surprise that some had so soon been moved from Christ unto another gospel, which he says is not another, but some would pervert the gospel of Christ. The only possible chance for us, then, to be with Christ is to be steadfast in the word of God. To accept any alteration or perversion is to be at once removed from Christ; for "whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ [which is the word of God, the Holy Scriptures, the gospel of Christ], hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son."

How MUCH OF IT MUST WE PREACH?

We must preach all the council of God to be free from the blood of our fellow men. One might preach nothing but the word of God and leave people entrenched in error—not because he did not preach the word, but he did not preach all of it. We must preach all the counsel. So many times preachers diplomatically side-step certain portions of the gospel for one reason or another. No one can be guiltless who does. We should strictly heed the apostle's advice when he says, "that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written," and it would be at least as hazardous to leave out something that is written.

WHEN IS THE PREACHING TO BE DONE?

In season and out of season—any time, anywhere there are gospel subjects. Since today is the day of salvation and now is

the accepted time, the present is always opportune for preaching the word of God. Since the people repent at the preaching and one sinner repenting causes more joy in heaven than ninety and nine which need no repentance, it seems to me that we ought to preach to the people in season and out of season. Too many churches think they must have a certain time for a meeting, and if they cannot get that time, they will not have it. Too many also hire the best preachers obtainable and refuse to let them evangelize. They pay them to serve them when the world is dying for the gospel. And then preachers are willing subjects often. Listen to the call of the lost! Their only hope is for us to take to them the water of life. We must break to them the bread of life, or else they perish. The churches are building extravagant houses of worship to tickle the vanity of the people, as well as their own, and find themselves under obligations to help this institution or some other, and the result is that the churches cannot preach the gospel to the adult world, which is perishing for it. The Antioch church could have kept Paul at home; but, then, how could the gospel have been carried to all nations?

What if the people will not endure the doctrine? That very point was predicted by Paul. When people in the church or out refuse to hear it, we are thereby challenged to a stern proclamation of it.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON PROPHECY

Much has been said recently on the subject of prophecy. Some criticisms have been made, and it has been charged by reason of these that some objected to any study of prophecy. This is not true. No one objects to the study of prophecy, so far as I know; but there are objections to uninspired men's giving out the meaning of unfulfilled prophecies to support their theories. In the first place, the fulfillment of prophecy does not seem to be in the province of uninspired men to recognize; not only those prophecies that are unfilled, but even those that are fulfilled. The prophets that spoke by the Spirit of God were not able to recognize the meaning of their own words when they "prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what matter of time the Spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified

beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Neither the inspired prophets nor angels could understand the fulfillment, but it required specially inspired men to tell when it came to pass.

We have uninspired men everywhere now who claim they can interpret unfulfilled prophecy, when inspired men and angels could not before it came to pass. Do uninspired men today have power to do things that inspired men could not do? Certainly not. Not only were men and angels unable to interpret unfulfilled prophecy, but uninspired men have been unable to recognize it when it was fulfilled. And both good and bad men alike have fulfilled certain Scriptures, not knowing they were doing it and with no intention of obeying the Scriptures. Joseph and Mary turned aside into Galilee as they came out of Egypt, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets," when, in fact, "he was afraid" of Archelaus. The soldiers "parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," and did not break his legs; but "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water," "that the scripture might be fulfilled."

It took an inspired man to point out when and how the Scriptures were fulfilled after they had been fulfilled, and no uninspired man could point to their fulfillment. In support of this we now cite several references. First, we go to Pentecost. There were "devout men" from every nation under heaven there, and when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the apostles, not one of them recognized it as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy till Peter, guided by the Spirit, said so; further, they mistook it for a case of intoxication. Be it observed that these were *devout men* and acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures, and, at least in some measure, were students of prophecy. Still, they saw no connection between the prediction and its fulfillment, but erred greatly by saying these men were "filled with new wine" when they were speaking "with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

We have another case in the eighth chapter of Acts. The eunuch had been to Jerusalem for to worship, and, returning, was reading the prophecy of Isaiah. No one could say he was not earnestly studying the prophecy to know what it meant. Philip, the inspired preacher, came in contact with him and said: "Do

you understand what you read?" He said: "How can I, except some man should guide me?" This prophecy had been fulfilled in Jerusalem when Jesus died, but the eunuch was unable to connect the prediction with the death of Christ till it was pointed out to him by an inspired preacher. Is it possible that these modern uninspired interpreters of unfulfilled prophecy today are any wiser or any nearer the truth than the eunuch or those devout Jews on Pentecost?

I have heard it said that no one could understand prophecy till it was fulfilled. This man did not understand it *after* it had been fulfilled. What uninspired man has been able to understand fulfilled prophecy till guided by inspiration, especially since "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation"? All this ado about a certain unfulfilled prophecy coming to pass in a certain way at a certain time is but a guess, and may be as far out of harmony with the truth as they were on Pentecost when they said, "These men are filled with new wine." Many of the prophecies are expressed in symbolic language, which makes them the more difficult of interpretation. But these modern interpreters venture to tell us what the symbols signify and the exact fulfillment. They are visionaries and speculators of the first rank. Let the people beware of any uninspired man's interpretation of any prophecy. And since there are no inspired men now and haven't been since the apostolic age, "beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

It is one thing to study the prophecy, but quite another to be so cocksure as to a certain occurrence being its fulfillment. It is this that has caused the disturbance.

A single prophecy might mean more than one thing. Rachel dying in mourning at the birth of Benjamin and the mothers weeping over the slaughter of their children by Herod hundreds of years afterwards would never have been associated but for inspiration. In the same vicinity where Rachel said, "Benoni" ("son of my sorrow"), it was said, "Rachel weeping for her children." The prophecy coupled with certain historical events may be their fulfillment and it may not. It takes inspiration to make it certain.

A SERIOUS QUESTION

Someone has said: "One of the most serious questions confronting the church is how to convert the preachers." Preaching, to be effectual, must be to the point, strong, and definite. "For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" A preacher may preach the truth in such a way as to encourage error. He may preach nothing but the truth and leave sectarianism entrenched, and be heralded as a great preacher and full of "the Spirit of Christ," if he does not preach the *whole* truth. It is not considered diplomatic to preach what the people need. When any man has so preached the truth, he has turned the truth of God into a lie. There is a fearful responsibility resting on preachers and teachers, and the need today is for brave hearts to carry on for God. It is said: "You cannot catch flies with vinegar." But the Bible nowhere says: "You are the sugar of the earth." You can catch as many flies with vinegar as you can with "salt." We are not trying to catch flies; we are trying to convert men. This must be done with the word of the Lord. It can be done with nothing else.

"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." This forever settles the kind of preaching that is to be done. This confines one to the things that are written to the end that it is said, "That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written." God's men are to "take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," and "preach the word." "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." This passage is quite comprehensive. What did Paul preach then? He preached that "we are baptized into Christ," and that "we were buried with him by baptism into death," and that "ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you," "and being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness," and the

gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes. Therefore, "if any man think himself to be a prophet [teacher], or spiritual [full of the Spirit], let him acknowledge that the things that I [Paul] write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

Anyone who does not consent unto what Paul wrote "is proud, knowing nothing." Since "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," to the end "that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works," are given in the inspired Scriptures, why go elsewhere for counsel and instruction in the work and worship of the Lord? Any preacher found preaching and practicing things the New Testament does not contain either does not believe this, or, by ruthlessly trampling it under his feet, has "done despite unto the Spirit of grace." Men who did that under the old law "died without mercy," and Paul asks: "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy," who so disregards the new covenant today? The truth, and the whole truth, must be preached to the people in the fear and love of the truth, else they cannot be saved, neither the preacher. We are told that the time will come "when they will not endure the sound doctrine," but this is no excuse for the preachers to quit preaching it. The condition only calls for a more determined effort upon our part. We need moral courage in such a crisis. Jesus Christ was a most unpopular man because he met the challenge of error, and, with his fan in his hand, separated the chaff from the wheat. He burnt up the chaff with fire unquenchable. He preserved the wheat. The "chaff" is the innovations, the doctrines and commandments of men, but the wheat is the pure word of God unmixed and unadulterated.

Saul rebelled against God and "rejected the word of the Lord," and "did evil in the sight of the Lord" when he saved Agag, the king, alive, and "sheep and oxen" to sacrifice unto the Lord. The command was to "utterly destroy" the Amalekites. He disobeyed God. It will be observed that Saul's intention was to honor God and that he felt that he would be justified in what he did. Good intentions are fine, but they never take the place of obedience. What God said to Saul was no clearer than what he says to us on becoming a Christian and on the work and worship of the church.

Saul's excuse was, "I feared the people and obeyed their voice." It is pleasant to manifest a fraternal spirit; but when that *fraternal spirit* compromises the church with error, it ceases to be a fraternal matter. We had much rather agree with people than to disagree; but if to agree means to compromise with error and destroy the church for which Christ died, we prefer to disagree and fight it out. Jesus said: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." No one, therefore, can be a friend to Christ and do otherwise. To refuse affinity with the denominations is only manifesting a loyal spirit to the Lord, and we have no apologies to make for it.

Let us "put on the whole armor of God," that we "may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, . . . and having done all, to stand." .i

REASONS WHY WE SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT

Since many have taken in hand to tell why they left the denomination, or the Christian Church, it would be in order and interesting to have some tell why they ever went into such institutions in the first place. Why should any one be a member of anything he cannot read about in the New Testament? There is no good reason why anyone who would be a Christian should join any of these worldly institutions. Why should anyone want to be more than a Christian or less than a Christian? Since the church includes all Christians, and whatever makes one a Christian adds him to the church, it appears that no one can give a sound reason for being anything else. If doing one thing or joining any unscriptural institution can be justified, then by the same rule anything may be done, and any institution may be joined. But since neither can be justified by the Scriptures, it follows that nothing untaught can be done and no unscriptural institution can be joined without violating the principles of Holy Writ.

It would be no less interesting to have someone tell why he never went into any of these things. The answer is simple and easy. To give the reason why we do certain things and why we do not do others is easy from the viewpoint of those who take their stand on the Holy Scriptures and nothing else. Why should

anyone join any of the denominations? Why should anyone even join the "Christian Church"? No one can give a scriptural reason for either, for neither is mentioned in the New Testament. I have been anxious to know why anyone should even be baptized for any other purpose than that the New Testament gives. Let someone tell why he was baptized because his sins had been forgiven, or why he was baptized to get into some human institution. Since there is no spiritual blessing in any human institution that cannot be had out of it, why should anyone want to be a member of it? If one's sins are forgiven, or he is saved, before and without baptism, and he can be a Christian while he lives and go to heaven when he dies, why should he be baptized at all? People should do things in religion with purpose of heart, to be acceptable to God. All should be of one mind, and that mind is to do the will of God in heaven. It was this that caused Jesus to act, and nothing else. Neither could anything prevent his doing it. He came to do his Father's will, and did it. Certainly no one would offer this as a reason for doing things not mentioned in the New Testament, or for joining any one or all of the denominations.

It is admitted by all that we can do all the will of God and not be a member of any denomination or belong to any human society. Certainly no one would claim that things not mentioned in the will of God must be done to fulfill that will. Since it is not every one who saith, "Lord, Lord" that shall enter the kingdom of God, but those who do the will of God, it is evident that the will of God must be done. Do the people join the Christian Church to do the will of God? Certainly not, for the whole will of God can be done without being a member of it. In becoming a member of any of the denominations, one must do something that is no part of the will of God; and in order to remain in full fellowship and good standing, he must continue to do things that are untaught and unauthorized by the will of God. I can see reasons why people should come out of them, but none whatever why they should join them. I, therefore, rejoice in seeing people desert such company. But I am sorry to see anyone leave the truth in order to have fellowship in such things.

We are told that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth, and that it should be subject to Christ in all things. This should satisfy every spiritual yearning of the human soul. Is it spiritual

yearning that leads people into such, or a yearning to be popular, or to be fancy in things that should always be plain? People like ostentation in religion as in other things. They wish to be in the company of the majority. They would rather have these things while they live than to go to heaven when they die. Many have deserted the old paths just for the lure of such things. I see scriptural reasons why people should come out from among them and touch no unclean thing. There is no Biblical reason why they should ever go into them. There is a profound reason why one should be a member of the church, for the church embraces all the saved. The church is the body of Christ, and all Christians are members of it. Christ is the head of the body, which is the church. All spiritual blessings are in Christ, and we are members of his body. One cannot be in Christ without being a member of his body, for to be in Christ is to be in his body; and to be in his body is to be in his church, which is his body. One cannot be saved out of the church, then, unless he can be saved out of Christ. But if one cannot be saved out of Christ, he cannot be saved out of the church, for the simple reason that to be in Christ is to be in his body, and to be in his body is to be in the church. Since "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," it follows that all Christians are in Christ, for all Christians are new creatures. The old things are done away, and, behold, all things have become new. "For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." All of God's children are Christians, and all Christians are saved; therefore, all the saved are in Christ—in his body, which is the church. No one can be saved out of the church, therefore. For this reason everyone should be a member of the church, and nothing else.

THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SAINTS

We are told by inspiration not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." There is, no doubt, a good reason for this exhortation. It is the purpose of this article to show the indispensable need of such assembly. Usually we stress the necessity of the breaking of the bread, the contribution, the singing, teaching, and praying. This is always in place and very essential indeed. But it should not be overlooked that some

acts of worship cannot be rendered till we assemble. When we neglect, or fail, to assemble, we render ourselves impotent to do certain things commanded. When one is unable to assemble, he is, therefore, relieved of any responsibility. It would be unreasonable to require the impossible of anyone. God metes out to us responsibility by our ability. He gave to everyone "according to his several ability," and of course expected that he carry on. "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." Not only so, but in the hour of temptation he "will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Therefore, if one cannot assemble with the saints, he would not be responsible for his absence. But we had better be sure we *cannot* before we stay away. An excuse will not suffice; there must be a real reason. In my judgment there are very few, comparatively, who have any good reason for absenting themselves. As important as it is, there is no justification for disturbing the assembly for funerals or commencement sermons or anything else. All of these things can be, and should be, done at some other time. Neither do we believe it is wise and proper for anyone to so put himself willingly into some place where it would make it impossible to meet with the disciples on the first day of the week.

We read that "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," and "upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." This shows that all were there in the meetings upon the first day of the week. The first passage says "the disciples" and the second says "every one of you." No one, therefore, was expected to be absent. No doubt the inspired writer knew some would be neglectful, for he said: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." He saw the danger of neglecting the assembly, just as Jesus saw that people would forget him when he instituted the Lord's Supper.

People today are openly disregarding the assembly of the saints for pleasure and gain. Often groups of disciples will go on pleasure jaunts, stop on the way, run in, take the emblems, and persuade themselves that they have worshiped the Lord. They feel

that they must take the Lord's Supper; they think it is important, but the assembly of no importance at all. But, in fact, the Supper depends on the assembly. Sometimes brethren say this is the most important part of the service. How can any man determine that one thing which God requires is more important than another? In fact, God requires that we assemble, and when assembled we are to break the bread in his memory. No assembly, no breaking of the bread. "This do in remembrance of me" clearly implies a coming together and while together "do this."

Home reading, home study, home worship do not take the place of the public service commanded by the Lord. Those who do the most reading and praying and meditating at home are usually the most faithful in assembling for public worship. Those most interested in spiritual things feel the need and the desire for the fellowship and encouragement of mutual edification.

There is such a thing as vain worship, which can only be avoided by doing the will of God in all things. Anyone who *cannot* be in the meetings is not expected to take the Supper. But if he can be, and is not, in the meetings, he *cannot* take the Supper at all acceptably. There were certain acts of worship that the Israelites could not do anywhere outside Jerusalem. Hence, wherever their residence, they must come to Jerusalem three times a year. These things could not be done elsewhere. They had synagogues all over the civilized world in which they could do much, but they could not do other things that God required save in the temple in Jerusalem. Therefore, there were devout men in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven on the day of Pentecost.

We read also that the eunuch had been to Jerusalem to worship. These scattered Jews could manage to get to Jerusalem at the stated times each year. They kept this up for hundreds of years. God had said: "Where I record my name I will come unto thee." He recorded his name in Jerusalem; hence, these wonderful gatherings. Now we are not far from the meeting places of the saints, and many deliberately or by neglect stay away from these meetings. Jesus said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In the assembly we meet our Lord and Master. No other time does he come quite so near to us, perhaps, as when we meet in his name to break the

bread and drink the cup in his memory. We also meet for mutual edification and comfort; to mingle our voices in his praises. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." All this requires an assembly. Christians should not neglect it.

THE MEETING OF THE SAINTS

The meeting of the saints to attend upon the things divinely appointed is to be observed inviolably. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" is a very ringing declaration. Anyone who fails to assemble, therefore, sins. Of course there are exceptions. If one is sick and unable to attend, he will be excused. God never requires impossible things of anyone. People who are well are sometimes dilatory in attendance of these meetings; but when they get sick, they want the emblems brought to them. The assembling is just as important as taking the Supper when we do assemble. People who neglect the assembling cannot take the! Supper. The assembly is necessary to what is to be done in the assembly. There are some things that cannot be done outside the assembly. A brother who gets "miffed" at something and stays away and takes the emblems at home with his wife has not worshiped. When we slip off somewhere and take the Supper, so that we may go fishing on Sunday, we again have made a toy out of the Lord's Supper. Thus, having the Supper at the night meeting is to be severely criticized for this reason. I know there are some who cannot be there at the morning service, and for them this is, perhaps, all right; but those who could and would not are to be censured.

Oftentimes school commencement sermons are set for the same hour that the church has been accustomed to meet for worship, and, in order that they may attend, some have missed the Supper, and others have slipped off somewhere and taken the emblems. The service appointed by Jesus Christ gets mightily in our way. I am not opposed to schools or such sermons, but I am opposed to making a "mess" of the Lord's Supper for anything. Jesus Christ and his service must be first to make it acceptable. To put the church off till everything is done, and come to the meetings when you have nowhere else to go, is but to make a sham and a

mockery of it all. If Jesus would not suffer a man to "go first and bury my father" and then follow him, I do not believe he will permit anything else to have the preeminence over his work. Do we love him more than anything else? If so, can we do everything else before we give him his dues? Do we mean to feed our Lord and Master from the crumbs that fall from our table? God complained at Israel, through Malachi, because they gave to him the refuse, and he said: "Should I accept this of your hand?" and, "I am a great King." "Offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts?" Certainly not. How the conduct of some members of the family must grieve him! Are we going to give to him the time for which we have no other use? Is it possible that we will go everywhere we want to go first, and buy everything we want first, and then give to the Lord out of the left-overs? If we follow such a course, we will never get to heaven when we die, much less honor him while we live. Our influence as children of God will be nil and our lives failures.

I am here reminded of what Jesus said of the poor when Mary was being censured for her liberal gift, when the economical men joined with Judas Iscariot in saying that it was a useless waste, it might have been sold and given to the poor: "For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me you have not always." You can bury the dead and have their funerals at some other time. You can have your school closing at another time. So also with everything else. But the Lord's Supper must be had on the Lord's day, or not at all. I know the Bible says nothing about what hour it shall be taken, but it has been the custom of the church from time immemorial to meet at eleven o'clock on the Lord's day for this purpose, and it should not be disturbed for some other meeting. It is so established that everyone understands it to be the meeting to break the bread. You can go to these other things when you will, but not to the meeting of the saints.

Absence from the meeting is the first signs of apostasy. Attendance should be so regular that if one misses, it attracts attention. The elders should immediately investigate the cause. The careless and irregular should be exhorted. Upon such the church does not rest for its support. Their influence is not the best. If you

must miss something, do not let it be the worship. You can better afford to miss everything than this. I take it there is no time in all our experiences that we draw closer to him and he draws closer to us than when we meet around his table to break the bread and drink the cup in memory of him. The Lord's house, the Lord's table, the Lord's Supper, with him as the host, is a most delightful surrounding. Whoever misses it, misses something that money cannot buy. His heart yearns for his children, and here we can come more nearly to listening to every warm heartbeat than anywhere else.

'Twas about this table that John leaned on his breast, and while lingering there Jesus taught some of his most powerful lessons. It was at the close of his eventful life. The sun was going down, and we can get a closer-up glimpse of him than at any time previous. Did you ever look at the sun early in the morning and then at noon and then again at eventide? He is bigger and fuller and you can better see him than in the sparkling dew of morning or dazzling noonday. Two or three and the Lord—do not neglect it.

THE GREAT SALVATION

The salvation under Christ is great even to the casual reader of the New Testament. To neglect it is fatal. The dispensation that went before offered salvation to the people then living, but the salvation offered to us by Jesus Christ is superior in every way. In the first place, there was a time limit designated for the former. It was to last till the "seed should come," which seed was Christ. Christ came and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. The former began at Sinai, and ended at Jerusalem. In the allegory one is represented by the handmaid and the other by the free woman. One was Hagar and the other Sarah. Jesus came to fulfill the law, and the law was to continue till fulfilled. It was abrogated, therefore, when Jesus died. But it is not so with this great salvation by Jesus Christ. There is no time limit fixed, but it is given for all time, to last to the end of the age. There is no succeeding age, so far as this world is concerned. The law of the Spirit of life given by Christ will, therefore, last to the end. No addition or subtraction, at any time or under any circumstances, can be permitted.

In the next place, there was a national limit thrown around the old dispensation. It applied to the Israelites, and to them only. All the other nations were left out. But the new includes every creature of all nations. Again, the remission of sins under the former was for only a year at a time. The people, therefore, had to offer continuously the same sacrifices for the same sins, year after year. These sacrifices could never take away sins. But Jesus Christ is the supreme sacrifice, and remission of sins is absolute. Under the new covenant it is said: "Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more." Under the former a remembrance was made of sins every year, but under the new no remembrance is ever made. In this particular the salvation is great. Since we are saved from our past sins when we are baptized, and they are never to be remembered against us, we are never baptized but the one time. There is "one baptism," and when it is once done, it is sufficient.

Another point of interest is that this great salvation was at the first "spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." No one, then, guided by this passage, would think of going back of Christ to find anything that is directly connected with this salvation—that is, the conditions upon which it is promised. All these conditions must, therefore, be given by Christ. Jesus is the "author and finisher of our faith," and since we are saved by faith, we must be saved by his teaching. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." God speaks to us solely through Jesus Christ. He, therefore, is the mediator of the New Testament. Since this great salvation was first spoken by the Lord, no one could expect to find it before Christ came. This offers a fine suggestion as to how to properly study the Bible, for Christ "became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Hence, we repeat the voice on the mount, "Hear ye him." Moses said: "Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." It is, therefore, fatal when one drifts away, or departs, from the teaching. We must abide in the doctrine of Christ, therefore, to be saved.

Not only did Jesus begin to speak this great salvation while on earth, but it was "confirmed to us by them who heard him." This

makes reference to the apostles, who were with him and taught by him to be his ambassadors when he had gone away. Therefore, if we would hear Jesus Christ on this great salvation, we must hear those who were with him. After Christ had ascended, he sent the Holy Spirit on them, and they began to publish this great salvation abroad. They went everywhere preaching the word. Multitudes of men and women were added to the Lord.

The conditions of salvation, or remission of sins, as given by the apostles, is necessary to this great salvation. The gospel was preached, and when the people believed it they were told by these ambassadors to "repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." The "remission of sins" here is the "great salvation" about which we are speaking. What did the Lord say about this great salvation? Whatever the apostles said. This is the only way we may ever know, since they heard him and it was confirmed to us by them. The Savior said to them, "He that heareth you heareth me"; and since Christ went away without writing anything, it follows that the only way we can know what he said is through those who heard him.

Be it remembered that these men were not left to bare memory to bring these things that Jesus said to us, but they were baptized with the Holy Spirit to insure them against mistake. The words of Christ by the apostles, therefore, are infallibly correct. Christ gave to them what is called the "great commission," and then sent on them the Holy Spirit to guide them in preaching to the whole world. Under this commission, and thus guided by the Spirit, they taught that people must believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that they must repent of their sins; and that they must be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins—to wash away their sins—to be saved. Thus, the great salvation comes to us. The apostles were to speak only the things that they heard Jesus speak, or that they received from him.

WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES SAY?

During the personal ministry of Christ "a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus answered: "What is written in the law?"

how readest thou?" With Christ that which was written was sole authority. It was the end of all controversy. So also should it be with us. To go outside the Bible for the answer to questions pertaining to the life and destiny of men is to depart from the example of Christ. Paul said to the Corinthians: "And these things, brethren, *I* have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." Paul would not "go beyond" that which is written, and he warned the whole Corinthian church not to do it. Peter would have all Christians speak only as the oracles of God speak. Therefore, what the Scriptures say is the end of all controversy. Nothing else is authority in religion.

Jesus said: "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures." Philip "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Paul reminded Timothy "that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." All that relates to human redemption comes from the Holy Scriptures. The apostle offers nothing else. With him the Scriptures, and the Scriptures only, are relied upon. He further added: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Since the "man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" by the Holy Scriptures, it is useless to go beyond that which is written for anything in matters that "pertain unto life and godliness." It would be even sinful. "For sin is lawlessness." The man who wrests the Scriptures does it to his "own destruction." Great care should be taken in the handling of the Scriptures. We would do better to give what they say rather than what they mean. It is a much safer course. The only question should be, "What do the Scriptures say?" on any matter.

What do the Scriptures say about faith? "Without faith it is impossible to please God"; and, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." By faith we are justified and "have peace with God," We "walk by faith," the just shall "live by faith," and faith is "the victory that overcometh the world." The question is often asked, "What must one believe to be saved?"

Believe what the Scriptures say. But it is contended that the Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"; and so it does. But no one can believe on Jesus Christ, or that Christ is the Son of God, without believing what the Scriptures say. When a man demanded baptism at the hands of an inspired preacher, the preacher said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest"; and the man said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." This was the result of preaching unto him what the Scriptures said. Since one preaches Christ by preaching the Holy Scriptures, no one can believe on Christ and reject what the Scriptures say.

What do the Scriptures say about repentance? "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," and "repentance . . . should be preached in his name among all nations"; "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"; and, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."

What do the Scriptures say about the confession? That all should "confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus," and "with the ' mouth confession is made unto salvation," and "whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

What do the Scriptures say about baptism? "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"; "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"; "Now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"; "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death"; "For we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"; "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." Other passages might be given, but one who would not believe these would not believe if all were given.

The foregoing tells what the Scriptures say about how to become a Christian—a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Let us bear in mind that no one can believe on Jesus Christ without be-

lieving what the Scriptures say. When Christ was preached in New Testament days, and the people believed the preaching, they were baptized the same day, or the same hour of the night. In these days men claim to preach Christ, and the people believe all they preach, and no one is baptized. There is manifestly a difference in the preaching, for the result is different. Like produces like, they say, and I believe it. So, then, if "any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY ON ENMITY

Jehovah said: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Just so long as this enmity lasts between the serpent and the seed of the woman there will be conflict. Satan knows this, and works night and day for a compromise. He will even argue that it is wrong to be envious—to bear animosity—and many professed Christians believe it. Hence, they cease to fight against evil. The enmity which God put between the serpent and the seed of the woman is like a great wall that permits no crossing. Anything that would tear it down is evil. This enmity must continue if we would survive.

Christ is the seed of the woman, and his body is the church, over which he is head. His church stands against the world, and the world stands against his church. He counsels that the church "be not conformed to this world," and "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

Let the church accept the challenge and stand square against the world, and cease to throw bouquets or coquet with the world. Let the enmity remain strong, and the fight will continue. Take the enmity away, and the fight stops and the church is lost. The

church owes its existence to fighting, and it must stand and carry on in the same way. It is a spiritual warfare, however, and the sword of the Spirit is the only admissible weapon, for "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." From the foregoing quotations it is easy to see that to be a friend of God is to be the enemy of the world; also, that the world hates the disciples because they are not of the world. To love God is to keep his commandments; to love the world is to do as the world does. Jesus said: "You are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you."

Listen to the Psalmist: "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." That is not all. "Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." In speaking of Christ and his throne being forever, God said: "A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." It is just as important to hate iniquity as to love righteousness. Any gospel preacher who tries to make a covenant with those who are in error is an enemy of the church. No compromise is possible. "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" None, of course. Then let the enmity exist, and the fight goes on.

We talk of love as if love would remove this barrier. Love is a rule of action and a course of conduct. Anyone who would not fight evil away from the church, and ask the church to come out of evil, is not actuated by love at all. The task of keeping out of the world will not be half so difficult if we learn to hate the world. It will be impossible for anyone who loves the world. To be mindful of the world is to be led into worldliness. The exhortation of inspiration is to "abhor that which is evil," "abstain from all appearance of evil," "abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul," "flee fornication," "flee from idolatry," "flee also youthful lust," and many other similar passages. Why do people flee from a snake? Because they abhor it—because of the "enmity" that exists. We offer no sort of compromise to the serpent. Neither

should we propose any kind of compromise to the world, and we will not as long as we hate the world.

I know that the Bible also teaches us to "lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies," and that "envyings" belong to the works of the flesh, and they that "do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." But there is a marked difference in envying one another, and having in our hearts "enmity" against evil. It was envy that caused Cain to kill Abel, and Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt, and the office holders of the Medo-Persians to cast Daniel into the den of lions, and moved the Jews to crucify Jesus Christ. It is a green-eyed monster that knows no mercy. It abhors; it seeks to destroy.

Therefore, the wisdom in "enmity" between the church and the world. This same book tells us love "envieth not." Therefore, when we kill love for the world, we destroy the taproot of worldliness in the church. When the church looks with favor and indifference on the world, it is in great danger, for "this vile world is not a friend to grace to help us on to God." The church is to be the light of the world. It is impossible except by way of contrast. As long as the church does as the world, it cannot be the light of the world. By the help of God, let the church be different.

SEEING ALIKE AND SPEAKING THE SAME THINGS

Speaking editorially, the *Christian Standard* says: "It is not necessary that we all see exactly alike. It is not necessary that Christians all say exactly the same things." This is the *Standard's* apology for departure from New Testament teaching on the work and worship of the church. It is asserted that "on the great fundamentals" agreement is important. We are to understand by this that human organizations to carry on the work of the Lord and the organ and other instruments do not belong to "the great fundamentals" of the Christian religion. That which the Lord commands in his church is just as much a "great fundamental" as that which he requires sinners to do to be saved. The great commission enjoined upon the apostles to teach the baptized believers to "observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Anything the apostles taught the church to observe, therefore, is

fundamental. Anything they did not teach the church to observe has no part nor lot in it. No one who stands squarely for the New Testament will ever utter such sayings. It is an effort to justify additions to the work and worship of the church. When the more advanced guard of the Christian Church receive unimmersed people into it, what excuse will be hatched for that? Will the *Standard* say that if a person believes that sprinkling is baptism, to him it is? Will it say that unimmersed persons are Christians, and that, therefore, they have obeyed God? If "it isn't necessary that we see exactly alike," how far would one have to see differently to be wrong? If we are not to "speak the same things," how far can we differ? Peter said: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Paul wrote: "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing."

The use of the organ and missionary organizations has divided the church. There are two distinct bodies having no fellowship. If Christians all had spoken the same things, would we have this condition? The responsibility, therefore, rests upon those who have spoken other than by the oracles of God, and they must answer for it in the last day. This responsibility cannot be shifted by saying the differences are over nonessential things. They do not classify these. The New Testament commands us to *sing*. That is a specific and exclusive command. When an instrument is played, we have done that "which he commandeth them not," just as did Nadab and Abihu. Their only wrong was to do that "which he commanded them not." Was that a nonessential?

The word of God is the only ground of union. Jehovah expects and demands that his children be one, but only when they "walk by the same rule." Here is the situation. One party says he can worship with or without the mechanical musical instrument. The other party opposes the instruments on the ground that the New Testament does not authorize them. Those who use the instruments can worship without them. Therefore, they admit the ground of objection—that the New Testament does not teach their use; for certainly no one can do without what God commands. That which caused the division perpetuates it—the introduction

of untaught things into the worship of the church; and there never can be fellowship until all such is abandoned.

As much as we desire union and unity, it cannot be effected by a compromise. No Bible truth is subject to arbitration. It must be the pure word of God or nothing. Any agreement men might reach, therefore, would be without authority unless they agree to take the word of God, and that only. Traps will be set, but the Lord's children should be wise enough to keep out of them. Paul pointed out that "the man of sin" works secretly. But the same apostle said: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." They argue that we are agreed on "the great fundamentals." They say, "I can do with or without it"; and, "It is too small a thing to have a racket over"; and, "*I* can't see any harm in it." No such argument was ever made to get people nearer the truth, but always to lead them from it. If they really want fellowship, let them forsake their "cunning craftiness" and "sleight of men," and all untaught things, and meet us on the word of the Lord.

It has come to light that some of the churches of Christ are using digressive and sectarian literature in their Bible-class work. We quarantine against infectious and contagious diseases and use preventives. This is right; but how much more important it is to safeguard truth against error! The use of sectarian literature imperils the soundness of the church. Literature coming from the fountain of digression is sure to carry the germs of innovation. All contact with such should be avoided. Though it be claimed that no error is taught, the deadly work will be eventually seen in breaking down differences and distinctions necessary to be maintained. The organ was first used in the Sunday school, and the children brought it into the church later. They argued that the Sunday school is no part of the church, and therefore the use of the organ would be permissible, and, through subtlety, it was worked into the church over the protest of many godly members. This literature will eventually bring on similar trouble. It is all right to have graded literature, if all the truth is not *graded out* and error *graded in*.

SERVING OTHERS

Until we learn that there are others in the world, we are not prepared to even start as Christians. The spirit and life of Christ was to serve, not to be served. Jesus pointedly said: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." It was this that endeared Jesus to men and makes his name so precious and adorable today. His personal touch and deep sympathy with the downcast and unfortunate, and his willingness to be identified with them by the service he rendered to them, make him illustrious through the ages. His teaching many may forget, and his miracles may no longer appeal to the tired and weary, but his gentle touch and tender service carry on.

It is not always clothes and food that people need. Jesus knew this, and, therefore, endeavored to supply the real need of sorrowing men. It is great to be able to supply food and raiment and other temporal wants of men, but human sympathy is what the people need most.

When Jesus ministered, he left a tenderness and warmth that lingered still when years had come and gone. Often in our ministrations of mercy the immediate need is supplied, but that warmth and feeling of human sympathy and care are lacking. Sometimes the gospel is preached in an air that makes it as cold as steel. People frown on it as a cruel and hard taskmaster. The warmth of love and emotion is lost in the super-effort of intellectuality and strained efforts at logic. The churches and preachers feel that they should be served instead of serving. They delight in the chief seats and exalted places. Jesus considered none of these things. These have always had a tendency to separate the pulpit from the pew. The preachers become an exclusive class, and must be ministered to by the people. This is in no sense the spirit of the Master. Not only so, but elders and deacons have come to take the same view of things. They are in the light of the Bible the servants of the church, but they have in many instances developed into a group of autocratic lords to rule with an iron hand over the heritage of the Lord. They have exclusive meetings and decide by majority vote the affairs of the whole church, while the

congregation must obey. Such positions tickle the vanity of human beings to the extent that they render themselves unfit to carry on the Lord's work. Jesus said: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you."

Offices, with the honor and emoluments thereof, have never made the name of anyone dear to the hearts of the people, but rather his service of tenderness and love. There are no great ones in that sense in the church, but we are all brethren. The great one is the servant of all. The aristocracy in the kingdom of God, therefore, is to go down on our knees in the most menial and humble service to the poor and needy. God told Abraham that he would bless him, but he also said: "Be thou a blessing." God blesses us now in order that we might be a blessing to others. Anyone who does not follow this course is headed for the rocks of destruction. Christ gave his life for the church, and it was bought with his precious blood. It was the divine decree that "the gates of hell" should "not prevail against it." It was "exalted above the hills" to be the great and only distributor of heaven's blessings among men. But we often see it with its bony fingers poked out as a street beggar asking alms of all passers-by. The complaint goes out that the church is not appreciated when the world does not respond. Instead of the church being a blessing, therefore, by supplying the needs of others, it is endeavoring to get them to supply its needs. Instead of helping the beggars, it turns out to be one. It should be adorned and attractive by reason of its good works and sweet service to others, instead of its worldly adornments, such as banquets, suppers, and the like.

The multitudes followed Jesus for the loaves and the fishes, and they will still follow for the same reason. About all you hear now of church work is the supply of temporal wants. Spiritual needs of the people are lost under such rubbish. The church is to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth only in the point of such service. The church gives what the world cannot give when it functions properly. The world and worldly organizations can attend upon the benevolent and charitable needs of the people from a temporal and earthly standpoint, but are sadly lacking in spiritual help. The world can educate for time, but not for eternity.

Any church or set of brethren who can only educate and train young men and women in schools or orphan homes for things of this life are wasting their time. The training and education for the life to come is the vital thing. There is a great need for education and training for useful citizenship, but a much greater for spiritual service.

It should be remembered that the fleshly mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. We are selfish naturally. How splendid it would be, therefore, if we could learn to "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others"! Also, remember the passage that says: "Love seeketh not her own." This followed will make the church the most attractive institution in all the wide world, and people will flow into it from every nation under heaven. Why? Because it has something that the human heart needs and for which it yearns always.

HOW THE SPIRIT LEADS

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." As many as are not led by the Spirit of God, they are not the sons of God, therefore. It is a most significant theme. It is in place, then, to ask, *How* are people led by the Spirit? This may be best understood by showing first what being led by the Spirit is *not*.

Jesus said the time would come when "whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." One who follows what he *thinks*, therefore, is not led by the Spirit of God and is not a son of God. Paul said: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." But this never made him a son of God. The underlying principle of the kingdom of God is set forth in these words: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." No one can follow the Spirit of God and not deny himself. No one can deny himself and still do what he *thinks* in religion. God said: "My thoughts are not your thoughts." Therefore, men must give up their thoughts for God's thoughts. We read again, "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes"; and, "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own

eyes"; for, "There *is* a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." To be led by the Spirit is to deny what we think and that which seems right to us and follow solely the Spirit's course.

One may be thoroughly *conscientious* in all he does and still not be led by the Spirit of God. Paul said: "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Again: "I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men." To be a son of God, one must be led by the Spirit of God, not by the "dictates of conscience," or "feelings." These are worth face value, but no more—conscience "accusing" or "excusing" according to the teaching. Therefore, it justifies or condemns from the standpoint of training. If the training is wrong, the conscience is wrong. "Feeling" depends on what one believes, and what he believes on what he has heard. If he believes false testimony, his faith is false and his feelings deceptive. One may "believe a lie," therefore, and be "damned."

From the foregoing it is clear that "the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and that he needs an infallible leader. For man to be led by the Spirit of God is to follow after the Spirit. That is to say, the Spirit directs the way in every detail.

We are told that men are free from condemnation "in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Men who walk after the flesh are not free from condemnation anywhere or any time. Since those who walk after the flesh are condemned, it will help us to better understand the subject of walking after the Spirit by finding how people walk after the flesh. To walk after the flesh is to "mind the things of the flesh"—"adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." It is not difficult to judge, then, when one is walking after the flesh. When one is minding these things, he is after the flesh; and "if you live after the flesh, ye shall die." The only way possible to avoid this is to crucify "the flesh with the affections and lusts," or to "deny himself," as the Savior said. No one can follow the Spirit and at

the same time "mind the things of the flesh." Would it not be interesting- to know just how many members of the church, who think themselves Christians and who think they are going to heaven when they die, are resting under condemnation now and destined to die or be banished from God's glory and power forever? "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Beware of the flesh and the world. "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."

Now, to be led by the Spirit is to mind the things of the Spirit evidently, for "they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit." The "things of the Spirit" are all in the revelation the Spirit makes in the Scriptures. Not one is outside the Bible, therefore; for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." Anything not in the New Testament is not a thing of the Spirit. To be led by the Spirit is to "mind the things of the Spirit." This being true, we must listen to the Spirit of God exclusively and not to men for guidance in all matters pertaining to life and godliness. "Now we [apostles] have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we [apostles] might know the things that are freely given to us [apostles] of God. Which things also we [apostles] speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." So, then, "if any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I [Paul] write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." So also with all the apostles. To be led by the Spirit, then, is to be led by the words of the Spirit spoken by the Lord's apostles.

"THE SPIRITS IN PRISON"

This statement in one of the Epistles of the New Testament has been given to some strange positions. Especially is this true of those who hold the theory of a chance after death. The pas-

sage is used, therefore, to teach something it does not contain. It is true that the Spirit by which Christ was raised from the dead preached to the spirits in prison; but it is assumed that the prison is the unseen world, into which people go when they die. That God did the preaching by the Spirit is sure. But we remark that he has done the preaching in the same way to all. The object of preaching is to save people. For "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The preaching was to the dead—that is, dead in trespasses and sins—that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit. Therefore, God saves people from their sins, so they might live such lives that will not only glorify God, but make them to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

WHAT IS THE PRISON?

This can only be determined by the word of God, not by my opinion nor anyone else's. Isaiah (61:1-3) says: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." This passage is very comprehensive and conclusive. When Jesus came, he came to set the "captives free," to open the "prison" to them that were bound. Setting the captives free and opening the prison to those who were bound and saving people from their sins, all mean the same thing. Therefore, all who are in sin—living in sin—are captives and in prison. Would to God all of us could fully realize that when we are living in sin we are in prison and that Jesus came to save us from sin, not in sin, and, therefore, to set the captive free. We cannot be mistaken about this passage and its meaning. In Luke 4:18 we have Christ using this passage and applying it to himself. When he had read the passage, he said: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." This shows conclusively what the prison is.

WHEN WAS THE PREACHING DONE?

When they "were disobedient." "When once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." "While the ark was a preparing wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." The preaching was done by the Spirit through Noah. It was done in the days of Noah. Now, since the days of Noah covered a period of time not less than nine hundred fifty years, that would be too indefinite. So it was while the ark was "a preparing." This was a period of approximately one hundred years. The preaching, therefore, was done before the flood, and not after; before they died, and not after. Those people, therefore, were in prison because they were in sin. They refused to hear the preaching, and suffered the consequences. They were destroyed by the flood. It is always too late to preach to people when they are dead. Funeral preaching perhaps has done more harm than good, for the reason that it endeavors to hold out some sort of chance for people when they have died in disobedience to the gospel. They were in prison while they lived, died in prison, and were ever thereafter beyond redemption. The only hope for human redemption is while they live. It is too late when they are dead.

We conclude that the preaching must be done. Nothing but the word of God must be preached. Sinners must hear, believe, and obey the word preached, or else they cannot be saved. The Spirit preached through Noah. David said: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." Christ gave his word to the apostles and then sent the Holy Spirit upon them to guide them unerringly in preaching it to the lost. His Spirit dwells in his body, which is the church, and through the members of his body, with the word of God, operates on all who are in sin. The Spirit has always operated in sanctification, conversion, and redemption, but never independent of the word.

THE PREACHING MUST BE RECEIVED

It is manifest that no one can receive the preaching without obedience to it. The preaching Noah did was full and complete, but it could not save them, because they would not obey it. It was not mixed with faith by those who heard it. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He

that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Noah was preaching to save the people from the flood. Only those who believed the preaching were permitted to enter the ark, and they, therefore, were "saved by water." The language of our text says: "Eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." Therefore, people who will not receive the preaching and be baptized will be in the same plight of those who did not enter the ark. I do not wonder, then, "when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Christ came to save people from their sins, to set the captives free. He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—that is, saved from their past sins. Those who will not do what Christ commands can never be freed from sins.

SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is a very vital theme. The church is a spiritual institution. Everything that has to do with it must be spiritual. The members must be spiritual. The song service must be spiritual. So, also, the prayers as well as all acts of service and worship. The songs we sing, the prayers we offer, and the deeds we do must all be spiritual. The sacrifices we make must be spiritual, for to this end was the church established "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Since the church is the "spiritual house," all spiritual sacrifices must be made in and through the church. And, inasmuch as every Christian is a priest, and we are a kingdom of priests, no one but a Christian—a spiritual person—can make these sacrifices to God. All Christians, then, are in the church, and constitute the great spiritual body of Christ. One not a member of the church of Christ, therefore, is not spiritual. Paul wrote to the Romans and told them that there are two minds—the carnal (or fleshly) and the spiritual. To be carnally-minded is death, and the carnal mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law.' of God, neither indeed can be. To "be spiritually minded is life and peace."

No one can please God in anything he may do if he is not spiritual, for those who "are in the flesh cannot please God." We

are either in the flesh, or we are in the spirit. Those in the flesh are carnal, and those in the spirit are spiritual. All things, then, that do not please God belong to the carnal. "For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." God must be pleased. "Without faith it is impossible to please him." Faith comes by hearing, and hearing comes by the word of God. Therefore, anything the word of God does not teach cannot be spiritual. Neither can anything therein be carnal. So, then, if any man think himself to be "spiritual [full of the Spirit], let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." Spiritual things, therefore, are confined exclusively to the commandments of God—the things that are written.

God reveals all of his things unto us by his Spirit. The New Testament is that revelation. Outside of it there is no spirituality. The word of God is spiritual. The church of Christ is spiritual. Christians are spiritual. It takes this to make the work and worship and sacrifices spiritual. One who is not spiritual cannot offer spiritual service. Neither can that which is not spiritual be offered by those who are spiritual. So, then, anything the New Testament does not teach cannot be handled or touched by Christians in service to God.

Since "without faith it is impossible to please him," and faith comes by hearing the word of God, we cannot leave his word for a single thing. No one can be spiritual without God and Christ, and no one can have them without continuing in the doctrine of Christ; for "whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." Since no one can be spiritual without God and Christ, and to have them he must abide in the doctrine, the doctrine is indispensable.

When Jesus was entering into the shadow of the cross, he said: "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me," What a consolation to know God is with us in our hour of deepest distress! Even when all men forsake us, God is with us. Paul said, when all men forsook him, "notwithstanding the Lord stood with me." The only complaining cry of Jesus, if it be right to call it such, was on the cross when God withdrew his presence. "My

God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" was wrung from his suffering heart. He could without complaint suffer the loss of all things, but when his Father is not with him, he cries out in anguish. So with us today. With God we can suffer the loss of everything. But to lose him, all else is of no avail to help us.

May we also be reminded that the Most High dwelleth not in houses made with hands. Perhaps there has nothing been done more calculated to destroy the spirituality of the churches than the building of expensive meetinghouses. Fine houses built by human hands, though with the purest motives, are ruinous. Ostentatious display in acts of worship have taken the place of the virtues of the Man of sorrows. We are relying on the material, rather than the spiritual. We should also learn that he is not "worshiped with men's hands," but altogether with human hearts. He dwells in human hearts. Humility of heart and simplicity of life are those virtues that commend us to men, and make us acceptable with God. Let us, therefore, give more time and attention to preparing our hearts and purifying them for his dwelling. Let us enjoy his presence now, as well as anticipate his glory hereafter.

I am persuaded that using literature in the Bible-class work which comes from the publishing houses of those who are steeped in error is but a link that leads toward the creation of sympathy for such error. It is a bid for compromise. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." The only safe course is to "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

THE NECESSITY OF TEACHING

In order to be Christianized, the world must be taught. This is indispensable. Untaught people cannot be baptized. Therefore, no one can be a Christian until he is taught. In our anxiety to have additions we have neglected to teach as we should, and therefore many are immersed who are not Scripturally baptized. It is good to have additions, but it would be better not to have so many than to fill the church with unconverted people.

What the Bible says on the subject is plain. We read: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." From this we learn that the Father draws men to himself by teaching, and no man can come to Christ who is not taught. Jesus also said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Since no one can come to Christ unless he is "taught of God," it follows that teaching is indispensable. God comes to men only through Christ, and men come to God only through Christ, and that by teaching. Christ opened his personal ministry by teaching. His disciples came to him, and he "opened his mouth and taught them." By this he has shown us that the only way to save the world is by teaching. When the Holy Spirit was promised, Jesus said he would "teach you all things." Paul said: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us." Jesus came teaching, the Holy Spirit came teaching, and the grace of God came teaching. The apostles were commanded to "go . . . teach all nations, baptizing them," and then "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded." The whole system of redemption, then, is a system of teaching. Not teaching anything and everything, but teaching "all things whatsoever I have commanded." For this cause Paul was sent "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

It is a significant fact that no inspired preacher or teacher of New Testament times ever resorted to anything but the preaching of the word of God for success. The success that attended their labors was marked. In less than forty years the whole world had been evangelized. It was said that their words went unto the ends of the earth, and the gospel had been preached "to every creature which is under heaven." All we need today to save humanity is to learn the word of the Lord and teach it to the people. If they are not saved by this method, they cannot be saved at all. There is, perhaps, a technical difference between

preaching and teaching, but we are not concerned with technicalities. All preaching is teaching, and teaching is preaching. A sermon that does not instruct is a failure. In the great commission Mark said, "preach the gospel to every creature"; and Matthew said, "teach all nations"; while Luke said, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." This shows that the primary object of preaching is to instruct the hearers. It is said of those in the new covenant: "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." People must be taught before they can enter the new covenant. This is a strong point against infant baptism. An infant cannot be taught, and, therefore, cannot become a member, of the new covenant. This is in accord with Matthew's record— teach and baptize the taught.

The object of teaching is to impart knowledge. We read of those who had "a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos to themselves and "expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." Men are converted by teaching, and error is corrected the same way. The necessity of going everywhere preaching and teaching the word is upon us.

When we find a field infested with weeds, we know they came from the seed which were sown there sometime and in some way. Why not say the same thing about the field of religion when we see it in full of tares? Did they come from the word of God, which is the seed? Whence, then, did they come? Someone taught something that the Bible does not teach. From this comes all denominations and all error in religion. False teachers and false teaching are to be avoided carefully, lest we have error upon error. Whoever teaches anything other than the word of the Lord will not be held guiltless by the Judge of the living and the dead. Had the word of God and nothing else been preached, there would not have been a single denomination on earth, but all believers would have been "one body in Christ, and every one members one of

another," to the end that the prayer of the Lord would have been realized: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." God hasten the day when we will have no divisions, nor denominations, but sweet fellowship, and the unsaved will say, "God is in you of a truth."

"THE NECESSITY OF TEACHING," AGAIN

Sometime past this page carried an article on "The Necessity of Teaching." We have since received some communications that show it is an important subject. One brother reports that a preacher said to baptize all who come forward and teach them afterwards. That is exactly the trouble with the church now— too many baptized who have not been taught. The preacher who said that is not a safe instructor in the way of salvation. The craze for large numbers of additions on any terms is destructive. Many children are immersed, no doubt, who are not eligible to baptism. No one can be baptized and not be immersed, but one can be immersed and not be Scripturally baptized. One not taught cannot be baptized. The Savior said "teach" and then baptize, but this new doctrine says baptize and then teach. Since one cannot believe until he understands, and baptism is supremely an act of faith, he cannot be baptized till he hears, understands, and believes. (Mark 16:16.)

We read that men shall see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and be converted. No one can be converted without understanding, and no one can understand without hearing, and hearing comes by the word of God. Since no one can be saved without being converted, this new idea would fill the church with the unsaved. No one can believe without understanding. Salvation is by faith.

Everyone must know that the teaching goes on after people are baptized. Jesus said, "teaching them"—that is, the baptized— "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." But everyone must also know that one cannot be baptized till he is taught. The Revised Version says, "make disciples, baptizing them."

The word of God contains a case where some were immersed before they were properly taught. Aquila and Priscilla taught the preacher "the way of God more perfectly"; and Paul taught the disciples of John their error, and "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Their former immersion was invalid because they had not been properly taught. It seems from this that to teach them some things *after* they were baptized that they should have known before was not the example set. Hence, these people were required to be baptized after the correct teaching. Then, if people are not taught now before they are baptized, is their baptism valid? Frequently some member of the church comes to us and says: "I was baptized when I was young. I didn't know what I was doing. I want to be baptized." This goes to show the effects of the lack of teaching or faulty teaching.

The Jerusalem church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching." So long as this was followed there were no such troubles. They taught that men should "know assuredly" that God had raised up Jesus. When one would request baptism, New Testament preachers would say: "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The answer of the one to be baptized was: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." All this as a result of preaching or teaching.

The searching question of inspiration was, "Do you understand what you read?" And until one did, he was not baptized. Who would say he should have been baptized and taught the things he did not understand afterwards?

If people who are baptized were taught, the church would be saved from much internal strife. A certain religious cult spend their time preaching to "the sheep" (as they put it) and do not preach to "sinners" at all. This new idea the brother reports seems to be of that order. Sinners must be convicted of sin by teaching, and until that is done they are not eligible to baptism.

The mission of the Holy Ghost was to convict the world of sin when he came. He has never convinced a soul except by teaching. Not one. Jesus said: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." To be made free is equivalent to remission of sins. But no one is "free" without the knowledge of the truth, which is the word of God. Therefore, one must learn the truth.

Men must learn of God to come to Christ, and they cannot come to God save through Jesus Christ. Another passage says: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding." Men understand with their hearts. So the word of God must enter the heart for people to be enlightened. It enters the hearts of those who are taught. That is the reason, no doubt, that Paul said: "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

Paul said, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse," and exhorted Timothy to "continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them," for his own safety. In giving instruction to Titus on the subject of ordaining elders, the apostles said of the one to be appointed: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Elders are to be sound in the faith, as well as the preachers. He further said to Titus: "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."

Anyone who says baptize all who come and teach them afterwards should study these passages. Here is the final on the question : "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." This is divine counsel and safe.

"THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD"

The time in which the Holy Spirit wrote the caption of this article was an evil age; no one can deny. Jesus died to deliver the people from the evil of the age. It certainly is no less evil today. Time has not improved the age in such things. I do not wonder at the apostle saying, "Be not conformed to this world," or age. Should we be so conformed, the present age being evil, the church would become an evil institution. The church is supposed to be in the world, but no part of it. It is to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. It cannot be, except by contrast. It must be different, therefore. To get some slant on the present world and its evils, let me mention a few things which have been, and are, transpiring daily.

For an instance, a ball, sponsored by the President, observed throughout this country, the proceeds of which were to go for crippled children. Yet it is an acknowledged fact that the ballroom has been responsible for the downfall of more young men and women than any other one thing. It has been estimated that seventy-five per cent of the fallen women of this world started their downward career in the dance hall, and the effects have been more damaging to young men than to young women. Who believes that any such practice can be justified, even though the argument be made that it is for the benefit of unfortunate children? Why destroy hale and hearty young men and young women to save a few crippled children? And, besides, the children have a physical disorder which would not debar one from heaven in case he died, while the dance given in their support corrupts the moral and religious being to the end they cannot go to heaven. That which corrupts the heart or soul is much more vicious than that which destroys the body. Jesus said to fear him that can destroy both soul and body in hell. He plainly said that man can only destroy the body. With all of this, the churches falling into this President's ball! Members of the various churches selling tickets!

It is high time the people who claim to be Christians should stop, look, and listen before attempting to assist in any such practice. Since Jesus died to deliver us from it, we ought to try to deliver ourselves.

Not only so, but it has been argued that the sale of intoxicating liquors should be legalized and the tax from it go for the aged. Yet liquor has made more trouble, broken more hearts, caused more disease and death, broken up more homes, made more orphans and widows, caused more bloodshed, filled more penitentiaries than all other causes combined perhaps. It has controlled every man who has touched it, and likewise every country. The populace and the officials alike have been made slaves by it. There is not enough money in the world to pay for the damage it has done to men and nations. It has blackened the hearts of men and women and damned their souls forever, which have no monetary value. Then to argue that it would be a good thing to license liquor and take the proceeds and support the aged! Where is the wisdom in destroying the manhood and womanhood of this country to support the feeble? Which should be spared, if one must

be, to the exclusion of the other? It has been said from the old saloon days that if the church members would quit drinking the saloon would go out of business. Whether this be true or not, it is certain that the vote of the church members has legalized its sale again.

All the misery and death, together with the damnation of souls, will be laid on the head of those who have made it possible. Professing to know and serve God, in their works they deny him. It is impossible to justify such a course for any reason. Every bleeding, dying victim on the highways, as a result of a drunken driver, is but an indictment against everyone who has by vote or word of mouth aided in such a death-dealing thing. A sign may be seen all along the highway now: "If you drink, don't drive; if you drive, don't drink."

Not only so, but at this time, when race-horse gambling is about to be outlawed from the state of Texas, the argument is made that twelve hundred" will be without a job, the railroads will lose patronage, horse breeding and feed will suffer; and, therefore, it ought to continue. Suppose that all this is true, still the gambling at the race tracks has not been justified. How many bills go unpaid at the stores, how many women go naked and children hungry, besides many other ills, because of the race track and its gambling and horde of gamblers? Which is the better, to support the family and pay the debts or to patronize the race tracks? Which will be the best to make a great country and a noble citizenship? Which is the more conducive to the good of the children of this present age? It should not take an honest man or woman long to arrive at the right answer. Which society would you prefer for your child, the race-track attendants or the churchgoers? It is refreshing to see the tide turning against such corrupt practices. In sections of Texas they are destroying marble machines, grab machines, punchboards, and such like devices. These are harmless, they claim in justification; but they furnish a means of gambling which when once started rarely ever stops. For the last few years the host of Satan has been turned loose on an unsuspecting people in every imaginable device. It has been supported from the capital of the nation to the humblest cottage in it.

If Paul should come back and write as he did once to the Galatians, I wonder how he would express himself on "this present

evil world?" I wonder if he would chime in with the simpering sentimentalist of the pulpit and pew, saying, "The world is growing better"? Be it observed that the world cannot get good enough. To be in the world is to be lost. All the saved are in the church—in the world, but no part of it.

Sermons

THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE

My friends, I feel that it would be remiss in me if I did not express to you my deepest appreciation for your continued coming. I do not recall for a long time a series of meetings in which I have had the pleasure of engaging that has been more evenly attended than this one. We have had fine audiences both at the day services and at night. We have a very fine audience tonight, and that pleases me very much. You have not come because of my preaching, but because of your interest in the study of the Bible, and that is the most heartening thing that has happened to me in a long time. We are living in perilous days when people like something light, but we have tried to give to you nothing but the word of God. We have tried to tell you what the Creator of man has had to say as relates to the salvation of your soul. If I have failed, it is because of my inability to do any better than I have done, for I have done the very best I could. We have no mind or inclination tonight to devote our efforts to anything else; the only purpose we have in mind is to get before this people the plain truth of God. I wish to express to you, therefore, my deepest and most heartfelt appreciation for your coming and for the opportunity you have given me to be here for these studies.

Your attention for tonight shall be invited to the second chapter of Acts of Apostles. People who claim to be Christians and members of the church of Christ should be thoroughly familiar with this chapter, because it is the beginning of that institution. I am reading from verses 41 and 42, in which we have these words: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls; and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." I would like to commend these verses to you to read until they would be familiar to everyone in this audience and until none of you would ever forget them, even in years to come. They should linger in your memory always. If we could do this, then this service could not be a failure.

We shall not endeavor to tell you about every good thing spoken of in these verses, but I want to point out to you this fact—that they conform perfectly to the great commission that Jesus Christ delivered to his apostles before going away when he said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The first church was so taught that it continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. It is very specific and very important that the church of Jesus Christ continue in the apostles' doctrine. The church will perish from the earth whenever the doctrine of the apostles shall have ceased being taught. Only it can save us. We cannot be saved without it. The New Testament says that God is the author of life and the prince of truth and righteousness, and the word of God, the truth, is the only thing that converts people.

I would like to point out to you that I have read articles, heard people argue in public discussion on the question of church succession. I have seen them wade through seas of profane literature to prove their succession. We find a church here or an individual there trying to trace its succession, and they make the argument that a certain individual was baptized by somebody who was baptized by somebody, on and on back to the days of the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is not a man who has ever traced it, and if he could, what good would it be? Suppose I should show you some succession from the apostles and the Lord Jesus Christ and then turn back and read the picture God gives of the church and of Christians, and they are not alike. Suppose we would suggest to you further that the only succession, whatever we have or ever can have, therefore, is the truth of God, the truth of the Bible, and wherever that is planted we have the church. "The seed is the word of God." (Luke 8:11.) The New Testament is the seed, and the word of Christ is the doctrine of the apostles, and when John fixed the last "Amen" to the Book of Life, that ended it. Nothing has been added to it. The seed is the truth, and wherever we have the truth we can have the church.

I have been asked many times: "Where did this come from? Where did that come from?" I have been asked that about var-

ious organizations of the world. I am not at all interested in them. The moment I find that they did not come from God, something that he has not commanded, something I cannot read in the New Testament, the thing goes in the wastebasket. I have no time to worry about them. Why should a man spend his time searching" profane literature and wade through seas of history to find where this or that thing came from, or where this or that organization originated when the Bible knows nothing about it? What do you gain by it? What do you care about anybody's movement if the Bible says nothing about it? If the Bible says nothing about it, then I would not give the snap of my finger for it. If there is anything I need to know, I can go to the New Testament and see what it says. If the New Testament says nothing about it, I need not give it any further attention. Why spend a lifetime trying to find out where this or that came from if the Bible says nothing about it? If a man finds out, what does it matter? What account is it? Just leave it alone and turn your attention to something worth while. What difference does it matter where this movement started? If it did not start with God, we ought to lose all interest in it. I want to impress upon you that the New Testament is the seed, and we can have the church of the living God wherever there is a human being. That is the only thing that will perpetuate the kingdom of God and produce Christians, and that is the only remedy of the Almighty for the ills of mankind, but the word of God is so often rejected. There are people who cannot stand sound doctrine. They will not listen to it. What if they don't? Will I have to quit preaching sound doctrine because someone can't stand it? It is a challenge to manhood and to Christianity, and I am ready to meet that challenge and toe the mark any time, anywhere, and if there are people there who cannot stand sound doctrine, they had better look out. When we preach the word of God we have not a thing ' in this world for which to apologize. No, we have not an apology to make; we have nothing for you but the word of God. We need it, and we must have it. There is no way out of it except to preach the word.

In the reading a few minutes ago we read that in the first church the Christians stood steadfast, not turning from one doctrine to another. They got in the church, they stayed in, and they

stayed out of everything else. That is the hardest thing I have ever tried to get members of the church to do. One of the hardest things I have tried to get the church to do is to get men in the pulpit who have grace enough to preach the word of God, who will confine themselves strictly to the word of God. We need men who will preach the word as it is written in the New Testament, men who will not cover it up with chaff and rubbish. We need men who will take the chaff and burn it up. That is what Jesus came to do. Listen to what the Bible says: "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." (Jer. 23:29.) All right, then, anything you cannot read in the word of God is like chaff, and it should be destroyed, burned up. On the other hand, what is wheat? It is the word of God.

I want to point out to you that the first church, the New Testament church, the model church, the church that had its beginning in the city of Jerusalem, was composed of members who were standing steadfast on the truth. That is what this church did, and that is what every other church should do. We ought to stand on the truth, and I sometimes feel that we have made a mistake on that point, and that we will be isolated and destroyed because we have not done it. We ought not to allow a preacher to preach anything but the word of God. When physical disease threatens our wives or our children or anyone else, we are perfectly willing to inoculate for infectious disease and to effect a cure. I sometimes feel that this would be the best course to pursue in the church to save us from wreck and ruin. Which do you think is the best course, to save the church before it is wrecked or to try to save it after it is wrecked? The word of God is what we need.

The first church continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayer, but that is not all. It taught. Through it the truth went everywhere. Not only that, but their lives were consistent with their teaching. They would not allow men in the pulpit who were bankrupts, fornicators, or adulterers. They would not allow that sort of a man to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We ought not to permit these things in the church, and when we do the church is handicapped and we are impotent to go any further.

It is utterly impossible to get men to follow the Lord Jesus Christ unless we follow him. We ought to make every effort on earth to get men to follow him, but we must follow him first. We need to learn this lesson, and then we can step in the forefront and ask people to follow Jesus Christ; otherwise it doesn't matter about your eloquence or your familiarity with the gospel, or it does not matter about your argumentation. On the other hand, our eloquence, our familiarity with the gospel, and our efforts to proclaim the truth are reinforced and made to be effectual when we follow Christ.

I want you to note this. We are to know the word of God and teach it. It does not cost a thing. The gospel is without money and without price. The church that was established in the city of Jerusalem taught the word of -God. In less than forty years the gospel was preached to the whole world. Even an infidel historian tells us that there were six million Christians before the death of the last apostle, but we are so weak that we cannot get to the corporate limits of a small town. We cannot even get to our neighboring states. That church continued in the apostles' doctrine, but that is not all. They were steadfast in the apostles' doctrine. They continued in it all the time. Lots of people are good members of the church just as long as everything is sweet and pretty and there is no trouble arising and everything is quiet and peaceable, but it was not always that way. It is not going to be that way now; There are people who are good members until trouble arises, worry and anxiety comes, and then they are not there. That is what the apostle was talking about.

It is a mighty poor specimen of a Christian that cannot be a Christian except when the sun is shining, and you cannot find him when it goes down, when clouds arise, and when there is trouble and anxiety. You cannot find him when persecutions abound and opposition arises. In the first church they kept right on; persecutions did not stop them. About two years after the church was established, a persecution broke out against it in the city of Jerusalem, but that did not stop them. They remained steadfast, and they went everywhere preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If some persecution were to break out against this church, how many of you would have the moral courage to remain steadfast, to teach and to preach the way they did

in the Jerusalem church? How many of us would have the moral courage to leave home and friends and go preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and tell men what they must do to be saved, preaching the gospel as it ought to be preached? I wonder how many would preach it as Paul and as Peter and the rest of the apostles preached it? How many of us are that devoted, and how many are willing to give up something for the gospel. It may cost us a great deal. It may cost us property, pleasure, or take away a great many things that are dear to your heart and life, because God wants men and women who will be steadfast.

I would like to read you another passage: "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.) You can build a house and see the building crumble to the earth; you can pay for property, and somebody can pick a flaw in the deed and you lose it; you can do a lot of things in the materialistic world that will be in vain, but you have never done any work for the Lord in vain. "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is NOT in vain in the Lord." Everywhere I go people are asking if there is any harm in this club or that organization. Well, I don't know anything about that, and the reason that I don't know anything about it is that I cannot read anything about it in the Bible, and I would be afraid to go beyond that. Anything that I need to know about *is* right in here (holding up the Bible), and it is exceedingly dangerous to go beyond it. That is the most favorable thing that I can say about it.

I have been trying to get people, when they are not certain about anything, to pray to God about it. You ought to go to God often and ask him to guide you and to give you wisdom that you may know when to stop or to what extent you can go. You are right when you stay in the New Testament; you cannot go beyond its borders with safety. When you are in the church, the apostle says you are in Jesus Christ; when you are in the Lord, you are in his church. He said every Christian is a member of his body, the church, and herein God's service is to be offered acceptably. God's service is to be rendered here, and you cannot serve God

anywhere else. There are some things that we cannot do anywhere else; some services we cannot render anywhere else. The Jews could do some things without going to the temple, but they had to come to the city of Jerusalem, to the temple, to offer some other services. Some things you have to come to the assembly to do. Certain things must be done in the church; and if I am living out of the church, then they are nil. I believe I have said this before in this meeting, but I want to say it again: if preachers and editors had spent as much time and effort trying to get people to do what God says as they have spent in trying to keep them from obeying God, this would be a much better world; yes, it would be in a better condition. I am trying to lend my influence every way I can to get men and women to do what God says, whether I like it or not, for that does not have a thing to do with it.

I want to read you another passage. John said in his second letter : "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.) For a man to continue steadfastly in the doctrine is to have God. The man that departs from it does not have God. You cannot do a thing without him. It is impossible to do anything without God. We cannot fight our battles and win the conflict without God. We must have him. I don't care how strong you are, how confident you are in your own wisdom, without God you can do nothing. Here we have a man that goes on, transgresses the law of God, abides not in the doctrine, and he has not God; but listen to the passage further: "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ hath both the Father and the Son." Think about this, friends. It is of such paramount importance that we cannot pass it by lightly. The man that abides in the doctrine has both the Father and the son; he has both God and Christ. The only way to do that is to abide in the doctrine. That's the only way to have them. You hear people say, "I don't like to hear doctrinal sermons." Well, friends, I would be ashamed to preach any other kind. That's the only kind I know anything about. That's the only kind the Bible knows anything about, and when I quit preaching doctrinal sermons, I quit preaching the Bible, and then God is not with me. I must not turn to the right or the left, I must not stop this side

or go beyond the Scriptures for any purpose in the world. If I do, I transgress, and then I have neither God nor Christ. The only way I can have them to live by my side in life is to continue steadfastly in the doctrine. That's the only way, friends, just to "continue in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers." When we don't preach the gospel, we have laid ourselves open to criticism, and we are headed for a terrible calamity. Listen to what the apostle says, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John 2:11.) What are you going to do about that sort of thing? I am not responsible for anything in this Book. Don't blame me for it, for I am not its author. It becomes my responsibility to do what it says, but I am not responsible for what is written in it.

When the apostle wrote the book of Romans, he said, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." (Rom. 16:17.) Stay away from them, he says. "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. 11:18.) Mark them; turn away from them. We have men today preaching things that no apostle ever preached or wrote about, and we accept him as our brother. They are preaching things that you cannot read about in the New Testament. What does the apostle tell you to do about that? Here comes a preacher preaching something you cannot find in the New Testament. Then, in the language of the Book, we are to avoid him. It doesn't matter who he is. It doesn't matter how conscientious he is. I have had men to tell me, "He is so conscientious." Well, I think as much of conscience as anybody, but when it comes to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and the plan of salvation, I am not going to sacrifice the truth for kinsfolk, for my friends, or anyone else. We need this lesson. Nobody should be asking you to sacrifice your honor or sacrifice the truth for the sake of somebody's conscience. I may have said this before, but I am going to say it again to you tonight: I am not going to keep silence about my convictions. I am going to preach what the Lord has taught and what the Bible says if I never have another friend, and if I lose

friends on that account, then it will not be a great loss to me. We cannot afford NOT to preach the gospel, the apostles' doctrine. Yet there are some people who say, "I don't like doctrinal sermons," and there are certain churches that will not allow a preacher to preach but one doctrinal sermon a year. If I were their preacher and they instructed me not to preach but one doctrinal sermon a year, I would get kicked out the first day. I had a party of preachers come to me a long time ago and wanted me to participate in a union meeting, and they wanted me to sign a statement that I would not preach a doctrinal sermon, and I would not sign it. I am not willing to preach anything that I cannot read from the Bible; and if I preached at all, I would break the agreement the very first time I preached. I read this passage nearly every time I preach a sermon: "Every Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for DOCTRINE, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16.) A man that would agree to preach nothing doctrinal would have to get outside of the Bible, and I would not give the snap of my finger for anything that I cannot read in the Scriptures. I am willing to preach the gospel face to face and heart to heart with any man; as long as he will preach the gospel we will stick together, but when he goes outside of the Bible he will have to go without me. I would like to suggest now, in the language of the text, that we continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. Look how the church at Jerusalem spread the gospel. Look how they planted churches in every hamlet and crossroads. Look how they evangelized every nation under the sun in just a little while. They did not have the facilities that we have. They did not have the airplane, no telephone, no telegraph, no public carriers to carry them about, no railroads, no steamships, no automobiles, no means of rapid transit and communication. They walked over the country with nothing but the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. They make no mystery about it. They do not get a group of fine singers to help out and carry the gospel to the whole world, but they carried the gospel to the world.

I want to read another passage. Paul is talking to Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself ..." I want to stop long enough for you to see this. There are a lot of preachers and church leaders

who ought to read that. "Take heed unto yourselves . . ."— that's the place to begin. When Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, he said unto them: "Take heed unto yourselves and to the flock . . ." (Acts 20:28.) We had better make a little introspection and see what our condition may be. "Take heed unto yourselves," and then you can talk to the church, and in doing that you will save yourself and them, and when a decree is made that we shall not preach doctrinal sermons, then, indeed, if that is the way to save myself, I will have to beg to be excused. Not only that, but my fellow man must be saved that way. I am going to preach the Bible, for that's the only thing that will save us.

Now I want to turn your attention to another point. I have heard men all over the country talk about "my doctrine" or "your doctrine." I don't read anything like that in the Bible. When the Bible talks about God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, it is not doctrines. The "s" is never used in this sense. It is singular form every time. Of course, the Bible talks about the *doctrines of men*. You don't read that in the Bible when it is used in an acceptable sense. Every church preached the same thing, every preacher preached the same thing in the early days, and wonderful and mighty did it become. Then somebody taught something without authority.

Now, the word "doctrine" is singular as it is taught in the Bible, just doctrine, in the singular, God's doctrine, Christ's doctrine, Holy Spirit doctrine, and apostles' doctrine, in the singular. There were twelve apostles and Paul added made thirteen, and they all preached exactly the same thing, and the word "doctrine" is applied in the singular. Paul, Peter, and James and John did not differ. They taught the same thing, and they could not have had but one doctrine. They said, Let's all speak the same thing. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracle of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.) Now, they could not have said that, they could not have taught that if they had not been in line themselves.

Now, I want to suggest to you further that the word "doctrines" really does occur. I want to read a passage to you. The apostle said: "If you be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subjects to ordinances? (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which are all to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of

men." (Col. 2:22.) There are just as many doctrines as there are men who can think them up and will write them down and devise them. I would like to call your attention now to another passage from the word of God. Christ said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way, but when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?" (Matt. 13:25-27.) If that had been in the present day, many preachers could not have understood a word of it. Christ said that while men slept the enemy sowed tares. Somebody preached something without authority; somebody said something he did not have the right to say; somebody sowed tares. The Bible says that the seed is the word of God. Today we hear much discussion about union and unity. I have been hearing men preach on Christian union and Christian unity ever since I have been big enough to listen to a sermon, and not one of them used this text and preached on it in the sense we find it in the Bible. The Bible is not talking about union or any union that might exist. But we must hasten. The apostle admonishes us to touch not, taste not, handle not; keep your hands off things the Bible does not teach. Mark men who would teach things that the Bible does not say. Mark the man who would do that; and if any man comes to you with any doctrine that you cannot read in the New Testament, don't lodge him in your house. Don't bid him Godspeed. Courtesy does not go that far. Any man that would do that and continue to teach things the word of God does not say, the Bible says, "do not bid him Godspeed." Don't encourage him. You are not lacking in courtesy, then, for it doesn't go that far. Of course, you could not be a Christian without being courteous.

The Bible says, "Finally, my brethren, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." (1 Pet. 3:8.) That is the language of the Bible. Every Christian must be courteous, but for me to be so courteous as to take a serpent in my hands is not what the passage means. Men will come to you with doctrines that are not true. They will

not handle the sound doctrine, and I am not going to take a serpent in my hands, and I hope people will relieve me of the pain of saying "NO" if, indeed, it is right to call it a serpent.

I want to read you another passage. This passage which I shall read to you is one in which the word "doctrines" in the plural form is used. The apostle said, ". . . Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and *doctrines* of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1.) The devil never condemned any man for preaching doctrines that are not true. There are men who will preach anything you want them to preach. They will preach anything you want to hear and will even slip around and find out what you want him to preach and what you want to hear, but the gospel preacher, a preacher of the Lord Jesus Christ, will not do that. I have thought many times of what Jesus said of John the Baptist: "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind?" When the wind is blowing north, they go north; when it is blowing south, to the south. Is that the way you want to be, turned about by every wind that blows? Do you want to be turned about by every current? Some men are like that; they will teach anything; but the word of God is rigid.

Now, if you want men to think you are smart, find out what he wants to do and advise him to do that, and he will think you are smart. If you want men to think little of you, find out what the man is doing, especially if he is doing wrong, and tell him of his wrong and try to save him, and he will never have any use for you. One of two things will happen. They will either repent and turn to God, or they will gnash their teeth and turn on you. Now, one of those two things will happen. "Am I your enemy because I tell you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16.) I am the best friend you ever had, but I am not going to tell you something that is not true just to make you feel good toward me. When I see men doing wrong, it is my duty to reprove and rebuke them. The word of God tells us to beware of divers and strange doctrines. There is the word "doctrines" again. The word is never used in the sense of being acceptable. Now, anything you cannot read in this little book is strange doctrine. You may be familiar with it; but if it is not in this little book, it is strange doctrine, strange to the Bible, outside of it, and has no part in the New Testament. There are men who would believe doctrines of devils. What are

you going to do about that sort of thing? When you read this book, it is the doctrine of God, the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of the apostles; but they say, "I don't like the word 'doctrine'!" Well, I'll tell you what to do, then. You read the Revised Version, and you will not be worried with that word any more. Here is what the Revised Version says—"teaching." I know men will worry sometimes about that. I remember a few years ago that a number of our lessons had "teachings of God," "teachings of Christ," or "teachings of the Holy Spirit." That is without authority, for they have no "teachings." It is one. The whole Bible is one. There are 1,189 chapters, and they have but one teaching, just one teaching, just one thing, and that one thing is what we need to hear. We need to obey God, not in the plural. We need the doctrine, and we must have it.

Now, let's turn back to our text: "They continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine." We cannot sit at the apostles' feet now, for they are not here. The apostles are not here at the present, friends. When they were here they left us the doctrine. We have this statement in the Bible: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Cor. 4:7.) We now have it written in this book, which I think is better. The apostles were earthen vessels that held the treasures of God's truth, and they gave his message to us. They did not have the fine highways that we have today. They were not built then, and they had to walk wherever they went, but they carried God's message. Today highways have been built, roads have been chartered, and we can get a road map and go wherever we should like to travel. God has given us the necessary instructions in his book so that we can keep in the path that leads to life eternal in the land of fadeless day. He has mapped the way for us. In other days a man would have to find an apostle to know the will of God. That was before the New Testament was completed, and we have it today to guide us in the paths of righteousness. We have God's will reduced to writing, and we ought to study it. If you don't have the New Testament, get it. It doesn't cost much—just a few cents. Get it and read it all. It has two hundred and eighty-three chapters. Jesus Christ came down to this earth and died for us; then he went back to heaven, but he charted every mile of the way for us.

He left his instructions for us, even though we are two thousand years this side of Christ and the apostles. Now what are we going to do about it? Are you going to neglect God's word? Are you going to lay it aside and say, "I am not educated"? You don't have to be finely educated to read this book. Whenever a man gets so finely educated that he will not read and accept this book, he has too much education.

Now, I don't object to anybody's being thoroughly educated in everything possible, but I do object to it when it destroys his faith in this Book, when it takes away from you the only testimony we have to things divine. I object to it when it shakes our confidence in God. Now we are nearly two thousand years this side of the cross, and here is the word of God. What are you going to do with it? Suppose a man were going to survey a tract of land. Before he would start surveying it, he would have to find an established corner from which to work. He would have to have something to guide him or to help him, an established place from which to work. It doesn't matter what kind of apparatus he has, he cannot do anything unless he has established a point from which- to work. We have a point established for us in the second chapter of Acts. We have there a place to begin. There we find men asking, "What can we do?" What if God had not written down what we should do? What if a surveyor were to start out to survey some land and were to get lost in the woods. What if he were to lose his way. What would he do? Why, indeed, he would come back to find the place he knew. He would not turn around and around in one spot. He would find the place that he knew was established and get started again.

Now, in these days, if you will excuse this illustration, if a surveyor were to go into the woods and find a knot on a tree and say, "This is where the former surveyors made the lines meet," would you believe him? Would you believe him when you don't know a thing about it, don't know whether they made the knot in the tree or whether a woodpecker might have pecked the knot in the tree? You don't know a thing about it, and, therefore, you wouldn't put a dime in a piece of property like that, or a piece of property that had such as that in the abstract. You wouldn't put a thing in it. I wouldn't spend my money for that sort of thing, and neither would you, but when it comes to our souls, we will

take all sorts of things as facts. One person says this, another that; someone says something else; and someone else says something else. You can't take anybody's word about it. My opinions are no good, but they are as good as anyone else's. The only thing for us to do is to see what God says about it, just sit down and see what the apostles said. See what Peter, James, John, Paul, and the other inspired apostles said. They had his word fresh from God. They were inspired. They could make no mistakes. You wouldn't drink water from a branch. The water isn't clean, for the surface water has filtered into it, bringing in trash and dirt. You would go to the place where the water comes out of the mountain to get water to drink. Then go to God's great filtering plant and drink until you have satisfied your thirst. We wouldn't drink water out of the branch, yet when it comes to religion we are ready to drink from any sort of stream that flows. It makes no difference how poisonous or how impure it is. We ought to turn away from that sort of stream and go back to the apostles and let them tell us what we should know.

The early church left us an example. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and we must do that, too. When the church departed from that they went into the period of the Dark Ages. The departures were gradual. They came on little by little, until after a while they had completely departed. How can we depart and still be the church of Christ? I want you to tell me. It would help me a great deal if you would. It is hard to stay in the middle of the road. Our appetites must be made captive. We must have the power to say, "I will not. I won't do it." We must continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. One more passage before I am done. I am reading from the fourth chapter of Ephesians, verses 8-14. The Book says, "When he [Christ] ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God,

unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Now, friends, are you going to let a man come along with cunning craftiness and sleight of men deceive you? We have the New Testament revealed to us, and are you going to let him turn you away from the apostles' doctrine? Are you going to be tossed about by every wind of doctrine? Are you going to do that? I am not going to be persuaded that you are.

Let me ask you to come tonight and take your stand on the New Testament, be a Christian, and nothing but a Christian. Don't you want to be a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ? Don't you want to be a member of the church of the living God and be a member of nothing else? Are there those here who will come tonight? Remember, Agrippa said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." He was close to becoming a Christian, but not close enough. Don't you want to be a Christian? Don't you want to go to that city that lies foursquare, where pain and misery can never come, where there is not a tear to dim the eye? Won't you come and do the things that are written in this Book? Let Jesus Christ be the captain over you and his word your guide. Won't you hear his word, believe him, repent of your sins, confess his holy and adorable name, be baptized into him for the remission of your sins, and arise to walk in newness of life? If you have been a Christian, but you are not living as you ought to live, if you have wandered away, don't you want to come back to his church tonight? He says, "Confess your sins one to another, and pray ye one for another." Don't you want to come back? If there are those who are living in this community who wish to worship here, you are invited to come and identify yourselves as Christians and take your stand with this congregation to help them and let them help you. Let us stand and sing the song announced.

CONTINUING IN THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE

It has been indeed a delightfully pleasant association with you in these series of meetings, and I want to express my profound gratitude to those who have made it possible for my appearance

here and for those who have furnished an audience of listeners at every meeting both day and night. I wish also to express my deepest regret that I felt it incumbent to be absent this morning. You know duties never really conflict, but we felt under the circumstances that it would be no less than tragic not to make a certain visit that we made today where our dearest friends are under the cloud. We are looking forward to another occasion of this kind another year, if indeed in the kind providence of God we shall be permitted to live until then, and, as your speaker said, when we are dead, there will be plenty of ground unplowed, and we are trying to prepare young men and women to do it. We realize that the time is short now. "We must work the works of God while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4.) We are close enough now to see the end of life's trail. We can even see at times "beyond the sunset's radiant glow." At most it will not be many more cycles of the earth until we, too, shall have paid the debt that is laid down upon the hearts of all men.

Be that as it may, there is but one thing that concerns me, and I hope never to have my attention diverted from it. I hope I shall never be charmed by anything to such an extent that I would halt in the progress and march to the goal that is set before us. We are absorbed and concerned only with what God has said, with the word of the living God, and it is yet sufficiently full to supply every need of man and to give every ray of light that man needs to follow in the path that ever leads onward and upward until one day we can lean forever on the bosom of the Lord Jesus Christ and realize what it means to be "safe in the arms of Jesus," to be free from corroding care. There is but one point in all of God's word, if kept in mind, would keep us in the right always and would also lead us into the proper conduct individually and collectively. The whole Bible was written for that one thing: to teach us obedience to God. If we have learned that, we have learned everything else. If we know that and keep it in mind, it will be impossible for Satan, even with all his wiles, to ever lead us astray from the path of righteousness. I hope we shall not forget it. When we have learned obedience to God, we have learned everything. You may come to meditate on any portion of the Bible, and whatever part you might read, I hope you will

not forget the main purpose in all the pages of the book of God with its 1,189 chapters, 929 in the Old Testament and 260 in the New Testament, that every one of them was written for one thing: to teach man obedience to God. No, you cannot just at a certain time when you pray say, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." No wonder when Jesus came to pray in dark Gethsemane that night where the blood drops streamed from every pore of his skin like sweat that he said, "If it be possible. Father, take this cup away that I may drink it not; however, thy will be done." No wonder the apostle in writing of him said, "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father." (Phil. 2:8-11.)

I do not believe, friends, that we ought to allow anything to charm us, allure us, and tempt us, and get us away from that one point, obedience to God. I want to read a scripture which I think is in line with this thought: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where his voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." (Psalm 19:1-4). Look up tonight, when you go out, at the stars. Look at the harmony in them. Note the harmony in the twinkling stars as they move in their orbits in harmony with God's omnipotent purposes. If you go out and look up at the North Star, you see it where it will be tomorrow night and every night and where it has been all the time. It never advances because it is the will and desire of God that it stay where he placed it. It stays there because it is the will of God. That is the reason we have no discord there.

The reason we have discord, lack of harmony, disfellowship, and nonfellowship, backbiting, and devouring between brethren is that someone has disregarded God's will. If God's will were done on this earth, we would have indeed the same rhythm, beauty, concord, and charm as we see in the heavens. Wherever you see discord, then, the will of God is violated. I hope we will study and

think about it to this end. Then beauty, and concord, and fellowship, and power will be found in the brotherhood. We want human beings as different as they may be in makeup and disposition to be blended into one harmonious whole. That is to me one of the most wonderful things in the word of God.

I think, indeed, it would be hardly fair to leave our former investigation and studies just as we have approached them at the present moment. Last evening we talked about the beginning of the church. We went back to the earliest times to the very beginning of the church as it came to us from God through the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, we are turning to that chapter that records that story of the beginning of the church and the marvelous scenes enacted there. It is the memorial place, the memorial day of the church. It shows us the cost of the church, even the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and tells us about the first members of the church, the first people added to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think, indeed, it ought to challenge our attention because it has to do with the souls of men, that part of them that never dies. It is supremely interesting, profoundly interesting, to me because it deals with the most soul-searching subject that may be approached at all. It deals with the eternal destinies of men and women. We study the various incidents and accounts of the world from one standpoint or another for the purpose of our earthly pleasure or benefit, but whatever takes place here (pointing to the Bible) has to do with the eternal souls of men. It serves as a balm for every hurt, a panacea for every ill, a tonic for the sin-sick soul. It was written that we might be saved after a while, that we might live where the sun never goes down and where day never ends, in order that individuals might live forever in the land that is fairer than day.

Reading from that wonderful second chapter of Acts, again we have these words: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." That is found in Acts 2:41, 42. I want to talk to you a little about "continuing in the apostles' doctrine." Let me remind you, first of all, that there were added to the church that same day about three thousand souls, and we have also had the church

from that day until now. The church did not depart from the apostles' doctrine, and it is a fine example that the mother church left. They were a fine group of workmen, and after Christ went away, they took the work and carried it on, spreading the word of God to all the corners of the world. If folk had "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine," there would not be a faction or division in all the religious world. If religious people had observed that fact, there would be nothing of that kind in the world today—no divisions, no factions.

But somebody departed from it. People grew cold concerning it and left the original teaching. It is our purpose to restore the people and the church back to the original teaching, back to God, and back to the Bible. I think, indeed, that is the thing we need now above everything else in the world. We need to "continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." Now, I don't know how many that church had in its membership. The book does not say anything about the number in the original membership. Someone says there was not but one hundred twenty, but after reading the Bible more, there may have been more than that. Perhaps there were, for I find a suggestion of that when I read where Christ appeared to above five hundred brethren at one time after he was raised from the dead. (1 Cor. 15:6.) How many there were in the church then I do not know, but at the first preaching of the gospel in fact three thousand were added to the church, and the next time we have a sermon we have the number of men augmented to five thousand, but the spiritual work and opportunities became so momentous and powerful that in less than forty years the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ spread throughout the civilized world to such an extent that the Bible said that the gospel had gone out "to all the earth and his words to the ends of the world." (Rom. 10:18.) The gospel had been spread abroad, had been preached to every creature. Paul said, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister . . ." (Col. 1:23.) Now, that was done before the last of the apostles was dead, and there were more than six million Christians in the Roman Empire, all following in this thing we are talking about—the apostles' doctrine, the apostles' teaching. We

talk about bringing messages that are nice and appealing, but, friends, if we don't bring the message that Peter, James, and John brought to a perishing, dying world, that message should not be received. The gospel is the remedy that the world needs today. If the church would ever learn to get back to it, get back to the New Testament, back to New Testament teaching, back to the New Testament standard of conduct and worship and service, we will have the church as it used to be. If we would do that, we could move the world with the gospel. Why is it that we cannot get outside the corporate limits of a town the size of Nashville and beyond the borders of the state of Tennessee? Why not go all over the world? Why not "preach the gospel to every creature"? The early church did that in a remarkably short time, and they did not have telephones, nor telegraphs, nor airplanes, nor postal service to carry their letters. They did not have the smooth highways or the train to carry them about. They walked on the roads barefoot.

Friends, we ought to learn this lesson: we must get in the apostles' doctrine, and we must stay in it. Not only that, but we must stay out of everything else. That is what we need. That is the thing that will make us go again and cause the gospel of Christ to cover the earth. Yes, friends, that is what will cover the earth again with the light, power, and influence of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing else ever will do it.

When we talk about the apostles' doctrine, you know there are some people in the world who do not like it. They don't like the word "doctrine." They don't like "doctrinal sermons." Well, if you don't like the word "doctrine," just read the Revised Version, and you will never be bothered by it. It won't worry you again, because the word "doctrine" is not there. The word "teaching" is supplied in its stead in the Revised Version. But, now, a person who does not like "doctrinal" sermons certainly does not understand the Bible and what it teaches. They don't understand the meaning of doctrine. If you don't like doctrinal sermons, do you mean that you don't like certain policies of the Bible or certain things contained in it? Is that what you mean? If not, please tell me what do you mean, for the whole Bible is doctrine. The whole thing is doctrine. You cannot divide it up

and break it up into a duke's mixture and say one thing is doctrinal and another isn't. There is one Lord, one gospel, and one New Testament, and everything in it is doctrinal. Lots of times I hear writers and teachers and speakers and lecturers talk about the "teachings" of Christ. Why not speak in the language of the Bible? You never read that in the Bible in your life. The "teachings of Christ" is not mentioned in the Bible. All he did was to teach the same things that had been taught, and every other teacher taught the same thing; therefore, teachings and doctrines cannot divide the New Testament, for it is all doctrine.

Now, I want to tell you this. We have had many controversies, public and otherwise, some printed and some oral, on the question of church succession. You hear folk talk about it and endeavor to trace it from one standpoint of history or another. You have found men who, in an attempt to prove their idea, will lose themselves in the remotest bounds of antiquity. Some will even go back before the church started. The church began on the day of Pentecost almost two thousands years ago, and here I am a member of that church. It is here today. It is the apostolic church. It is the church of the New Testament. It is the church of which I am a member. If you trace a church back to its beginning and find that that church did not practice and preach those things that the Bible teaches, what is it worth? It ought to be evident that your search is worth nothing at all. If you find a church practicing things that the New Testament church did not practice, it has gotten off the line somewhere, and there is no question about it.

But we have the same Bible today, and that makes it possible for us to "continue steadfastly in the apostles' "doctrine." We can be members of the same church today, for we have the same book, the same doctrine. You can hear the Lord Jesus Christ giving his parables today and see the disciples as they came and went teaching and preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hear Christ telling them that the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while the men slept the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went away. A servant came and said, "Didn't we sow good seed in thy fields? from whence then hath it tares?" (Matt. 13:25-27.) Now, that would have been one of the finest opportunities in

the world for Christ to have said what some modern people say, but he didn't. Where did the tares come from? *Did they come from the good seed?* No. Well, where did this thing or that come from in religion? One man will tell you it came from the Bible, and another will say, "No, it didn't come from the Bible." The Bible is the good seed. The good seed is the word of God, and never a tare came from it. Whenever you find a tare, it came from somewhere else. It didn't come from the Bible. Whenever an error creeps in, an enemy has sowed tares among the good seed. Fathers and mothers, preachers, instructors, teachers in the classrooms have been indifferent and careless and irresponsible, and enemies have slipped in, and the result is that tares have been sowed among the good seed while they were asleep. The terrible thing about it is, they don't make an effort to check their growth until they have spread, and grown, and destroyed. Now, anybody can tell a Jimson weed from wheat, but it takes a close inspection to tell the difference before the plant grows up. That is the tragic thing about the tares, for they look so nearly like the original. Anybody can see false teaching after it has grown up and spread. Even a blind man can see that, but when it begins to creep in, it is so nearly like the original that we think it doesn't make any difference. When the fruits have grown and spread, then we can see that they don't belong to the Bible and are not a part of its doctrine. We can see, then, that it is not a part of the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ. When it is full grown, we can see that no apostles preached it, and the early church did not receive it or practice it. Finally, the harmful tares spread and spread until the church is nearly ruined, divided, and corrupted, and then we open our eyes and see it. That is why every Christian needs to keep his eyes open and keep the word of the living God before him and never lose sight of it. We need to open our eyes and open our ears and do the word of God, for we shall be blessed in doing the word of God.

But just a moment. There is a succession that I believe we may be able to find by careful examination, and it does not require any deep, profound study to make this discovery. That is finding the true doctrine. If I preach differently to Peter, then he is in one class and I am in another. If this church practices something the New Testament church did not practice, then it is different.

It is not the New Testament church, for the doctrine and the practice must be just alike. If it comes from something besides the New Testament, it is wrong, for the Book says that "the seed is the word of God." (Luke 8:11.) Take a sprig of grass and trace it down to the root, and you may find that it goes down two feet. Now, that is the story we want to get before you. The seed is the word of God, and if a man is a Christian, he is a member of the New Testament church. If a man has a doctrine that does not come from the word of God, if he is a member of a church that does and teaches things not taught in the word of God, he is not a member of the New Testament church, for those things did not come from the true seed, the word of God. Thus we have the seed, we have the word of God, and that is the only succession we need. The apostles received it from Christ, and the Holy Spirit was sent to guide them so they would make no mistake with it. They declared it and preached it and we have a record made of it.

I have had people ask me, Where did this come from, or where did that come from? Where did this organization come from? Where did that practice come from? Where did that doctrine come from? When I get questions like that, I don't waste much time about it. I take the New Testament, look at it very carefully, and it does not take long to find out whether or not it came from the New Testament. When I find it did not come from it, I throw the question away. I know it is wrong because it came from the wrong source. I know it is wrong because it didn't come from the right place. We need to teach everything that comes from the word of God. Find out whether or not it came from the seed, and, if so, we ought to be able to find it with very little trouble. The New Testament contains only two hundred sixty chapters, and it tells us all we need to know. It is the seed.

Now, there is another point I want to talk about. Peter talks of being "born again of incorruptible seed" (1 Pet. 1:23)—not corruptible, but incorruptible. I think the idea is that it is of incorruptible source. You can go out here and buy some Barred Rock eggs. You pick them up, and pay the price, and when they hatch out, you have Rhode Island Red chickens. What is the matter? The seed has been corrupted. Did you ever plant a field of corn, and when it produced it was red corn that you had? What

is the matter? The seed has been corrupted. Now, friends, we cannot mix the word of God and practice and teach things that the New Testament does not teach and still be pleasing to God. That is not obedience that people are supposed to render to him.

Now, that isn't all. The word of God never produced a one-half Christian or a one-fourth Christian. It never produced an octogenarian Christian. It never produced a 99/100th Christian. The word of God produces a Christian, a whole Christian, and it never produced anything else, and when some other teaching creeps in, the word of God steps out. There are people in the world who think we don't need to read the Bible. Sometimes preachers write articles in religious papers to draw the attention of the people away from it. Sometimes they use other methods to attract people. They don't captivate people by preaching the gospel, and the apostle says, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1:8)—let him be accursed. Let me tell you, friends, the church must get into the apostles doctrine and stay in it. That is what the early church did, and that is what Jehovah expects us to do. If the church is to be the church which Christ built, over which he is the head, his body, it must do this. There isn't any other way out.

But sometime, somebody departed from the doctrine and division came. Somebody said something he should not have said, and did something that he should not have done, and taught something he should not have taught, and caused people to depart from the doctrine. Indeed, friends, people ought to come to themselves like the prodigal son did and get up every movement, creed, and composition on earth, and if they are contrary to the apostles' doctrine, they need to be burned. They need to forget what I say about it and what someone else says about it and come back to the New Testament and find out what the apostles said.

The Book says that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." Listen, friends, we have lots of members of the church who will go along fine just as long as everything is nice and things look good, but when somebody rubs them the wrong way, they step out. They continued steadfastly as long as the sun was shining, but they stop when things go wrong. That is not the kind of person that God wants. He is not willing to sacrifice when the

cloud comes; he will go along as long as things run smoothly. -Now, I am not trying to abuse anybody. I don't want to hurt your feelings, but I do want to save your soul, and if that is necessary to save your soul, I am willing to do it. I could not love my fellow man enough if I were not willing to do it. You know that the man that God loveth, he chastises, but there never was a man chastised that it did not hurt. Yes, it hurts. Indeed, I have had experiences like that, and I fear sometimes that I did not get enough of it, and I am satisfied that I didn't, but at the same time it hurt. It hurts us. That is why it does us good. Why does God chastise? Is it to punish? No, it is for our good. Here is somebody I love, and he is doing something he shouldn't do. I love this person dearly, and when I see him doing things that mean his disgrace, what ought I to do? Should I think just because I love him so much that I can't do a thing about it because I am afraid I will hurt his feelings? No, if I love him dearly enough, I would warn him. If I love my daughter well enough, I would cut her down, I would do anything to save her. I would not love her if I did not. If I love a person as I should, I would do anything for his good.

Now, the Book says that the church "continued steadfastly." What does that mean? What does it mean to be steadfast? It means that they were not in and out like bees about the hive. When the sun shines brightly, they run among the clover, and when it is rainy, they are in the hive. Now, some folk are like that. When the sky is clear, they are out there in the dance halls, or swimming pools, or at the various places of amusement. You don't find them at the meeting of the Lord's people, but when the storms come, when sorrows assail, they will start coming to worship. They will call for the preacher then and have him to read the New Testament to them and pray for them. They will do that when the cloud is over them, but when the storm is past, when the trouble is gone, they are right out again. Now, that isn't what we are talking about. That isn't steadfastness. If you are going to be steadfast, get in and stay in. Now, that's what we are talking about—stay in it. Stay in the New Testament and stay out of everything else. That is being steadfast.

Now, we come to something else in the Bible that is perhaps too often overlooked by the careless reader: that is patience. You

sometimes hear folk say, "He is the most patient man I ever saw." What do you mean? A patient man is steadfast. He doesn't get discouraged and quit. He stays right in. That is patience. If you don't get returns the first day, just keep on. Do you know, friends, that is what we need today. You know we ought to think of old Noah. In that antediluvian world he preached approximately one hundred years, and he never made a convert. He went out every day and preached to the people and went back at night having nothing to show for his labor. Today a preacher goes out to hold a meeting, and if he preaches a week and somebody does not come and obey the gospel, we are ready to quit. The way to get people to obey the gospel is to stay right on the subject. Keep preaching the gospel to them. Preach it to them tonight and tomorrow and as long as you live. That is the way the early Christians did, and the gospel was spread over the world in a remarkably short period of time.

Now we find a passage of this kind. It reads like this: "Brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58.) Another one says: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.) Abide means to "dwell in," to "remain," It means to "stay in" Christ, "stay in" the New Testament, and "stay out" of everything else. Just continue on today and tomorrow, and don't be discouraged if you think you don't get results. Don't quit. You will never get results that way. Just keep right on. That's the way God wants us to do. That's the way the church did. The passage says, "He that abideth in the doctrine hath both the Father and the Son." Then the man that goes on has "both the Father and the Son," but when you leave the New Testament, you leave God. When you leave the New Testament you leave Christ. Now, what are you going to do without God? We may think we can make a joke of it, and we may think we can make a success without Christ and without God, but we can never do it. You must have God to walk with you, and talk with you, and aid you, and support you, and save you. If you abide in the truth, he abides in you. I am sure of that. I am sure that he will abide with us if we

"continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." Now, note that it says "doctrine"—not "doctrines." It is not plural. No. "s" is there. We have a way of adding it, making it plural, but the "s" makes a lot of difference. We ought to put it like the Book says it. It may hurt a bit, but maybe that is what we need. If it will help us any, let's do it, for it's the best thing for us. Thus, then, we have the doctrine of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, and when this is the case, we don't have the "s." It isn't written that way in the Bible. The preachers, and editors, and teachers, and educators, and publishers put it there, and when a man does that he has done something that he had no right to do. When he does that he has left himself open to severe criticism. He should be criticized when we come to think of it. Remember it, friends: there is such a thing as "doctrine" of the apostles, but not "doctrines." There were twelve of them at first, and then Paul after a while, but they did not have thirteen doctrines. I expect I could find thirteen different preachers in the churches in Nashville, and each one would be preaching a different doctrine, but they would not be the doctrine of the apostles. They would not be the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But then I read another passage which says, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9.) Now, that is where "doctrines" come in. Men have "doctrines." God doesn't have "doctrines." We cannot let it pass, friends, for there has never been a doctrine of men that ever saved any man. They are powerless to save men, for men are saved whenever they have done what God commands them to do, and what commands men to do is found in God's teaching, in God's Book. Whatever God commands is in the Bible.

Paul in writing to Timothy speaks of the doctrines of devils. Yes, the devil has a doctrine. He has a doctrine for everything, but I am interested in only one doctrine, the plain, old-fashioned doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ. The devil is afraid of that. It condemns him, but he can preach to you most any doctrine you want to hear. You know, friends, I found this out a good many years ago: if you want folk to think you are smart, find out what they want to do and tell them to go ahead and do it. They will think you are smart then. Preachers in the pulpits over the country are doing that sort of thing all the time. I would be

ashamed of myself if I should preach like that. Indeed, I don't think a man that would do that sort of thing should be called a man. That is just about the worst thing that I can imagine. A person who would not tell you honestly, fully, and sincerely what the Bible says ought not to be allowed to stand before you at all. I am not saying that just to criticize, but the souls of men are at stake. The devil finds out what men want to do and advises them to do it. Preachers will preach that way, and unless you read your Bible carefully and go by it, you may be deceived. Oh, the devil will not take an outright issue about it, but he will slip around and slide in and find what men like and put something in the Bible or take something out that will destroy its meaning. That is the doctrine of devils. The idea is to preach a doctrine that will suit everybody that has a peculiar notion. Now, a real gospel preacher doesn't do that. He will be compelled to take issue against it. He will be compelled to toe the mark and say what God says and let the truth of the Bible fall where it may.

I want to read another passage on that point. This is found in the letter to the Hebrews: "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." (Heb. 13:9.) Now, the devils have strange doctrines. There are many of them. There is no use now to go into details, but you would not recognize a strange doctrine if you had never seen or heard it before. Of course, that is not what it means. You know what a strange doctrine is. It is one that is not in the New Testament. If it isn't in the New Testament, it is a strange doctrine. What's the matter with a strange doctrine? Well, what was the matter with the strange fire that Nadab and Abihu offered to God? Fire is fire, isn't it? There was a strange fire, however, and Nadab and Abihu found that out. It is fire that came down from heaven and burned on that altar. Nadab and Abihu were smart enough to go outside and get some strange fire, and you know what happened to them. They were burned. They thought it wouldn't make any difference. The world ought to learn a lesson from that. Here (holding up the Bible) is the doctrine that came from heaven; the others did not. Here is the doctrine that came "from God; therefore we have to go to that. They had to go to the altar to ignite their sacrifice, and we must go to this, the New Testament. We must go to that not only to find the fire to ignite the sacrifices, but for the sacrifice

itself, and for everything that goes into it we have to go to this Book. I hope, friends, we shall be able to drive that lesson home. How many teachers and preachers and editors have been captivated by strange doctrines! Why don't men preach the doctrine of Christ? Why don't they stop putting in things and leaving things out? Why don't they learn where to stop? Friends, let's pray tonight that we may be able to look on our hearts so that when we come to the border line of earth we will have wisdom enough to stop on the side of ascertained truth.

There are lots of things to learn about the Bible. You know, the mind's eye is something like the physical eye. You can look out on the prairies out where I live and see where the earth and sky meet. That is the horizon. Of course, they do not really meet, but they seem to. You can go on and on, but you never find where they meet. Now, if you want to learn what is in the Bible, go on and learn it. If you want to grow, go on and grow, and there will still be things to learn. Thus we have the blessed statement: "The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (Prov. 4:18.)

Now, then, friends, here we are nearly two thousand years this side of Pentecost. The apostles who wrote this were guided by the Holy Spirit, and it is perfect; but look out at the cluttered-up channel of religion today. Look at the doctrines of men that are poisoning the stream of life. Let's look at it. Here we are nearly two thousand years this side of the apostles, and look at the condition that exists! What are we going to do about it? Are we going to throw up our hands and say, "What can I do? I have never been to college. I have no degree." I am going to tell you what to do. Pay no attention to the doctrines of uninspired men and go back to the apostles. Let Peter tell you what to do. Let John tell you what to do. Go to the Bible and read it. See what it says. You can understand it. You don't have to have somebody to read it to you and interpret it for you. If a man is out here surveying a tract of land in some of these barrens, he has to have an established corner, one that is not disputed, and then he could lift his Jacob's staff and throw a plumb line, and he can start out to work. The line has been established, but probably he got out there a couple of miles and lost his way. What will he do? Well, he looks about on the trees, and he finds a

knot on the side of one and decides that this is where it has already been surveyed. It is really where an old woodpecker was pecking a long time ago. That is the reason the knot is there. But what will the man do? He will go to a point that he knows is right, and then he will proceed. We need to get back to the New Testament. We need to get to a point that we know is 'right. We need to get back to God's word. That's what we need to do. There is a man down in the woods there chopping cross-ties. He gets hungry and thirsty. What is he going to do? He doesn't want to go hungry and thirsty all day. He wants water to drink, but what is he going to do? There is a stream about two miles up in the woods. He will follow a path that he knows will lead him to the stream. He will walk up there to the stream and drink of its crystalline waters and quench his thirst. But there is a stream that flows from the throne of God. It is free and limitless. It is as free now as it has ever been, and it is nearly two thousands years this side of the apostles. All who thirst are invited to come and drink of that stream. Theologies and dogmas and doctrines of people who have lived in times gone by have faltered and failed, but this can never fail, for it comes fresh from God. It comes from the Lord himself. It comes from the Lord Jesus Christ, and you can lift your cup and drink your draft of life, and then, indeed, we may be able to stand and to save our souls.

What are we going to do about it? Let me point this out to you. We read in the New Testament that from the time the church was established until the day the New Testament was finished and completed, they were looking forward to "that which is perfect." In the fourth chapter of Ephesians, it talks about the unity of faith, of full-grown men in Jesus Christ. Now the New Testament is done. It is perfect. Christ was perfect. The apostle says, "Henceforth, be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine and sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. 4:14.) Let me tell you, friends, we need to learn that; we are not children. Paul said, "When I became a man, I put away childish things." (1 Cor. 13:11.) We have got to the place where we are rather feeble. We don't recognize that we are men and women. When we become men and women in Christ, we

are not to be as children "tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine." If a man comes preaching something not in this Book, are you going to listen to him? Not if your ear is trained to this Book. If you will study it and meditate upon it as you should, you will not be led away by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness. If you see a man practicing legerdemain, or sleight of hand, and see him suddenly pull a rabbit or a hen from somewhere on the stage, you know that is sleight of hand. That is sleight of men, isn't it? Well, here is a man who takes the Bible and thwarts it, and twists it, and tears it, and pulls out theories and doctrines and things that the Bible does not mean to say. That's the sleight of men. They will take a passage of Scripture and twist it, and thwart it, and pull it out of its place and out of its setting and change the thought of it, and "by their cunning craftiness lie in wait to deceive." There are many theologians in this world who are doing that today. They are preaching things that are not genuine. They are not always what they seem. A long time ago I heard the story of a man who had lost his voice, and he had a drove of hogs, but he could not call the hogs to come at feeding time. He would take an ear of corn and knock on the rail for them. One day after that had been going on for a long time, two men were going through the woods lot and saw the drove of hogs going this way and that, and it attracted the attention of the stranger. He said to the other man: "Look at those hogs. What does it mean?" The man told him they thought it was feeding time, but it was only an old woodpecker knocking on a limb. Every time the woodpecker got on a stick they would run to him.

Friends, we need to trim our boughs until the theological woodpeckers are overthrown and we can hear clearly and listen to God. Pay little attention to men; listen to God. He has written his Book. Can't you read? It is a little Book. It doesn't take long to read it; and I tell you, friends, we ought to read it for ourselves. We ought to listen to God. God talks to us there, and we ought to listen to him, and we ought not let anybody get us off. We ought not let men deceive us, for God says, "By their cunning craftiness they lie in wait to deceive us."

We have talked too long. Thank you for your patience and for your close hearing. As I leave this final message of this meeting with you, I hope you will never forget it.

In closing, if there are those here who have never obeyed him, won't you do so now? If you refuse him, he will reject you at that day. Jesus Christ lived, died, and was raised for you, and he is even now touched with the feelings of your infirmities. He is interested in you. His great heart is touched by our pain.

If you are not a Christian, don't you want to be one? You are invited to come. If you are a child of God who has not lived right, don't you want to come back? Won't you start now and live right as long as God let's you live in this wonderful world? If you will come, you too are invited. Won't you come while we stand and sing the song that was announced?

THE BEGINNING

I will read just a few verses from the Bible tonight from the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke, beginning with verse 46: "Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, and ye are witnesses of these things."

These verses do not need a great deal of comment, or explanation, or embellishment. I do not think that I need to garnish them at all, as I have remarked at a previous service. I won't remark much about them other than the starting at Jerusalem. I would not waste fifteen minutes reading a book telling that it started from Rome, or Paris, or New York, as well as I like America and appreciate its wonderful things, because the Bible tells us that it began in Jerusalem. The church of the Lord had its beginning in Jerusalem, when all nations of the world up to that time were gathered there, and the gospel was preached only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. That's what Christ came to do—save—and he succeeded in this work, and for that reason no man could have been the founder and establisher of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the church became a reality in the world and a security of men, and the preaching is to be done to all the nations. Hence, every man that lives on the earth

accountable before God is on the same platform, with the same privileges, the same opportunities, the same rights. It was not always so, however. Under the former regime that was not true; but under the Christian dispensation, under the New Testament, that is so, and the Savior positively said that the church is to have its beginning at Jerusalem. It definitely started there.

It is also definitely stated that it did not begin and was not to begin and could not begin until Christ had been crucified, buried, and raised from the dead. That brings us to the time after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ when by the working of the mighty power of God he lifted his head from the night of death upon which he had slept. The preaching of the gospel among all nations could not have preceded the resurrection of the crucified Lord, but sometime thereafter this opportunity was given, and Jerusalem is the place. Now, there are other passages besides the one I have read tonight which prove that the church had its beginning in Jerusalem. In the eleventh chapter of Acts, Peter is at the house of Cornelius, and he said, "As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us *at the beginning*," at Pentecost. Thus Jerusalem is the focal point. Therefore, when one looks forward, he meets the fulfillment; the one who looks backward has a reality upon which to lean. All this occurred in connection with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, and that occurred, as everybody knows and as it is related in the Bible, in the city of Jerusalem, and it was on the day of Pentecost, a record of which you will find in the second chapter of Acts.

"Now when the day of Pentecost was fully come, and they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." Here we have the beginning. There are many institutions in the world, wonderful institutions that deserve our finest comments. There are a number of institutions that refer to the development of the human mind, to educating men that they might be splendid citizens in a great country like ours, that they might follow certain trades and study certain courses that they might be scientists or

geologists or whatever else they want to be; but we are not talking about the beginning of institutions of that kind. We are not talking about the beginning of an institution that has to do with the care of the infirm and feeble or with the sick and crippled. We are talking about an institution that has to do with souls of men that never die that had its beginning at Jerusalem. It is the mightiest institution of all, and there has never been one like it. There has never been one comparable to it, and there never can be one. There are wonderful institutions of mercy on this earth. There are institutions that can pick up an orphan child and feed him and care for him until he comes to manhood. They can teach him to be a good citizen in a great country like ours and lend a hand to carry on the affairs of the world. They do a great deal of good, no doubt; but the institution we are talking about tonight has to do with that part of man that never grows old, that won't die, and lives on when the worlds have burned out in their orb, that will live on when the sun goes down for the last time, and the stars from heaven fall, and all the elements shall have been dissolved. This institution will still stand for that for which it was established, in order that man's souls might be purified and brought back to God that they might live forever, eat of the ambrosial fruits forever, drink of the limpid, crystalline waters of the river of life, that they might live on plains of ether where the sun never goes down, not for a year, not for a day, but forever. I hope, indeed, friends, you will understand the importance of that institution about which we are talking.

We read a prophetic utterance about it now which says this: "In the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it." (Isa. 2:2.) We are told by those who have made a study of the figures and symbolism of the Bible that the hills and mountains refer ordinarily and usually to governments of one kind or another. God's house was to be established in the top of the mountains, established above the hills. Every other institution on earth pales into insignificance when compared to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is as far above the governments of the world as the mountains are above the folk in the valley. All other institutions when compared to the church of the Lord Jesus

Christ are but pigmy institutions of power and usefulness. It lifts its head above everything, over the biggest governments of earth and over the smallest hills. It would be a fine thing for us to sit down and try to cultivate the value of the church and what it means to us now.

Let me say this: You have heard folk talk about the church not being worth much, that people can be saved without it as well as with it; but if you want to find the value of the church, calculate its value by the price paid for it. Listen to Paul talk. He said: "Christ also loved the church; and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:25-27.) Now, if you can tell me what Jesus Christ is worth to your soul, I can tell you exactly what the church is worth to your soul. My Exemplar, my Saviour, my Lord loved it so much that he didn't even have any mental reservations pertaining to it. He gave himself body and soul, all for the church, and whatever he is worth to you the church is worth.

Another passage in the Bible tells us in Acts 20:28 that he "purchased it with his own blood." Can you tell me the power of his blood? Can you tell me what its efficacy and its virtue are worth? If you can tell me what the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is worth to you, then I can tell you what the church is worth. Now, that is what I am talking about—the church, its beginning, where, when, and how it carries on its work on earth. I think they are ponderous questions, mighty questions, captivating and soul-searching, and deserve all the interest we can command. I learned when I was a boy in school that when you paid a certain price for an article it is legal and lawful for you to expect that article to be worth as much as the price paid for it. The church of Jesus Christ is worth as much as his blood is worth to you. I tell you, friends, we need to revise our way of thinking about the church. It is a wonder to me that the church has survived after such a spirit of indifference and carelessness, but in spite of that the church still survives and still reaches out to men and women; but Christ said that he would build the church and the gates of Hades should not prevail against it, and it still stands

for folk today to receive its benefits. God is over it! Jesus Christ is head of it. It was born of the prolific womb of the love of God.

I want to suggest that the fact that not only was its beginning in Jerusalem, but the apostles were sent to bear witness. Not only that, but the Book says that the gospel is to be preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Prophetic utterances tell us that it is to be established in the highest mountain, and "all nations shall flow unto it."

In the first dispensation there was the family religion; in the second, a national religion; and in the third dispensation, the Christian dispensation, Jesus Christ is the king, and the gospel is for all the world. Jesus Christ is the king. He is the law. He is our high priest. The church is his kingdom, and it is international. The color of the face and the brogue of the tongue have nothing to do with it, and the men and women who hear the gospel, believe it, and obey it are born into the family of God, become members of the church of the living God, "the pillar and support of the truth."

But that is not all. I want to read you a few passages of Scripture tonight. Back in the very beginning in the Garden of Eden at the transgression when leaf by leaf the roses fell and drop by drop the springs ran dry, when man did that which God forbade him to do, hear Jehovah say, "The seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head." (Gen. 3:15.) Look down through the ages, and somewhere, sometime in the history of human affairs, that thing about which he is talking is brought about. The purpose is to bruise the serpent's head. Whether you call that a promise, or intimation, or whatever you call it, the seed of woman is to do it. Time rolled on, and Abraham was called out from Ur of the Chaldees when seventy, and thirty years later Isaac was born. Abraham had been promised that in his seed all the families of earth should be blessed, and finally we come to that seed which is Jesus Christ. I am trying to get this before you so you can understand it. The seed of woman, in its final analysis, when mixed together, shaken down, boiled and simmered down to its real meaning, is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the body over which he is the head and of which every Christian is a member; and if the serpent's head is ever bruised, the church will have to do it.

I want to stop long enough to say another thing; You hear people talk and abusing womankind, saying, "We would not have to work if she had not taken the forbidden fruit, then ate it and brought disgrace, disappointment, destruction, and harm to every creature until there is not a baby born in the world that its first breath is not drawn with a scream." Listen: There is another side to it. "The seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head." The Lord Jesus Christ was born of woman. Man had nothing to do with it. The world's Redeemer was born of woman. She brought our hope into the world, and Christ gave his life to save us. He bought the church with his own blood. It is his body. "There is one body, the church." (Eph. 4:4.) Christ is the head of it. Every Christian is a member. Now, in the future, I hope we will learn to look on both sides of the matter before passing judgment.

Observe the New Testament talking again: "If you are Christ's, you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) If a person becomes a Christian, he is the seed of Abraham. Christ is the seed of Abraham; and if a man is a Christian, he is in Christ, in his body, and his body is his church.

"The seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Now God said that. We have repeated his promise to Abraham that Isaac should be born unto him and through his seed all nations should be blessed, and finally Jesus Christ was born in the city of David, born of Mary, and next we have the church, the spiritual body of Christ, the body over which he is the head, and I want to remark just here that Christ is not divided. When the church is divided, then Christ is divided. When his body is divided, then you divide Christ.

I want to turn your attention just a little now to a group of passages in the New Testament. For instance, when John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," you could not read that without understanding that something is approaching that is not as far away as it used to be. You look forward to the time and place and day when this thing is becoming a reality. We have the church in purpose, in promise, in prophecy, in preparation, and last, in fact. John the Baptist preached to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He said, "The kingdom is at hand." (Matt. 3:

2.) Then, when Christ came, when his disciples were grouped by his side and said, "Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples," Christ said, "Thy kingdom come." (Matt. 6:10.) He said, "You pray in this manner and in this fashion, Thy kingdom come." Friends, if the kingdom had already come, Christ would not have said to pray like that. Indeed, friends, John preached that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and Jesus told his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." The twelve preached the same sort of thing, and the seventy preached the same sort of thing among the Israelites, among the lost sheep of the house of Israel. They looked forward to the time when the kingdom should come and this movement should have its beginning in the city of Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost after Christ was raised from the dead. We find another passage along that line. Jesus talking to his disciples said, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32.) This points unto that kingdom that was promised, where men could eat and drink, and the apostles sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

But listen, at the cross after Christ was dead, Joseph of Arimathea, who begged the body of Jesus, is also said to have "waited for the kingdom of God." (Luke 23 :51.) After Jesus was raised from the dead, after Christ had been with the apostles forty days, he told them not to draw nigh to Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father. I want to emphasize that. They said, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" I am reading this to you that you may see their trend of thought. I like to think of it like a funnel. Some look forward, and others look backward, and it makes a focus at a certain place. At a certain place appointed and at a certain time the church was to be established. There are texts that very strongly make that suggestion. Take another passage. Jesus Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." (Matt. 16:18.) Think of it just a little. "*I will build*," he said.

Suppose a man came to you arguing that John the Baptist established the church. Pay no mind to him. "Will build" means later he will build the church. There will be a change in worship. He is going to build the church. It is to be done later in that case. John could not build it because he had his head cut off a

long time before these words were uttered. Jesus Christ said, "I will build my church," after John was dead. Certainly, then, he could not have built the church before his death. We ought to understand that point.

But that is not all. There is another point to which I would call your attention. You hear folk talk about reading the Bible, and one sees something one way, and another another way, and another another, and that all those various things came from the Bible. They all came from the same source, but folk tell you what *they* think about it all. They tell you their thoughts; so these things, then, come from the people themselves. They are not from the Bible. They tell you that we cannot see things alike, and that one church is as good as another. That isn't what the Bible tells us. None of those things come from the word of God. If it did, we could find it there; therefore, when we come to a study of the matter, indeed, this trend of passages leads us to one place—Jerusalem.

Did you note how every one of those passages stopped at the same point, at the same place, and on the same day, and at the same time. Note the reading of the text. Note how it is associated with the various passages. It says that the church began at Jerusalem, and you know Peter preached there that day. He told them to "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38.) It was there that the preaching of the gospel for repentance and remission of sins began to be preached, and all nations were witnesses of those things.

Then note that another passage said, "The Holy Ghost fell on them as it fell on us at the beginning." There Peter is looking back to Jerusalem—the beginning. Jerusalem was the place it began, and Pentecost was the time; therefore, the first sermon preached without regard to nationality, to all the world, was preached that day. When the Great Commission was given, Christ told the apostles to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15.) He told them to "Go teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19.) I am reading these

passages to show you that Jerusalem is the place that the church began, and Pentecost is the time this thing happened to come into existence.

I read another passage on that point, and see how all these things are associated. I am reading Acts 1:8: "After that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, you shall be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." I challenge your attention to this point very carefully. The apostles never became witnesses until they had received power from on high. They never became witnesses of Christ until they had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. All that happened on the day of Pentecost. That is when the preaching of the gospel began and the apostles were to bear witness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Along this line I want to read another passage in Mark the ninth chapter and the first verse: "There are some standing here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Reading again Acts 1:8: "After the Holy Ghost is come [that is, after the power comes], you shall be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Now note: one passage said "after the power comes," and another said "after the Holy Ghost comes." The other says the "kingdom." Now, the power came at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit fell on them at Pentecost. The kingdom came on Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem.

Now, that is the story of the church. It began at Jerusalem, and the Holy Spirit fell upon them then, for Peter said at Jerusalem, concerning the conversion of the house of Cornelius, that "it fell on them *as it fell upon us at the beginning.*" (Acts 11:15.) Now I suggest that these passages ought to be sufficient to clear up this question, and you ought not to have a great deal of trouble arriving at the answer.

Somebody wants to know why we talk about these things. If a person does not know when the kingdom of God was set up, he will have a great deal of trouble finding out how to become a member of the church, a member of the kingdom of God. Listen to the statement that was made about the day of Pentecost: "God added to the church such as were being saved." (Acts 2:47.)

You do not find where that was said before the day of Pentecost. "I will build my church," Christ said. Now, it is said that "God added to the church such as were being saved." (Acts 2:47.)

Listen further now. Let's turn just a little farther into the thought of the apostles and hear them talking: "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we can serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (Heb. 12:28.) Other passages look forward, on and on, to the future, and when you pass this point, then, they look back. We read that people are "added to the church." They "received a kingdom that cannot be moved." They are "translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son." (Col. 1:18.) Therefore, passage after passage may be produced to show when the church was established.

There is another remark to which your attention is invited. That is this remark: the writer said that the Lord "blotted out the law, which was against us and contrary to us, nailing it to his cross." (Col. 2:14.) I heard a man preaching a sermon not a great while ago, and he was driving his points quite solidly home, and he said, "The law was a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." The law was not a schoolmaster to the Gentiles because they were never under it. It could not have been their schoolmaster unless they went to school to it. When thinking of the Jews, however, they were under the law. It was their schoolmaster. They were under the law until faith came.

Again we find that Jesus Christ came to take the law out of the way, "which was contrary to us." (Rom. 8:3.) "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh." That's the way the Book talks about it. It says that Christ took the law out of the way. In Hebrews, the writer tells us that he took the first covenant away that he might establish the second. If he was not talking about that when he said, "No man puts new wine into old bottles, or puts new cloth into an old garment" (Matt. 9:17). I don't know what he meant. The old covenant has to be eliminated and done away until there is not a fragment left of the old law before the new can take its place.

We sometimes hear brethren talk about part of the old law being brought over into the new law. Friends, there is not a bit

of it brought over. The whole thing was done away, and the new order was made new from top to bottom, from center to circumference. It is all new. When we come to think of the law of Moses, it must be removed before the new law can be put into force. It was removed. The old law was removed after Christ died, and here is the New Testament. Christ could not accomplish the task of giving a new law without taking away the old. The old law had to be removed first.

I called your attention last night to another verse, and we are inviting your attention to it again tonight. That passage says, "The priesthood being changed, there was also made of necessity a change of law." (Heb. 7:12.) That is, when there was a change in priesthood, there had to be a change in judgment, a change in law. Christ came, then, to become a high priest after the order of Melchisedek. Now that is the priesthood that lasts forever; as long as Christ is priest his law is to carry on.

When did Christ become a priest? While on the earth? The Book says positively "No." The Book says that he was not of the right tribe. If he was a high priest while on the earth, he had to be of a certain house, the family of Aaron. When Jesus Christ came to be high priest, it was after he had died and shed his blood. Then he went to heaven and became the high priest of God. He made an offering for our sins once and for all. That is the statement, and I hope we will not fail to get it. The priesthood and the law of Jesus Christ did not begin until he had ascended into heaven forty days after this and ten days after he had ascended and sent the Holy Spirit down to the apostles that he might embrace them and that they might speak without error the unsearchable riches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second chapter of Acts is the chapter; Jerusalem is the place where the church had its beginning; and Pentecost is the time, on the fifty-third day after Jesus Christ was crucified and raised from the dead. It was on the fiftieth day after Christ was raised from the dead. We have a picture of all that in the Old Testament. When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, we can see them at the feet of Sinai to receive the law. It began on the morrow of the seventh Sabbath, and that is the day of Pentecost, after the harvest is finished and garnered and the wheat threshed. Now, that began on the day of Pentecost, and the

church began on the day of Pentecost, on the fiftieth day after Christ was raised from the dead, on the morrow after the Sabbath. Seven times seven make forty-nine, and the first day of the week is the fiftieth day. On that day the New Testament church came into existence. We have it starting out on a worldwide mission in saving the souls of men, to recover and redeem them and bring them back to God. Now, that is the story of the church.

I want to suggest to you that the church had to have a foundation before it could be built. You cannot build a house by putting on the top first. You must begin at the foundation and come up. There are a very few people in the world who ever give the proper respect to the builder of the foundation on which a structure stands, because the foundation has to be good. They pay no mind to the man who rolls the wheelbarrow and digs and spades the ground. All that is necessary. It must be done, but do you know, people pay little attention to that? It doesn't attract, yet it is necessary. There is not a building in this town or in the world that is any more secure than the foundation which maintains it and upon which it stands. There isn't a building that is any more secure than the foundation that stands under it. We wait until the walls are up and a fellow with a white cap and suit and a little paint and brush comes along, and he puts a little paint here and a little there, and gives a high light here and one there, and we talk about what a wonderful artist he is, and we never say a word about the man that dug the foundation and poured the concrete and built the walls, and the whole thing depends on him.

Now we have the foundation of the church. The Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation. In Isaiah God said, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." (Isa. 28:16.) Jesus Christ, born of woman, came and lived in the flesh, and he was tried in every possible way, yet without sin. He came out without the least bit of tarnish on his escutcheon. There was not a thing in the world to be found wrong with him. "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4:15.) He suffered hardships ; he slept on cold stones for a pillow; he was reduced to need and penury, and subjected to want, and he said, "The foxes have

holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. 8:20.) Then, in addition to that, see him praying in dark Gethsemane with drops of blood running from the pores of his skin like sweat, and then hear him say, "Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from me, never-the less not my will but thine be done." (Matt. 26:42.) Thus he went to the cross and carried my sins with him there. He lived as nobody ever lived, a life of purity and truth. He never punished his enemies nor rewarded his friends. When he was arrested and brought to trial, he opened not his mouth. He spake as never man spake before. His life was a benediction. For the people who look at his life, it is the model for all circumstances.

Sometime ago I read a book stressing just the point about which I am talking. The title was, "What Would Jesus Do?" I wish we could learn to do just what Jesus would do in all circumstances, and if I read his word sufficiently, I can learn that. I wish I could learn to speak as he spoke. When he spoke, he spoke so eloquently, more eloquently than anyone. He had the word on the tip of his tongue. He could express himself well with no effort on his part. See him stand there and with his finger touch the dumb tongue and make the dumb to speak. See him make the deaf to hear. See him heal the lame limb and the lameness is gone. See him open the eyes of the blind. See him raise the dead. He lived as no man ever lived before. In the language of the prophet, "The desert was made to rejoice and blossom as a rose." (Isa. 35:1.) Thus working his wonderful and marvelous miracles in the brightest days of the world's history, in the open sunlight, before his most virulent enemies, accused and persecuted, he is our Exemplar, our Lord, our King, our Priest, our Prophet.

Still that is not enough! They brought him to trial. They tried him and killed him. On the morning of the day they crucified him, they cried, "If he is what he claims to be, let him come down from the cross." When he was dead, they took him down and put him in a tomb, sealed with the seal of the government, with an extra guard of soldiers to make sure he is not taken away. On the morning of the third day he lifted his head from the lap of the night of death on which he had slept for three days, and God's angels came down and rolled back the stone which

guarded his tomb, and Jesus lived again. Now, that is the supreme test. If that were not true, then our faith, our hope, and our preaching would be nothing, and we would of all men be the most pitiable. I wonder sometimes how we look at it, what we think about it. I wonder if we think of him as the foundation of our faith, if we have learned that in and through him every child of God who lives now lives because the Son of Man arose from the dead and built a spiritual house for our salvation. God selected him; man rejected him, but "the stone that the builders rejected became head of the corner." (Matt. 21:42.) The foundation was Jesus Christ himself. Jesus Christ himself was the chief corner stone, but he was not the foundation of the church until after he was raised from the dead. That is the supreme test and pivotal point on which the Bible rests. If that is not so, the Bible is worth nothing, and the smoking altars were all in vain. If Christ was not raised from the dead, we would know our faith is in vain. If Christ was not raised from the dead, our faith is worth nothing at all. He arose from the tomb. If that fact were not true, the Bible would be worth nothing. No law would be worth anything. The Old Testament and the New Testament would go down with it.

Mark you, friends, the Book tells us he ascended to heaven. The first chapter of Ephesians says that "he is head over all things to the church, which is his body." (Eph. 1:23.) Think of it a minute, friends. If the church existed before Christ ascended to heaven, it was without a head. That is what the Book says. He is head of it, and the church is not to rebel against his authority. It is to do whatever he says, go wherever he leads. Every Christian is a member of that body over which Christ is the head. The church has a perfect head. You know if anything goes wrong with the head, the whole body is out of order. The whole body ceases to be in harmony. Christ is head over the church. If his law is followed, there will be no factions and divisions, and indeed factions exist because men have done and said things they ought not ever to say.

These passages are all centered around a certain thing and lead you to the same point, but now I want to call your attention to another fact: the beginning of the church and the beginning of the reign of Christ come at the same time. The second chapter of

Acts is the chapter, and the day of Pentecost is the time. On this day the foundation was laid. If people think that the church has to change, as we sometimes hear folk talk, then the head has to be changed. I want to ask you, friends, if the head needs to be changed, and if the foundation needs to be changed? You know that if the head is changed the foundation has to be changed, for doesn't the church have the same head and the same foundation. Therefore, if any change needs to be made, where will you make it? The New Testament is like it used to be. The church is the church of yesterday, today, tomorrow, and forever. It is for today, yesterday, and tomorrow. It always will be the church on which we lean and in which we can rest even when we pass through the deep river and shadow of death.

Christ said he would build a church and the gates of Hades should not prevail against it. Note, further in the second chapter of Acts, verses 31-35, this scripture: "He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses; therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted and having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear, for -David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my God, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool." He is to sit there until his enemies are made his footstool. That is his object. He is going to stay there until his enemy becomes his footstool.

Now listen a minute. There is another thing I want you to note. When he was exalted at the right hand of God, it is said that "he shall put all enemies under his feet." Now hear him say, "having received the promise of the Holy Spirit." That is not what the apostles received. It is the promise of the Holy Spirit made to David that his seed should be raised to sit on the throne, and Christ is going to reign until his last enemy is made his footstool. Reading the first chapter of Hebrews, verse 13, it says, "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool"? The Scripture says with reference to Christ in the one hundred tenth Psalm and the first verse, "The Lord said unto my lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Now, that is a

prophetic utterance concerning Christ. Then, coming to Hebrews the tenth chapter and the twelfth and thirteenth verses, we find this, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." If we are not careful in reading, we are sometimes likely to miss the meaning of this. He offered one sacrifice for sin forever, and then what? He is sitting by the right hand of the Majesty on high till his foes shall be made the footstool of his feet. The fact that he made one sacrifice forever, never to be repeated, rose from the dead, sat down at the right hand of God from then until his foes shall be made the footstool of his feet, ought to indeed challenge our attention.

Reading again in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, verses 22-25, the apostle tells us this: "For as in Adam all die, even *so* in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming; then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power, for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." Think of it, friends. Here is the beginning of the church on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem, and the gospel is preached among all nations. The church is not to be restricted in membership. The brogue of the tongue and the color of the skin have nothing to do with it. Christ begins his reign, and he is going to sit and reign until his foes are made his footstool. Then this passage tells us, "then cometh the end." There is an end, then, as well as a beginning.

Reading in Acts, this kind of statement is made: "And he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoke by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:21.) Christ lived, died, was buried, and arose, and went to heaven, and he will be retained there until the "restoration of all things," and that necessarily limits his going to stay there. He is going to stay there until the church bruises the serpent's head. The Scriptures said that the seed of woman should do that, and Jesus Christ is the seed, and the church is his body. The church began on the day of Pentecost, and it is to carry on until Jesus comes, then comes the end. Then is the

time when he is to deliver his kingdom to the Father. "Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." Listen now, "For he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet." What is the difference? He will sit there until he has done this. Heaven must receive him when that is done. He will sit there and reign until the end, and heaven will retain him. What is the difference? Just words expressing the same thought.

Jesus Christ began his reign on the day of Pentecost, and he is continuing to reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. He will continue to reign until the times of the restoration of all things. He will reign until the last enemy be destroyed, and this last enemy is death. That is the end, then, of Christ's reign. Yet we sing, "We'll reign with him through endless days and forevermore." No, friends, we are wrong. Christ is going to reign until he has put the last enemy under his feet and then he abdicates the throne and turns the kingdom back to his Father. He will reign until the last enemy that slips into your home and mine, into your family and mine, and takes your life and mine is conquered. He will reign until death is conquered.

But now we don't know what tomorrow may bring to us. There may be no smile tomorrow on our faces. Tomorrow they may be washed away by floods of tears. Death is an awful enemy. We don't know when it is coming. Think of it, friends. We don't know when we will see the sun of our lives go down and sink behind the western horizon.

But there is another side to this thing that we call death. It may take us into the arms of the Lord where we may be lulled to sleep on his bosom, into that sleep from which none ever waken. Now just a minute! Let us look back yonder at the beginning. There was a man made from the dust of the earth, and a woman was made from his rib. There is a wonderful couple. They know nothing of childhood and of human growth and development. God planted a garden eastward in Eden and he made every fruit to grow there for them to enjoy, but there was one tree that they were forbidden to eat the fruit thereof. They were forbidden to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Look at that couple there in the garden. See the tempter come and say, "This is your

home?" "Yes," they say. "And you are to have the enjoyment of the fruit of all the trees?" "Yes, all the trees except one, and we cannot touch that, because God says that when we do we shall surely die." The tempter told them that they should not die, deceived them, and they did not take the counsel of God. They listened to the tempter, and he told them they wouldn't die. They touched the tree, ate of it, and leaf by leaf the roses fell. Drop by drop the springs went dry. The tree of life is gone. The garden is gone. Their pleasures and joys are gone. Deeper and darker they go until finally we come to the close of the New Testament, and once more we see the tree of life come back, and we see the garden of God and the paradise of God, where we are destined to go if we are true to him, if we are true to his church, and if we are true to Christianity. We are called there by reason of death.

But enough for tonight. Are you willing to pick up the frayed, broken fragments of your broken, ruined life and bring them back to where life used to be before sin came into the world? That is our hope. Are you willing to pray, and labor, and wait until one of these days when we will take our flight to mansions in the sky from the highest peak of the mountain of faith, so that God will wipe away all tears from our eyes? Are you willing to acknowledge Christ before the world, live for him, die for him, and finally read your titles clear to mansions in the skies?

I have spoken too long, but I want to point out this fact to you: Christ is calling for us. He wants us to give our strength, wisdom, and power in working for him. He wants to take you under his wing as a hen would gather her chicks under her wing. He beckons you come. He wants to protect you as a child, to take you under his wing and keep you when the rain is spattering against the window panes. He wants to protect you when the dark clouds enshroud. Hear him say to Jerusalem, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" He wanted to protect them from the rain and the storm, but "they would not."

If there are those here who have never obeyed the gospel of the Son of God, won't you do it tonight? If you have obeyed him

and have not lived right, won't you come back to him and say, "Lord, I give you my soul, my body, my all to live for you from now on to the end of my life? Won't you come while we stand together and sing?"

IN CHRIST

We read tonight a group of verses from the second chapter of the book of Colossians, beginning with verse 8, and to this reading your most careful and undivided attention is invited.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that were against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances. (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using:) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom

in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."

In view of this reading, it seems to me that a compromise of God's word is impossible. It appears to me at the present time in which we live the greatest effort that is being made in relation to securing peace and to unifying the race of man is in compromise of God's word. The efforts being made are in compromise with the truth of Almighty God. I presume that there is not a man living tonight that desires peace more than your speaker, but I cannot say that I want peace that badly. In fact, I would not have it upon those conditions. I believe, therefore, that the people of God should be a militant people. I believe that we should be at peace only when we have fought against error and won our conflict. We can have peace with God on his own terms. We can have peace with anyone if we take it on their terms. We can have peace with Satan if we take it on his terms. Therefore, it is not a question of peace. We may have peace, however, upon the terms of the gospel and upon the truth of God.

There is a danger that a man be spoiled evidently, or else this language is meaningless. Not only will a man be spoiled apparently, but men will spoil him through "philosophy, and vain deceit, and the traditions of men." It appears that the greatest danger that confronts us lies in the suggestion made: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." A man may advance his theories and his philosophy about the Bible, about the things of the Bible, about God, about salvation; he may speak as long as he wishes about them, and when he sits down, he has not accomplished a thing. There is not but one thing that counts, just one thing that shall be considered, and that is "that which is written," that which God has said, that which God has reduced to writing and made permanent. You sometimes hear people talking this way: "If we could hear God talk to us directly as he used to talk to people, then we could do better." I don't believe it. You have heard people talk about spoken language being better than written language. There is not a person in my hearing tonight who would talk that way about a business deal. If you were going to invest money in a piece of property, you would have it put down in writing. You would

have it properly recorded, so there would be no question about it in the future; and if ever any question comes up about the title to it, who are the heirs, then you refer to the records. They will tell you the history of that piece of property. Then and there the question is settled. So, then, there is nothing comparable to the written word. Whatever the Book says, that ends it. We can come to it and settle any question. My guess amounts to nothing, but it will go as far as yours. What I think about it, or what anybody else thinks about it, amounts to absolutely nothing. The only thing that matters is what God thinks about it—not my theories; not your theories; not anyone's thinkso. Besides that, it is useless for me to come on this rostrum and preach anything beyond that which is written. I believe that old Balaam, apostate that he was, wicked as he was, yet possibly combined with some degree of prophecy, understood this, for he said, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more." (Num. 22:18.) He could not go beyond God's word; he could not do less than God's word commands. I cannot say anything that God's word does not say. I can preach the word only as God has said preach it. I can preach the word of God only according to the Word. I cannot go further than that, but we must go that far. When we read that men may "by philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world" spoil you, you ought to heed that warning. They seduce even the children of God. We are more fortunate than any people that ever lived since the New Testament was completed. We have the Bible. We have both the Old Testament and the New Testament. It doesn't cost much. No one need be deceived, for we have the full truth. Any human being can read it.

When the Bible says, "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:10), it no doubt means the New Testament is to supersede the Old. We are to follow the perfect law. Paul says to the church at Ephesus, ". . . Henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. 4:14.) There are men who are jugglers with the word of God, They can take passages and make them appear

to be what they are not, and make them seemingly prove what they do not mean to say; and they can make their application look reasonable. There are people who are likely to be deceived, and against this the apostle uses very strong terms. "Beware lest any man spoil you." If you go clown the highway and see signs stating, "Slow, Danger," you know that you must beware. When you read the word of the living God, which deals with your salvation and with your home in heaven, don't you think we should beware? The apostle says to "beware lest any man spoil you." God cannot use a spoiled person in his service. We should beware of false theories and doctrines and philosophies which are said to spoil men.

Last evening we called your attention to the fact that the blood of Jesus Christ is in the New Testament. The blood of Jesus Christ is in his church, the church of the living God. I mentioned that what it takes to get into the New Testament, it takes to be in his church. When a man is redeemed from sin, washed in his precious blood, he is, therefore, a member of the family of God, for the church was purchased with his blood. We read tonight, having been washed, about the danger of being spoiled by philosophy and vain deceit. We ought to take heed, for the passage says that "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Don't let man becloud the issue for you. "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made with hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." There could not be but one circumcision made without hands, being the circumcision of Christ that the body of sin might be cut off. Sin must be brought out. We must be saved from it. We must be saved from sin; we must have salvation from our sins; we must have remission of our sins. Sin must be cut off, and here it is called the circumcision of sin. Then sin is cut off. We are saved from the sins of the flesh. This is possible only in Christ, and not out of Christ.

Now, we read a passage from the Galatian letter: "We are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:26.) A person cannot be a child of God out of Christ. A person out of Christ is not a child of God. We are inside the body of Christ

if we are children of God. How do we get into Christ? The Bible tells us that "as many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27.) Since the blood of Christ is the only thing that will save us from sin, cut sins off, cast them away, pardon our sins, cleanse us from sin, you have to get in the blood of Christ before we can be saved. That blood is in Jesus Christ, and you are baptized into Jesus Christ. Then you are a child of God; you are in Christ. Then the apostle tells us that "there is one body." (Eph. 4:4.) He tells us Christ is "head over the church, which is his body." (Eph. 1:22.) If you are in one, you are in the other. If you are in Christ, you are in his church. You are a member of his body, his church, which was purchased with his blood. Everyone who becomes a member of his church is added to his body. Whatever it takes to make a Christian, it takes to make a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are to be in Christ. You could observe from the reading that "the fulness of the godhead bodily is in Christ." You cannot be in Christ without being a child of God. "We are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The Bible tells us that "as many of us as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Therefore, any unbaptized person is uncircumcised, and he does not know any of the "fulness of the godhead bodily." He is out of Christ. An unbaptized person is out of Christ, and he cannot be a partaker of the blessings that he sheds on the children of God. Have you said that baptism ; does not amount to anything? What do you think about it now? I am merely calling your attention to what the Bible says, but that is not all. I could stand here and exhaust my vocabulary in a few minutes, for it is not inexhaustible by any means, telling you about the fulness of the godhead. I cannot tell you all about God, much less the godhead. I have read what the commentators have had to say about it, and every one I have read says that the godhead is made up of Christ, God, and the Holy Spirit. I could not tell you about the combined fullness of all. I could not tell you of the fullness of God, much less the fullness of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit combined. I can tell you that an unbaptized person is out of Christ; he does not know the fullness of either, much less all three combined.

What does the fullness of God mean? I don't know. I have heard that he is omniscient and omnipotent. I have heard that his eye is everywhere, beholding the good and the evil. I have heard that he rides on the winds and that his habitation is on the dark bosom of the storm cloud. I have heard that the lightning was a flash of his eye, and that the thunders the rumble of his voice. I have heard that from the tips of his creative fingers the material universe was molded. I have heard that when the word fell from his lips ten thousand glittering worlds sprang into existence. I want to tell you here and now, I cannot tell you about the fullness of God. He is without beginning of days and without end of life. He is everywhere. He is beyond man's conception. I cannot tell you about the fullness of God. The Book says that the fullness of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are all in Christ.

Don't let some fellow come here and tell you some human being's philosophy and be deceived by it. The Book warns against it: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Don't let men deceive you. Study God's word. If we fail to do so, it is an unspeakable and inexcusable mistake on our part, for it has to do with our eternal soul.

We were talking about the Lord Jesus Christ being the fullness of the godhead. We read in the Bible a story of a little baby being born, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, God in the flesh. They were to call his name Immanuel, for he was to save people from their sins. The fullness of the godhead dwelt in this little baby, born of woman, living in poverty. He never had an evil thought; he never yielded to temptation. He was subjected to temptation, yet without sin. He lived a perfect life, and he spake as man never spake before. He touched the blind eye and made it to see, commanded the dumb tongue to speak and it spoke. He made the lame walk; he raised the dead; and with a word he made the desert to bloom and blossom as a rose. As the prophet said, he came to open the prison door and liberate the captives, relieve man from sin, take the burdens of men on himself, bear the ignominy of the cross. Yes, he was willing to go to the cross and carry my sins with him there and die in our stead, and come out of the grave and make it possible for us to come to God. Then he went back to his Father to reign

until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The fullness of Christ is utterly impossible for human language to express without the Holy Spirit.

I have heard of Holy Ghost religion. I have heard them talk about the Holy Spirit speaking to people. The Bible tells us all we know about the fullness of the godhead. When we have told all that we know about it, as much as our heads will contain and our hearts will receive and our lips will utter, we have not even touched the hem of the garment, so to speak. Yet, all the fullness of God is there; all the fullness of Christ is there; and the fullness of the Holy Spirit is there, residing in Christ. You ought to be in Christ. Don't let any man keep you out of Christ. Don't let a man keep you from being baptized into him, into his body, into his church. An unbaptized man is out of Christ. I want to suggest for this reason that we ought to take this matter seriously. We ought to hear him in all things. We ought to be in Christ and let his blood cleanse us from all sins, take our sins away, and make us pure and clean. We are born into the family of God when we are baptized. We rise to walk in a new life. Old things are passed away, and all things become new. Listen to the apostle in the fifth chapter of Second Corinthians: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Suppose he is not in Christ. If he is not a new creature, according to this language, he is not in Christ. If he is a new creature, he is in Christ, and old things are passed away, and all things are become new. This all takes place in Christ. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." If he is not in Christ, he is not a Christian. Can you think of a Christian out of Christ? If he is in Christ, he is a child of God.

The Bible says that we are all children of God by faith. We cannot be children of God without faith. We are baptized into Christ, and we cannot be a new creature unless we are in Christ. The word of God tells us that. People will sit down and listen to a man with his "philosophy and his vain deceit after the traditions of men" talk all afternoon, even blocking the avenues and streets, telling us things to keep us out of Christ. They will listen to him telling things to keep them from embracing Christ, and being obedient to him, that we might be inducted into him and his

kingdom and enjoy the fullness of the godhead, being complete in him. Yet we can hardly listen thirty minutes to a gospel sermon. Listen again to the apostle in the eighth chapter of the book of Romans in the introductory verse: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Men have taken advantage of some things the Bible has said, and they have in this passage. They sometimes use the Scriptures to prove their theories. They have used that to prove that the children of God who have committed sin will not be condemned, even though they have been adulterers, murderers, liars, fornicators. Do not believe a word of it. Any man that would say that would be guilty of twisting the word of God, making God say something he never meant to say. The passage reads, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," but listen to the rest of the quotation, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." There are people in Christ who walk after the flesh; and if the Bible teaches anything, it teaches that they will be condemned. The Bible not only says that, but it says that "judgment must begin at the house of God." (1 Pet. 4:17.) God is not going to begin the judgment at the foot, but at the head, among the preachers and elders and teachers. Yes, he begins judgment with the preachers, and some of them ought to have it now. Judgment must begin at the church of God, at the house of God, in his family, and that includes all the family, all the children of God by faith, all who are in the one family, all who are in his house. The time has come when judgment must begin at the house of God. I want to suggest this. My judgment is that Jehovah is going to take the preachers, elders, and older people first, beginning at the very first, among the best, and come down instead of going up. That is the story, and it is important that we notice it. "We are all children of God by faith," and "judgment is to begin at the house of God," and that is "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15.) "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." What if we walk after the flesh? If we walk after the flesh, we shall be condemned. That sort of thing will never get us anywhere. We can't take

this passage and make it prove that a child of God who walks after the flesh will not be condemned.

I once heard a preacher endeavoring to prove that proposition by quoting this passage, trying to confirm his proposition. He made this statement: "I can do that because I am a pure man." I believe that sort of doctrine is the most destructive of all. Many brethren seem to think that they can do as they please and still be pleasing to God.

Now, I am talking about the man in Christ, who walks after the Spirit. The Bible says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14.) If he is not led by the Spirit, not walking after the Spirit, he is not the son of God. If he is walking after the flesh, he is not led by the Spirit. If he is walking by the Spirit, he is led by the Spirit. The Spirit and the flesh are contrary to each other; they are fighting each other; so the Bible says that "you may not do the things you would." I read in the first chapter of Ephesians, verse 7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Let me read you still another. In the first chapter of First Corinthians, verses 30, 31, we have these words, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Let me read you still another passage. I am reading from the Second Corinthian letter, chapter 1, verse 20, "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." Now, I am reading from the First Corinthian letter, the fifteenth chapter and the nineteenth verse, "For if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Behold the apostle as he stands on the edge of the grave and says, "Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15 :55.) "Therefore, brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, inasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain." (1 Cor. 15:58.)

Men will build up influences and advance theories that are "after the tradition of men and after the rudiments of the world." Don't let them deceive you. Don't give your money, your life, and your interest to that sort of thing, for when it is tested your

labor is in vain. You should labor in the Lord and not in them. There is not a human organization in the earth that will live much longer. They all dwindle away and die. The only thing that will live on this earth is his church, the church of the living God; and it will not live unless the members of the church will learn to do what God says to do. I think I understand what Christ meant when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:18.) He did not say that about any other organization, political party, or faction of humanity, but he said it about his church. We have his word in the New Testament, and he has fixed it so that if every disciple of Christ would die tonight his church would still be here. The seed is there. We could discover the seed years later and plant it in human hearts, and the church would come into existence immediately. I think that is a matter of supreme importance, but listen to another passage or two. Ephesians 1, verse 3, spreading out like a blanket, so if there is anything we have not mentioned, this verse will include it, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." I want to read this. There are members of the church who ought to read it and meditate on this seriously. They think because they have been baptized into Christ they can go on Sunday morning to the streams and lakes, fields and woods, places of pleasure, and be indifferent to meeting on the Lord's day with the saints to break the bread and drink the cup, the place where the best people on earth are assembled. The passage says that God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." The assemblage is where the saints meet to break the bread and drink the cup that marks the undying love of the world's redeemer, where Jesus Christ is the host, and we are his invited guests. What else could he mean by this statement? What else could he signify? When you come to the place where you can taste the pleasures of the world and think that you can appropriate the blessings of Almighty God that he has richly provided in Christ and in heavenly places, you are wrong. The blessings we are talking about are in Christ.

There are men who will tell you that there is nothing in the church that you can get along as well without it as you can with it. They tell you that you need not be baptized. I want to tell

you just now that if the preachers, teachers, educators, and editors had made as great an effort to get people to do as God has said as they have to get people NOT to do what God has commanded this world would be a better place in which to live. How many sermons have you heard trying to get you to do what God has not said? Every sermon ought to be preached to get men to obey God, not to do what he doesn't say. The Bible says that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1:21.) You can preach some things that would never save anybody. Here we have the church of the living God, and the Bible says that all spiritual blessings are in Christ. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Cor. 5:19.) We are a new creature in Christ. The blessings of God are in Christ. All spiritual blessings in heavenly places are in Christ.

I want to turn your attention now to the sixth chapter, verse 15, of First Corinthians. The apostle is talking to members of the church, "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?" Now, I want to say this: If you want to move your membership, just move your body. That is the way to do it. You cannot move it anywhere else. That is why members of the church ought to stay out of certain places; they don't want to be members of beer gardens, dance halls, race tracks, and various other things. Whenever you carry your body there, you carry your membership there, for your body is a member of Christ. Eph. 5:29 says that "Christ is the savior of the body." The apostle is talking about the church. Could a man be a member of Christ and not be in his body? Could you tell me how a person could do that? We are members of his body. We read another passage, "He is the head of the body, the church." (Col. 1:18.) Eph. 1:23 says, "He gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." I read again from the Colossian letter. He said, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." Whenever a man is in Christ, he is in his body, the church. "Beware lest any man spoil you" on that point.

People all over the country are trying to make men and women believe that the church does not amount to anything and that it does not save anybody. We have read these passages to show you that the spiritual blessings are all in Christ, that salvation is in Christ, that God through Christ reconciles the world unto himself, that to be in Christ is to be in his body, that to be in his body is to be in the church. That is what the Book says about these things. That is not my teaching. I am not responsible for it. God put it there. I am to do and to preach what God says, and that is what he said. I don't know but what I told you this before, but when I am at home my phone is constantly ringing asking me, "What do you think about a certain passage?" What does it matter what I think? My thinkso amounts to nothing. What does the Book say? I don't want to tell a man what I think about anything when it comes to the salvation of his soul. I want to read to him what God says about it, and then I have told him the truth of God. I have told him the thoughts of God. Tonight as we spoke on the question, "Beware lest any man spoil you, . . ." we were leading up to this point that I am talking about—the church, blessings in Christ, blessings in the church, the things that cannot be had anywhere else.

If you feel tonight that the church is not worth anything, I want to ask you what sort of reflection do you cast on the Lord Jesus Christ? In Ephesians, the fifth chapter, he said that he gave himself for the church. I was taught when I was a school boy in the course of mathematics that when I gave a certain sum for a certain article I got the value of my money in exchange; and if you can tell me what Christ is worth to your soul, then I can tell you what the church is worth. That is what Jesus Christ gave for it. Whatever his church is -worth, he is worth.

Another passage says that he "purchased the church with his own blood." (Acts 20:28.) When he says that he purchased the church with his blood, then what is his blood worth? Whatever that blood is worth, that is what the church is worth. "Beware lest any man spoil you." Don't let a man twist the word of God and distort it to keep you from obeying the gospel and out of the church of the living God. Anything else you can do never will save your soul. Pay no mind to anything else man tells you to do. Get in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, for which

he gave himself and every drop of blood in his body, and begin to work there, and beware of the philosophy and traditions of men. Don't let anything beguile you from it. I want you to think a little on this question.

There is another point I want to make before we use up all of our time, and that point concerns a passage used on funeral occasions. You know I told you that there is not a thing written in this Book for the dead. Everything is written for living men and women who toil and live in this world. It is written for us while we live. Now, the passage that I am going to read is rarely ever used except when somebody is dead. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." (Rev. 14:13.) Mark you, friends, a man who dies out of the Lord is not included in this blessing. I read you one passage to show that you are baptized into Christ, and look at the effort that is being made to keep people from being baptized into Christ. Look at the efforts that are being made to keep people from obeying the crucified, but risen, Lord. What if they die out of the Lord?

Let me read you another passage that is rarely ever used except on funeral occasions. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. 4:13, 14.) I don't know that *I* can unfold all the meaning of this passage, and I am not going to try. The point is, if a man lives in Christ, he dies in Christ. He falls asleep in Christ, and at God's appointed time he is raised. What if we die out of Christ? Then neither of those passages would apply. I want you to get the lesson: We live in Christ, and we fall asleep in Jesus Christ. The dead in Christ shall rise first. I don't want you to forget that. I want you to keep it before you.

Now, there is not a human organization in the world that can go any farther than death with us. They can take care of our education; they can clothe our growing bodies ; they can feed you; and when you are sick, they can sit up with you through long, weary hours; they can get a minister to comfort you and pray for you and bring relief to your broken body; but when your eyes are closed in death, the best they can do is to place a sprig

of evergreen on your grave and put up an epitaph saying, "Here lies my brother." That is as far as they can go. That is all they can do; but the church for which Jesus Christ died, gave himself and every drop of blood in his body, can promise you life beyond the grave. No human organization can do that.

You know these political parties over which we tear our hair amount to nothing. All of the human organizations in the world amount to nothing to your soul. People will spend their time and their money and everything else that they have to build up these things. All of them will perish one of these days and leave you nothing. A lot of church members give so much to these organizations that they have nothing left to support and maintain the church for which Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine, suffered so much. They admit that Christ established the church in the travail of his soul. They admit that it is the only thing that can break the bars of death and the grave and land us safely on the other side where we may rest under the shade of the trees, yet they don't give it the support it deserves.

Friends, I want to point out to you this fact. A man outside of Christ is outside of his body and outside of the church. Christ is the head of the body. If you cannot be saved out of Christ, you cannot be saved out of the church. We are all made to be new creatures in Christ; and if you are in his body, you are in his church; and if you are in his church, you are a child of God. The Book says that "we are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." If you are outside of Jesus Christ and trying to be a child of God by faith, it is impossible. The Book says, "As many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Have you been baptized into Christ? Have you put him on in baptism?

There is no use for me to speak longer. I have spoken long enough. Are you unbaptized and out of his church? I do not censure you, friends. I am sorry for you, and I am asking you to turn from error. I am asking you to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ and to come into the kingdom of the Son of God. The kingdom of heaven can be reached by anyone except those who obstinately refuse to do his will. Will you hear him tonight and obey him? He is the author and finisher of your faith. He is the captain of your salvation. Won't you come to him tonight and let Christ lead you all the way? Won't you come and make

heaven glad tonight by your coming? Don't you want to render obedience to the gospel of the risen Christ? I believe that the Bible tells us that "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repents than over ninety and nine just people who need no repentance." Christ came to save you if you will only come to him. Won't you heed the invitation tonight? You may never have the opportunity again. If you are out of Christ, won't you listen to his pleading voice and answer the beckoning call? Won't you come to him and let him save you? He is able to save all who will come unto him.

If you have obeyed the gospel and have not lived faithfully, don't you want to renew your allegiance to the church? Won't you be like the prodigal son who returned and said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight"? Won't you start over again? If you are here, members of the church, who wish to be identified with this fine congregation, you are invited also.

How many will come while we sing?

THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

We read tonight for our text from the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, the eighteenth and nineteenth verses: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him; and it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that man shall die." I don't suppose that it would be easy to find a text more pointed than this, or that covers more subject matter to be no longer than it is. The very first statement made is important, and the last one is just as important. I never get on the rostrum to speak or talk about God, the plan of salvation, or the Bible, that I do not feel the force of this statement. Any man who speaks anything in the name of God that he has not commanded shall die, or any man that speaks in the name of other gods shall die. You remember James put it like this, "Be not

many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." (James 3:1.)

It would mean a great deal to me to go wrong, but it is not nearly as bad for me to go wrong myself as it is to carry a whole congregation, or a whole community, or a whole city wrong; therefore, what I teach might do that very thing. If I should undertake to teach you a lesson, write an article, or preach a sermon that is not in harmony with God's word, I shall die. Any man that puts his pen on paper or preaches from the pulpit anything not in harmony with God's word will die. That's what the Book says; I didn't put it there; I didn't say it. The time has come when we are inclined to say things about the Bible we ought not and make uses and applications that we should not make, making it teach things that God never intended. I believe, for that reason, we ought to understand that if we say anything in the name of God that he has not commanded we will die. The instruction in the Bible is the living word of God, and it is necessary that we give it our attention. The Bible instructs us that all we do in worship and service to God we should do in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and if I were to do anything in worship and service in anybody's name other than his, I have violated God's law. If I preach a sermon in the name of anyone else, if I say a word or offer a suggestion not in harmony with the word of God, that he has not commanded, that did not come from God, I have acted strangely before God. I have acted just as strangely as Nadab and Abihu acted when they offered strange fire before God.

Last evening I called your attention to divers and strange doctrines and tried to point out to you and to leave on your mind the fact that anything you do in the worship or service of God that you cannot read out of the Bible is strange doctrine. Anything you do in worship or service that is not commanded in the Bible is strange doctrine. Just now I would like to make this point: We disagree on the things outside of the Bible, not on the things in the Bible; therefore preachers, teachers, instructors in the classroom or pulpit, or wherever they are, ought to feel the responsibility resting upon them when they undertake to say a word about this Holy Book. Any use I might make of it, I must give an account of that use, For that reason the Bible says, "Give

attendance to reading until I come." (1 Tim. 4:17.) The apostle also said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15.) We haven't any right to drag into the pulpit anything you cannot read in the Bible. We have no right to bring in anything that God has not taught. I would be afraid to teach people to do anything that I cannot read in the Bible. Not only that, but boiling it down to a finer point, I would be afraid to teach anything that I cannot find in the New Testament, for we are living under the New Testament.

Let me call your attention to another passage that brings out the point clearly. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." (Heb. 1 :1, 2.) God's word comes through Christ, and faith comes by reading the word of God. "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) I remember the Revised Version on that passage says, "Belief cometh of hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." The common version says, "Faith comes by hearing." That's the truth. Faith does come by hearing. Faith comes by the word of God through Christ. In the Old Testament faith came through the prophets, but we have the Lord Jesus to lead us. Anything we do must come from the Lord Jesus Christ, come from the New Testament, for he is the mediator of the New Testament, standing between God and man. God gave him the terms of reconciliation.

We ought to understand that if we place anything out of its order, make any application that he has not made, if we say anything that we cannot read in the New Testament or teach anything that you do not find there, the Book says the man who does that will die. The passage we read referred to a New Testament prophet. He said, "I will raise up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth." (Deut. 18:18.) That Prophet is Christ. We are to hearken unto him. That passage refers to the Lord Jesus Christ—everybody admits that. If they won't admit it, I think I can demonstrate and prove it. God said he would put his words in his mouth, that he would give him his word. God said he would speak all that he had commanded, and that whosoever would not

hearken unto the words which the prophet should speak in God's name it would be required of him.

We ought to stop here long enough to consider that. We ought to think about it. We need it. Jesus Christ gives us the word of God in his own way, and they who will not hearken unto it, "it will be required of them." We ought to hear his word; we ought to believe it and become obedient to the Lord Jesus. The man who does not do this, it will be required of him.

I remember another passage which I have read before in your hearing, I believe. I am reading it again tonight, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20:12.) Then when we come to the judgment throne of God, we will be judged by the things written in the New Testament. It shows us the will of God as it relates and applies to us. This is our word, our law. We are under it, and when we come to the judgment, we will be judged by the things written in the New Testament; and if we have not done them, what are we going to do? God said that he would require them of us. Now just what are you going to do about them? Here are the things commanded written in this little Book. We have a copy of it. Now, what is going to happen when God requires it of us and we cannot meet the requirements? What's going to happen to us? I think, indeed, that is an important suggestion. Well, I think we shall have no trouble whatsoever in demonstrating to you that Jesus Christ is the prophet of whom God spoke, the prophet that God said he would raise up. God said that he would put his word in Christ, and Christ was to speak to the people.

Let's go to the New Testament now. When Jesus Christ had gone to the top of the Mount of Transfiguration, and Peter, James, and John, his three disciples, were with him, there appeared and talked with him Moses and Elias. Peter said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." (Matt. 17:4.) Think of that scene. Think of Moses and his life, and Elijah translated in a chariot of fire, and they came back and talked to Christ on this Mount of Transfiguration! No wonder Peter was

enraptured. He didn't understand what he said. "It is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Of course, he was not permitted to do that. We ought to do the things God permits us to do for the joy of serving him. A cloud overshadowed them and God said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; *hear ye him.*" (Matt. 17:5.) When charmed and enraptured by the scene that had come before their eyes so suddenly, a very serious and solemn conversation is related. Now Peter said, "It is good for us to be here. Let us build three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." When Peter said that, he came more nearly expressing the ideas of many people today than any other man in the Bible story, the idea of joining the church of your choice. Well, if you wanted to worship men, you could hardly do better than to worship Moses or Elijah. "Let's build *three* tabernacles," he said. Many folk say today: "Let a man do as he pleases. If he wants to worship Moses, all right. If he wants to worship Elijah, all right. If he wants to worship Christ, still all right." Friends, we try to please men now rather than God in many ways.

The apostle said that if he should seek to please men he would not be a servant of Christ. It is all right to please men if we can please God at the same time; but if you cannot please God and man at the same time, you had better not try to please man. It is impossible to please both; therefore, we must please God. There is but one way to please God. The Book says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6.) We learn that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word. We must walk by faith. Everything we do, we must do by faith. Whenever I preach something I cannot read in the New Testament, or do something that I cannot read in the New Testament, then faith steps out of the picture. The New Testament is the word of Christ, and the Bible says that where the word of a king is, there is power. Christ is the King of the New Testament. The New Testament is the power of that King. Since the New Testament is the sole authority for everything we do, we ought to be very careful to follow its teaching.

You remember, now, Peter said, Let's build three houses of worship; one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias. It was

seemingly a phenomenon. There was no answer, but a cloud overshadowed them and received Moses and Elias out of their sight. Then the voice of God came from the heavens saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Then pungently and powerfully he said, "*Hear ye him.*" Every word in this little Book, then, is written by his authority. I am not surprised to hear him say: "All authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:18, 19.) After that cloud had overshadowed them on that occasion, hear God's voice say, "Hear ye him." Now, that applies to every man, and woman, too. We had better listen to him, hadn't we? There is no other way out of the intricate difficulties of this life. We ought to listen to him. He has spoken to us in the New Testament, and we should hear him. He came to lift us up, to open prison doors, to set the captives free, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. Don't you think we had better listen to him?

I want to turn your attention to another passage now, for fear some are not willing to accept that as absolute proof, to show you that we are not guessing about the matter. I am reading from the third chapter of Acts, when Peter preached on Solomon's porch, in which he had this to say. Here are the words quoted from the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, the very language that we find that Moses used as a text, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." (Acts 3:22.) God raised up a prophet in their midst, and we are to hear him in whatever he has commanded us. Jesus Christ is that prophet. The reading further says, "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." You will observe, no doubt, that the apostle paraphrased it some. He had the right to do that because he was guided by the Holy Spirit. I have known a few men who seemed to think that they had the right to paraphrase the Scriptures. An inspired man had the right to do that. Now, it would have been absolutely impossible for an uninspired man to

recognize the fulfillment of that prophecy, but it is easy to see it after an inspired apostle points it out as fulfillment of prophecy. We can understand it when the apostle points out a prophecy there and the fulfillment here. When the apostle says that is the fulfillment of a prophecy, we have it then. We cannot be mistaken about it. Now, the very language that we quoted as a text is applied to Christ when he goes away from this earth to heaven to reign there until he has put all things under his feet and until he has conquered the last enemy, until death shall be destroyed; and from that time he went away until the time when he comes, that statement is applicable. "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." (Acts 3:24.) He talks about "these days," not in the future, because that would not be "these days." It could not be "these days" in the past, for that would not be "these days." It was "these days when the prophecy was fulfilled. Peter does a little additional paraphrasing in this passage and says, "Him shall ye hear in all things." That is the way the Holy Spirit led Peter to put it. He further says, "Every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."

I want now to turn your attention to another passage, to a reading from the twelfth chapter of John, the last two verses. Hear what he said. "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me." Now Jesus is talking. The preacher who spoke that spoke not from himself. He was the Son of God, the light of the world, Mary's son, and he said that he spoke not from himself. God said that he would raise him up, and he was to speak the word of God; he was to teach the people; and if they did not hear him, it would be required of them. Yes, they were required to hear this prophet. Did Christ conform to that? Didn't he fulfill that prophecy? He spoke not from himself, but he said that God gave him what he should say. "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me." Get that point, friends. "He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak, and I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12: 50.) I think we could have no difficulty of finding the fulfillment of prophecy in the words we have

there. We are to hear that prophet. One passage says, "Hear ye him," and, in other words, the passage we have read for our text tonight as the Spirit gave it to the apostle applies to the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was not speaking for himself. It is an easy thing for a man to be speaking for himself; it is not hard for a man to justify himself, for "every way of man is right in his own eyes." Now, Jesus Christ lived as a man a long time ago, and he never uttered anything of himself, never uttered a word of his own. He spoke the will of God, and that was absolutely all he said. Everything he said was what God told him to say. What he did was what God told him to do. Wouldn't that prove to you that he was that prophet spoken of in the scripture reading? That fact should bring the church of the Lord Jesus Christ before people in a remarkable light, and from that high pedestal we occupy as members of it, we should let our light shine by the lives that we live. If we could learn that, wouldn't we be wonderfully blessed?

You will find people today who are ready to give of their money, time, and talent, and whatever else they have to building up of organizations and institutions with which Jesus Christ is not concerned, had not a word to say about them. What glory does that give to the church for which he gave every drop of blood in his veins?

What are we here for, anyway? The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ came into the world to do something specific, and that was to do the will of God. Now, the Bible tells us that we are called according to the purpose of God. We are here for some purpose. We are here to do his will. Why should he call us his people, separate us, isolate us from the world? That the church would be one thing and the world another. We ought to learn that whenever the church will speak only the word of God, only those things that Jehovah teaches in the New Testament, just that much and no more, when we will do exactly what God has commanded and no more, and not stop until that is done, then you will see the church of the living God moving along, a working organization that will carry on. The word of God tells us that "his commandment is life everlasting." I wonder how we feel toward the commands of God. The Bible says that the "commandment of God is life everlasting." We ought to obey them, then.

When Jesus Christ came to the Garden of Gethsemane that night before he was crucified, you remember he left the disciples to watch, and he went into the garden and prayed. That prayer is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John. He prayed that they might know that the commandment of God is life everlasting, that they might be one in Christ Jesus, that it is life eternal if they did the will of God.

Leaving the reading of John on that point, we find him saying that we know we love him if we keep his commandments. I know that his commandments are life everlasting, and the man that does not keep the commandments cannot live. That is not temporal life; it is eternal life. We need to learn God's commandments; we need to keep them. That's the way Jesus Christ, your Redeemer and mine, your Saviour, your Exemplar felt about it. That's the way he felt about the commands of God. How do we feel toward the commandments of God? Do we take them seriously? Is the command of God a burden on our heart? Do we rest until it is done? There is a burden resting on our souls when it is not done.

You will gather from this reading another point. God sent Christ into the world to say something, and he said it. He sent him into this world to do something, and he did it; and when that was said and done, his work in the flesh was finished. You will let me call your attention to this fact. Christ evangelized the human race. He was never very far away from Jerusalem or outside the land of Palestine, but God's word went over the civilized world, over the civilized portion of it, at that time. He confined his labors to a small country and his concentration upon twelve men. He selected twelve ordinary men and concentrated upon them, teaching them in order that when he is gone they might be instructors, apostles, teachers. One of them, Judas Iscariot, fell by the wayside, and another, Matthias, was selected to fill his place. I wish to point out to you that God sent Christ into the world. He commanded him. Christ commanded the apostles, and he sent them out into the world. They are in his stead. They were to work in his place. They were to carry the word over the earth. They were to teach it to all the world. I want to read a passage to show you what I mean. I am reading John 17:8, "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received

them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." Then, going on down to the eighteenth verse, he says, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." So, then, Christ sent the apostles out into the world. God commanded Christ, and Christ commanded the apostles. We have, therefore, God, Christ, and the apostles, three links in this chain, closely allied and associated together. There *is* one other fact to which I would like to refer your attention, and I think that it ought to be impressed on the minds of people everywhere. The apostles were not to go out and preach until they had tarried at Jerusalem. They were not to tell the gospel story, they were not to preach it until they had received power from on high, until the Holy Spirit had come to guide them. Therefore, we have a chain of four links, if that is the way to put it. The first one is God, the maker and creator of everything; the next one is Christ; and the next is the apostles; then the Holy Spirit who came to guide them into all the truth so they could preach the gospel message without error and lead men unto salvation. That is the way we came to possess the plan of salvation.

I want to call your attention now to another passage. I am reading from the tenth chapter of Matthew, verse 40, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." He is going to send them afar. He is going to send them over Palestine. He is going to send them out to preach all the commands of God, and he said, "Whosoever receives you receives me." Now I am reading from John 13:20, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." What we are after is to get right down to the point. Every person who believes Jesus Christ can receive him. People cannot be saved without receiving him. That's the point I am after. People are expected to receive Jesus Christ, but they must receive the men that Jesus Christ sends, for he said, "He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me." He further said that "when they receive me, they receive him that sent me." He receives God then. You cannot hear Jesus Christ and believe him and receive him and reject the apos-

bles that he sent. It is utterly impossible to receive the one without the other.

Now, in connection with this, I would like to call your attention to this point. You hear people talk about the Holy Ghost religion a great deal, and I want to say I wouldn't give the snap of my ringer for any other kind. I want to say further on that whenever you receive the Holy Spirit you receive his teaching, and whenever you receive the apostles you receive their teaching. Now, you cannot come to the one without coming to the other. You cannot receive the Lord Jesus Christ without receiving the other three. You cannot receive the one without receiving the other. It is utterly impossible to make a mistake on that point. Jesus Christ was sent into the world by Jehovah, and Jesus Christ sent the apostles into the world and commanded them. God commanded Christ, and Christ commanded the apostles, and the Holy Spirit was sent on the apostles to guide them in presenting the commands of God to the world; therefore you cannot receive one without receiving the other.

I want to turn your attention to another passage. Reading from the first chapter of Acts, the introductory verse says this: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen." I make mention of that because Christ gave commandments to the apostles. Where did he get the commandments unless from God? Now that is the story of the Bible. God gave it to Christ; Christ to the apostles when he said, "Tarry in Jerusalem until ye receive power from on high." On the day of Pentecost they received the Holy Spirit. They spoke in other tongues; Peter preached the first gospel sermon in fact that was given to the world.

I want to read another passage. Luke 10:16 says (Christ is talking), "He that heareth you heareth me; he that rejecteth you rejecteth me." You could not hear Christ without hearing Peter, James, and John, and you cannot hear God without hearing Christ. God spoke through Christ, and Christ spoke through the apostles —not leaving it up to their bad memory, however. The Holy Spirit was sent to guide them so they could tell people the commands of God without mistake, so they could tell without this-

take what God had given to Christ, and what Christ had given to them.

I want to read now from the fourth chapter of First John, the first verse, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Now, we are to identify those spirits by the teaching given. False prophets have gone out into the world, and he said that we are to try the spirits. But how? How are you going to tell what is right or wrong teaching? In that same chapter, the fourth chapter of 1 John, verse 6 says, "We are of God He that knoweth God heareth us [the apostles] ; he that is not of God heareth us not." But that is not all, "Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." Listen to Peter, James, and John and you will never fail. There are prophets that are not of God. That's what the Book says. They are contrary to God. They are false prophets. That's what the Bible says, and I am not responsible for it. I am not responsible for what is in the Bible. That isn't my responsibility. You couldn't blame me for what is in the Bible; you couldn't blame me for telling you what is in it. My responsibility lies only in what I say and how I handle the word of God. That tells whether we have the Spirit of God or the spirit of error. Reading from the second chapter of Hebrews, verse 1, we have these words, "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip"—lest we should drift away. I want to hesitate just a moment to say that there is danger in drifting away from the things we have heard, and there are many churches that have done that very thing, and they have gone on the rocks. Many others are adding to the word of God. Just as long as conditions like that exist, turmoil will reign supremely throughout the religious world. That's the reason for the turmoil that exists today. If people would get in this Book, stay in it, and stay out of everything else, we would never have any trouble. We would never have any debate. Whenever we find trouble in the church, the Book teaches that somebody has violated the teaching of this little Book. You cannot obey God and differ. It is utterly impossible to obey God and differ. It is impossible to vary. The passage further says, "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and dis-

obedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Heb. 2:2, 3).

Now, I was not there, and I did not hear him, but Peter, James, and John heard him, and they wrote it down in the book we call the New Testament. They transferred it to us. The apostle speaks of the great salvation. What is it? It looks to me to be unwise to go prior to the time Jesus began to talk to find out about it. That would be utterly unwise, it seems to me. He first spoke to the disciples, and they confirmed it to us. Those men were with him; they heard him; they wrote it down for us in a book, and we are fortunate enough to have it today anywhere. It is not expensive.

I want to read another passage. We have the apostle talking in these words. Here is what he says, "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet"—able to see spiritually—that is, full of the spirit, then what? "Let him acknowledge the things that I Paul write unto you are the commandments of God." (1 Cor. 14:37.) What did Paul write? That is ours to find out. He wrote on a great many things, and I want to tell you he wrote some of the finest and best instruction found anywhere. Now, he says, "If a man is spiritual, let him acknowledge the things I write are God's commandments." Paul never wrote anything but the commandments of God. The question is, what is he talking about here?

I have heard people argue on a certain passage, the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians, verse 16, about the meaning. The passage is talking about a contentious person. "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." If a man is contentious about something the Book did not say, that the apostles did not write about, the church has no right or business contending for that; but when it comes to what Paul wrote, they have to toe the mark. They have to contend for that. We have to take what the apostles said. The question is, Am I big enough, strong enough to wade right into it, stand up for it, take what God has commanded? My salvation depends on that. Friends, our salvation depends upon our obedience to those commands.

I want to read another passage which I think is a very striking one, and very important also. I am reading from the fifth chapter of Second Corinthians, verses 18 through 20, this time. Listen to the apostle as he talks. He said: "All things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation: to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." That is striking, isn't it? It refers to the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not have any ambassadors in the world today. No, there are no ambassadors for Christ today in this world. An ambassador is a man who speaks with authority for a government. Now, Jesus Christ went away and left the apostles as ambassadors, ministers for him. He gave them authority, and the church is to be carried on under their supervision. What they have to say is authority. I feel sorry for any church that would not conform and comply with the apostles' doctrine and continue in it. We talked about that last night. You remember that the Book tells us that the first church continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. Now the apostles were ambassadors of Christ; therefore, Jesus Christ has no ambassadors today. He doesn't need any ambassadors today. The apostles had the word of reconciliation, and they were put in the stead of Christ and in the place of Christ. They were praying people to be reconciled to God. They never prayed God to be reconciled to people. It is quite the reverse now in the religious world, and it has been from my earliest recollection. People are sought to come to the anxious seat, and a group of religious workers will come up and pray God to be reconciled to those sinners. The apostles did not do that way. They worked on people to get them to come to the Lord Jesus Christ, to be reconciled to God, and if you will get men and women to come to him, God is willing. God is ever willing to receive the penitent soul.

I want to suggest to you that I see no reason in all that. Listen to Isaiah, chapter 59, verses 1, 2. He says, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between

you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear." He says your sins have separated you from God. Then whose fault is it? It isn't God's fault. God has not left us; we left him. Are we going to ask him to comfort us in our sins? We could not ask him to do that. Let's turn away from sin and come back to God. He always stands waiting to receive us. He is willing to receive all who will come unto him.

I want to refer your attention to another passage. Isaiah is talking, and here is what he said, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. 55:7.) The apostles were religious workers, but they did not work on God, but we find religious workers today working on God, trying to change God. Now, I believe we can have peace with anybody on his own terms. If you expect to have peace with God, you must have it on his terms. We could even have peace with Satan if we took it on his terms. God gives us his terms; and if we want peace with him, we must take it on those terms. Then we can have peace and be saved. The apostles understood this. They worked on men and women; they taught men and women; they illuminated God's way to men and women; they did everything they could within reason to get men and women to turn away from their sins. Now, that is the only way men can be saved now, and I want us to get that point.

I think I can call your attention to another illustration before we close, for I have spoken long enough. I want to call your attention to the prodigal son. (Luke 15:11-32.) He called for his substance and went away. I don't suppose that he had any substance of his own, but he got what was due him and wasted it in riotous living. It is not any trouble to waste it. It is not hard to waste what it is not hard to get. It is not difficult to waste it; but to economize, save, and keep what we have is another proposition. Therefore, for a man to keep himself pure in heart and soul I tell you is a different proposition. Now, that boy wasted his substance with riotous living. He lived with harlots. Isn't that awful? Can you think of anything worse than that? He lived like a dog. He did one of the worst things that human beings can do. He wasted his substance in riotous living. He

had nothing left. He had no friends left. Oh, he had plenty of friends when he had money to spend. It has always been that way. You have plenty of friends when you have plenty of money, but where are they when you are broke? You don't have them then. I found that out when I was a young man and had not been married long. I went to a banker friend and told him that I was in need of a little loan, and he said he was in the very same shape. Where were my friends? My good friends were all broke with me. But this man *wasted* his substance. It was gone. His friends quit him when he was broke. A famine came, and no man would give to him. I want to say this to you young people: "Just as long as you have money to treat boys and girls to ice cream and Coca-Colas and take them to the soda parlors, you will have lots of friends, but when your money is gone they have gone too." When you are poor, the way to keep your friends is to economize. Young people should be taught to economize and to save. The only way to keep your friends is to put your money in a savings account and throw the book away. It is not any trouble to write a check, but it is hard to get something to write a check on.

Now, this young man had spent his substance, and he is going to try to find a remedy for the situation. He went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him to feed the swine. He could not even feed himself. He even "would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat," the Book tells us. Anything would have tasted good to him; he was hungry. He went on until he had reached the extremity, and he came to himself. That's the way humanity is prone to do. We go to the extremity, and then we come to ourselves. God is long-suffering. He lets us go until we get to the place that we realize that we need him. Isn't it strange that the most intelligent thing that God made is like that? This young man came to himself, and he said: "In my father's house is bread and to spare. I am going home, and I am going to tell him that I have sinned against him and against high heaven, that I am no more worthy to be called his son, but I just want to be as one of his hired servants. That is all I want to be." Now he is getting about right. Let some souls in the church think the church cannot get along without them, then they go on the rocks. If a person leaves the family,

he will find whether or not the family will go on. If I were to drop out tonight, I would not be missed. I am just a raindrop in millions falling on the same roof with dozens of others. It doesn't depend on me. No, indeed. This boy found out the family could go on without him, but he is getting on the right track. He is going home, and what a reception he is going to have! When we read this story in this little Book, it indicates this: The father's love went with the boy even when he was living in sin. His love extended into "the far country," where he lived in sin and disgraced himself. The father is looking for him. He is waiting for him to come home, and one day someone appeared on the landscape. It is the boy he had been wishing for. Isn't that a familiar scene? I remember in my life when the boys were gone away how mother would look for them, how that great mother heart stretched out to the boy that was gone. She could not eat; she could not sleep. She would go to the window when the shades of night had fallen and push back the curtains and look out into the dark to see if she could catch a glimpse of him or to see if she could hear a footstep coming. No tenderer is that than is God's wishing for the wandering child to come home, to come back to him. He is looking every day for him, wishing that someday he would come back. Now, that is the story.

Now, would you tell me that God is, hard of approach? It is not so. It is not true. The only hard part about it is to get the man to come back home, be man enough to confess his sins and become obedient, be humble, be willing even to be assigned the place of a servant, and be willing to be satisfied with that. When the father of this prodigal boy saw him coming a great way off, what did he do? He sprang from his seat, ran to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, even though he was dirty, ragged, and disgraced. He put a ring on his finger, shoes on his feet, and a robe on his person. He killed the fatted calf and called in the neighbors and rejoiced over that prodigal son. He said, "My son was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found." I want to tell his brother; I want to tell my friends; I want to tell other men and women of my joy. Now, I want to get down to the point. You will never have any trouble getting God in the notion to save you; you may have trouble getting yourself in the notion to be saved. That's all the trouble you will have. God is willing to

take you in his arms and save you from sin. Now, that is the disposition of the Father. The prodigal son goes out into the far country, and God, the Father, looks for him, waits for him, watches for him. Will we leave God, crowd him out of our lives?

That is not all. We have this fine thought in the story. "There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repents than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." (Luke 15:7.) Did you ever hear the story of the woman that went to the gate of heaven and they would not allow her to come in? They sent her back to get the prettiest, the most beautiful thing in the world as a credential, and she brought the prettiest flower that bloomed, but they said, "No, that is not it." She went back and tried again. That time she brought back a mother that was widowed and had a group of children who lived in want and penury, and she was teaching them to pray in their privation. She said, "Surely that is the prettiest thing on earth," and carried that scene back. They said: "No, that is not it. Go back and try again." She went back and found a man, old, and bent, and gray. He had gone the ways of the world, and now he was broken down under the burden. He was kneeling in prayer, and tears of penitence ran down his face and were dripping off his chin, and she reached out and caught some of the tears and carried them to the gate of heaven. They said: "Yes, that is it. You can come in."

"There is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repents than over ninety and nine just people who need no repentance." God prizes a penitential tear. My friends, I want to ask you if you won't come to repentance tonight. God is waiting, God is looking, God is listening for your decision tonight. What are you going to do about it? What is your answer going to be? Will you not hear him, believe him, obey him tonight as he beckons to you? He is calling for you. How many will come while we stand and sing tonight?

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

My friends, for the text tonight we read a group of verses from the first chapter of the first letter of John, beginning with verse 5 and reading to the close of that chapter, in which we have

these words: "This is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

I began with verse 5 and read to the close of the chapter. Last evening we called the attention of the people present to this thing we call "sin"—what it is, its consequences, its devastation, its wreckage, its ruin. I tried to point out the relationship that it sustains to God, to his word, and to Christians. The Bible says that sin is a transgression of the law of God. The darkest picture that we could paint, the most miserable and awful condition we could point out, the storms, the cyclones, the tornados, the floods, all are brought on by sin. It is sin that has robbed mankind of its purity, peace, and security. It has taken the blossom of youth from men and women and brought on old age prematurely. It has robbed hearthstones of their sanctity. It has caused the withering of the flowers and the blight of trees, until the "whole creation travaileth in pain and groanings until now." I don't want to go over all those things again tonight, as I have already talked to you about them, and yet I don't know but that it would be well enough for us. It might be the best thing we could do. I feel this way about it: If people could see and realize what sin is, how devastating, how terrible, how despicable, how base, how mean, how low, how destructive it is, until it makes our ideals lie prostrate on the ground, takes away from us our physical health, our morals, our spiritual blessings, our religion, then maybe they would not be so enticed by it. Maybe we would not get so much pleasure from following in its way.

Tonight we want to turn the picture over and look on the other side. I call your attention to the fact again, as we stated last night, that Jesus Christ came to save people from their sins, and when we come to think about it, boil it down to its final analysis,

we are just forced to this conclusion, and I think logically so, that there was no other way to save men except by the way of the cross. The only way for him to save people from their sins was to pour out the last drop of blood that ran in his heart and in his veins. If you were to ask me why, I would have to say that I do not know. All that I could do would be to shake my head and say, "I do not know." If you were to ask me why he had to die, I don't know. If you were to ask me why God could not have designated water instead of blood and used it as a cleansing efficacy and virtue and power to wash away the sins of the world, I would say that I don't know. I don't want to be put in the light of limiting God's power and his mastery, but since he did not do that, since Christ had to die, since he designated the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ as a cleansing efficacy, we conclude that he could not.

Jesus Christ came to do one specific thing—save people from their sins—and in order to do that, and in order to be well-pleasing to his heavenly Father, he had to die. Don't ask me why, for that's a question I cannot answer. I do not propose to answer it. I am just trying to deal with the facts, and I am forced to conclude that it was impossible for God to save the human family in any other way. It was impossible to save men, impossible to forgive the sins of men without their hearts being cleansed from every stain until they should be as white as snow. Nothing would do that but the blood of Christ. I know it could not be done any other way. I don't know why. I am just telling you the facts and relating them to you as they are stated in this Book. If you know why, then I'd be glad to know. I would sit at your feet, even all night if necessary, to know why.

I am not going into the theology of it, if that is the term to use. I am not going into the philosophy of it. I am not going into the possibility of the impossible. I am just talking to you about the facts as they are stated and spread out for us on the pages of this little Book that I hold in my hand called the New Testament.

I know that "the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." (Isa. 51:2.) I know in the language of the Bible that the sins of man were forgiven on the single condition that Christ should give himself as a sacrifice for sin. I also know that man must cease to do evil

and learn to do well before he can be well-pleasing in the sight of Jehovah. I know that he must hear God's word; he must believe it; he must come to repentance; he must confess Christ; and he must come to an acknowledgment of his sins. God wanted man to cease to do evil. He wanted their hearts and souls cleansed from their sins and wanted them to go to heaven at last. The cross was the only way to do this; therefore, Jesus Christ was willing to give every drop of blood in his heart to cleanse men and women from their sins. God wanted man to be saved, and yet he could not do it while men and women were living in sin.

We read this statement in the text: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." If we say that we have no sin, that means that we do not need the blood of Christ as a cleansing efficacy. That is to say, on the other hand, that we all sin, and we all need the blood of the crucified, but risen, Lord. If we acknowledge our sins, however, we acknowledge that we need the blood of Christ. We need it every day, every hour, my friends. We hear John say, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." These passages mean that if we say that we have not sinned we make the declaration that we have no need of Christ's blood, and that it was shed in vain, and that it was wasted. "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." If we say that we have no sin, we make God a liar, for God says that we do. Christ cleansed us from sin by carrying our sins to the cross. He did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

There is not a man or woman of accountable age, old enough to be responsible before God, who does not need the blood of Christ. There is no other way to get to God; there is no other way to get into Christ; there is no other way to get into his church, his family, without the cleansing efficacy of the blood of the Son of God.

God has put all things in this world under his control. All that is materialistic, this which we know, everything in this world is under his rule. In the other worlds, if there are other worlds (and we are told by some that there are other worlds) whirling about us, God is the supreme ruler. Looking over the universe to find something to save men and women, God sent his beloved son to die for all men everywhere. There is just one thing, and only

one thing, that can save men and women, and that is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The blood could not save men and women without being shed. It could not redeem men while it was coursing through the veins and arteries of his body in its natural course. Remember it, friends, the blood flowing in Christ's heart could not save humanity until it was shed. His blood had to be shed before it would do man any good. Its only power, its only virtue, its only efficacy is in its being shed to cleanse men and women from sin and make them pure and white in the blood of the Lamb. It is the only hope of the world today, my friends. Take away from us the shed blood of Christ, and you take away the last bit of solid ground upon which we have to stand. Take away his blood, and everything becomes void.

I have read those passages in your hearing to show you the importance of the blood of Christ. I have tried to show you that God, with his unlimited power, wisdom, and research, who holds the world in his hand, who has everything within his grasp, materialistic or otherwise, designated the blood of Christ as the only cleansing efficacy. Listen to the Lord Jesus Christ when he went to dark Gethsemane and left the disciples to watch while he went to pray. Look at him as he kneels to pray and drops of blood flowed like sweat from every pore in his skin. Look upon him, friends, as he falls there prostrate on the ground and prayed to God like this, three times told, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."

Now, friends, don't you think it unreasonable and illogical to call on any other name than that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our crucified, but risen, Lord? In the light of Bible teaching it was not possible that the cup should pass from him. He must go to the cross and carry our sins with him there; he must be nailed to the cross; he must pour out his life's blood on Calvary in obedience to the will of God in order that we might be saved. For that reason I conclude, and I think logically so, that it was not possible that God's will be done any other way. There isn't any other way for man to be saved; therefore, in obedience to Jehovah's will, my Lord and yours died on the cruel cross in order that he might redeem mankind.

Now, I want to turn your attention to an Old Testament incident or story to get you to understand that there has never been

any sacrifice offered to God, which was acceptable to him, without the shedding of blood or its equivalent, even from the beginning. The shedding of blood has been acceptable from the beginning. I want to say that we might get discouraged sometimes, and we might have our difficulties, and throw up our hands and give up in despair, and just quit because our labors do not seem to count. Let me read you a story on the tip of my tongue just now. It occurred in the first family at the very fountainhead of human life and existence, fresh from the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel, and when those boys came to the right age to make sacrifice, we find them bringing their offerings to the Lord. We have them divided in their opinions and in their characteristics and in their traits, just as men and women are divided today. They lived under the same conditions; they had the same parents; they ate the same food; they were nurtured at the same breast; they had heard the same lullabies from old Mother Eve; they were taught the same ideals. But how different they were! How different they were in thought; how different they were in ideas! Notice them when they bring their sacrifices to the Lord. Cain brought the fruit of the ground as an offering to the Lord, and Abel brought the firstlings of his flock. Cain's offering was not acceptable to God. He was a tiller of the soil, and he brought his products as a sacrifice to the Lord. It looked beautiful to him, but it was not what God wanted. Abel was a keeper of sheep; therefore he brought the firstlings of his flock. What I am trying to point out to you is the difference in human thought and customs. We should do our own thinking. We ought not to be like driven cattle, driven here and there by public sentiment or anything else. We ought to be responsible for our conduct; but when it comes to matters in religion, where God has spoken, we should listen to him. What we think matters not at all. Cain thought his sacrifice should be acceptable, because it looked good to him.

I believe that we ought to do our own thinking. Someone said, "The reason I am a Democrat is that my people were Democrats; therefore, I am a Democrat. I am a Democrat because it so happened that I was born into a family who were Democrats." I would be ashamed of that sort of reasoning. I would be ashamed to say that I am a member of some religious body just because my father

was a member of it. I want to be a man. I want to make my own decision in matters of this sort, particularly when it comes to my religious affiliation. Are you a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ just because your father was a member of it? If that's the only reason you are a member of the church, it isn't worth the snap of your finger to you. If you are a member of some political party just because your family belonged to that particular party, it doesn't mean very much to you. We shouldn't be like driven cattle; we need to do some thinking for ourselves.

Let's notice the story of Cain and Abel, the sons of the first couple. When the two boys came to offer their sacrifices, look how differently they reasoned. One was a farmer, and the other was a keeper of sheep. The one that was a farmer went out on his farm and plucked the very best products that the fertile soil would yield, not the inferior, but the very best. I can think of nothing on earth more attractive or more acceptable or that would more easily meet our standard from the standpoint of excellence. Cain thought of nothing that could be more attractive for a sacrifice. Many people reason like that today. They think it would please God because it is attractive. People go to fairs today to put their products on exhibition because they are attractive; they look good to them. On the other hand, however, they are nothing to compare with what we have here. Sin had scarcely blighted anything on the earth. The yield from the land was great and good. The ground had not been worn out; it was alluvial, well-watered, and fertile. The land had not been washed away by various floods; therefore, the produce of Cain's land was marvelous.

He gave not only the best of it to the Lord, but he gave the first of it. He gave it abundantly, too; he was not stingy. Friends, if you will let me step aside long enough to do so, I want to tell you that this idea that we have of serving God today is wrong. I am talking about this idea of giving what we have left (if there is anything left after we have all we want) to the" service of God. We wear the good clothes until we tire of them or until they become rags and then give them to the poor. That is not a sacrifice. If you want to sacrifice, you wear the old suit and buy the poor man a new suit. We can't serve God with the shakings of the tablecloth. We can't give him the leftovers. If you would serve

God acceptably, take the little hungry, dirty child from off the street, bathe him, clean him up, give him the foods that he needs, give him the proper clothing. Give him the very best care that you can. Don't be stingy with it.

Cain didn't see how little he could do, but how much he could do. I want to ask this audience to read the last book of the Old Testament. It is not large. It contains only four chapters, and they are not long. Read it, study it, and get the lesson. The prophet is rebuking them for not offering the best to the Lord. They wanted to give that which was not pleasing to him. They gave that which was not marketable, which was defiled, which was not good, which was no account to the Lord. That was what they offered for sacrifice, and the prophet rebuked them. He told them they would not offer it to their governor. If you were going to send the governor of this state a present, you would not send him something you did not care for. If you were going to send the governor of Tennessee something, you would send him the best. If you were going to send the governor a turkey for Thanksgiving, you would not send the worst one in your whole flock. You would want to send him the very finest one you could find. Jesus Christ is the King of everything, our Exemplar, our Ruler, our Savior, and you want to give him something that you would not dare give the governor of a little state like Tennessee, and that is no reflection on Tennessee. Offering something you do not care for and something you would not give to the governor of your state is no honor to Jesus Christ, the governor of your soul and mine, the King and Savior of mankind. They were commanded to give a tenth under the law, and, at least, we ought to do as well toward Jesus Christ, the Son of righteousness and the Light of the world, the Bright and Morning Star, our Prophet, Priest, King, our Exemplar, and our Leader. He is all in all in the light of the Bible, and here we come bringing him something that we would not even give to our governor. They did not even have the Bible written at that time; there was not a line of it written then. They did not have the Book to guide them as we have, no experiences of other men related, no history. We have the benefit of all these, and yet we will do things that even those people who lived back there in the shadows, before daybreak, would not do.

Cain gave the best that he had. It was what he had worked for. It was what he had chosen with great care.

Our sacrifices should be given to the glory and honor of God. Can we do it to the honor and to the glory of God outside of the church? Can we give to a cause outside the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and do it to his honor? We cannot give it as he has instructed if we do.

Cain offered that which he thought would be attractive to God. Man would think that would be attractive. We would like to pick up those large, luscious fruits and look at them and admire them, even taste them, and perhaps brag on them. They would be a delight to us, but that was not what God wanted for a sacrifice. Abel, on the other hand, went out to his flocks and selected a lamb of the first year, one without spot or blemish. He took it by the head and cut its throat and killed it. Lots of people today cannot even kill a chicken. People turn their backs on it. It is not attractive. It is repulsive to them. Here the sacrifice was not beautiful to the eyes of men, but it was pleasing to God. Cain's sacrifice was attractive to the eyes of men; Abel's sacrifice does not attract men. It is repugnant. When Abel killed that lamb, and when it was put on the altar and the flesh burned to ashes, that sacrifice pleased God. God accepted this one, and he rejected the other one.

What are we trying to do today? We are doing our very best, our level best, to make the services of the church attractive, and I sometimes wonder if they are acceptable. There is just as much sense in Cain's trying to please God by offering what appealed to his appetite. He offered that which appealed to the appetites and proclivities of men, that which appealed to man's taste and which seemed beautiful to him, that which served to satisfy his animal makeup. Our services are sometimes about like that. Our preaching, singing, and sacrifices are about like that. Yes, friends, they are about like Cain's sacrifice—pleasing to men, but not acceptable to God. Our preaching is that which men like to hear. It does not matter whether I like it or not. My God is the one who is to be pleased, and I ought to be big enough to say the right thing regardless of what anyone may say about it. I cannot be what God wants me to be and always be pleasing to men. I want to be able to look at things in the light that God looks on

them. I wonder sometimes how God looks on the services of the church today, how he estimates them. I wonder if he praises them. I wonder if we have not been trying to make music to suit somebody's ear rather than in our hearts, and the Bible requires the latter, doesn't it? It is all right to sing well if we can, but we are "to make melody in our hearts." (Eph. 5:19.) God does not look on outward appearance. God looks on the heart. Cain brought the Lord what he thought was beautiful. Was Abel's sacrifice of more value than Cain's? No! Value does not count. It is not the amount I offer. I suppose that what Cain offered, from the standpoint of intrinsic and extrinsic value, was better than that which Abel offered. It isn't the amount always that counts. Therefore, the thing for us to do is to do just exactly what God says.

Get this statement, "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead, yet speaketh." (Heb. 11:4.) He lives in spite of the fact that the grass has grown over him. He still talks to men and women through the Bible. He offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than his brother. The Bible says "by faith" he did it. When we do things by the word of God, we know they are acceptable. God had spoken, and Abel did what God told him to do. Cain did what he thought would be acceptable, and there are plenty of people like that today. They think that if a man is earnest and honest that will get you to heaven, but there is the difference. Just think about their sacrifices. One had blood, the other did not. One was accepted, and the other was rejected. One was the giving up of life, and the other was not. That is the difference. One is a type of "the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:36), and the other is not. One is for atonement, and the other is not.

We sin on what is outside of the Bible. In the language of the text, "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with the other, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." What Abel did that day he might not have been able to interpret, but the Bible says he did it by faith. He probably could not look through it and see just what it meant. It was actually a type of the Lamb of God going to the

cross and carrying my sins with him there. It was a type of Christ going to the cross for the sins of all people, everywhere, all over the world, irrespective of the color of the skin or the brogue of the tongue. The blood that flowed from the lamb's veins that day is a type of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that poured from his heart on the cross when he gave his life for you and me. His sacrifice did not have a thing about it beautiful. The cross is not pretty. There is nothing attractive about that sacrifice, but when it comes to the virtue, the efficacy, the power, and the benefit to man, this was the sacrifice that counted. There was just as much in that sacrifice that was rejected as there is in anything else that man devises outside of the New Testament. Nothing you can arrange outside of the New Testament, any doctrine that you preach outside of the New Testament, any theories you can advance, any work you can do outside of the New Testament is not a bit better than that sacrifice that Cain offered that day in the long ago. We can get a lesson from that in doing what we do by faith. We can do just as well by doing what God says to do. I have thought lots of times that we have not yet been able to drink to the depth of anything we do.

I wonder when we come to the Lord's table with bared heads and humble hearts if we realize that we are in the presence of Jesus and that we are there as his invited guests. We are invited to come out of the world to break the bread and drink the cup that proclaims to the world the undying love of the world's Redeemer. We know that it carries us back to things past; and then takes us into the future when Jesus shall come again. The Book tells us that much. I wonder if we will be embarrassed and afraid to stand in his presence when he comes. Will we receive from his beneficent hand the jeweled crown that shall bedeck our brow and shine with splendor forever and forever? How many of you think about it like that? How many of us drink to the fullest the meaning of this feast? I wonder how many of us get the full meaning of Christ on the cross with his bleeding palms nailed thereto. I wonder how many of us understand why we are buried with him in baptism and arise to walk in newness of life. Do you realize the fullness of it when we read passages like this: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the

dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:29.)

I want to turn your attention to another text that we find in the New Testament. I am reading from the language of our Lord in Matt. 26:28, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." I want you to get this point. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the remission of sins. Here the Lord had met with his disciples and instituted the Lord's Supper. He picked up the cup and said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Now get this point. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is of the New Testament; it belongs to the New Testament; it is associated with the New Testament. Not a drop went with the Old Testament. There are thirty-nine books in the Old Testament, but not a drop of his blood is of the Old Testament. Not a drop of it belongs to the Old Testament. There is not enough blood in all of the Old Testament to save one soul unless that soul could be saved without the blood of Christ. The blood of those animals could never take sins away; therefore, if we have all the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and live absolutely according to their standard, if such a thing could be, we could not be saved. We have the New Testament today, and we are to live by it. That passage tells us that his blood is of the New Testament. It does not belong to any one book more than to another of the New Testament. The New Testament is the receptacle that holds it. Each and every drop of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is found in the New Testament, and not a drop could be found anywhere else. The person that does not come to the New Testament can never expect to be saved from his sins. The blood of the Old Testament will never wipe away sins, for the cleansing efficacy and power of the blood of the Redeemer is found in the New Testament.

I want to read from the Apostle Paul again. He is talking about the Lord's Supper in the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians, verse 25. He speaks in this language, "This cup is the new testament in my blood." This passage says, "is the new testament in my blood." The other passage said, "This is my blood of the new testament." We cannot come to Christ any other way.

Now we come back to the story of Cain and Abel again. The passage showed us that Abel offered his sacrifice by faith, and Cain substituted what he thought would be all right. "By faith Abel offered up a more excellent sacrifice." Faith comes by hearing God's word, and Abel did what God told him to do, and he came in contact with the blood. That blood was typical of the blood that was going to be shed. Man was going to be washed in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The man who thinks he can substitute something else for a cleansing efficacy is mistaken and deceived on that point, and unless he learns that he is mistaken he is lost. He has to come to the New Testament. I want to lay this thought on your minds: We have the blood of Christ in the New Testament. His blood and the New Testament are linked together and are inseparable, and when you come to one, you come to the other.

I also want to read to you from the twentieth chapter of Acts, verse 28, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Now, then, we have the blood of Christ in the New Testament and in the church, and you cannot separate them. No, it is absolutely impossible, friends. I want to tell you again that this book, the New Testament, is the receptacle that holds every drop of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot find it anywhere else, and you can never experience its cleansing efficacy and virtue unless you come to it. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ, that verse says, was purchased with the blood. Yes, he bought it with his own blood, and he loved it so much that he gave himself for it. There is not a drop of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in any other church. This is the only one he purchased with his blood.

Do you remember the story of the passing of the death angel over the land of Egypt? The instruction was given to put blood of the paschal lamb on the doorposts, for the destroying angel is going over tonight, and when he sees that blood he will pass over it and not harm anybody in that house; but where there is not found blood, he will take the life of the firstborn in that family. (Ex. 12:7-12.) I want to show you, friends, that when the destroying angel passed over and saw those bloodstains that family

was protected. They were protected by the power of those bloodstains, but those bloodstains could not protect them if they were outside the door. The bloodstains of our Lord could not protect us outside of his church. If you are in the church, you are under the blood of Christ. They mean nothing to you unless you are in his body, the church. God is under no obligation to show his power only as we may be within its bloodstained walls, in the church. Then you tell me that the church does not amount to anything? I want to ask you what you think. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only institution of any kind that has the blood of Jesus in it. If you are outside his church, not a member of his church, then you are outside his blood. I want to ask you, friends, did you ever read that story, getting its meaning? I remember it said, "None of you shall go out of his house till morning." (Verse 22.) We have men and women running in and out of the church like bees running out of hives when the sweets are there. Then he runs out into the fields among the clover. When the inducements come, when everything is sweet and fine, they are thinking but a very little about it; when things go wrong, they send for the preacher and want him to pray for them, and they want to renew their allegiance to the church. As soon as everything gets back to normal, then they go out again. You had better get in his church, and stay in it, and stay out of everything else. That's the only safe rule. If you are not in the church, get in it and work in it. It is the blood-bought institution that will protect you from the onset of the enemy, his devastation and his destroying influence. You are protected only as long as you are within its walls. Notice now, here is the blood of the new testament, and the new testament in the blood, and the church purchased with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Put them together.

I want to read another passage to you. This is found in Hebrews. "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. 12:22-24.)

This is a remarkable group of verses, and we have meditated hour after hour on those wonderful metaphors and remarkable language. We find such expressions as "the innumerable company of angels"; "the spirits of just men made perfect"; "God the judge of all"; "the mountain of Zion, and the holy city"; "the church of the first-born"; "the new Jerusalem"; "Jesus, the mediator of the new testament"; and "to the blood of the sprinkling, that speaketh better things to come." Did you ever hear that blood talked? Did you ever hear it say anything? The Bible says that it speaks, but many of us hear not, see not, and touch not. The poet said that "the stars e'er singing as they shine, the hand that made us *is* divine," said that the stars talked. We have them all over the world in civilized and uncivilized countries alike. Did you ever hear the stars say anything? Why, we have people who will go down town and stay all day long and come home in the evening and not see a thing. After being there all day, someone will ask them, "What did you see today?" "Nothing." "Didn't you see anybody?" "No" The show windows were filled with things to see, and people crowded all the streets, bumping against one another all day long, and yet you come back not seeing anything or anyone. That's the way many of us read the Bible. We read it without seeing what is there. The Bible tells us that the blood of Christ speaks better things than that of Abel. Then what does Abel's blood say? It cries unto the ground, calling for vengeance, calling for judgment, calling for condemnation. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ calls for cleansing from sin, calls for forgiveness, calls for mercy. Yes, the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ speaks better things than the blood of Abel.

We are under the New Testament. We are to live under it. The church is an institution of the New Testament. The church was bought with blood, even the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The blood is in the New Testament. Just one other thing, blood is always sprinkled in the language of the Bible. You never read of it any other way, or anything that typifies blood. That accounts for "clean water" in the Old Testament being sprinkled for a type. It didn't say "pure, clean water," for clean water is not pure water. I heard a preacher on the radio not a great while ago endeavoring to strengthen that by saying, "having your bodies washed in pure, clean water," Then he spoiled the whole thing.

It said, "having your bodies washed in pure water," but he said, "in pure, clean water." Clean water has certain chemicals added to it. It has something else added to it, and clean water is a mixture. We ought not to try to add anything like that to the Scriptures. He should have read it like the Scriptures say it, "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." (Heb. 10:22.) The blood was sprinkled in the Old Testament. The blood of Christ in the new testament is under consideration, however.

Turn to the ninth chapter of Hebrews when you have time and read it. We haven't time to go into it tonight. In it we have the story of a will and the death of the man who made it. It tells us that a testament is of force after the man is dead. It further says that "when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled the book and all the people." They were purged with the blood of animals. We are purged by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is sprinkled on the church, and on the Book, and on everything used in the service of the church. They must be purged with the blood; and if the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is not on them, they are unholy, destructive, and ruinous, and did not come from God, and did not come from the New Testament. If it is not in the New Testament, we had better not practice it. I have been asked this question, "What is your leading objection to the use of musical instruments in the worship of God?" Here is my leading objection: It is not in the New Testament. It is not covered by the blood of Christ. The New Testament knows nothing of it. It was not practiced by Christ and his apostles. Christ's blood was sprinkled on the New Testament, and anything in it has been purged and sanctified with his blood. Anything not in it does not have the blood of Christ on it, and it cannot be used in worship and service to God. When you look over it, you will find it like this: Where did the New Testament say one word about musical instruments in worship? Nowhere, and it is without the blood of Christ and cannot be used. It is just as strange to God as the fire that Nadab and Abihu offered.

Lots of people are trying to get to heaven on what the Bible does not say: I am trying to go there by what it says. The blood

of Christ is not on anything that you cannot read there. The blood of Christ is on the church of God, on the New Testament, and it cleanses us from all sin. The Bible says that "if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." That is the ultimate result, and the light is the word of God.

I want to ask you tonight if you don't want to be a member of the church bought with the blood of Jesus Christ. Won't you let the blood of Christ cleanse you, redeem you, save you, purify your heart, and cleanse your life? Won't you come believing him, repenting of your sins, confessing his name? Won't you come and be buried with him in baptism and rise to walk in a new life that ever leads onward and upward? Won't you come in obedience to your crucified, but risen, Lord and take your stand on the New Testament? Christ is pleading with you to come and drink of the water of life. He invites you to come. "Come all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.) He is not going to force himself on you. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20.) He is not going to break in on you. Do you want him to be the guest at your table and in your home? If you will open your heart and invite him in, he will come. Why will you delay when mercy is so near and salvation is offered to you without money and without price? Just surrender your stubborn will and come to him. If there are Christians living in this community without a regular place of worship, you are invited to come and identify yourself with this congregation. If you have been a Christian and have not been living as you should, won't you come tonight and make acknowledgment of your wrongs and start anew? How many in this splendid audience will come tonight?

PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

My friends, I feel that it would be remiss in me if I did not express to you at this time my sincere appreciation of your presence tonight. Being the second Saturday night of our series of meetings and to have this fine audience is about the most hearten-

ing thing we have experienced in a long time. People, as a rule, do not like to attend religious services on Saturday night. To have this fine audience is quite pleasing to me; and if I should fail in my effort to teach a lesson that is worth while, I am sure that it will not be because I have not received from your presence inspiration to that end.

Those who were here last evening will recall, I hope, the group of verses read in your hearing, and from them we hope to teach this lesson. I hope you have not forgotten that to reach salvation we must grow to it, and we must get rid of those things which stunt our growth and poison our bloodstream before we can grow. On the other hand, there is offered to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ a balanced diet for spiritual development, and it ultimately ends in salvation that is eternal. Whether or not we grow depends on how much we desire the sincere milk of the word. You remember the Scripture says, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 2:2-5.) Yes, friends, he also has left a "holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Now, that is another very fine reading which ought to afford us a very fine lesson. If we could not do anything more than call the attention of this audience to these verses until they became thoroughly familiar to you and until they became a part of you, I am sure we could not make a failure in the service tonight. I know of no group of verses containing more material for thought or more necessary and essential to our well-being and welfare than these. Without wasting words, and to make a long story short, we might just remember that he who comes to Christ comes as unto a living stone. Jesus Christ is that living stone. Our faith, our hope, and our salvation all rest on him. Everything that means anything at all is built on him as a foundation. When the Scripture said "living stone," that marks a division in his life, that part of his life that follows the resurrection. Up to that time it was never said that he was a "living stone," but after that time it was said of him. Remember, now,

that it was after his resurrection that this was said of him; before that time it was not said of him.

We find further that the Bible says that he "is head over the body, which is the church." (Col. 1:18.) This was not said before his resurrection, but after that time it was stated. I want to say for once and for all that he became all authority from the day that he lifted his head from the lap of the night of death on which he had slept. He is then represented as the living stone.

I want to suggest further that when you read from the fourth chapter of Acts you will find that the apostles were questioned as to what authority or in what name "you have done these miracles." Peter said that all we have done, we have done "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead." (Acts 4:10.) He further says, "This is the stone which was set at naught of your builders, which is become the head of the corner; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:11.) Therefore, if a man rejects Christ as the head of the corner, he rejects his authority. Further than this, another Scripture says, "... Upon this rock I will build my church," (Matt. 16:18), which expresses the same thought. Christ was alive then. He had not yet died. The Scripture also says, "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" [the church]. (Matt. 16:18.) Gates mean the power of a city; they are the means of ingress and egress. Hence, when Jesus went in through the gates of death, he went out the same.

In the first chapter of Romans, verse 4, then, we find him (Christ) declared to be "the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." When Jesus Christ was risen from the dead, he was selected by God to be the chief corner stone. Yes, God elected him, and upon him the church was built.

Sometimes we hear folk talk about the church and say, "Well, it doesn't matter when the church was built." I think they are wrong, and I want to suggest that the church could not have been built until the foundation was laid. That foundation is Jesus Christ, your Savior and mine, and the foundation was not laid until after he was proven, tested, and raised from the dead. One passage we read said that "the stone that the builders rejected

became the head of the corner." The other said that "he was disallowed of men, chosen and precious." After men rejected him on one hand and disallowed him on the other, God chose, elected, and laid him in Zion as the foundation of the church, and inasmuch as this selection was made he became the living stone, it seems to be plain that he was not the living stone until after he was raised from the dead. From then on he was spoken of as the Perfect One. Up to that time that term was not used. Then he became the author of eternal salvation. Mark you, that was when he was made perfect, when he was laid in Zion as the foundation of the church.

Another passage tells us this in the second chapter of Ephesians, "Now, therefore, we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." (Eph. 2:20.) He is the chief corner stone, and his church is built upon the foundation and unto that everyone else is added. God could not add men to the church until it existed. Now, I would not attempt to limit the power of God, but I do not believe that God could lead men to something that did not exist. We cannot be joined and built into Christ until the foundation is laid and has an actual existence in the world.

Then, further than that, we want to impress upon your minds this point: that we come unto him as unto a living stone. Read Revelation the first chapter and you will find a statement like this, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18.) Read the Great Commission, as it is called, and you will find that he told his apostles that "all authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me." (Matt. 28:18) The other version says, "all power in heaven and on earth is given unto me." Perhaps neither of those apostles originated the term used, but one set of translators thinks "power" is better than "authority," and another thinks that "authority" is better than "power." He not only had authority to give law and offer the conditions of pardon, but he had power to execute that law. We have lawmaking bodies in this country who have the power to make laws, but they are impotent to en-

force them. Jesus Christ is not only able to make laws, but is powerful enough to execute in detail everything about it.

Let me suggest, further, in the event somebody would argue that the church was established prior to the resurrection of Christ, this point: Jesus Christ is the living foundation, and he was not living until he was raised from the dead; therefore, if it had been established before Christ was raised from the dead, then it would be without a foundation. Now wouldn't it, friends?

But that is not all. I wish to call your attention now to another passage of scripture which tells us that when he ascended to heaven God gave him a name above every name, and there is salvation in none other name. (Eph. 1:21; Phil. 2:9; Acts 4:12.) If it was established before the resurrection, then it was established without a name and without salvation. When he ascended to heaven, God gave him to be head over all things; therefore, if the church was established before the resurrection of Christ, it would have been established without a head. Yes, friends, it would be a body without a head, a building without a foundation, an institution without a name.

Further than that, I might call your attention to another point. That is, if Jesus Christ was the foundation of the church before this, it was without his blood. His blood was shed on the cross; and if it was not possible that his blood could take away a single sin until it was shed, then the church was established without his blood. While it was in his veins, it could not remit sins. It had no cleansing efficacy until it was shed. There was no priest on earth holy enough to offer that cleansing blood. It took Jesus Christ, who gave his own blood, and he went into the holiest of holies and ascended to heaven and is the great high priest; therefore, if the church existed before the resurrection and before he ascended to heaven, it had an unregenerated membership.

Jesus Christ is the living stone that lives forevermore, beginning from the resurrection. The Book says, ". . . and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the workings of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;

and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church." (Eph. 1:19-22.) I believe this should be sufficient on this point. I have showed you that if the church was established prior to the resurrection of Jesus Christ that it would be without a foundation, without a name, without a head, without a regenerated membership. It would have people in it who had not been saved, and it would amount to nothing in the world.

The Bible said that Christ "was chosen of God and precious; ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." I want to talk to you for just a little bit about that. "Ye also as living stones . . ." he said. That would make the house of God a living institution. It is not made up of inanimate material. It is made up of living human beings. I know of a meetinghouse in the city in Dallas, Texas, which has on it these words, "This Is the House of God." It is not any such thing. The church isn't made of inanimate material. The church is the house of God all right, but it is made of living material. It was taken from the words of the apostle when he said, "I am writing these things that ye may know how to behave yourselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God." (1 Tim. 3:15.) Remember that the church is made up of living people. If I were to read that Noah built an ark to save all of his house, I would not have any trouble convincing you that he meant his family. That is what the apostle meant. When I read about Cornelius and his house or the jailer and his house receiving the gospel, that means their family. You would understand that. You would know that his family means his wife and children. The children of God are his family; they are in his house, and the house is the church of Jesus Christ, for which he shed his blood. Every Christian is in it, and whatever it takes to make you a Christian, it takes that to make you a child of God, a member of his family. Whatever it takes to make a Christian, it takes that to put you in the church. That may not be very transparent to people who are beclouded and confused with theories and denominational ideas, but it is the teaching of the Bible. That's what the Book says about it. The Bible says, "You are *living* stones." You are not only a stone, but a *living* stone. Of course, he is not talking about the rocks under your feet; he is talking about men and women. They are

regarded as rocks because they are steadfast, firm, and solid. There are lots of folk in the church who would do well to read that—not that I am disparaging toward the church of the living God in the least. I am not talking just now about the living God, the living Christ, the living Holy Spirit, the living water, the living bread, the living word, or the living sacrifice, but I am talking about LIVING STONES. Everything in the church is living; everything is alive about the church. I want to tell you, my friends, there is no place for dead folk in the church. It is a living institution, a moving, active, powerful organization of workmen. It is alive, and it is by the lives that we live that we can be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

There is another point I would like to make. On one occasion Jesus Christ was talking to the Sadducees, who had the wrong conception about the resurrection of the dead, and he told them God is the father of the living. (Matt. 22:23-32.) He said that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead, and God was not the father of the dead, but of the living. If you are a dead stone, and if you are in a dead church, then God is not your father, for he is a living God, and everything about his church is living. The foundation is alive, and every member built into the foundation is alive. It is alive all the way.

As I have tried to say many times on funeral occasions, the Bible was not written for the dead folk, but for the living, and I do not believe that God wrote the Bible for dead men. I do not believe that God ever made a flower to grow for the dead. He made them to grow for the living. He wrote every line in the Bible for the living. The beautiful twenty-third Psalm was written for the living. We ought not to leave that out. Every time somebody dies, we put flowers on his grave, and we ought to do that; but I believe we ought to put flowers in the lives of the living as well as on the graves of the dead. I think there are quotations that ought to be read when there are no flowers in the heart of someone. It is ours to give faith to men and women while they are living. We ought to make them look up and not down while they are living. We ought to wipe away their tears while they live. I want to say that there never was an institution on the face of the earth that had as much life or stands for as much as the church

of the Lord Jesus Christ. The reason Christ was raised from the dead was that he might resurrect us from death.

You will observe that these living stones about whom we have been talking are built up a spiritual house, and, as I remarked before, that house is the house of God. It is the church which is the pillar and support of the truth. That is the statement of the Bible, and note that the word "pillar" is spelled "p-i-l-l-a-r," not "p-i-l-l-o-w," but some members of the church seem to think it is "p-i-l-l-o-w." We need to work; we need to preach the gospel out in the field; we need to comfort the sick and brokenhearted; we need to lift up the hands that hang down.

The word of God is represented as a lamp to our feet, and we ought to send that light to all the world. We ought to send that light to those in darkness. We ought to share it with all the world. The members of the church are the light of the world; therefore, the word is represented as the lamp, and the church as the light. The church in another figure is the candlestick. It does not give any light, but it holds up the light, which is the word of God. The purpose of the church is to give the light to the world, and the church has no right to do anything else. Whenever we get into politics we have gotten outside of the purpose of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be the pillar and support of the truth, the candlestick to hold up the light to all the world. It is the one institution dedicated to maintaining and holding up and supporting the word of God, believing it, loving it, and preaching it. That is the thought and ideal of this spiritual house. I am talking about the Spirit of God. There are many spirits in the world, but God has only one spiritual house, which is the church.

I want to read another passage from the Bible, "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual [that is, full of the Spirit], let him acknowledge that what I write unto you are the commandments of God." (1 Cor. 14:39.) Inasmuch as the church is a great spiritual house, it must acknowledge that what Paul wrote are the commandments of God. Another passage I read before I want to read now, "Therefore, we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-

stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." Then we are a spiritual building. The church is a spiritual house, and, being spiritual, we cannot take material things into it. Things that are not spiritual have no place in it.

I want to call your attention now to spiritual sacrifices. Suppose we were talking about sacrifices that are not spiritual, just leaving off the word spiritual and talking about sacrifices. There is not a person in this audience, among us, that would not know what we meant by a sacrifice if he has ever given up anything that he needed. When he gave up something he really needed, he made a sacrifice. We have to give up something we need to make a sacrifice. If I read the Bible correctly, the way to heaven is the way of sacrifice. To give up something for which we have no need is not a sacrifice. We can give clothes that we have discarded and cut the buttons off if they are worth a nickel, and give away shoes that are of no value to us, and somewhat pacify ourselves that we have sacrificed and served God and our fellow man. It may be that our discarded clothes have helped someone, but that is not a sacrifice to us. I do not doubt that our discarded clothing can be used to help humanity, but that is not a sacrifice, friends. Suppose you wear the ragged garment and give a garment that is not ragged to the poor. That would be sacrifice. Suppose you wear an old, ragged garment and give another man a new suit that you really needed. That's sacrifice. Have you ever made a sacrifice? When you make your contributions to the Lord, do you make a sacrifice? Or do you give what you have left over after you have satisfied all your own wants? Do you just give your left-overs to the Lord after you have gotten all you desired? Do you buy all you want and then give a paltry sum to the Lord? Is that the way you do? Do you pay for automobile tires and gasoline to ride around all you care to, and then if there is anything left give that to the Lord? Do you try to serve God by giving him the shakings from your tablecloth—just giving him the crumbs? Do you think you can serve God acceptably that way? You would not undertake to serve a king that way, and we ought not to try to serve God, who gives us everything that we have, in such a way as that.

A few nights ago I read you some scriptures telling us that God's name had been polluted because some folk put that which was with blemish, that which they could not sell, that which they could not use, that which was of no value at all, upon his altar and into his service, and God would not accept that. He said, I am a great king, and you wouldn't treat your governor as you have done me. (Mai. 1:8.) Here is Jesus Christ, the king of kings, the king eternal, and you would not treat him as well as you would the governor of the State of Tennessee. We go out and work for a week's salary and then on Saturday night go to the picture show or buy everything we want to buy, never thinking about the Lord. We don't consider anything along that line until Sunday morning comes, and it never occurs to us that we should give something to the Lord until the collection plate is passed around and we have to hold up the procedure while we rake out a copper or a nickel or a dime, and we have to scatch around in our pockets for them. We need to get our contribution ready the first thing in the morning when we start to meeting. We ought to make up our minds how much we are going to give and have it ready. We ought to take God's part out the first thing. There are many people who are trying to serve God out of their surplus, out of what they have left after they have bought all they want to buy. That's not the way to serve God. It is an insult to God. That's not a sacrifice.

Another point for our consideration is this: Sometimes we sit still until we are driven to give and feel that we cannot get out of it. The Bible says that we are not to give of necessity. (2 Cor. 9:7.) It is much better to give freely without being forced to give. You know the poor widow gave all that she had, and that was but two little mites. She did it from the liberality of her heart. Then look at Mary with her alabaster box of ointment as she pours it on the Lord Jesus Christ. She was not forced to do it, but she did it from the liberality in her great heart. See her as she breaks the box and pours the contents on her Lord. See the tears in her eyes, and watch her kiss his feet. Then see the economical business men with Judas Iscariot say: "That is riot necessary, That could have been sold for a price and given to the poor." (Matt. 26:7.) Of course Judas was not caring for the poor. We have plenty of brethren in the church who do

not give until they feel that it is necessary to give. They say, "When we need it, I will dig it up." That *is* not the question. That isn't it at all. Are you sacrificing? Are you giving to the Lord as you should? Are we letting someone else pay all the expenses while we ride along as a piece of driftwood on a swollen stream? Friends, if we ever get to heaven, it will not be done that way. Let's never think that we can get there that way. Some folk think they have to get out here and serve ice cream at exorbitant prices and raise money for a church. That's not the way the Bible tells us to do it. We don't have to serve pink teas in order to raise money for the Lord, for that's not the way he wants us to do it.

There is another point I would like to make, and it would not be hard to see it if we were not selfish. It is this, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35.) If we could get that point, we would do well. When the beggar stretched out his emaciated hand and asked Peter for alms, Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee." (Acts 3:6.) Peter realized that. God may hold us accountable for not having any more to give. It is possible that I may do the best I can on the occasion, but he may hold me accountable for not having any more to give. Maybe I have not done my best; maybe I have not economized as I should. We are living in a generation of spendthrifts, and the result is that we are going into bankruptcy unless we call a halt. You remember Christ said to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." (Matt. 22:21.) Are we giving to God as we ought to give?

God told the Jewish people that if they would bring their tithes and offerings of which they had robbed him he would open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings upon them. If they would bring their sacrifices to him, he would bless them abundantly. Look at David back yonder when the plague took the lives of seventy thousand persons. David came to the threshing floor of Araunah, and Araunah asked why the king had come to visit him. He told him that he had come to buy the threshing floor, and Araunah said: "Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him, take the oxen for burnt sacrifice and the threshing implements for wood. I will give it to you." David said: No, I will not take that which is yours. I won't

offer burnt offerings to the Lord which were without cost. I will pay you the just cost. Then David bought the threshing floor and oxen and counted out the money and paid the full amount. (2 Sam. 24:20-25.)

I have chanced to see this working among the people of God sometimes: Here is a widow or an orphan in need, and someone wants to get food and clothing. He goes to a merchant saying: "There is a poor widow over there in need of food and clothing. Won't you sell it at wholesale price?" Now, if you want to please God, you won't do it that way. You will pay him the full price. That's what David did, and he didn't even have the New Testament teaching of Christ along this line. He only had the imperfect teaching of the Old Testament, just that which led up to the Lord Jesus Christ, which led up to the light of the glorious day. Here we are in the sunlight and full possession of his teaching and come down to that sort of thing. What do you think about it, friends? What do you think about a man going to a merchant, oftentimes a sinner, on behalf of an orphan child and asking him if he will give something off the cost and sell it to him for less than he will to anybody else? Then that man goes out and tells how much he has done for the poor; he didn't do it at all. The merchant was the one who really gave it. He just swapped dollars with you, and you claim the benefit from it and the virtue in it! If you want to please Almighty God, pay the full price for it. It takes that to sweeten the sacrifice. When the dearest object that clings to our heart is taken away, it is taken because God wants it. He takes it because he needs it, and we ought to rejoice that we had it to give.

The idea of sacrifice is this: You give something up for the benefit of someone else, and when it is gone, you will miss it. You are willing to do without it because it will bring a blessing to someone else, but you will feel the pain of its going. You made a material sacrifice. You might make a material sacrifice, and it would not be a spiritual sacrifice, but can you think of the church offering anything but spiritual sacrifices? We have a picture of the church in the Old Testament tabernacle. Certain ones would come and offer sacrifice, and nobody else could come within a certain distance of the place where sacrifices were being offered. Certain Levites would come at one time and the family of Aaron

at another time. When one tribe was there, another could not go. Suppose somebody out of another tribe came in. What would happen? You know, don't you? Suppose even a priest, one who was ordained and recognized as a priest, or one of the house of Aaron had brought in something that was unauthorized and offered it. What would happen to him? You know what would happen. You know what happened to Nadab and Abihu when they offered strange fire before the Lord. The book of Numbers, chapter 3, verse 4, said that they did that which was not commanded; and when a child of God does something not commanded by Almighty God, he is in the same sort of predicament that they were. Oftentimes we are willing to show liberality and raise money for some unfortunate persons. That is fine, but when we come to make application of it, we will turn it over to the Red Cross or to some other organization of which the Bible knows nothing, and that organization gets the praise. It is proper to make the sacrifices and raise the money, but it should be done by the right persons and in the right institution, and that is the church.

A thing could not be spiritual unless the Spirit had something to do with it. A sacrifice could not be spiritual unless the Spirit had authorized it. Whenever you get out of the New Testament, you leave out the Holy Spirit. He was to come to "bring all things to your remembrance." Christ said. "He shall teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that I have said unto you." (John 14:26.)

When you come to read this little Book of two hundred sixty chapters, it is the language of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit has not taught something and has not required it, then it is not spiritual. That *is* the only way that a spiritual thing can come to us. It cannot be spiritual unless it comes through a spiritual institution. The church is that spiritual institution that should receive your sacrifice and dispose of it. There is not another spiritual institution in the world besides it. It doesn't matter what you may think about it, that fact is still true. Whatever we may think of the church and as little regard as we sometimes may have for it, these things I am saying to you about it are clearly taught in the New Testament. Note now: for a thing to be spiritual, the Spirit must command it. To be spiritual, a spiritual person

or institution must offer it. The Spirit tells you what and how and when it is to be offered.

In talking about singing, the Bible says that we are to "sing with the spirit and with the understanding also." (1 Cor. 14:15.) Note that it tells you how to sing—with the spirit and understanding. You cannot substitute anything else for that. People have tried to substitute something else for it, and that is why the difference exists between the Christian Church and the church of Christ. They say, "Oh, we agree on fundamentals." Well, do we? Whatever the New Testament teaches on one thing is as fundamental as its teachings on anything else. What do you mean by fundamentals of Christianity? "We mean the conditions by which people become Christians," they say. What would the Bible mean if it commanded certain things as fundamental and others as not? Just what would it mean to you, friends? The idea of such a thing! "Why," they say, "we agree on fundamentals." Friends, we are divided on fundamentals. When the Bible says to sing, we must sing. We understand that. We know that we are to sing spiritual songs. That is fundamental; and when the Bible says to sing *with the spirit and with the understanding also*, that, too, is fundamental. When we do anything else, we have not done what the Bible commands. This is a spiritual institution. Why? Because the Spirit taught it. The Holy Spirit told us how and what to do. The Holy Spirit said for us to do that; therefore, it is spiritual. We are to do that because we are "living stones, chosen of God and precious, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Whenever the church of the Lord Jesus Christ offers something not written in the New Testament, it is not a spiritual sacrifice, and it is a terrible mistake to offer it. When the church of the Lord Jesus Christ will take an unholy thing, a strange thing, and offer it to God, certainly it is not a spiritual sacrifice. We ought to stay within the lids of the Book, friends, and we ought to stay out of everything else.

One other thought before we close. The apostle said this, and I believe that it covers the field substantially, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your

spiritual service." That is the reading of Romans the twelfth chapter and the first verse. There we have it. Think about it for a while. It says, "your bodies," in the plural—not singular. That means every child of God. Many people constitute the body of Christ, and everyone put together makes one body. Then it is a living sacrifice, not a dead one. God has no more use for a dead body than you have; therefore, I suggest to you that he wants your living body. He wants men and women who are alive, hale, and hearty. He wants a living sacrifice. You could not be a living sacrifice and have your own way all the time. You can't be a living sacrifice and eat everything you want to eat, and drink everything you want to drink, smoke, think as you please, and do as you please. You could not do that and be a living sacrifice. You have to do without some things, and you would have to do some things for someone else. God asks you to give him your whole body. He wants your hands, your feet, your tongue. He wants you to surrender your whole body to him. He said to "present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." That is what the Bible said. We are to submit our whole bodies to him, and with such a sacrifice God is well pleased. We ought to surrender our hearts, our bodies, our minds, our all to him as living sacrifices. We ought to let him use our bodies as he sees fit.

I have thought a lot of times about what Paul said when he made his first and second missionary tours and returned to Antioch in Syria from which he went out. He said that he had surrendered his all to God, that he had given himself. How many of us would say, "Lord, you tell me what to do, and I will do it, irrespective of what I think about it or the way it ought to be done"? I want to say to you that that is a lesson for us. Do you feel that way about it?

Don't you want to come to Jesus tonight and live for him until God calls you home? Christ died for you and stands at the right hand of God tonight pleading for you. His great heart is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and he is able to save all who will come unto him. I wonder how many will respond to the invitation of the Lord tonight, hearing, believing, and obeying him. If you have been a Christian but have not lived right, won't you come back to him? If you have recently moved into this com-

munity, being a Christian, and wish to cast your lot with these brethren and help them and let them help you, won't you come tonight and let your wishes be made known?

How many will come while we sing the song selected?

"LET ME DIE THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS"

Now for the last of this series of meetings, as we have previously announced, we have chosen for our text and for our subject these words, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." I presume that it would be most difficult to find a better text or a better passage from which to deliver a lesson to a perishing and a dying people. This passage needs but little or no explanation to make you understand how potent and powerful it is. It does not make so much difference where a man dies or when he dies. If we can tell how a man dies, we can settle every other question that is perplexing. People are constantly asking what becomes of the dead, where they have gone when they leave this body. We are more or less anxious about that; but if we can just find out how a man dies, we might be able to settle that question once and for all.

The only difficulty in finding out how a man dies is in discovering how he lives. Certainly a man cannot live one way and die another. A man cannot die the death of the righteous and live unrighteously in this world. God has recognized this and said for men to deny themselves all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and he tells us to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (Tit. 2:12.) Then any man who does not live righteously could not die the death of the righteous. If you can find out how people live, then you can find out how they die; and if we can find out how they die, I don't think it requires the wisdom of Solomon to tell where they go.

Take the life of a man, his history, his conduct, and use that as sort of an index to point out the future, and you won't have much trouble in finding out where his final resting place will be. I am of the opinion that Paul laid down that premise strongly when he put it in these words: "For I am now ready to be offered,

and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:6, 7.) It was through his conduct, through his life, through his obedience, and through his duty done that he could see the crown of righteousness that would shine with undimmed splendor that would be pressed on his brow by the jeweled hand of the Son of God in that day.

The only way that we can enter into that city that lies foursquare in the land of fadeless day is by our conduct here. The man or woman who does not live righteously in this world cannot go to heaven when he dies. I think that no one can question that. When a man reads the Bible, acknowledge it as the word of God, and conducts himself as it directs, I think there can be no question as to his destination. We can't depend on our feelings in the matter, for they may be of a strangely mixed nature, but, after all, we are strangely made up. We are made up of strange parts; therefore, all of life may be a strangely mixed cup. We may have the dregs of despair and the dregs of joy and success all in one cup. The fabrics in the course of life may be varied. We may drink some of the bitterest experiences in the cup of life, but in every cup we drink we may also have the best and sweetest experiences of which human beings have ever tasted. We cannot, then, blame Balaam for being strangely mixed up, for we are strangely mixed ourselves. We have all our idiosyncrasies and our own peculiarities; therefore, it makes it a perplexing problem and a distressing thing sometimes.

Balaam was a soothsayer and a prophet. He was an apostate, no doubt, from the real teaching of the word of the living God that was in force and to which people looked at that time. Balak, the king of Midian, sent for him to curse the people who had come out of Egypt, who were invading the country, but God said, "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed." (Num. 22:12.) We have this kind of thing said of Balaam: He would not go because "the Lord refused to let him go." (Verse 13.) He wouldn't go because the Lord told him that he could not go.

I want to say further that whenever you hear a man talking about the church refusing to let him do so and so, just as certainly and surely as you live he will do that very thing. He wants to do it, and he will. When we find that God says, "No," about anything, that ought to kill our desire to do that thing; and if we continue to want to do it, we are not right. Better begin to examine ourselves immediately. When we want to do anything about which there is a question in our minds we ought to ask, "What does God say about it?" That ought to settle it. If God says that we ought to do a thing, then we should do it; and if he says that we ought not to do a thing, that ought to kill our desire to do it. When he says that we ought to do a thing, that should create a burning desire in our hearts to do so because God said it.

Balaam would not go because God refused to let him go when Balak sent men after him to come and curse his people. Then the king, understanding human nature, raised the reward. I am of the opinion that he understood it very much since he raised the reward. Balaam was offered the second place in the kingdom, which was a place of honor; but he sent the princes back to Balak and told them that if Balak "would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God to do less or more." (Num. 22:18.) I wonder how many men today would say that. I wonder how many men, when they are invited to go somewhere, would say, "Wait and I will go see what the good Lord says about it."

I want to get the foundation of this lesson down right. I want you to note that oftentimes a man knows what God says about a thing, but he is not satisfied with it. He will go and see what man says about it, and then he will try to prove that it is all right by the Scriptures. You take a man who wants to drink liquor, and he will find passages that he thinks will justify him in drinking it. If he can find none other, he will tell you that Paul said, "Take a little wine for your stomach's sake." He thinks he has found a passage that will justify him in drinking liquor. He thinks he has proved his point when there is nothing in the world wrong with his stomach.

It ought not to be necessary for God to repeat a command over and over again if he is to be relied on and if he is to be trusted.

If he says something on one subject, certainly everything else he has to say will be in harmony with it. Men sometimes seem to think that he has to repeat a thing again and again before it is to be relied upon. They have to go see what men say about it. God does not have to say the same thing over a dozen times to make its stronger. If you know that he forbids you to do certain things then your rule ought to be, "Touch not, taste not, handle not."

Balaam said to those people, "I pray you stay here tonight that I may know what the Lord will say unto me." (Num. 22:19.) God said to Balaam, "If the men come to call thee, rise up and go with them, but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, thou shalt do." (Verse 20.) The next morning before the voice of the birds he was out and gone. Jehovah had spoken, and Jehovah never changes his mind. There are people living today who seem to think that God will change his word because we are out of harmony with the preachers or out of harmony with the methods used, but the word of God never changes. People may change, but God's word doesn't. They think the Bible should be changed because times have changed. Yes, times have changed, but the Bible hasn't. God hasn't changed. Nothing that is trustworthy and reliable has changed.

I want to suggest to you that Balaam did not have to be called the next morning, but he was up early and running greedily after the wages of unrighteousness. Balak made several attempts to get him to disobey God and failed. He said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like this." (Num. 23:10.) How many people have come to a bad end because they have gone contrary to the counsel and advice of God! How could a man come to the end of an unrighteous life and die the death of the righteous? How could a man die the death of the righteous when his life had not been like that of the righteous man? How could he die the death of the righteous when he has done evil, when he has been careless, indifferent, and negligent, and paid no mind to the religion of Christ? I want to say now that the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is a living, practical matter. It is made up of conduct, and that conduct in one word is righteousness.

I want to turn your attention now to another passage of Scripture. Jesus is talking in what editors and preachers are pleased to call the "Beatitudes." That term sounds good to them and looks good in print and reads well, but after all, it is over the heads of the majority of people, and we are just calling this one of the conditions of the heart or traits of character essential to the development and progress in Christianity. It begins at the heart, at the very bedrock, at the very place where we need to begin. It says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6.) The person who does not want to be righteous does not hunger to be righteous. You cannot make him be righteous if he doesn't want to be. It is utterly impossible to make him be righteous; therefore, a man must have a desire to be righteous; he must hunger and thirst after the righteousness of God. A man never gets too big to hunger and thirst after righteousness; he never gets too old or bold. Man must create a desire to be righteous. He must want to go to heaven more than anywhere else. He must yearn to go to heaven. That is what we want to suggest. It is the beginning of a righteous life, the way to develop. When a man is thirsty for water, he will find a way to get water if it is to be found; and if he is thirsty enough, he will drink water out of a horses' trough. If a man is really hungry for food, you don't have to make him take it.

The doctor once sent me to the springs to drink the water there. I told him I had about as soon that he had sent me to Sodom and Gomorrah as it was incompatible with my ideals. He wanted me to drink water by the clock, and that is just about the hardest thing that I have ever tried to do. Every time I tried to swallow that good water, it would not go down. I was not thirsty for it. We think we have to have ice water and distilled water; but if we are thirsty enough, we can drink water where we find it. We are just not much thirsty when we refuse it.

If a person is hungry enough, a piece of corn bread will taste good to him. We are so full of good things that we throw away and waste enough to feed many people. The American people throw away enough food to feed the world. We are sated, gorged, and gluttoned on that sort of food. We have an appetite for good food, but when we are hungry, we will eat any kind of food-

When a man is hungry enough, you cannot keep him away from food. You take a man who wants strong drink, a man who drinks liquor, and let him come to a new town, and he does not need but thirty minutes to find a bootlegger when a man who did not desire it would not find him in thirty years. Why? Because he would not want it. Every drop in the world would not tempt him. He would pour it in the Cumberland River or some other river. He has no appetite for it.

The Lord said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." That is the result of his desire for righteousness. He must have an appetite for it. I wish I could stand here tonight talking to people in such a way that I could create within them that desire for righteousness to the extent that they would hunger and thirst after it. I wish that I could make them want to be righteous. I wish that I could make them want to go to heaven. If I could create that desire in the hearts of people in this audience, I would be willing to do as the Arab—fold my tent and steal away until somebody else needed me.

When I was a boy I wanted to go to the old swimming hole in season—and sometimes out of season. I would not let that stop me. I wanted to go there whether I had permission or not. First I would stand looking at it, then I would find myself walking toward it, and the next thing I was in it. One "No" could not stop me. That is what I meant this morning when I was talking to the Bible school. I said to get father and mother by the fingers and don't turn them loose. Nag them and ask them again and again to come to Bible school. Keep on until you get them to come. If we want to do a thing bad enough, we will get it done. If we want to go to heaven bad enough, we will go there. If we want to be a child of God bad enough, we will be one. If we want to be a member of the church of Jesus Christ, we will be one.

Note another passage in this same Sermon on the Mount. Jesus Christ is talking about seeking first the kingdom of God. He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6:3.3.) Did you ever see a man seeking something for which he had no desire and for which he had no appetite? If he did not have an

appetite for it, certainly he would not seek after righteousness. If he had no appetite for something, he would not pick it up in the road. If he does not long for righteousness, he will not seek for it. He is not hungry and thirsty for it. If a man is hungry and thirsty for righteousness, you will see him seeking for it. A man will not seek for a thing he doesn't want. I would not seek for a thing I didn't want, and I wouldn't expect any other man or woman in the world to. If you don't want the kingdom of God, if you don't want righteousness, just don't seek for it. If you want it, seek for it. Put that first. We are not putting the kingdom of God first, however. Friends, we are putting the kingdom of God and his righteousness second. We will let the church and everything that pertains to the church wait until we get all the chores done and the fields turned and get everything we have on hand out of the way, and then, perhaps, we will give some time and attention to the church. There used to be a time when there was an open season in work in summer, but that is closed now; and if you convert anyone, you have to take the opportunity just where you find it. There are so many things to lure members of the church away from the services now, and we are putting the kingdom of God second. The Book says that we are to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Do you think a man is putting the kingdom of God and his righteousness first when he doesn't think about the church services until Sunday morning? Is he putting the kingdom of God and his righteousness first when he doesn't study or think one bit about his contribution until he gets there on Sunday morning? What do you think about that?

Suppose I were to come here to preach a sermon on Sunday morning and didn't think about it until I came. You would be sorry that you came if I were to do that. It would be a very poor talk, I imagine, if the preacher waited until he got there to think about what he was going to say or what he will preach about. I would not wait until I got in the pulpit to think about what I am going to say, and then open the Book and read and feel that God would fill my mouth on whatever subject I would preach upon. Friends, I want to repeat it and to impress upon your minds that we are not putting the kingdom of God and his righteousness

first; many people are putting that last. We ought to seek for it first.

On Sunday mornings if we want to go visiting, we go. We say, "Oh, we can go to church any time." If we want to go anywhere on Sunday, we say, "We can go to church any time." We put the church on the side track. We give the main line of life to everything else; and if nothing else is on hand, we will attend the services of the church. That isn't putting the kingdom of God and his righteousness first. I am just calling your attention to this lesson; we need it mighty badly. Let's seek God's kingdom and his righteousness first.

We are to seek out of the Book of the Lord. We are to read it. That is the place to read. Do you read the Bible? If you don't, I am not censuring you, but I am sorry that you don't. Yes, I'm sorry for you. The Bible is the book to read, and the church of Christ is the place to work. Are we going to stand by and let the preacher do it all? Is that the way you are going to do? "Oh," you hear folk say: "I just haven't time to read the Bible. We pay the preacher to do that." If you don't read your Bible, you don't know what a feast you are missing. You wouldn't pay your preacher to eat your meals for you. Is that what the preacher is for? Now, if that is your conception of the matter, you have a very poor one. Nobody can read the Bible for you. You must seek out God's Book and read it; you must seek God's kingdom and his righteousness. You must seek in the right place. If I wanted a piece of hardware, I might go to Sears, Roebuck Mechanical Department and get it, or I might look in their catalog, find it listed, and order it. If I wanted a piece for my automobile, I might go to Western Auto Supply Company and get it. That would be the right place to look for that. But if I want the righteousness of God, they don't carry that in their stores. That isn't in stock. You could search their catalogs just as long as you wanted to search for it and seek after it, but you won't find it there. You are seeking in the wrong place.

Out in Texas where I live the whole land is covered with derricks. Oil was sought on other land, but there was none there. They sought in the wrong place. Now, that is the reason some people have not found the kingdom of God. They have sought it where it is not. The Bible is the place to go. We must seek

out God's Book and read it, and we cannot fail; but the first thing we must do is to hunger and thirst after righteousness. We must have an appetite for it, hunger and thirst for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and then seek for it, and in seeking for it we must come to the Bible, the book of God, and read it. You cannot fail then. If you want to know the way of life, the plan of salvation, the righteousness of God, to what other book would you turn? There is not another book in the world that can tell you that. The Bible is the book that deals with those subjects.

Now I want to point out a division that conies right here, and that division is God's righteousness and ours. There is a lot of difference. We hear folk say, "It is not all works." God has arranged and defined his work and ours. That isn't my work, and there is a lot of difference in my work and God's work. The apostle talking in Romans the tenth chapter, beginning with the first and reading through the fifth verse, has this to say: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved, for I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, for they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, for Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them." That passage does not need a very great deal of explanation. People who are ignorant of God's righteousness go about trying to establish their own righteousness. Why is the whole religious world beclouded? Why do they do things for which they have no authority? They are ignorant of God's word. That's the reason. I used to think that any man who would do things not commanded in the Bible was dishonest, but now I believe that he just doesn't know any better. I am more charitable now. A man who knows God's righteousness, but then will go on scheming and planning his own would be dishonest. It isn't difficult to define that.

Now, there are two kinds of righteousness—God's righteousness and ours—and I would not give the snap of my finger for mine or for yours. Isaiah spoke of it as being filthy rags in the sight of God. My righteousness doesn't get you anywhere, but it will

get you as far as yours. It is not my righteousness that counts, but God's. Can we define it, separate it, and isolate it? Can we bring it to you so you will be able to see it?

I am not interested in the righteousness of man. I would not spend five minutes in finding out about all the righteousness that man has ever done. It is not the righteousness of man that I am talking about. On the other hand, I am calling your attention to the righteousness of God. That is what we want to find out. If you could get the world out here, it would be divided into two groups—the church and the world. There would be just two things the world and the church. Now there are two kinds of righteousness—the righteousness of God and mine.

I read you that Christ is the end of the law. "He is the end of the law," the Scripture says, "to everyone who believes." Then we are to conform to and obey the commands from God through Jesus Christ, as I have repeated to you at other times. They came through Christ. You know Rom. 10:17, that familiar and often quoted passage says: "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." Faith comes by hearing the word of Christ. That is, God talks to us through Christ solely and only. There is no other way.

Now, concerning the righteousness of God, let me turn your attention to another passage, the one hundred nineteenth Psalm, the one hundred seventy-second verse, which says, "All thy commandments are righteousness." Then it doesn't matter what they are, but whatever they are, they are righteous. I think that draws the line of demarcation in the lifeline of human conduct. All of God's commandments are righteous; and if God did not command it, it is not righteous.

Now, reading from the fifth chapter of First John, verse 17, the Scriptures say, "All unrighteousness is sin"—S-I-N. Sin is sin; therefore all sin is unrighteousness. That cannot be controverted. All unrighteousness is sin, and all sin is unrighteousness.

Reading from Romans 14:23, we have these words, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Now, then, since faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ, whatever is not of faith is sin, and all sin is unrighteousness. All of God's righteousness is in the New Testament, in the word of God,

the teaching of Jesus Christ, and the commands of God come through Christ to us. Faith comes that way, and since faith comes by hearing, then whatsoever is not of faith is sin. All sin is unrighteousness, and anything you cannot read in the New Testament that men do in worship and service to God that he does not command is sin. I think you can understand that. I don't believe that we need to stand before this intelligent audience and spend a great deal of time on that point. The thing we should do is to be certain that we are not violating his commands ourselves. It would be hard to convince others if we are not doing as he commands ourselves. If we want them to be saved, if we want to teach them, then the first thing we need to do is to get out in the clear ourselves. Are we preaching something that is not in the New Testament? Are we doing something not in the New Testament, something that the New Testament doesn't teach, something that the Holy Spirit and the apostles never taught? Are we preaching something that the New Testament church never practiced or taught? Folk dare to do many things in religion that the New Testament does not have one word to say about. That is sin, and "all sin is unrighteousness," and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and "faith comes by hearing the word of Christ." We are to listen to him. That ought to settle that part of the question once and for all.

I want to call your attention to another passage. I am reading now from the Hebrew letter: "Thy throne, oh God, is forever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (Heb. 1:8; Psalm 45:6, 7.) That is a quotation from the Old Testament applied to Jesus Christ. His throne is established forever, a sceptre of the kingdom, a sceptre of righteousness. It is made of righteousness, and that is power. The most pungent thing we could say about it is that it is made of righteousness and lives forever in the hearts of men on the way to heaven. That is the sceptre that he holds proudly over the kingdom of God. The reason for it is because "thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity." Don't forget that you cannot be an unrighteous man and be in that kingdom. The sceptre of righteousness controls only as you may love righteousness and

hate iniquity. Now you are not to hate the sinners, but you are to hate their iniquity. You are not to hate the man who does the iniquity, but you are to hate the iniquity. Jesus hated iniquity, and he opposed it and condemned it everywhere he saw it.

We come to the point now that we think it is wrong to debate in religion, that controversy and arguments never get you anywhere, yet when you look over the pages of the Bible you find that Jesus Christ and the apostles were the greatest controversialists that ever lived. Christ was in controversy every day. He did not wait for somebody to step on his toes and challenge him, either. Everything that had to do with the destiny of human life he questioned it and laid bare the backs of those living hypocritically and ungodly. He said on one occasion, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." (Matt. 23:15.) He talked to them about the religions in his day. When they strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel, he called them hypocrites. Yes, he told them they were hypocrites. He said, "You take away widows' houses" (Matt. 23:14), and for a pretense and to cover it up "you make long prayers." Outside you are like whited sepulchres, beautiful to look at, but inside you are corrupt and full of dead men's bones. (Matt. 23:27.) Christ told them the truth, and he had no apology to make for it, and that is what we must do today if Christ is living in us. He loved righteousness more than he loved anything. Just think about it! He not only loved righteousness, but he loved it above everything. There is nothing that could have the right of way over the righteousness of God. Therefore, I want to suggest to you that we ought to love righteousness above anything. There is not an infidel on earth who doesn't like righteousness.

When a child of God does things that God has not commanded, he will suffer, and Christ will suffer. Jesus loved righteousness. He came to earth and denied himself of the riches of heaven and lived in abject poverty because he loved righteousness. That is why he slept on the ground with a stone as his pillow. That is why he could be hungry and rejoice. It used to bother me as to why and how he could suffer so for it. His love for the righteousness of God was so supreme that he could go the way of the

cross. He knew that on the other side there was a crown for him to wear. We ought, therefore, to love righteousness because of that crown we are to receive over there. We ought to love it enough to turn away from everything else, not only turn away from it, but become righteous. You remember Peter said, "In every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." (Acts 10:34.) Now the man who does not work righteousness will never be a righteous man, but the man who works righteousness is a righteous man and is acceptable with him. A person who doesn't work righteousness is not righteous; he doesn't love righteousness.

We read that the apostle wrote to Timothy about perilous times. He said, "In the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false-accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3:1.) That's what the Common Version says. ' Let me ask you, friends, how much do you love God? Do you spend more for pleasure than you spend for the Lord's work? How much do you put in the Lord's cause? How much do you spend for pleasure? Do you spend more for pleasure than you give to the Lord's cause that he loved so much and for which he made such a sacrifice? Think about it, I don't know how much you give, but I want you to study about it. How much do you love Jesus Christ? Do you love him more than you love pleasure? Do you love Jesus Christ when you spend one hundred dollars for pleasure and give fifty cents in service to the Almighty? Is that the way you do? Here is the service of God, the work of the church, the salvation of the souls of men at stake, and we are trying to save them, and are you refusing or neglecting to give to his cause? Or do you love a place of amusement more than you love him? Do you let a place of amusement stand between you and a service of the church if the amusement conflicts with the service? Do you go to the place of amusement instead of to the worship? Which do you love more —the Lord or pleasure?

Jesus said that certain people believed on him, but would not confess him for fear they would be put out of the synagogue.

(John 12:42.) They loved the praises of men more than they loved God. What about you? Is that the reason you are not a joyful Christian? Are you afraid of what men might think or say? Do you love the righteousness of God more than anything else in the world? Or had you rather not say? I am just trying to put this lesson before you so you will be able to get it.

I want to call your attention now to another point. That is: "Let me die the death of the righteous." To be a righteous man you must hunger and thirst after righteousness; you must seek it in the Book of God. You must read that Book to find it, and then you must be a worker of righteousness. You know the sceptre of God's kingdom is the sceptre of righteousness, and we ought to love righteousness. We ought not only to love it, but we ought to love it more than anything else.

I have been talking about the righteousness of God, and now I want to read about the righteousness of man. I am reading from Hebrews the eleventh chapter and the fourth verse, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Isn't that marvelous? Isn't that wonderful? Just a simple sacrifice was offered by Abel, but it was acceptable to God; and although he is dead, and has been for almost six thousand years, you can still hear his voice ringing loud and clear above the conflict as it comes down to us. He was righteous; he offered an acceptable sacrifice. Isn't that worth thinking about? Don't you think that is worth something?

"Let me die the death of the righteous," the Book says, "and my last end be like his." My life ought to be such that it will be cherished by men and women, boys and girls, when I come to die. You don't want to live evilly, do you? You want your life to go down in the annals of history as a righteous person. I want to be remembered as a righteous person when this poor lisping, stammering tongue lies silent in the grave.

In the thirteenth chapter of Matthew we read the parable of the tares, and we learn that at the end of the world God will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and cast them into the fire, but the righteous shall shine above the brightness of the sun.

First, then, "let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

I want to read now from the Revelation. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready, and to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." (Rev. 19:7, 8.) Wouldn't it be fine to sit down at the marriage feast of the Lamb with all the saints who have been washed clean and white in the blood of the Lamb? I want to quote our text again, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Now, in closing, I want to read one more passage. The apostle said, "I have fought the good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day." (2 Tim. 4:7.) Then, friends, I want to die the death of the righteous, and I want my last end to be like his. If I live righteously in this present world, I will die the death of the righteous, and I can rest on the bosom of Jesus Christ for comfort.

Let me ask you if you are a Christian. If you are not, don't you want to be one? Don't you want that crown of righteousness? Don't you want to start now and live for him until God calls you home? Let me beg you and plead with you to come to him. It is for your own good that I ask you to come to him. I am standing face to face talking to you now for the last time during this series of meetings. I may never have the pleasure of speaking to you again. But be that as it may, I want you to remember that God is calling you, and he wants you to answer. He wants to do something for you. Won't you come in answer to his beckoning call? Won't you permit him to come into your heart and life? How many in this audience will come tonight? If you have been a Christian but you have not lived right, won't you change your way of living? If there are those who have recently moved into this community who want to be identified with this congregation, you, too, are invited to come and help them and let them help you. Come, while we stand up and sing the song announced.

WALKING BY FAITH

My friends, I am profoundly thankful tonight and deeply appreciative of this opportunity. It has been a long time since I stood on this rostrum. My path in life has carried me away from these familiar scenes and from the dearest friends I have ever had. Some of them are living, and many are dead. We are happy to come here for the simple reason that I owe much of what I am, if I am anything at all, to the men who founded this institution. Their pictures hang on these walls tonight [referring to James A. Harding and David Lipscomb], and I should feel myself forever disgraced if I should say a word or do a thing that would foil their attempt or thwart the effort that they put forward for the betterment of the people of this country and of every other. Those men stood for a certain thing—the word of the living God.

I have not come here to try to entertain you. I have not come here to reward my friends nor to punish my enemies, if, indeed, I have any. I have come here to talk to you about things higher and things nobler. I haven't any time for vain babblings. There is no time in the pulpit, nor in the classroom, nor in the press, nor in Bible study for anything that is not clearly taught by him who knows what to say. You will let me tell you tonight that I don't know how to preach a sermon. All I know about it is to copy those who did know how, and the Lord Almighty knows how to do it. Christ not only gave to those apostles his word, but he gave to them supernatural power in the baptism of his Holy Spirit that they might carry on without default.

We are very happy to appear before this fine group of people tonight to call the attention of this people to the things that you have heard all the time. There is an effort on the part of folk now to look out for a thing that nobody has ever heard about and to preach a sermon entirely new, and whenever you undertake it, you are attempting something you have no business to do. This is the word of God. This is simple. It is basic. It is fundamental. I suppose, then, it would be difficult to misunderstand it and err, and here it is for us to walk by faith and not by sight. I know that times have changed. Fashions and fads have changed too. I know that. People have changed in their views. I am well acquainted with that fact; but I am also familiar with the fact that faith has not changed and never shall until that which

produces it has changed—the word of God. It can never change, and faith, therefore, cannot be changed, just as long as it comes by hearing the word of God.

There are just two things in the text. One is faith, and the other is sight. I think it would be perfectly logical and right for us to undertake to define our terms until there can be no misunderstanding as to what we mean when we use them. First of all, we say that sight means outside the realm of faith. You can see it; therefore it does not belong to faith. Anything that does not belong to faith and is no part of it belongs to sight and is, therefore, to be classed and catalogued under that heading. That covers a large field; and if the things done today in the religious world should be eliminated, indeed, it would be a wonderful task—that is, the things that belong to sight and come under that heading. How much of the preaching in the pulpit and the teaching in the classroom belong to that kind of thing now? Faith is not what you can see, because if you see it, you cannot believe it; and if you cannot believe it, you cannot render service to Almighty God. Anything, therefore, that is not of faith is sight.

You hear folk talk about "I like this church and am a member of it because I like it better than any other." Better say, "I want to do this or that because I like it better than something else." If that is it, then, I suppose it would matter but little as to what is preached to us. It is not a question of what I like or what I think. It is not a question of what seems all right to me. It is not a question of anything that might arise in me. I know nothing about it, absolutely nothing, and I know as much as any other man living knows about it, for that matter, and I know nothing. All anybody knows about what is right is just what the Bible says. If God did not say a thing, then I must not say it; if God said it, then I must. It doesn't matter what may be our opinion; it doesn't matter how times may change; it doesn't matter how styles, fashions, and fads may change, the word of God is still the same. All these changes can never affect it. It would be a wonderful and terrible task to see the Bible in the light of all the false teaching and false things that are coming from the pulpit, and from the classroom, and from the press, and from the radio. Wouldn't it be wonderful just to see the Bible in the light of these

conflicting doctrines? Wouldn't it be wonderful to see them just as they are?

When we turn, then, on the other side, we learn that we walk by faith every step of the way. We must walk by faith in everything we say; everything that we do must be done by faith. It is useless to hear folk say that it can be done any other other way, because it couldn't, and when I have perused the stories of the men in every country as men of God, you would not find one man who did not walk by faith. Every man in the galaxy of God walked by faith. They listened to God; they believed God; they did what God commanded. That is what we need to do now. If ever there was a time in the history of the world when thrones were tottering and crowns were trembling and kingdoms were crumbling, if ever there was a time when men needed faith in God, that time is now. I presume that if there ever was a time when people have driven God's word from the pulpit, and from the school, and from the home, and from the hearts and lives of men and women, that time is now, and whenever God's word is driven out, God goes out with it. You cannot have one without accepting the other, and whenever people are indifferent to the word of God, they are indifferent to their creator and maker. Therefore, listen to God. I have heard folk talk about their confidence in God being shaken. Do you know what it will take to shake man's confidence in God? Well, you shake a man's confidence in his word and you shake his confidence in God. If there is a person in whom you have no confidence, it is that man whose word you cannot trust. If God's word is not trustworthy, then he is not trustworthy. If you accept God as the maker of man and his eternal soul, then you must accept his word at its face value, whatever it says.

The subject of "Faith" is a new one, and yet it is old. It is as old as human life. Wherever there has been one bit of testimony, we have faith, and I might remark that faith links us with all those things that otherwise would not break upon our enraptured faces. The apostle said, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18.)

Can you imagine a human being stealing off to a quiet place to himself looking upon the things not seen, visualizing them, and yet, at the same time, they are not seen. That is the way the apostle talks about it. That is a passage that we have used many times without getting perhaps the full strength of the passage at all in its true significance. The apostle tells us that "the outward man perishes, but the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for a moment, worketh for us a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. 4:16, 17.) Would you stop and look at it? You could not miss the meaning. Why not look at the things that are not seen?

I just want you to see, friends, if I can make you, that it isn't a matter of human knowledge. It is not a matter of what we see; it is a matter of faith. Therefore, "we walk by faith and not by sight," and everything that we do that will be acceptable to God and pleasing to him must be done by faith. Anything, then, that is not of faith comes under the other heading; and when it doesn't come under faith, I don't care what it is. I immediately lose all my interest in it if it comes under another heading.

Every once in a while someone asks me this question, and I suppose there are few preachers who do not have the same thing asked them: "Where did this thing come from? Where did that peculiar doctrine originate?" When a question like that is propounded to me, I pick up this Book from which I read constantly, and which I have read through all these years, and when I find that it did not come from this Book, I throw it in the wastebasket. That is the only disposition for me to make of it. If it did not come from this Book, what difference does it make where it came from?

You hear folk talk frequently of this movement or that movement of somebody, but I wouldn't give a snap of my finger for any movement under the sun except that which we read in the New Testament. It is well enough, perhaps, to be versed in literature, to know something about history, modern, medieval, and ancient, but to know the New Testament and hark back to it is the arm upon which our entire destiny is resting. I don't know what you think. I am not able to say. But this one thing I know, there is nothing new about the Bible and about faith. It is the same as it has always been. It has not changed a bit, and I freely

predict nothing ever will occur that will necessitate a change in the testimony which produces faith in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ that makes it possible for us to carry on acceptably before God and man. For that reason we have selected this text for tonight. "We walk by faith," the scripture says, and that is what we want to do. That is the thing we advocate. Therefore whatever it is, it is brought to that end.

All we do must be done by faith. Then we learn that the Bible says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6.) We have learned, too, that the Bible says, "Faith comes by hearing the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.) I read the Revised Version on that text from Rom. 10:17, "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Of course, the Bible is the word of God. Everybody understands that. All of it is the word of God from the first word in Genesis to the last of Revelation; but it is faith that redeems, faith that saves the souls of men, and faith that makes it possible for us to walk with God, and that faith comes by hearing the word of Christ. If Christ never said it, then you can't have faith in it. Only to this extent can we have faith; otherwise we cannot.

Would it be, indeed, out of place for me to say this to you? God has spoken to us through his Son Jesus Christ. God spoke to the fathers through the prophets; but he has spoken to us exclusively and solely and only through Jesus Christ, his Son, and he has made the New Testament our final and full authority in religion. Did Christ ever teach it? If not, you cannot do it by faith. I wonder, friends, if it would not be, therefore, a very fine thing for us to sit down and read the New Testament through. It contains but two hundred sixty chapters. Whatever you find there is what Jesus said. God talks to us through Christ, and faith that makes us acceptable in the sight of God, and well-pleasing to him in all that we do, comes from it.

There is another passage I would like to read. I liked the brother's comment on the song we sang about prayer, but listen to this passage. Listen how the apostle talks. He says we know that he hears us in whatever we ask "because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3:22.) Since without faith it is impossible to please

God, when a man does anything in religion without faith, he cannot be well-pleasing to God. Without faith you cannot pray with confidence that God will hear you, and I ask you what you would do when things go wrong if you could not steal away and pray? Do things never go wrong with you? Have you never felt the pangs of hunger? Have your eyes never filled with tears of sorrow? Has your heart never ached with regret? Have you never felt the need of prayer? Have you never been met by adverse winds of despair until your very soul was tortured and torn by them? Has the death messenger ever come into your home and taken from your embrace one that you loved? What did you do? Did you steal out and pray? If you didn't have faith, you couldn't do it.

Faith is not a fancy. I have heard folk relate- certain demonstrations of faith, and when they had finished they were not demonstrations of faith at all, but faith itself. We read about the church in Rome and its faith being spoken of throughout the whole world. Their faith was known and talked about. James said, "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." (James 2:18.) The apostle Paul said that "faith works by love." (Gal. 5:6.) Jesus Christ said, "This is love that you keep my commandments" (John 14:15), and faith that works by keeping the commandments of God is living faith.

When people have lived lives of consecration and devotion, earnest, honest, sincere, heartfelt, having high ideals and morals, but at the same time not according to the New Testament, when they come to pray when things go wrong (for do they never go wrong?), is it possible that God does not hear them? Is it possible that you have never reached that time when you have felt that "other refuge have I none, hangs my suffering soul on thee," and through the adorable and precious name of Jesus Christ could you make your petitions to Almighty God with the confidence and assurance that he would hear you and grant to you the things that you asked? God will do that only provided that we have kept his commandments. If we have believed his word, if we have rested on his promises, if we have never faltered, never failed, we may be sure that he will hear us if we have done what he commanded us to do and if we have left out what he has not com-

manded. Everything else should be left out of religion. There is no time in it for anything else. There is no time for anything else in the press. There is no time for anything but God's word in the pulpit or in the classroom or over the radio.

If anything is not in this Book, it ought to be left out of your life. If you can't read it in God's word, leave it out. Couldn't we memorize the New Testament and utilize it, assimilate it, digest it? Could we not turn the world upside down with the power it lends and gives to us if only we would confine our teaching, our remarks, and our obedience unto that and to that only? Sometimes, friends, there is a time when you cannot do anything else for folk but pray for them, and then do you find yourself deprived of that power? Oh, you can say words. Anybody can say words. Anybody can tell emotions that they have felt in their hearts, but that is not what I am talking about. I am talking about effectual prayer, one to which God will listen, and when it is said and finished, there will come from the bountiful fingers of the Almighty the innumerable and countless blessings for which our hearts were withering and dying. That's what I am talking about, and it all depends upon this one thing that I am endeavoring to teach and on the subject about which I am talking—whether we are walking by faith.

Indeed, friends, if we are going to make it a matter of knowledge and a matter of sight, then we will be turning about in a space not much bigger than a wash basin the rest of our days. Faith goes on. It leads upward. It spreads. It is like a seed. But what does faith mean to you? How do you regard it? How do you look upon it?

Suppose we think of it like this. Faith is not a thing you see. If you could see it, it would not be faith. It is what you don't see; therefore, the Bible said, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1.) In discussing this the apostle said further, "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." (Heb. 11:3.) That is the only way anybody will ever understand it. By faith is the only way anybody will ever understand the plan of salvation, and the way of life, and the worship of the Lord. It can't be done any other way. It must be done by faith.

I read another passage concerning "spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9) of the will of God, and apparently that is the thing about which the apostle is talking. We understand by faith. I just like to think of it from that standpoint. I can steal away from the crowd with this little Book in my hand, with its New Testament, containing 1,189 chapters; and if I am as dutiful and studious as I should be to learn its contents, I can, therefore, have a faith that will match anybody's faith. I just like to steal away from the world and cease to listen to the rabble of men and to their vain babblings and false doctrines and strange doctrines that men have advanced outside the word of God and see what the Bible says. By doing that I can just bless myself and lull myself into the greatest peace of mind and heart till I, by that sort of thing, can be wiser than anybody that ever lived prior to the day that the New Testament was completed. You know, friends, the New Testament is that upon which our faith is resting, because that is the word of Christ. When that was said, when that was finished, that was the end; that was final.

You sometimes hear folk talk about the approach we are to make to men in order to win them; therefore we have to change our tactics and means of appeal and way of approach. The only change we need to make, friends, is away from humanity and back to God. We need to get back to his word. We need to preach it. We need to read it. Well do I know, as expressed in the New Testament, that the time will come when "they will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3); and because there are people in the audience and in the world that won't endure it, many preachers and teachers won't preach it and teach it. Be it understood, however, that I am not to quit preaching the gospel. No, I am not to quit because someone can't endure it. It is a challenge to every bit of the manhood in me to preach it with determination, strength, and power. I am called upon to preach it whether people want it or not. I am going with the word of God whether folk can endure it or not. I am going to preach it here, and I want to preach it as long as I live. I want to preach it as long as there is a pulsation that beats in my breast. If people cannot stay with me on the word of the living God, we just can't stay together on anything.

But that is not all. When we come to talk on that question of handling the word of God and sound doctrine, you know there are preachers in the pulpit, editors, teachers in the classroom, speakers on the radio, and orators who could have the same thing said of them that old Pilate did when the howling mob was crying for the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was willing to content the people, therefore he rendered Christ to them to be crucified. That is the way we look at it. Must we, therefore, pay such a price to content the people? Oh, they say, we must not preach doctrinal sermons; we mustn't preach to the world the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, because somebody might not like it. That's the way some preachers, and teachers, and editors think about it. When you preach the word of God, there is a possibility of their salvation; they may be saved. It cannot be done any other way. We *must* preach the word of God. We *must* stay with the Bible. We *must* get in the New Testament and stay in it and stay out of everything else. When you leave the word of God, you get out of it. I have heard a great many sermons delivered on the use of mechanical musical instruments in the worship, together with certain other things that you cannot read in the New Testament. A young preacher came to me not many months ago and said, "I am going to have a debate on the use of mechanical instruments in the worship, and I want to get some strong points." I said: "Well, get in the New Testament, stay in it, and don't leave it, and there isn't anything else you will need if you will just take this. Get on it, stay on it, and never get off."

Now, "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6.) "Faith comes by hearing the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:17.) Faith has to come by hearing the word of Christ. It can't come any other way. Since it has to come that way, we must preach the word of Christ. That is not all. The Bible further says that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. 10:23.) Then, even if a man is doubtful, even if no wrong is meant, if he doubts anything, it is wrong for him to do it; therefore, it is all a matter of faith, looking at it from that standpoint.

I like to steal away sometimes and sit down by myself with the word of God with nobody to disturb and hear God talking to man. I like to hear the voice of God when he thundered forth and instantly ten thousand glittering worlds sprang into exist-

ence from the prolific womb of that word. Through faith I can see all of that. I can hear him when he spoke and see the results. I can hear him when he spoke to the waters and told them to return to their places. Thus far, you proud waves, shall come and no further. Friends, you take faith away from me, and I can hear nothing. You take my faith away from me, and I can see nothing. When it comes to the plan of salvation, that is so also. It is not a question of reason. It is not a question of appetite. It is not a matter that appeals to the senses. It is an act of faith. It is a matter of faith in the cause for which Jesus Christ gave the last drop of blood in his heart, and we are proposing, therefore, to stand for that and to cling to that and to nothing else. By faith you can go back to the little manger and stable in the city of David, the little city of Bethlehem, and you can see Mary and Joseph as they are driven from the inn, and not finding a place to stay, they went to the manger where she gave birth that night to the world's Redeemer. You can see it every bit by faith. By faith you can hear everything that it said, and by faith you can see everything that is done.

Friends, I had rather a man would take the heart out of my breast and destroy my physical life than to destroy my confidence in God by destroying my confidence in his word. Destroy my faith in his word, and you have destroyed my faith in God. There isn't another book so wonderful as the Bible; there isn't another book that could speak so well and tell us so many things that otherwise never could have been said. Now, that is the lesson. I can by faith see the shepherds as they watched their flocks on the stony plains of Judea that night. I can see their amazement when they saw the star; and I can hear the angelic annunciation, "Behold! there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord"; and I can see some wise men in the east as they regarded the appearance of the star; and I can see them as they left their homes, crossing the burning sands of the desert, bridging broad streams. I can see them crossing the cold, precipitous mountain heights to pay the homage of their hearts to this newborn babe. By faith I can see the world's Redeemer born there in the stable in abject and groveling poverty. By faith I can see Judas when he kissed him and betrayed him.

By faith I can hear what they said and see what they did to him.

I can see them as they led him away to be crucified. By faith you can see all of that. By faith you can see the King of Days as he rolls back at the noon hour into the confines of evening, refusing to shine. For three hours on a clear day on the earth the sun was darkened and the world was in darkness while Christ hung suspended between heaven and earth.

You can take your Bible and steal off into your room with it and read it and meditate upon it and see all of that, and it wouldn't cost you but the price of a New Testament; and if you don't have the price of it, somebody would give it to you. You could see Christ as he is being nailed to the cross, and you could see the price paid for your sins and mine. I urge you to read this Book faithfully, study it, meditate upon it, do what it says, and leave off the things that it leaves out. We can read it and understand it. It is addressed to us. Our hearts are touched by it. We can receive it and appreciate it. We ask you to accept this and accept nothing more than that nor anything less than that.

Now, listen, friends; I want to read you just a few other passages on this subject: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things." (1 Cor. 13:9-11. This refers to that period, indeed, when we should put away that which is in part. "For now we see through a glass dimly, but then face to face." (Verse 12.) The time has come when we must put away childish playthings. The New Testament belongs to the adolescent period, but not only to the adolescent period, but to the full grown man in Christ.

But that is not all of it. Let me call your attention to a number of other quotations. The Bible says that "we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1.) Can you imagine a man being justified any other way but by faith? Can you imagine any man's being justified by faith when he doesn't have faith? Can you imagine any man having faith when he doesn't know anything at all about the New Testament? Now, that is our job. That is our task. We must let them know about it. There are people in this town, there are people all over this fair country of ours who are dying tonight

because men who claim to be Christians have not taught them what the New Testament says. We have taken up their time and filled their hearts with other things, but we haven't taken the time to captivate them with the word of God, and that is exceedingly tragic. If you were to lead somebody out there and with poison arrows shoot them and hurt their physical bodies, send a poison virus through their veins, poison their bloodstream, that is an awful thing to do. We wouldn't stand for it, but we can look at the poison teaching all over this country tonight. Might as well shoot poison arrows into their bodies as to kill the spiritual bodies of men and women, boys and girls. That just as surely means death, death evermore, death everlasting, as the other would mean death to their physical bodies, for this would mean a spiritual death. I think it would be exceedingly unfortunate for me or any other speaker to say one word without Scriptural authority from this pulpit or at any other time, because it carries poison and death with it. That is what it means.

A man is "justified by faith." He can have "peace with God by faith." You can have access to the grace of God by faith. We stand by faith; we walk by faith. Faith is the shield that protects us from the fiery darts of the wicked. "The just shall live by faith," the beloved John said, and "this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4.) Friends, will you let me tell you the world and all that is in it stands between us and the gate that stands ajar; and if we ever pass triumphantly, victoriously, and successfully through that gate to live on the plains of ether in the land that is fairer than day, where the sun never goeth down, with all the pure and the good, it will have to be done by faith. How are you going to conquer the world? By faith! We sometimes hear folk say, "Fight the devil with fire." Better not try it, for that is his line. Ours is faith. Better take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. What does Jesus say, my Exemplar, my Teacher, my Lord, my King, my Priest, my Prophet, my all? What does he say? I believe it is just exactly that. That is what it takes to conquer the world. I not only ask you to give mental assent to it, but to believe it to the extent that you will render obedience to it from the heart. There isn't any way to master the world but by this. It isn't possible any other way. We must do it by faith. All that is in the

world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the vainglory of life, are not of faith, but of the world, and the Bible says to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." (1 John 2:15.) Then hear him say to the man who loves the world that "the love of God is not in him." The world is against us, and we are against it, and we will never overcome it successfully by compromise. No, it is a fight to death. That's what it is, and we have the weapon with which to fight and the power by which to conquer. That power is given to us by Jehovah, and that power comes by his word to us. You know the Bible says that certain ones are "kept by the power of God" (1 Pet. 1:5), but he added, "through faith," and "faith comes by hearing the word of Christ." Think about it, friends. By faith we can overcome the world. It is not an easy undertaking. It is a big assignment. It is going to take everything, indeed, that we can do, and the help and grace of God, to succeed in this terrible struggle for the conquest of the world out there. There are towering peaks and deep ravines; there are precipitous cliffs and terrible gulfs, deep rivers and oceans, mighty rocks and fortifications in our way. We cannot take dynamite and conquer the world. We cannot use our physical strength to tear it down, for our weapons of warfare are of God. We must use his word.

What are we going to do about it? You hear folk talk about "I have faith." Well, where did you get it? Where did it come from? If you didn't get it from the New Testament, leave it alone. There isn't any place in the scheme of human redemption for it. Now, I want to plead with you that we turn our attention to that. Let's stay with the New Testament.

Let me remind you that when Peter told Jesus that he would never deny him—others could, but he wouldn't—Jesus said, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that your *faith fail not*." (Luke 22:31, 32.) Friends, if my faith never fails, the devil is defeated. No question about it; but my faith fails me when I get off the New Testament. What does it teach? What does it say for a man to do to become a Christian? How does it say to carry on the worship of God? What does it say about a man with a life of purity, consecration, and devotion? How can we follow Christ? "If any man will follow after me, let

him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matt. 16:24.) Follow the Lord Jesus Christ. What does the Bible teach? What does the New Testament say? That's what we are talking about—faith—faith in God, faith in his word.

People talk about Abraham's faith, and "it was counted unto him for righteousness." (James 2:23.) To me that is one of the most priceless things that we can say about Abraham, this man of faith. Watch him start out across the Syrian Desert, following the voice of an invisible God to a country he did not know and had never known. He didn't turn back. He was unafraid. He went into the land of Canaan. How many have you seen start out to be a Christian and then turn back? How many of those who went out of the land of Egypt failed to reach the land of Canaan? 603,550 above twenty, able to bear arms, left for the land of Canaan, but 603,548 fell before they reached it. Did you ever read the third and fourth chapters of the book of Hebrews dwelling on that point? Well, by faith we can master everything. We ought not to allow anything to divert our attention or to lead us away from God. We ought to walk with him in faith. You know the apostle said, "We walk by faith and not by sight."

Friends, let me in closing submit these thoughts to you. God is overhead, Christ is leading the way, and the heart within Jesus is calling. You can hear his voice at every turn calling and reaching out to those in temptation and sorrow. Hear him say, "My child, I know." He knows how thorny the way, how rough the road, how scalding the tears, how heartbreaking the sorrows. He knows it all, and his great heart is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. To you he speaks every day, "My child, be not afraid; it is I." If you are not a Christian, won't you let me beg you tonight in the adorable and precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ to surrender to him and from this day to the end of your life, from now on, whether it be many days or few, to live faithful to him. Many of us are nearing the end of the way. We can even see the end of the trail beyond and the sunset's radiant glow. Be that as it may, many or few, will you in the name of your God, your Father, your Lord, give him your hands, surrender to him your body, give to him your service to the longest

day you live? How many in this audience tonight will come? Let us sing.

LOT'S CHOICE

My friends, we are happy that the time has come for us to again resume our study of the Bible and to deliver to you a lesson tonight on the subject previously announced relative to Lot's "casting his tent toward Sodom." It may be in place for us to remind you again that there is a great number of people even in the church who feel that the Old Testament is old, antiquated, and of no use any further. For that reason they prefer preachers to select their texts from the New Testament. I called your attention last evening to some quotations in respect to it, and in the run of these quotations we find that God said, "These things happened for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11), and it behooves us to give careful consideration and study to everything that God has recorded. We could not ask that people would emulate every example that may be set forth there or to follow in the footsteps of some characters whom God has seen fit to mention. In our lesson tonight from the Old Testament we have one character whom we could not wholly commend unto you; however, with all of his faults, the Bible speaks of him as "righteous Lot." He was clandestinely so, however. He was not an aggressive person, and he lived in a city where there were sins of all kinds, and while he was a righteous person and did not partake of their evil deeds and did not approve of their conduct, at the same time he did not openly and above board oppose them. In studying this we have a very interesting background, and it is quite essential and necessary that we review it.

First, we learn that Abraham and Lot left Ur of the Chaldees in the long, long ago. Now when Lot was orphaned by the death of his parents, that old uncle, Abraham, the most righteous man on earth, took Lot into his home, twined the tendrils of his heart about that boy, trotted him on his knee, and loved him greatly. He watched him play around his tent when he was a lad. When he grew to manhood, Abraham divided his possessions and his acquisitions with Lot. Abraham was a rich man for his day. He divided with his nephew his cattle and other earthly possessions; so all that Lot was and had, he owed to his Uncle Abra-

ham. He was adopted into the family, so to speak. Abraham had taken him under his wing, and the child was brought to manhood under his excellent guidance and had gone into Egypt with him. Your attention is not particularly invited to that now, but after that time they came back to Palestine, and in the meanwhile both of them had increased in earthly acquisitions—in herds, in cattle, and the like. A statement like this is made, "The land was not able to bear both of them."

Let me have your attention to this, friends: Today we get in one another's way, and it is not possible for both of us to occupy the same stand. One must go. Today, even among brethren in the church, it sometimes becomes necessary for one to step out of the platform or else have a fracas or struggle over the matter to the end that Mr. Darwin's theory might be brought into view and the survival of the fittest seems to become their serious purpose. Now, the land was not big enough for both of them; it could not contain both Abraham and Lot. Something must be done. There is not pasturage enough; there is not water enough; there is not land enough. They are crowded, and even their herd-men began to quarrel. I would like to leave this thought just here: There are a lot of people so crowded up in their business affairs today that they get in one another's way. Even men and women in the church become so crowded up in business affairs that "the land cannot contain both of them." They get into trouble over some situation, and bad feeling, strife, and division result. Now, that even happens in the family of God.

I know of a congregation not a great way from this place that is torn wide open over a political question. Politics has divided the church, the schools, until the "land is not able to bear those brethren." That church is crushed, broken, and wrecked, and it was once one of the finest little congregations to be found anywhere. Just as soon as politics entered that congregation it was torn to shreds. Think of it, friends. That sort of thing among brethren! Now that condition is to be found in many congregations today. We are jealous; we are prejudiced; we are envious; we cannot stand to see anybody else succeed. Therefore, we have to push him out, get rid of him by fair or foul means. It doesn't matter which.

Now, Lot was a rich man. He had flocks, herds, and tents. Abraham was also a rich man. He had flocks, herds, tents, silver, and gold. We learn that their herdmen quarreled because there was not enough pasturage for both of them. One of them must go, for the land was not able to maintain both. That is the background I wish to get before you.

The course of many today would be that they felt that they would be justified in fighting out the conflict and trying to succeed in driving each other out. That would be known as self-preservation, and we say that "self-preservation is the first law of nature." But the Bible says that every way of man is right in his own eyes. Every man has a right to protect his own possessions; but if he were big enough, religious enough, had the spirit of Christ enough, and was magnanimous enough, he would give up his own interests and his own possessions in order that somebody else might survive. Are we able to give up our possessions? Are we able to sacrifice in order to make people happier and make our families happier? I believe if we had the right spirit in us there would be no divisions between man and wife, between brethren, between friends, or between congregations of the disciples anywhere.

The man that is not willing to sacrifice, to surrender, to move back, to give up, cannot have peace, and he lacks just that much of being a Christian. Of course, friends, there are some things that we cannot surrender. But they are not land; they are not possessions; they are not political offices; they are not the office of school director; or the running of a line between two farms involving a foot or two of land. It is not these. There is but one thing that would justify division, and that is the teaching of the New Testament, the word of the living God; and if we cannot have peace on that, we cannot have peace at all. That furnishes sufficient stage room for every man, woman, and child on earth who has ever lived or ever will. It is big enough that he included everyone. The land was not big enough to contain both Abraham and Lot. That is a matter of earthly acquisitions and worldly interests. Because the land was not big enough to maintain both of them, we find the herdmen in conflict or in a fracas over it.

When the matter was brought to the attention of Abraham, he called Lot to him and said: "This cannot be. That will never do, for we are brethren." He said "brethren"—not friends. I doubt whether there is one of us here who knows fully what it means to be brethren in the Lord. If we could appreciate what it means and what it cost your Savior and mine to weld together the broken pieces and make one of the broken fragments of the human race, regardless of the color of the skin or the brogue of the tongue, we might become very nearly appreciating what it means to be brethren.

You remember when Moses came out of the land of Egypt after he had refused fortunes and would not be attracted by the glamour of office held out to him. He found two brethren in conflict, and he said: "You are brethren. You cannot afford to be in conflict." I wish my brethren could understand that. We cannot afford to have divisions and fighting among our ranks. We just can't afford to be divided, for it is necessary to preserve the brotherhood, the body of Christ, where "tears shall flow from eye to eye and joy from heart to heart," all believing the same thing, all speaking the same thing, being perfectly joined together in mind and heart, all working toward the same goal, all interested in the same thing, everyone doing the same thing, all helping rather than hindering.

The Bible talks like this, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Eph. 3:15.) I doubt that that could be said then, but when Abraham came on the scene, the first thing he said was, "We are brethren." It is disgraceful to see brother fighting brother, mad at each other, scrapping, backbiting, devouring each other. Why do brethren for whom Christ died act like this? There is nothing more destructive to the church; there is nothing more terrible than that. Thus we ought to fight for things that make for peace and harmony and things whereby we may edify one another. We ought to have more love one for another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." (James 5:20.) Christ says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one for another." (John 13:35.) Love was what made your Lord and mine go to the cross and suffer for you and for me, taking my sins with him there. We are the

champions of the true God and worship the true God, and we ought not to fight over a little piece of land, or a sheep, or cattle. We ought not to allow the brotherhood to be torn up and disgraced and divided and in strife over such things. Abraham could see that, but we have many brethren, even preaching brethren, in the church who cannot see it. Friends, we are strong-headed, stubborn, and must have our way; therefore, often the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is made helpless and broken and bleeding and dying and is made to be a laughingstock in the eyes of the world as it looks on. You will observe that Abraham had this matter on his heart. Lot did not seem to grasp it or care much about it.

The Book says that the Canaanites and the Perizzites dwelt in that land. They were enemies. Now, those people had no virtue in themselves. They were looking to vice. Their conduct was vile, and they sought the base things of life on which to live. Friends, there are people in the world today who have no virtue in themselves, and they delight to find vice in the people of God. Every bad characteristic, every fault they see in the people of God they magnify it. People like that are to be dreaded. Of course, we are no part of the world; we just pass through it; but we are to make an impression on the world by the lives we live.

I want to turn your attention now to the New Testament, because I could not think of preaching a sermon like this without this passage. This is what it says, "Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high." (Heb. 12:1, 2.) We ought to read this passage carefully and notice what is said. "Let us lay aside every weight," the apostle says. If you don't do it, the church suffers and your influence is dead. Instead of helping, you harm; instead of advancing, you detract and break down its influence. There is not a thing in the world that may be classed as a weight that we ought not to lay aside for the sake of other people and the example we set for them. Therefore, we ought to be very careful about the places we go and the things that we do, because the world will have to see them. The

eyes of the world are turning upon Christians and upon the church as upon an actor on the stage and the audience looking on. The eyes of the world are looking at everything that transpires in our lives. They are watching the church; they are watching every Christian; and every eye is turned upon us to see what we will do in struggle and in strife.

Now, there may be weights in my life that may not be found in your life. There may be weights in your life that are different from the weights found in mine. It may be necessary sometimes to stand out in the open and fight against them. Before I can run the race that is set before me, I must cut loose those weights and lay them aside. If I were going to run a race, I would take every weight off my body that I could. I would be just as light as I could be, lay aside every hindrance.

Did you ever hear a man say something good about a Christian and then say, "but . . ."? Well, there's something that hurts that Christian. There is a weight in his life, and he cannot succeed because of it. He should lay it aside. The apostle says that we should "lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us." Now, I am not discussing any certain sin. This passage said the "sin that doth so easily beset us." Now, that is a specific sin, and that sin is the sin of unbelief, and the sin of unbelief is the besetting sin of every one of us. We cannot get away from it. Listen, in order that we might run with patience the race that is set before us and win in the contest, we must be ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and to God the Father. I wish that men would cease to look at men and to measure and compare themselves with men. We are not trying to run the race with men. We are to look to Jesus Christ as the perfect pattern, our leader and exemplar. He is the Alpha and Omega; he is the beginning and the end; he is the first and the last. To the children of God Christ is all in all; Christ is everything. "Ever looking to him . . ." is the statement made, "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." I want to ask you what is the joy set before you? The joy of the Lord Jesus Christ was to do the will of God. That's why he was willing to shed his blood and endure the suffering of the cross, and on the banner that floated triumphantly above him

was written, "I have done what I came to do." He did the will of God. He went to Calvary's mountain, and the cross meant nothing, and the nails in his hands meant nothing to him except that he was doing God's will. The crown of thorns meant nothing. He was doing the will of God. The joy set before him went beyond the crown of thorns, beyond the grave, beyond the cross; and, friends, if we ever get to the crown awaiting us yonder in that everlasting home of the soul, it will be by the way of the cross.

Back in the thirteenth chapter of Genesis we learn that the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt in the land; and if Lot and Abraham get into a fracas, they will see it, and it will bring the brotherhood into reproach. Abraham realized that. *I would to God that we could see it and that we would be ashamed to ever find ourselves quarreling, backbiting, or envious of one another. I would to God that we would be broad enough and big enough and love sufficiently that we could cover all that up. I don't know the number of times that I have been called to help settle difficulties between brethren. I have heard brethren say this about some situations, "It is not the money; it is the principle." No, it is not that at all. It is a question of a sheep, or a horse, or a little piece of land, or some cattle, or the location of a school-house, or a school directorship, or something like that. It is something like that which has often torn to shreds the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We might sit at the feet of Abraham and learn this lesson. Now at that time remember that not a line had been written, not a sentence in the Bible had been written, and it was not written for a long time after that. Abraham had too much religion to allow a matter of that kind to start a quarrel. He was too well-bred to permit it.*

But that is not all. Abraham said, "We are brethren," and the next statement is that the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt in that land. If they quarreled, those people would know about it, and it would be a reflection on the brotherhood. There was but one thing to do. They must separate. Abraham said: "This will never do. Now you take your choice, and I will take the rest. You take what you want, and I will take what is left." I want to say that I believe if we lack enough religion that we will allow some little matter like that to tear the church up, I believe we

lack enough religion to keep us out of heaven. Just think! Abraham was big enough, generous enough, and magnanimous enough to say, "Now, Lot, here is the land. You take your choice, and I will take what is left. If you go east, I will go west; if you go north, I will go south." The land cannot hold both of us, and I believe in this case it would be much better for us to separate than to strive and fight each other. Abraham offers the solution to the whole problem. Lot has his choice, and he takes advantage of his old uncle who had given him every advantage possible. There is another point, brethren. It is not the principle involved. "It is not money, but the principle," they say. Now, just suppose we look at this: God promised Abraham that land. He promised him the land from the Euphrates River to the Great Sea. It belonged to Abraham. Lot could lay no claim to it. It was promised to Abraham and to his children, but you will observe that Abraham is willing to suffer the loss of that land in order to preserve the peace and harmony between himself and his nephew. He didn't want to have a fuss or disturbance over something when it could be avoided, and when selfish interest is involved. If we don't possess this spirit, we will never rise high in the scale, and it will be impossible for us to be great while we live here or to go to heaven when we die. There comes to be a crisis in the life of all of us sooner or later. I am trying to give you a background now. When that time came in Lot's life, it was necessary for him to make a choice. Now, that is a serious thing, isn't it? It is a serious thing when a man stands at the crossroads of decision to choose a course.

You remember God said a long time ago, "Behold, I set before you life and death, good and evil, blessing and cursing; choose ye this day whom ye will serve." (Deut. 30:15, 16.) When Joshua talks about it, he puts it this way, "Others may do as they will, but as for me and my house, we will serve the living God." (Josh. 24:15.) Now, that was the choice that he made. We might read still further that Moses chose to suffer ill-treatment with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He chose to suffer ill-treatment with God's people here and reach heaven with its glories and its grandeur rather than to enjoy the pleasures of this world for a season. That ought to be a wonderful thing to help us to make a decision. Moses had

to make it. That ought to help us when we come to the place where the road divides and when we have to make a decision. What road will we travel? What choice will we make? May we begin to pray today for God to give us wisdom that we may choose the right way, the right thing, that which will mean more to us than anything in the world! Oh, that we be not guided by our pride or selfishness, by the lure and blandishment of earthly things! Not these, my friends.

But that is not all. Suppose we look for a moment further at what the Book says. It tells us that Lot looked over the land and made his choice. He chose the rich, fertile plains about the Jordan. Now, it is rather little for a man to make a choice like that. He absolutely ignored his old uncle who had done everything for him. He had favored him in every way possible. He had watched him play about the old tent and had twined his heartstrings around Lot. He had taken him under his wing and held him in his arms. He had done so many things for him. Everything that he was or ever hoped to be he owed to that old patriarch. Now, that is selfishness. We cannot give credit where it is not due or consideration where it does not belong. That was just selfishness. That land was promised to Abraham, but he was willing to step out and let Lot have it, and Lot did not give any consideration to this old man who had favored him so much. Is it possible that we could be so full of ingratitude? Lot was an orphan, and that old patriarch took him into his home, treated him kindly, trained the tendrils of his heart around the throne of God. Abraham was a rich man for his day and time, and he had given Lot all that he had; but when the time came for Lot to make a choice, Lot wanted to increase his possessions, and he absolutely ignored Abraham. He chose the plains of the Jordan, and by reason of that Abraham is driven back into the unfavored hills of Palestine. He pitched his tent in the oaks of Mamre, and he lived there the rest of his days. It was there that the angels of God visited him, and it was there that the child of promise was born, when he was one hundred years of age.

Now, I want to ask, what would you do? Which had you rather be, Abraham in those unfavored hills in his tent in Mamre or Lot with his tent headed toward Sodom, the most despicable place in the world? Just which had you rather be? Which

choice would you make? They both could not stay there and have peace, so Abraham proposed that they separate. I want to ask your attention to this fact: The Book says that Lot dwelt in the cities of the plains and pitched his tent toward Sodom. At first he did not go to Sodom—had no intention of it. I am of the opinion that he did not intend to go. I don't think he ever meant to get into Sodom, the most wicked place in the world. It has come down in the statutes of time as a disgrace. It was a terrible place, an awful place. Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom, took his wife and babies there to make a dollar. He had a dream of luxuries and riches. Back in pioneer days, how many do you suppose had dreams like that and took their wives and babies with them? It never dawned upon him until he was out there that he would have to leave it all sometime, that he would have to live in dugouts in the ground, that his wife would be deprived of her religious affiliations and his children of the schools. For what purpose? To make money, to get rich. How many choose that to the loss of their souls? Are you going to lose your soul and your family for that sort of thing? It seems to me that sensible men and women now would not pursue that course to the loss of their souls. A man would not make that choice if he wanted to save his soul, his wife, his children.

I was in a controversy a great many years ago about the character of literature that should be taught to children, and they took me severely to task and criticized me most rigidly because of my views on the literature being taught. A man said, "Anybody can criticize, but I had rather not be so critical." I found out that that man had been using that literature and had lost every child he had and his wife also. When I found that out, I referred his attention to the fact and said, "If I were you, having used it, I would never try to get anybody else to do so." Lot was interested in getting rich and multiplying his cattle, and he lost his family. Many people are doing that today. How many men have lost their family, their children at that sort of thing? They pitched their tents toward Sodom. Oh, they didn't mean to go there. Lot didn't mean to go there, either. I am going to defend him on that, but the next time you read of him he is in Sodom. His righteous soul was vexed by their filthy manner of living. He

is troubled about it, but he is there. He pitched his tent toward Sodom; he pitched his tent in the wrong way.

Now, I just want to suggest, friends, if you don't want to go to Sodom, pitch your tent in another way. There is no sense in pitching your tent toward Sodom if you don't mean to go there. Pitch your tent away from Sodom. If you want to be happy, pitch your tent in another direction. Don't pitch your tent toward Sodom if you don't want to go to hell, where the worm never dies and the fire is never quenched, where it is dark and miserable, to be with the demons of hell and the degenerates of earth. There are multiplied millions of the human race who believe that there is such a place, with fire and brimstone, and yet there are men and women who claim to believe that who are ungodly and unjust. They have pitched their tents in the wrong way. Yet they claim to believe that there is such a place. I don't know that Lot knew that much about it.

Now, Abraham was the best man in the world, and Lot had the privilege of his company and was reared by him. He was the best man on the face of the earth, and for the sake of harmony and peace he was willing to give up part of his earthly acquisitions to Lot. He was willing to give it up and turn away from it. He was a wonderful man to associate with. What a blessing it was for Lot to be associated with such a man! Yet, Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom.

There are people in the world like that today. You see folk that will go away from church. I wonder why. They won't attend the prayer meeting. They are not interested in the Bible study. They offer every kind of excuse. I wonder why that is true. Why should a man rather go to a picture show than to prayer meeting? It fell my lot to talk to a man like this on the question of money. He said, "I give for the whole family." He didn't give much at that. He said, "They do not make anything." I said: "Your wife makes nothing? She cooks for you; she sews for you; she darns your socks for you; she does everything to make you comfortable and happy; but she doesn't make anything?" He said, "Oh, I give them money." I told him that I saw them going to the picture show, and I knew that that was not free. He said that he gave them the money to go on. I said, "If you can give them the money to go to the picture show, it seems to me

that you could give them money for the Lord." I told him the next time any of his family was sick, then, not to send for me. Send for them. That's where he spent his money. I said: "Don't send for me the next time one of your family dies. Don't call on the church then. Just go down there where you spent your money and see what they will do for you. They would not even miss you any more than they would miss one raindrop on the roof of a house when millions of others were falling upon it. They don't care anything for you. If you are going to spend your time there and give your money there, you will have to call on them when trouble comes into your home. Don't call on the preacher then. When prayer meeting comes, they will be in the picture show when they should be giving their best work to the church. They should be lending a hand to the work."

Why did Lot live, anyway? To increase his holding—that was all. He had an appetite for earthly acquisitions. He listened to the blandishments and call of worldly things and earthly possessions. His appetite for earthly possessions was so keen, his heart so avaricious, and his greed so great that he was willing to override everything and never consider anybody else in order that he might increase in the ephemeral interests of this world. He overlooked his interest in heaven and in all that God means and religion suggests. That is the story of pitching his tent toward Sodom; but instead of merely pitching his tent there, he *is* in Sodom.

But that is not all. Whenever any church, this one or any other, permits itself to depart one bit from the word of the living God, it is pitching its tent toward Sodom. When it allows any unauthorized thing to enter, it has pitched its tent toward Sodom, and mark my word, it will not be many moons until it finds itself in Sodom. Now, let me tell you, young man, when you touch the first drop of fiery intoxicants, you have pitched your tent toward Sodom; and if you don't want to go there, don't touch it. If you don't want to go to a drunkard's grave, break the heart of your wife, take bread out of the mouths of your children, don't take the first drop. If you would not have it that way, don't take the first drop. Don't take the first step; for when you take the first step you have pitched your tent toward Sodom. Young man, let me tell you, if you would avoid trouble, don't take one dishonest cent. When you do one dis-

honest thing, when you gamble for one cent, you have pitched your tent toward Sodom. If you don't want to go to a gambler's grave, don't take the first step. There have been multiplied millions of men and women who once were just as good, just as strong, just as wise and as able as anyone, who have gone to a drunkard's grave or to a gambler's grave. They didn't mean to go there, but they pitched their tents toward Sodom. It is not hard to keep from going there if we keep ourselves under control, if we manage ourselves.

Young lady, when you permit yourself to be handled and fondled by one of the opposite sex, you have pitched your tent toward Sodom, and many of your kind are in houses of ill fame today. They didn't mean to go there, but they pitched their tents toward Sodom. They had no intention of going there, but they pitched their tents in the wrong direction. Young man, when you do that, you have pitched your tent toward Sodom. You can't get away from it.

There is not a man in the penitentiary who went there for the first thing that he did. That sort of thing grows and develops from little things. Every highjacker, robber, thief, bank robber started from some little thing. He didn't mean to be, but he pitched his tent in the wrong direction. Young men and young women don't touch liquor if you don't want to be a drunkard. If you don't want to go to a gambler's grave, don't start gambling. When you take the first step, it is like putting the brakes in reverse and they won't hold. I know you would not aim to go to Sodom. Lot did not mean to go there, but he found himself in Sodom. He was disgusted by the filthy lives of those people, but he had pitched his tent the wrong way. A little while ago he was back with Abraham, the best man on earth, but he wanted possessions, and he left him. Friends, there isn't enough value in all the world to justify a man to leave the church of the living God, prayer, and the altar of service as prescribed in the New Testament. There isn't enough money in all the world to justify a man to go out there and live with the belligerents of earth and the demons of hell. There isn't enough money and value in all the earth to justify that sort of thing. Then what would justify me in pitching my tent toward Sodom? There is nothing that could mean that much to my soul.

But that is not all. If this church does not want to get away from the New Testament, don't take the first step. If you want to stand foursquare on the New Testament, don't depart from it a hair's breadth. Don't depart one bit from it. Let it alone. Let nothing cause you to depart from it. Don't listen to the siren's song, but stand square on the word of God.

I want to call your attention to another point. When God heard about Sodom and how bad it was, he sent angels down to make inquiry, and when they went they found it just that way. They told Lot to take his wife and his two daughters and his sons-in-law and get out of the city that very night. In the morning at daybreak, at sunrise, fire was to come from heaven and destroy those cities. Lot lingered there, for his life's earnings were there. Everything that he loved was there. His daughters had married there. He had lived there, and now he has to leave it all. Yes, he has to leave it all behind. Then what shall he do? Isn't it a terribly sad picture? Yet, that is the case. The angel came and took Lot by the hand and dragged him and his wife and two daughters out of the city; and when they were outside the city, the angel said: "Flee for your lives. Stay not in the plains. Get into the mountains, and don't look back." He had to leave the things there that were most beautiful to him. He had to leave the very things that lured him to Sodom. There is a time when we will have to leave everything that has tempted us and lured us to Sodom. We ought not to allow anything to lure us away from the church, away from prayer, and away from religious activities. We ought not to allow anything to tempt us away from the service of God Almighty. We ought not neglect the service of God in order that we might make money and lay it away, for one day we will have to leave it all behind. You can't take a nickel with you.

Lot and his family were fleeing. Sodom is to be destroyed by fire. His wife is close behind him, and when they came to the top of the hill over which they are to turn, she looked back. It is the last possible chance they will ever have to see that city in which they have lived, where Lot's life earnings were, where they had reared their children. Ten thousand sorrows rolled through that mother's breast, and she looked back. I don't think she meant to disobey God. I don't believe that she meant to do that

at all; but her children were back there, and when they came to that point, she wanted to glance back at the city. She shaded her eyes and looked back, and was turned into a pillar of salt, and you know the New Testament writer warns us to "remember Lot's wife." (Luke 17:32.)

I know nothing that is comparable to a mother's love. She will go to the door of death to bring her baby into this world, yet God's love is even tenderer. God's love is greater than that of the mother. That great mother heart yearned for her children, and she turned back. She looked back. Can you think of anything tenderer? She didn't want to leave her babies back there in that terrible city. They were her children and she loved them. No doubt she thought of the times that she had straightened out their tangled tresses and kissed the wounds away. She thought of the times that she had nestled them to her bosom and sang lullabies to them. When she thought of her babies, she wanted to look back. I don't believe that Lot's wife meant to disobey God, but she loved her children, and she just turned for the last time to cast a glance toward that terrible place where her children were. However, God did not overlook that; he didn't excuse her; and if God did not overlook her disobedience with all those sorrows on that great mother heart; if he did not wink at it, he isn't going to excuse us when we disobey him. He isn't going to justify us when we go back to the flesh pots of the world.

Let's look at Lot now. He is wifeless, living in a cave, broken and distressed. The conditions are too dark to mention now. He is sad; he is lonely. Do you know the reason for this? He made the wrong choice; he pitched his tent toward Sodom; and he got in Sodom, and it took an angel of God to drag him out. When he came out, he lost his wife, his children, every cent he had, all that he had loved and all that was precious to him. Cloud and tempest settled on him. He is crushed to the earth; he is brokenhearted.

We must close now, for our time is gone. I want to ask you, don't you want to be a Christian? God is calling you and asking you to a nobler and higher life. He wants you to do better; he wants to save you. Don't you want to come to him tonight? Won't you let Jesus Christ lead you over the rough roads and sands of the desert? Don't you want to follow him? You know he

said, "Follow me." Don't you want to walk with him until God shall take us into his arms and fold us gently to sleep on his breast where we shall be free from corroding care and shall dwell with him through endless days? How many will obey God and become Christians? Then won't you live faithfully as long as God permits you to live in this world? If you have once been a Christian but you are not living right, won't you come back tonight and start again? Don't you want to come back to your first love? How many will come while we stand and sing?

LOVE

I am reading today, this Lord's day, from the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, beginning with verse 8 and reading to the close of the chapter, in which we have these words: "Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away, for we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I, know even also as I am known. And now abideth faith, and love, and love, but the greatest of these is love."

Upon the Lord's day, in the Lord's house, about the Lord's table are these very remarkable verses written for our study. We stand on holy ground. I hope every one of us may be lifted up by reason of the sacred surroundings. I hope that we may be brought nearer to God, and that we may visualize what it is all about and more fully realize that there is a deep and abiding reality in the religion of our Lord.

I want to call your attention to the very last statement made in this reading, and, indeed, it is very astonishing when we think about it, ". . . but the greatest of these is love." Perhaps from the standpoint of human wisdom and human need, it would be impossible to accept this statement. It is by no stretch of the imagination that we say this. It is no dream, no vision of the mind, nor the thought of any one man, but it is a plain, pointed

declaration of God, and I believe it and accept it without gainsaying, because God says it. If you were to ask me why, I could not answer. I would be compelled to shake my head and remain silent. When you tell me anything is greater than faith, it would be hard to accept it, and without some superior intelligence to direct me, I would have to say that I could not accept it, but when God says that love is greater than faith, I accept it. I know it is so, because God says it is, and God never says anything that is not true.

Just think, now, of faith! Without it, it is impossible to please God. Immediately you see how indispensable it is. Without it, you could not pray; you could not repent; you could not confess Christ; you could not be baptized; you could not take the Lord's Supper; you could not sing. You could not do anything that would be pleasing to your Creator and the giver of your eternal spirit without faith. It seems to me that that is spread like a blanket over everything we do, and I don't believe it is possible to overstate the benefits and the importance of faith.

I have known men and women of mature years that, when the preacher announced that he would preach on the subject of "Faith," would sigh and feel that they were going to be bored with a threadbare, antiquated, and worn-out subject. Any person who feels that way, I am sorry for. It is one of the deepest and very finest subjects in the Book. It is a field from which we could gather fruit and flowers endlessly and still never miss that which we have taken. We read from the Bible that "we walk by faith and not by sight." (2 Cor. 5:7.) It further calls our attention to the fact that we are justified by faith and have peace with God. It also says that by faith we have access to the grace of God. It further talks about the Christian warrior who puts on the whole armor of God and says, "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (Eph. 6:16.) Repeatedly does it say we are saved by faith. In addition to that God Almighty has declared that "faith is the victory that overcomes the world." (1 John 5:4.) The only hope for the world in the struggle and strife and in combating evil is faith. In our endeavor to serve God acceptably to the end that he may some day say. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:21), it takes faith to make that service

acceptable. I hope I have not wearied you by these remarks, but I have said them merely to show you how wonderful, how big, how deep, how long, how high, how indispensable, and how important faith is. Yet the Bible says that love is greater than faith.

Now I want to turn your attention to the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. The apostle said that "by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." That is a wonderful statement. Faith drives the darkness away. It opens our eyes to the glories of the past. By faith we can go back in the morning of creation and stand on the side line of that marvelous procedure and see how the world was framed. We can see how Jehovah stretched out the evening as a curtain and adorned it with stars of the night. We can hear him as he spoke out of chaos and darkness and confusion and said, "Let there be light," and there was light. Instantly, ten thousand glittering worlds sprang into existence. I am saying all this to get you to see how important faith is, how indispensable and marvelous, how wonderful it is. You can hear Jehovah by faith, see and understand him by faith. You can see how the waters rolled back into place at his command that day. We can hear him say to the proud waves, You can come no farther. I want to suggest that there is not a thing anywhere beneath the path of the stars or the circuit of the sun that by faith we cannot accept and explore. It is not necessary for us to spend a great deal of time and money in exploring fields, caves, mountains, hills, and valleys, because if there is any story told by them this Book tells it. I can sit in my study and walk over the sands of the desert, climb mountains, and explore even things down deep in the bowels of the earth by this thing we are talking about. It takes faith to magnify, embellish, and amplify it. If it is worth knowing, by faith I can sit in the quiet of my home and study this Book, and I can find out anything I need to know about any place from the shores of Labrador to the fields of the sunny South. There is nothing on the earth or over the earth that I cannot account for by faith.

If it were not for faith, we would be groping our way in darkness today and impotent to do anything to please God or extricate ourselves from the entanglements of today's problems. I want to suggest, further, that by faith I can go to the little city of

David, the city of Bethlehem, and behold Mary and listen to her in the groans and agony and travail of her soul as she brings the world's Redeemer into this world. By faith I can see him as he is wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in the manger. By faith I can see the shepherds who were watching their flocks that night on the hills of Judea and who first heard the sweet-voiced group of heavenly choristers singing, "Peace on earth, good will toward men." By faith I can see the wise men as they come to pay the homage in their hearts to him that is born King of the Jews. I can see them diligently watching the star that led to the place where Jesus lay. By faith I can see them rewarded for their diligence and perseverance as they watched the heavens for that star. I can see them as they bring their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the child that was born King of the Jews. You take faith away, and you take all away. I don't know, my friends, what I would do, or what any other man would do, if his faith were shaken in God and in the Bible.

If there was ever a time in the history of the world that we needed to contend for our faith in God, that time is now, for our civilization is about to crumble, and our governments are tottering upon their foundations, and everything seems to be going wrong. It is a time when men and women ought to have faith in God, and I want to tell you today that when you shake my confidence in this Book and make me believe that it is not true, that it is full of lies, you have shaken my faith and my confidence in God.

What is faith? The Bible tells us that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1.) The other version says, "confidence of things hoped for." When the apostle talks about this thing, he says, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:17, 18.) The only way that we can see things that are far away beyond the realm of the mortal and the material is by the eye of faith. We could not even do this, however, if God had not spoken.

We can see by faith the walls of jasper and the gates of pearl in the city of God. By faith we can see the tree of life with its

ambrosial fruits. By faith we can see that innumerable group of the redeemed clothed in robes of spotless white and hear them sing the song of the redeemed. I can see by faith that land of fadeless day and the city that lies foursquare, where the sun never goes down, where cares never come, where nothing that blossoms shall never die.

Faith is one of the greatest subjects in this sacred volume, yet when the apostle talks about it, he says that love is greater. Not only is that so, but he classified these things, lays them down, and brings in another and puts it beside them—hope. I don't know whether we appreciate hope or not, but to me there is nothing sweeter or more indispensable. In our struggles, in our sufferings, in the midnight of sorrow, there is hope standing by our side and bids us wait until the break of day. It is hope that makes us look up and not down. Hope makes us see the sunshine behind the dark cloud and fully realize that somewhere the sun is shining and birds are singing. It is hope that makes us understand that it will not always be dreary and dark. It is hope that causes us to be lifted up. It is hope that causes us to see the rainbow after the storm. Hope makes us thank God and take courage when things go wrong. When death overtakes our companions and severs them from our lives, it is hope that helps us to endure. Hope is the very anchor of our souls. When we have the misfortune, as we think of it and interpret it, to lose a companion, we still have hope. Listen to what the apostle says, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." (1 Thess. 4:13.) Hope comes to wipe the tears away from our eyes. Hope binds up the rent in our hearts. Hope makes us lift up our hands when they hang down, and it makes the person who is worn out and exhausted take a new lease on life. What could we do without it? When clouds are dark and lowering, when thunders roll and lightning flashes, when the storm is driving and everything has gone wrong, when friends forsake and foes deride, we have hope to offer us courage and strength. Hope serves as a tonic, a panacea for our ills, a balm for our every ache.

What reason would we give for the hope that is in us? Both desire and expectation go into hope. It is a great thing to desire,

but it is a greater thing to expect. We might desire a thing without expecting it. When we hope for a thing, we desire it and expect it to come true. That is the sort of thing that helps us bear our burdens, carry our crosses, "learn to labor and to wait," pray on and believe on until God in his mercy sees fit to release us from the body in which we are bound, and let our souls go back to God from whom they came.

Just another thought on this: "Rejoice in hope." I want you to get it. What would cause a man as soon as winter is over to come out into the fields, break the ground, cultivate it, plant the seeds, and work hard throughout the springtime and the summer? Nothing but the thought of harvest. That's the reason he can work and be happy. He hopes for the harvest; he believes it will come if he will wait. If you are a Christian, how do you bear the persecutions and trials and temptations that you have to endure? Because we are looking for a reward. We are Christians, and we are living in hope of a reward.

I used to hear a preacher on funeral occasions who said that he would like to die on a day in springtime, because the birds were singing then, because the babbling brooks were flowing, because the flowers were blooming, and the grass was green, and everything was merry and bright. That would be like taking a life in childhood. Which is better, the childhood life, the adolescent period, or the mature life, the one that has come along through the various stages of development and stands on the river brink bearded, wrinkled, worn and gray? Which is better, the mature or the immature? Which is better, the green or the ripe? Which is sweeter and better? I think the man was wrong. The man sleeps in the dust today, but I think he was wrong. I think the best time of all the year to pass away is in the autumn, when the leaves have turned to gold and brown, when we can hear the song of the laborer as he gathers in the harvest. I think that is the best time to go, in the harvest time, when I can gather the fruit of the labors of many years, not at the time when I have just started to plant the seed.

Hope is a wonderful question, isn't it? Yet the apostle says that love is greater. Therefore, it must be true that love is the greatest thing in the world, the greatest grace in the heart of God, the greatest thing in heaven, the greatest thing on earth.

It can mold men and women perfectly together, making one out of twain. Nothing else can do that. It can lift men from the pitfalls of life and make them to be new creatures in Christ. In talking about the love of God, I want to say that he loved us so much that he sent his Son into this world to redeem mankind. There is no question but that he loves us. That is settled. It doesn't take much meditation or thought to get the point that God loved us. He doesn't even have to tell us so, for what he did is a demonstration of the fact that he loved us. "When we were in deep distress, he flew to our relief." When we were lost without faith, without hope, without salvation, then it was that God sent his Son to our relief, to lift us up, take our burdens upon himself, to carry our sins to the cross, to wipe the tears from every eye, and give men the opportunity to see the light. Therefore, it does not require much study for us to see that God loves us. Just another point. You know the Bible tells us that the love of Christ passes knowledge. There may be a limit to his love; but if there is, we have not reached it. It is like looking out over the fields to the horizon and seeing the place where the earth and sky seem to meet. Of course, they do not meet; it is just an optical illusion. You can go on and on and never reach the place where they meet. The love of God for the human race is like that. You just can't reach it.

I want to call your attention to another passage. The apostle is talking about the love of God in Romans the eighth chapter, the closing verses. We have him saying this, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." That is the love that God has for us. There is no way for me to get away from his love. I cannot wander away from it, for he loves us wherever we stray. He is our hope for salvation, and when we fall we can trust him for pardon. We cannot go so far away that God does not love us. There is no question about that. It reached the grand climax when Jesus Christ climbed to the height of Calvary and there on the top of that hill died for your sins and mine. He poured out his blood there and yielded up his spirit to the Father. The Bible says that "greater love has no man than

this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." (John 15:13.) It is a wonderful thing to see a man love his friends, sacrifice for them, put his arm around them, and lift them up, but it is even a greater thing to give his life, if necessary, for them. Yet that does not even touch the hem of the garment, so to speak, of what we are talking about. We are talking about something even superior to that. We are talking about the love that Jesus had for the human race. He was even willing to die for his enemies, not just his friends. Yes, friends, he died for his enemies. It would be a wonderful thing if we could just love enough to give something for our enemies, for those who do not love us, for people who persecute us, for those who make life miserable for us, if they can, and do everything they can to make us unpleasant on this earth. Wouldn't it be a marvelous thing if we could rise above that sort of thing and be willing to love our enemies? Even when they cause us pain, wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to love them still?

We have a love that is divine, not the love we have for our friends, but our love for God. Our love for him is a different thing. Sometimes the expression that we hear so much—the love of God—means his love for us. Sometimes it means our love for him. I am persuaded that nothing can keep God from loving us and that there is not anything we can do but that he loves us still. If I go down to the very bottom, if I go through the wide gate that leads to that place of eternal misery where the belligerents of earth and the demons of hell are in the underworld, it will not be because God does not love me. He loves me every step of the way; but I am sorry to tell you, my friends, that often the enticements and blandishments of this world have kept us from obeying him. They have weaned us away from him. When I love him enough I want to suffer for him. We ought to be willing to do that. When we love God we ought to show it by the manner of our lives. I am not talking about sentiment; I am talking about the love of God.

God's love is one of the finest things that the Bible tells about. Hear Peter say, "Above all things, my children, have love one for another." Have love among yourselves. That's what Peter said, "for love shall cover a multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4:8.) I assure you that that's not sentiment. It is not sentiment that

I am talking about. There are two different words for love. One means the love of a wife for her husband, the husband for his wife, or the love of a mother for her child, or a child for its mother; but the word I am using and the inspired apostle uses in the text is not that at all. Yet, at the same time, I would not deprive you of all the blessings of a mother's love. No, I would not take those blessings out of your life. I would not do that at all, and I hope you will understand me. I am trying to tell you just what God tells us. I suggest that we turn and read a passage to show you that God speaks of love by way of comparison, just in order to embellish and amplify it. Here is what the apostle says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal." (1 Cor. 13:1.) I would like to be a great orator. I would like to have an extensive vocabulary. I would like to always be able to choose just the right word to convey my idea. I would like to be gifted in language to the end that I would be able to make people laugh one minute and cry the next. I would like to be able to lift them up to heaven and then be able to bring them back with the power of words and the use of language. I might be able to do all that and yet be nothing. There must be something behind it that will give strength and power to all that we say or do.

The apostle further says, "And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing." (1 Cor. 13:2.) The man who knows all mysteries and has all knowledge, we would look upon as wonderful. We would think the man wonderful who understood all mysteries, wouldn't we? There would be nothing he could not tell us about. He would have all kinds of knowledge. There would be nothing that he could not talk to us intelligently about. It is wonderful to be a good conversationalist, and it would be exceedingly wonderful to see a man who understands all mysteries, a man who would foretell events one thousand years before they happened, and tell about them as accurately as the historian could tell you after they had transpired, and yet without love he is nothing. We must love all men, not just those who love

us. It is easy to love the person who loves us, but it is not easy to love our enemies, those who persecute us.

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." I want to say this for the benefit of the church. You can get rid of all that you have if you want to and get no returns from it. You can give it all away; and if love is not in it, it does not benefit you at all. The majority of the gifts made today, however, are made to people who could get along without them, and the people who need the gifts are neglected. I want to say for this reason that we ought to watch how we distribute our gifts. To whom do you make your Christmas gifts? Most of them are given to the people who would not suffer without them or to people who expect to give us something in return. Do you give your gifts to those who are in want or to the people who live in surroundings that are amicable and agreeable? Think about it, friends. I want to ask you, what do you think about this passage? It says, "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor and give my body to be burned and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." The passage says, "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor"—not to friends, not to children who do not need them, not just at Christmas time, not in graduation presents, not in wedding presents. Those are all mighty fine so far as it goes. The passage does not say just "goods," but it says "ALL my goods." If I give all my goods to feed the poor man, the man who is hungry, the man who has no earnings, the man who has no income, to the man who is suffering, and have not love, the Bible says that it benefits me nothing. If I were to give him all my goods until my family is in want, until my wife and children do not have sufficiently of the necessities of life, and until I haven't the necessary clothing to appear, as we might say and as people expect a man to appear, on a rostrum in meetings like this, and if I have not love, it profiteth me nothing. I can even give my body to be burned, and if I have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

I have read stories of the persecutions of the early Christians, and in my fancy I can see them tied hand and foot. I can see the wood piled around them and the fire started. I can watch them as they look heavenward on the flames and pray. I thought

that that was wonderful and they pleased God in it. Here is the point: If I give it, I am not made to do so. I do not have my hands tied or my feet bound. I could run away from it. If I give my body to be burned when there is nothing holding me, watch those flames creeping in upon me until they cut down my body to ashes and take my spirit on the fiery tongues of the flames on to God, if I give that body without love, I am nothing. What's this all about? What does it mean? Well, you hear him talk about faith, hope, and love, and he says the greatest of these is love. If you have faith and hope and have not love, you are nothing.

If you speak with the tongues of men and of angels, if you have not love, it is nothing. It doesn't matter about the amount of cattle, your houses, your land, your earthly acquisitions, or how much mental capacity you have. It is not that. That isn't what he is talking about, but what use do we make of them? He says that without love they profit you nothing. Let me point this out to you. We have the apostle talking to us in these words, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." (1 John 5:3.) The person who does not keep the commandments of God does not love him. If you want to love God, that is the way to do it, just keep his commandments. Let me read another passage along this line, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14:21.) If you know his commandments and don't keep them, then you don't love him. Another passage, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law." (Rom. 13:10.) "This is love, that you walk after his commandments." (2 John 6.) Then the person who does not keep his commandments does not love God. That is what the Book said. The apostle says that if a man were to be able to speak with the tongues of men and angels, sing sweetly, pray softly, make great sacrifice, give up all his goods to feed the poor, even give his body to be burned, or may be able to understand all mysteries and have all knowledge, he may be able to interpret everything said and talk about them eloquently and beautifully; but if he doesn't love God and keep the commandments, he is nothing. Isn't that it? That's what the Bible has to say on the subject.

Now, I'd like to give an illustration to show you just what I mean. If you were to give a definition to a term, you ought to be able to put the definition in the place of it and get the meaning. If you are wrong then, you will have to get another term. That's a rule of language. For instance, for me to say that law is a rule of action would be equivalent to my saying that a rule of action is a law. If I say in the language of the Bible that "this is the love of God that we keep his commandments," we should be able to turn it around and say, "to keep the commandments of God is to love God."

The passage I read just a few minutes ago said that a man can give his body to be burned, and without love it profits him nothing. We can give our body to be burned; but if we do not live in obedience to the commands of God, then it is not worth anything. I just wonder to what extent the wise man could grasp that when he says, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccles. 12:13.)

I want to call your attention again to another passage. "Love never faileth." (1 Cor. 13:8.) Get that friends. It doesn't say that we won't get old and wrinkled and gray and feeble, but it says that love, when ten thousand years have rolled over the earth, will be as young as it was at the beginning. "Love never fails." We fail in our undertaking oftentimes because we are lacking in the very thing we are talking about. Every passage in the whole Bible, every passage in the New Testament or in the Old Testament, was written for one and only one thing, primarily, that is, to teach man obedience to God. When we come to consider this passage, "This is the love of God, to keep his commandments," we conclude that a man does not love God if he does not keep his commandments. If a man does not love God, then he is not going to do what the Book says. Are you going to let somebody or something of this world get you away from its teaching? If you don't love God, you are not obedient to him; you are not keeping his commandments. It doesn't matter who you are, where you go, or what you do; if you don't keep the commands of God, you don't love God. For my life I cannot conceive of a man going up there to live with God in heaven, on the plains of ether, when he is not good and pure and does not love God. Can you imagine such a

thing? Then, in the face of this language, can you imagine that a man loves God when he doesn't keep God's commandments? The Passage says, "This is the love of God, that you keep his commandments." Love never fails. Prophecies fail, but love doesn't.

The apostle says, "There remains faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest of these is love." Take faith away; you cannot get along without it. Take hope away; you cannot get along without it. There is no use to try. It is our companion through life; and when we get to the brink of death, faith steps back and becomes sight, and hope becomes a reality. Even then love is there, that "golden chain that binds our happy souls above, and he's an heir of heaven who finds his heart aglow with love," I like to think of it as we think of the Gulf Stream. It carries warmth into the north, melting snows and ice, making the flowers bloom, therefore making it possible for people to live in the frigid zone, and bringing the cool down here in order that we might live. Consider the love of God, how it flows through the great sea of life and mellows the hearts of men, wiping tears from the eyes that weep, bringing the blessings of heaven to us, picks up the weary soul and carries it back to God.

Won't you launch out on that sea today? Won't you accept the gospel of Christ? Let me invite you to hear God, believe God, obey God? "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." Are you going to live in this world without love of God? Can you love God without keeping his commandments? Christ says that he has gone to prepare a place for us, and he's coming back after us some day. Don't you want to go there? Can you expect to go to heaven without obeying God? Then you will have to turn from your sins; you will have to obey him. Are you willing to hear him, believe him, repent of your sins, confess, be buried with him by baptism and rise to walk in newness of life? If you have done this and have fallen by the wayside, won't you come back today? Won't you try again? Don't you want to begin again? Let God help you through your struggles. If there are those members of the church here who have recently moved into this community who would like to be identified with this congregation, help them and let them help you, you are also invited to come today while we stand and sing.

HE THAT WOULD LOVE LIFE

Now, my friends, from the third chapter of the first letter of the apostle Peter, we have elected to read a group of verses tonight. This is the Scripture reading which shall serve as our text for this evening. I begin with verse 8: "Finally be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing, knowing that you are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, having a good conscience, that, whereas they may speak evil of you, as of evil doers, that may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing."

This reading within itself constitutes a remarkable sermon. If we would look the whole field of literature over, especially the Bible, we could find nothing, I think, that would be more acceptable and that would come more nearly meeting the needs of the suffering race of men than these verses that we have read tonight. I know of no group of verses of the same number that would come more nearly being of paramount interest to the unfortunate people of the earth. I believe that there is such a variety of matter in this group of verses that it is impossible to go into all the details. I believe it would be impossible to get all that there is in it, and we are not going to try.

First of all, however, let me suggest to the man that "will love life and see good days" that he must "refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile." There are some people who fall out with life and say that they don't want to live, and

they are ready to take their own lives. There must be some cause for it. Think of the people who are taking their lives today. Why do they do it? The man who lives according to the teaching of the Bible doesn't want to take his life. We have tried to impress that point on the minds of people. People take their lives because they are disgusted with themselves and with everybody else. They have not lived a life of righteousness. They have been selfish, and when a man concentrates on his own life and his own things to the exclusion of everybody else, he becomes so selfish that his interest in his own things beclouds every other issue. He will be sad and morose. He will ask, "What is there to live for?"

A person ought to conduct himself along such lines that he will fall in love with life and want to live. He should want to live for the blessings that he can share. He wants to live for the blessings that may shower from his finger tips into the hearts and hands of the unfortunate men and women of this world. He wants to live because somebody needs him. Somebody is calling for his aid. The man who loves life wants to live to wipe the tears from the eyes that weep. He loves to live because he can bind up the bleeding hearts of sorrowing human beings. He wants to lift up the hands that hang down. He wants to smooth the wrinkled brow. That is the man who loves life.

I had rather be of some service to my fellowman, do some good while I live, wipe some tears from someone's eyes, take some burden or weight off somebody's soul, than to put all the flowers that ever bloomed on his grave. I believe herein is the secret of our success in the service of the living God.

The man who loves life takes a warm, personal interest in the man who needs him. The way to be happy is to bind up the broken heart, soften the calloused heart, lift up the hands that hang down, bring faith, hope, love, peace, and joy to suffering humanity. I believe if we could learn this lesson we would love to live. We are not going to speak on that subject, but it is in our lesson text for tonight. I just like to say certain things because they are so sweet, so necessary, so good, and so important, and this is one of the things I like to talk about.

Notice now, the man that will love life and see good days has to begin with self. If we learn to live, we have to begin in our own home, in our own heart. We must learn to control the stream

of our own life. We should take into the fountain from which it flows only that which is good and that which is pure. We should rid it of things that would pollute the stream. Get the lesson. The apostle said to us, the man who would love life and see good days, "Let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it." Here is the language we want for our text, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." I tell you, my friends, there is nothing sweeter. It is sweet to know that God's eye is over us, watching over us night and day, watching over us when we rise up and when we lie down. He is watching over us when we sleep; he is watching over us when we walk. His eye is ever over us when things have gone wrong, when friends forsake and foes deride, when the clouds hang over us dark and lowering, when there are shadows across our pathway. He watches over us when there is sorrow on our hearts, when our eyes are blinded by tears, and our souls are bending down under life's heavy load. Isn't it marvelous to know that when everything seems to have gone wrong you can lift up your voice to God and know that he can hear you?

What would you do if you awoke some day and found that God's face was against you, that he did not care for you, that he would not hear you when you pray, that he would not watch over you? How could you get along without his hand to lead you? How could you get along without his love around you? If we have never come to the place in life when we have been so oppressed, undone, broken up, never been under the shadow, if days have not been sufficiently dreary, dark, lonely, and long, and if the work has not been so arduous and the task not sufficiently tedious to make us feel that "other refuge have I none, hangs my suffering soul on thee," we have not been humbled enough to feel his need. We need to feel that God must help us. Have you ever been made to feel that God must help you or you would be ruined? Then did you remember that his ears are open unto your prayers? Wasn't it sweet to pray to him? In the language of the old song, "Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer, that calls me from a world of care, and bids me at my Father's throne make all my wants and wishes known," wasn't it about the sweetest thing in

all the world? Isn't it about the sweetest thing in the world that could be framed in words? I know of nothing that could be more appealing to the hearts of conscientious, sensible men. Notice another thing, and we are constantly confronted with this, that when the time has come when friends cannot help us and relatives are impotent to bring to us one bit of strength and relief, when the time comes that our money cannot buy for us and our influence doesn't count, then the only course that we might pursue is that we have still the inexhaustible treasury of prayer. I had rather have that than to have all the money in any ' bank on earth. I would rather have the privilege of talking with my Lord in prayer than to draw a draft on any bank. When my money is gone, when my influence is gone, then I still have the privilege of prayer, and God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can think or ask." I am a child of God, and I am sure God watches over me, cares for me. He is not too busy to hear me when I need him. I believe the most inexhaustible treasury at all is that of prayer. Without it I can do nothing. I can call upon God when the fingers of death are drawing about me or mine. When dangers surround me and when foes assail me, I can send one petition after another to mercy's throne. When I can do nothing else, I can pray. When friends need our help, or when we are powerless to help them, we can pray for them. I am trying to get you to see how powerful and how important prayer is. How fortunate we are to have access to that treasury in the hour of trouble, when the shadows are gathered about us, when things go wrong! Aren't we indeed fortunate to be able in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to call upon our heavenly Father and receive from his bountiful hand the blessings that we need? What if we could not do that? What if we could not pray in the hour of need and ask God to be merciful and kind to us?

When we are reading this passage, we are reading language that is very pointed, striking, pungent, and powerful, "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers." You don't have to be told that there are some people in this world over whom his eyes are not, and there are some people to whom his ear is not open when they pray. If you want God to hear you when you pray, if you want God to watch

over you in the vicissitudes of life, take your conduct into account. He is watching over the righteous, not the unrighteous. He is watching over the good people, not the bad people. He is watching over the just, not the unjust. I believe this should settle the question along that line. I want to suggest that we must have some ground for prayer. We must have something to stand on. We must have some certain platform. We must make certain advancements as far as we are concerned. We must take a certain stand, and then from that pedestal we may be able to send our message to the heart of God. God hears the righteous man when he prays. God holds his children in the hollow of his hand. He gives them strength in the hour of trouble when shadows fall across their pathway. Indeed, he takes them in the shadow of his wing. God's eye is over the righteous man, not the unrighteous.

Now, I want you to listen to another verse. James is talking. In the fifth chapter of his book, we find this passage: "Confess your faults one to another and pray ye one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." That didn't say that the prayer of the wicked man avails much. We don't like to think that anybody's prayer is not heard, but when we read this, we are compelled to do so. If you are going to live an ungodly life, eat, drink, and be merry, do just as you please, when things are going well with you, and then when you get into trouble think you can call on God and he will answer your prayers, I want to tell you, my friend, you are mistaken. If you want God to hear you when you come to the throne of grace and mercy, you must live a righteous life. You must go as far as you can, and then God will take care of you. Sometimes we are disgusted before we have taken the first step. Take Terah for instance. When he left Ur of the Chaldees with Abraham, he said that it was too much for him. He thought a trip of six or seven hundred miles was too much for his strength. He thought it would take all the strength he had. The burdens of his two hundred years were weighing mighty heavily upon him, but he journeyed on. When he came to a little oasis on the desert, his legs buckled under him. He could go no farther. He fell by the side of the road, but he went just as far as he could; and if I am fortunate enough to reach heaven someday, I shall see him

sitting down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He will not be there because he fell by the wayside, but he will be there because he went just as far as he could go, and after I have gone as far as I can go, then God will do the rest. But I must do my best. I think I can best illustrate this by an event in the New Testament. There was a little group of women who followed Christ from Calvary. They had been deprived of ministering to him in his agony on the cross, but they wanted to prepare his body for burial in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. They probably anointed it for burial. They had waited on the Sabbath day. The grave was guarded, the Lord was in it, but they did all they could do. On the first day of the week, they went on the way to the tomb, but Jesus had arisen. They went just as far as they could. They did all that they could. We ought to take that for an example. We should do all that we can; we need to go just as far as we can, and when we get to the place where we can do no more, the Lord will take care of the rest.

I knew an old brother once who lived seven or eight miles from the meeting house and never missed but three Lord's days in forty years. One time he was sick; the other times it was raining, but he did his best to get there. He went just as far as he could. About one-fourth mile from the meeting house there was a creek, and during the heavy rains that creek got out of its banks. He knew that it was out of the banks before he left home, but he went just as far as he could go. He could not possibly cross that swollen stream, and God doesn't demand the impossible of us. There are certain demands that God makes of us, but I want to tell you, friends, when we have gone as far as we can, done all we can do and cannot do any more, and ask God to do the rest, I believe that he will do it. I believe that he will put his arm about you and hold you up. I believe that he will listen to you when you pray. For me to sit down in my room when I have not tried and ask God to do something for me is out of the question. Of course God does not need my effort, but that is a condition we must fulfill. We can't expect God to answer our prayers when we haven't done our part, but when we have made every effort we can, exerted all the influence and power we have to that end, then that is a different story entirely. The Bible says that "the effectual fervent prayer of a RIGHTEOUS man availeth much."

Let me ask you this: Wouldn't it go a long way toward healing the hearts of men and women if we learned that lesson? The Bible says, "Confess your sins one to another and pray ye one for another that ye might be healed." Wouldn't that go a long way toward healing the broken heart? Wouldn't that go a long way toward helping us out of our difficulties and troubles? Couldn't we be kind, courteous, and generous, and compassionate, and whatever else might be necessary to make the brotherhood something that would be attractive and the church of the Lord Jesus Christ would increase in magnitude? All this turns upon one word, and that is "righteousness." When the Bible says that "the prayer of a righteous man availeth much," that means the righteous woman too. It means the women as well as the men, for the women ought to pray too, but the point is that this is predicated on righteousness.

Let me read you the one hundred nineteenth Psalm, the one hundred seventy-second verse. "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness." Get this point: Without obedience to the word of God, you would not be a righteous man. If you do what God says for you to do, then you are a righteous man. Peter said, "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." (Acts 10:34.) The righteous man is acceptable to him. I want you to observe that whether Jew or Gentile, a man must be a worker of righteousness, and to be a righteous man, one must come up to the commands of God. Then when you come to pray, God will hear you. When trials come, and when shadows fall across our pathway, who is the man we ask to pray for us? When we have to say to someone, "I need your prayers," to whom do you go? Do you go to the man who has been indifferent? No. I have been in places where I needed the prayers of men, when life seemed heavy, and I could not go any further. Then someone says, "I'll pray for you." If some men said that, I would not think much of it. If some others said it, it would mean a great deal to me. It would be a tonic to my soul. On the other hand, take the ungodly man, the person who does not love righteousness, a robber, adulterer, fornicator, murderer; if that man prays for me, I would not think much of it. I wouldn't think that his prayer would amount to very much. But

if a person who lived godly and soberly and righteously should pray for me, the Bible says that a prayer from that sort of person will avail much.

I have thought many times about Abraham when the angels came and visited his tent in Mamre. I can see him sitting in the door of the tent in the heat of the day. See him as he greets the men, gets water for their feet, and has a meal prepared for them. See him as he entertains them. Then, when they get ready to leave, Abraham walked some distance with them. God determined to tell him what he was about to do. God knew that Abraham was a righteous man and would command his children after him, and one day he was to become a great and mighty nation. Then the angels told him that they were going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, because their wickedness was very great. They were going toward Sodom. Abraham asked God if the righteous would also be destroyed, and if fifty righteous men could be found in the city would they spare it. Finally he deducted the number to ten, and God said that he would not destroy it for the sake of ten righteous people; but they were not there, and Sodom was destroyed. Lot and his daughters escaped, and the reason they were saved was due, perhaps, to that prayer that Abraham offered that day. You never can tell what prayer will do. I believe that we ought to pray for one another. We ought to pray for one another when they are sick or when they are well. We ought to pray for the boys and girls when they wander away from home, and we ought to pray for them when they are at home.

There is no telling the power that prayer has or how far it reaches. It may reach that boy wandering out there in sin and cause him to come home again. At least, it would be safe to try it. We know that it would be the sanest course to pursue, but that depends on what I am, whether my heart is pure and my life is clean. It depends on the ground on which I stand and what preparation I have made to stand before God and offer my prayer, as to whether or not my prayers are heard.

I have thought many times of the period known as the Dark Ages. I have thought of the three hundred and more years elapsing between the Old Testament and the New Testament, when God seemed to have been forgotten. It seems that no one would offer up a prayer to Jehovah, or lift up his eyes to God, until more

than two hundred years after the transgression in Eden. They thought that God was a consuming fire, that he lived in the dark bosom of the storm cloud, that he rode on the wings of the wind. They thought that God was far away from us. They were afraid of him. When he came down to talk to Israel at Sinai, three thousand of them died, and the rest begged him not to speak. They could not stand it. Man had to be recovered, and finally there is a little baby born, just a little baby about a span in length, and he is to be the Savior of the human race. He is born in the city of David, Bethlehem. He is born of a woman who was poor as far as possessions are concerned, but a woman who was rich in her faith in God. The Redeemer was born in a stable, and when that little baby was born, he brought heaven down to earth. He brought the blessings of heaven down to us. He brought God down and raised man up until we can look into the face of our Creator and offer our prayers and our petitions to him and know that he can help. Just think of it—think of the inexhaustible treasury of prayer and know that it is here for us to come to it! Behold a man who needs strength and courage, but nobody can help him. His friends are impotent to help him. Nothing anyone can do for him will be any benefit to him. There is but one thing, then, to do, and that is to pray, and he cannot. He hasn't obeyed the commands of God; he hasn't lived a righteous life. I don't mean that it is not possible for him to pray. I don't say that a sinner cannot pray. That isn't it. I am trying to point out to you that even in that time, God doesn't promise to answer his prayers. A man can so live that even as sweet a thing as prayer can be turned into an abomination to God. That's what the Book says about it, and I'm not responsible for it. God put it there.

We know that God hears and answers prayers. If a man is a worshiper of him, he hears him, but in that worship the man does the will of God. Suppose we mean to worship God, do his will, and live righteously, but we worship him in vain. There is such a thing as vain worship. "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9.) Jesus is the author of that utterance. The man that worships God must do the will of God. When God's will has not been done, we have not accepted it, and our worship is not worth anything. It

is vain worship. You can worship God any way you want to, give to God anything you care to, but the question is: What will God say about it? How will he look on it? Will God accept it or reject it? What will he do with us, and what will he do with our gift? Whenever we make a gift to God, let's be sure we are following the instructions he has given to us. Let's be sure that we have done the will of God. Then we know that he hears us when we pray and that he accepts our worship. When a man prays to God, who will not do his commands, God says he will not hear him.

There are many people worshiping God in vain, and it is a distressing situation. It moves my heart; it burdens my soul. Look at the conditions that prevail over the city and over the world tonight and see men that want to know the will of God, and then look at the confusion in the world. I say again that my heart is touched by that sort of thing.

Some of the best friends I have ever had in the world, if they were to pray tonight, that prayer would not go higher than the ceiling. A man must follow God's will if his prayer is acceptable. In Proverbs we read that God turns his ear away from them. Even his prayer is an abomination in the sight of God. If you want your prayers to be heard, you have to live a righteous life; you have to worship God as he has commanded. The New Testament is the law of the spirit of life, and that is the law by which we are to be governed. You ought not to turn your ears away from it. You ought to accept it, live by it, be governed by it, and then when you have lived as well as you can, you can know that God hears your prayers. The prayers of the unrighteous man become an abomination to the Lord. Yes, as sweet a thing and as precious a thing as prayer can be turned into an abomination. As I said a few moments ago, I am not responsible for this being in the Bible. I am just telling you that it is there and is what God has to say about it. You can go along here living in disobedience to God and expect him to hear your prayers. You cannot expect to run wild like bees among the clover, eat, drink, and be merry, attend dance halls, swimming pools, after which the world is going wild, and beer gardens, and go everywhere else you have no business to be, and be pleasing to God. You cannot expect him to hear your prayers when you live like that; but

when you live righteously and godly, you can ask God to hear you, and he will. There's no question about that.

Of course, we all make mistakes. Nobody is perfect. God has told us that we will make mistakes, but Jesus says that if any man sins he has an advocate with the Father, and if we confess our sins he *is* faithful and just to forgive us. We all sin through our appetites and proclivities of the flesh, and we ought to confess them and pray God to forgive us. God has given us a law to follow, and Christ has prepared the way for us; and if you read the New Testament, it will tell you the way you should walk. Someday you will want God to hear you; and if you have not heard him, then he won't hear you.

John says that we know he hears us in whatever we ask because we have kept his commandments, and because we have done those things which are pleasing in his sight. Whenever you have lived that way, you know you can come to God in prayer and he hears you. You know that God has said for us to ask what we will, and I will grant unto you that for which you have made your petition, provided it is best for you. We oftentimes hear folk complaining that their prayers are not answered. For what do you pray? Maybe it isn't best for you. We sometimes don't know what we need. We are short-sighted and do not know what is best for us, but Jehovah does. He knows what things we have need of, even before we ask them. Men might ask for things that would not be best for them. In the language of James, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4:3.) God is not interested in your greed and lust. He is not going to give you the things that are not best for you. Let's look at this passage in the first letter of John, the third chapter, a little, "And whatever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." When we read this, you may want some sort of an explanation as to what things are pleasing in the sight of God. In the Bible there is another passage I would like to read (Heb. 10:6), "In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure." Remember another one, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17). If you want to do the things that are well pleasing to God, you are to act by faith, and you never can do that until

you have kept his commandments. You cannot be pleasing to God except when you do what Christ tells you to do. We ought to try that.

I want to read you another passage. In the fifteenth chapter of John the Savior is talking, and here's the way he put it, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." That is wonderful in its scope, and yet at the same time I want to suggest that you are not to overlook the caution that he gave. He said, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, you ask what you will, and I will do it." -I am trying to get you to see the place and ground for prayer, so that when we pray, we will have the assurance that he will hear it. The prayer must be made in faith. We talk about our Father in heaven, but Jesus Christ says that if you are living in sin the devil is your father. The devil is the father of sin; and if you are living a life of sin, then you are the devil's child, and the devil is your father. If you are following the lust of the flesh, you are doing what the devil wants you to do. God is not your Father; the prince of the power of the air is your father. If you have left sin, turned your back on sin, then God is your Father. He said, "If you abide in me" If you abide in him, then he is your Father. If you don't abide in him, then the devil is your father.

Last night I said that a man could not be a Christian without being in the body, and you could not be in the body without being in the church, for his body is the church. Another passage said, "He is head over the body, the church." If you are in him, you are in his body. If you are in his body, you are in the church, and you don't have to join a thing. There are some members of the church who think they could not clean up their back yards, gather up the trash, pick up the broken bottles, tin cans where mosquitoes breed, or cut their grass unless they join some civic organization or another called civic righteousness. When the Lord Jesus Christ tells you that "if you abide in me," in the body of Christ, in the church, a Christian ought to get out and pull up all the weeds about his life. He ought to throw away such things that ought not to be there, and when he joins anything, he is violating the statement of Christ. We ought to get in him, stay in him, and stay out of everything else, and hence, "If ye abide

in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

I have not joined any political power, no benevolent society, no kind of secret order; I have not joined anything, and I am content in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. This passage from John says, "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." I have known some men and women in the church who ought to learn this lesson; they ought to make a study of it. Does his word abide in you? If it is abiding in you, you ought to have it on the tip of your tongue when you need it, shouldn't you? "If my words abide in you, . . ." that ought not to be mixed up with anything else taught to us. Then, when we obey it, we can ask him for anything we need and he will provide it.

The Book says, "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous." The next passage I read says, "The -effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Another 'Says, "We know God heareth not sinners, but if a man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." The Bible says also that "he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination." The next verse says, "We know that he heareth us in whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments." The next verse says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." I don't think another argument is necessary. I don't think another argument is needed to show you that God is over us and cares for us. We know that he hears us when we pray if we do his commandments. We know he watches over us, and is always ready to hear our petition, and he is ready to come to our relief in trouble, but we have to do something: We have to live a righteous life. There are plenty of fine sermons delivered on this point, many fine articles written, many splendid books to be read; but the thing we want is not a book or a softly uttered prayer. The thing God wants is a heart subdued, a heart that is obedient, a life in harmony with the will of God, going about every day doing the will of God from the heart. Then, when shadows fall and he kneels before the throne of grace and mercy, his prayer is heard. The person who lives like that is the person that I would like to have pray for me.

I want to point out one other thing to you tonight. I like to think of the Lord Jesus Christ as a human being. I like to look upon him and like to look at him from that standpoint. For a long time after I began to preach I thought of him only as the Son of God, not as a man, not as a human being, but I have made the discovery that he was human. I like to think of him as working. I like to think of his being tempted. I like to think of him as being -tired, every nerve taut and his muscles sore, when the sun went down at the end of day. We learn that Jesus would often steal away from the crowd, go out into the desert places, and pray to God. Isn't that wonderful? Isn't it wonderful that your Savior and mine, who was with the Father in the beginning, and by whom was everything made that was made, then when he came into this world, see him steal out amidst the conflict and shadows and pray. See him as he seeks recovery and strength to meet every demand and face every problem. See him as he feeds the five thousand and sends the multitudes away. Watch him as he sends the disciples away in a boat. See him as he goes into the mountain to pray and the storm comes and the disciples are out there afraid. It is humanly impossible for them to make any progress. The first watch passes: the storm is driving and everything is becoming dark. The second watch passes: the storm is getting worse. They are still in a predicament. The third watch passes: the storm is even worse. The fourth watch: everything seems worse. The heavens are dark. The storm is raging. The disciples are in the midst of it. The thunder strikes fear to their hearts. Then they see what appears to them to be a ghost. Jesus went walking out to them on the sea, and they cried out in fear. Then Jesus cried out above the din of the storm, "Be of good cheer, be not afraid; it is I." (Matt. 14:27.)

Jesus was watching them from the mountain top in which he had gone to pray. He watches them until they have gone as far as they can, until they are able to bear it no longer, and then he comes to their aid. He wanted to see how long they could endure. He watches them through the third watch, and in the fourth watch he was close enough to speak to them.

It is a marvelous thing to me to be able to feel the Savior's hand in the hour of temptation and in the hour of peril, in the

night of sorrow and anguish. On the mountain of sacrifice Abraham heard the voice of God; he had his eyes open to see the day of the Lord; he saw it and was glad. In the den of lions, Daniel had the good fortune of having angels to aid him. It was in prison in Egypt that Joseph interpreted a dream, and God came to bless him. He was brought out and had a robe put on him and a chain about his neck. On the Isle of Patmos the apostle John saw the glories and wonders of heaven. Paul said that he was caught up into the third heaven and heard things that could not be uttered. Indeed, God does watch over the righteous, and I am sure that we can see that.

That is not all. The very thing that we would not want or would not have might be the opportunity of our lives. For instance, if there were no sick people, we would be robbed of a great opportunity to do good. If there were no crippled people, no blind folk, we would be robbed of the opportunity of assisting them, and we ought to be glad that we have the opportunity to do these good deeds. The point I am making is this: All of these give us an opportunity that otherwise we would not have to do good. If the sun would shine all the time, we would not have the opportunity to see another star. If everything went well with people all the time, we would never be able to see the difference between good and bad, between the truth and the false. Those misfortunes are the things that give us our opportunity, in hours of sorrow we can pray to our God and he will come to our aid. Listen to the cry of those disciples out there on the sea in that little boat rocked, tossed, and driven by wind, and then hear Jesus say, "Be of good cheer, be not afraid; it is I."

You are going to need him one of these days. A dark night is coming in your life and mine when we may want to hear his voice. He is calling for you now, but you will be calling for him tomorrow. If he hears you tomorrow, it will be because you have heard him today. Won't you turn away from the world with its blandishments and its temptations? Are you going to hear his voice tonight? Are you going to obey him tonight? If you do, tomorrow when you are in trouble, seeking God, calling to him, then he will hear you. Won't you come tonight hearing, believing, repenting of your sins, confessing his name, and be buried with him in baptism to rise to walk in newness of life?

Are there those who have not been living as they should? You ought to come back and turn from your sins and endeavor to serve God. Won't you come tonight?

THE LORD'S DAY

My friends, it is a distinct pleasure to me to be in your midst again after a lapse of a little more than fourteen years. I don't need to be introduced to an audience here. I suppose that almost everyone in this entire assembly is acquainted with me. I know you and you know me, so there is no need to take up precious time with useless preliminaries. Suffice it to say, we are glad and happy to be here. I have with me my devoted and life companion, my wife, who came with me to be in this series of meetings with you. We came to do good and not harm, and if, indeed, when this series of meetings is over, after we have left, we shall be glad if we have been the means of leading someone to Christ. If we have made some life brighter and some heart purer, I am glad that God in his providence has permitted me to return to this church for another time. If anybody is harmed, if we should cause anyone pain, or if we should cause anyone to be hurt, if we have planted a single thorn in the path of any man or woman, boy or girl, I shall always regret that I have come back. If I know my heart, I want to help people and not harm them. Suffice it to say that there is but one way I know to do that, and that is by proclaiming to you the unsearchable riches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are here to lead the people closer to God and to more and more lay these things upon your hearts and upon your attention and indelibly engrave them upon the tables of your hearts. There is not anything else that will bring anyone to God other than the words contained in this little Book.

Today, my friends, almost every effort that has been made to help suffering men and women has either been made to turn upon some individual or group of fallible, mortal men. My judgment is that the only thing that can be done today to help humanity in the way we should help is by leading men to Christ, turn them back to God, turn them back to the church, turn them back to his

word, and teach them to lean upon his everlasting arm today, tomorrow, and forever.

We have come into your midst not to entertain you. We have come to enlighten. We have come here to interest you in God's word. We have come to give you the advantage of more than forty years of meditation and study of the word of God, and when we have departed, we hope to leave that which brings peace and happiness to the hearts of men and women.

First, friends, I want to read to you just one statement from the word of God that will give us a basis for our lesson today. I want to read you from the book of Revelation, chapter 1, verse 10. It reads like this, "... for I was in the spirit on the Lord's day . . . ". I want to talk to you about that for just a little while, placing emphasis on the Lord's day, the Lord's house, the Lord's Supper. Let us for a few minutes draw away our minds and hearts from the world and from worldly things. I hope you will be able to forget everything of this world and everything of your own interest and be absorbed, even captivated, by the thoughts that relate to this day and its significance in divine history.

When that disciple, the beloved John, wrote that statement, he was approximately one hundred years of age. He was venerable; he was old; he was gray, worn, and withered. For his faith he had all but lost his life. He is an exile now. He is alone on the lonely Isle of Patmos for the sake of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, and he is surrounded by the surging waters of the billowy sea. He is there in deep solitude in the midst of the hills, the rocks, and the wilderness. When the Lord's day came, when he could no more assemble with the Lord's people, he climbed to the highest mountain peak, and we find this venerable old man looking away toward his old home, where he had spent his life in the service of God, where the disciples were to meet that day to break the bread and drink the cup that announced the undying love of the world's Redeemer. John was denied that privilege, but that's where his heart was.

Just here I want to say that I am sure that there are people here today who will have the privilege of taking the Lord's Supper, the opportunity of sweet communion with God, who will not appreciate it until it is denied them or until disease or circum-

stance lays hold on them and they are not permitted to assemble with the saints and engage in sweet communion on the Lord's day.

I want to point out further to you that the first day of the week is the Lord's day. I have fought for nothing else for a long time, and I shall continue to fight for it. Jesus Christ said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." When I turn back to the Old Testament, I read of the mountain of sacrifice, where he took his beloved child, Isaac, bound him, placed him upon the altar in obedience to the command of God. At the command of God, Isaac was unbound and released from the altar, but only when God told Abraham to release him. His eyes were open to see the day of the Lord, and the Bible says, "He saw it and was glad."

In the New Testament, three days after Jesus Christ's crucifixion, we learn that the grave was opened, and Jesus Christ came forth triumphantly to live again. This happened on the Lord's day. Jesus Christ was raised from the dead on the first day of the week. If there was not another thing we might say about the first day of the week, that should be enough to interest us, to captivate us, to arrest our attention and make us take notice in wonderment. Note further, Sunday is the first day of the week. We might point out to you that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, for which he gave every drop of blood in his body, for which he even gave himself and all that he had, came into existence on the first day of the week. It was established on the first Pentecost after Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. This was when the church had its beginning. It began in the City of Jerusalem. You will understand, of course, that the day of Pentecost would have always fallen upon the first day of the week. It would be impossible for it to come any other time for the simple reason that God laid down the law by which count was to be made. He said, "Ye shall count unto you on the morrow after the sabbath, from the day ye brought the sheaf offering seven sabbaths shall be complete. Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath ye shall number fifty days." (Lev. 23:15.) "On the morrow," therefore, is the day on which the church is to be established. That is the first day of the week, that is Pentecost. The historical setting of this is to me a most marvelous and interesting thing.

The Israelites were carried into Egypt under the most favorable auspices. There they were given the most promising and best part of the country. The people lived there in calm and peace for a long time, but finally the tables were turned, and they were thrown into a bondage that lasted approximately one hundred years. That bondage and that servitude were gall to them. It was impossible for them to round out a day's work. It was impossible to do all that was required of them. Because they had not done the impossible, they were beaten when the sun went down. Then they cried unto God, and God heard their cries and came to their aid. Just here I would like to bring in this thought: it is unfortunate for us that we are so prone to forget God and cannot feel the need of God until we are in distress, bowed down in sorrow. That *is* a good time, however, for us to lean on his arm; but it is better to be there at the noonday, when the flowers are blooming, when there is not a cloud in the sky, when there is not a tear to dim the eye, when there is not 'a sorrow in the heart. It has always been, and likely always will be, that men and women will kneel before God when they are crushed to earth by circumstance, and especially when cares, temptations, sorrow, and suffering, and the things which are put upon humanity come upon them. It is then that they will call upon God. It was in this condition the Israelites called upon God and God came down to deliver them from their bondage. God heard their cries.

The Passover angel, indeed, struck down the first-born in all the land of Egypt, and the Israelites left that land, on the third day crossing the Red Sea. Get the historical setting of this event about which I am talking. Remember how the sea divided and rolled back. In the Old Testament we read that on the first day of the week the sea was divided and stood as a wall on the right hand and on the left, and the bottom was as dry ground. The Israelites passed through it "under the cloud and in the sea," and the Egyptians were drowned. These things ought to make us stop and think, friends. If nothing else had happened on the first day of the week to make it significant, these things should make us meditate upon it. That is not all. Don't you remember that they sang the song of deliverance that day, now that Egypt was behind them and Pharaoh and the Egyptians who pursued them were dead. Then, after the crossing of the Red Sea, this emancipated group

of people finally stood at the foot of the mountain, and God came down on the cloud-capped mountain, and his voice rang out, orally giving his law. God undertook to talk to them, but they could not receive it. Three thousand died on this occasion. Then the law of Moses was given.

Now, let's turn to the New Testament, and we find the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, our Passover, dying for us on the cross of Calvary. On the morning of the first day of the week, on the third day after his crucifixion, by the working of the mighty power of God, he raised his head from the lap of death on which he had slept. He was raised never to die again. On the fiftieth day we find the kingdom set up; we find the church established. We could not be mistaken, friends, for the count permits no mistakes. Therefore, on the first day of the week, we have the beginning of the church in the city of Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit came down to guide the apostles on that day. Peter preached the first gospel sermon, and there were devout men from every nation under heaven there that day. Three thousand of them who had heard the gospel accepted it.

I want you to observe, friends, that back in Egypt we have the Passover lamb. In the New Testament we have Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. In the Old Testament we read that the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and came out alive. In the New Testament we read that Jesus Christ was baptized into death and arose again. On the fiftieth day after their crossing the Red Sea the law was given. In the New Testament we read that on the fiftieth day the word of the Lord was to go out from Jerusalem, and the law from Zion. In the Old Testament we read that when the sickle was put to the full-grown grains, the first sheaves were to be waved before the Lord. In the New Testament, Jesus is represented as being the first-fruits. On the fiftieth day after the grain had been harvested, threshed, ground into flour, and loaves made out of the flour of their newly completed wheat harvest, they were to make their offerings before the Lord on Pentecost. Turning to the New Testament, we find that on the fiftieth day, the first gospel sermon was preached, and Christ's kingdom was established.

Let me refer your attention to a statement in the New Testament, "According to the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord ..." First we have the gospel in promise. God told

Abraham that in his seed all the kingdoms of the earth should be blessed. Later we have the gospel in prophecy. The gospel was to go out from Jerusalem and the law from Zion. When the rugged preacher, John the Baptist, came out of the wilderness, preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," there was presented the gospel in preparation. Therefore, we have the gospel in promise, in prophecy, and in preparation. When John had finished his work, Jesus supplemented it with himself, the twelve, and the seventy. We have the gospel in fact on the day of Pentecost, when the first gospel sermon was proclaimed by the stalwart Peter. When the day of Pentecost was fully come and Peter preached to them, we have the beginning of the church, the beginning of the new covenant that is to last until the end of the world, not because it deals with the temporal affairs of men, but it has to do with the souls of men and women. Its significance is for the salvation of dying souls. I want to say, then, that in my judgment this is the greatest movement that has ever been launched at any time. The inaugural address by the apostle Peter is most marvelous for the simple reason that it does not have to do with the perishable mortal, but is dealing with the imperishable immortal. It deals with the eternal, not with building skyscrapers, not with building highways nor manufacturing musical instruments to be used in worship nor building ships to cross the sea. It deals with the hearts and undying souls of men with the eternal everlasting redemption and salvation of men. It is, therefore, the greatest thing that has ever been given to the world. This most marvelous event happened on the first day of the week.

John said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." What do you suppose was on his mind? What do you suppose this disciple whom Jesus loved was thinking about? What was he interested in? I believe that kind of thinking might help us, stimulate us to greater thought, captivate our minds.

I want to call your attention to another passage of scripture. Jesus is talking, and here is what he said in Mark 9:1, "Verily I say unto you that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till we have seen the kingdom of God come with power." When the power comes, the kingdom comes with power. Acts 1:8 says, "But ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both

in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and in the uttermost parts of the earth." The power comes when Christ's kingdom comes.

Let me read you Acts 2:1-4, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The power came with the kingdom of God, my friends, and the kingdom has been here ever since. But that is not all. I call your attention to another point: The kingdom has come, and Jesus said to Peter, "I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Jesus Christ gave Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and he was the only man on earth that had the authority to open the door of the church. He opened it on that memorable day of Pentecost, and it has been open ever since. Now notice, my friends, it was upon the first day of the week that these things happened. I am trying to show you what this day signifies and what it means, how by a little study, thought, and meditation on it we get the real meaning, the real purpose of the lesson, and how we, too, might be "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." I wonder if it would not be good for some of us to stop, sit down and think, meditate, concentrate upon the significance of the Lord's day.

The fact that the church, the kingdom of God, was established on the first day of the week, the fact that the kingdom came with power, should make us take time to think, meditate about it seriously, draw our minds from the world and everything else, and think as we have never thought before on the subject. We live in such a hurry today we don't take time to think. On the first day of the week the Holy Spirit came, the power came. Peter used his authority; he used the keys of the kingdom. He opened the door of the church to everyone, to all the world, and to every creature. It has been open to everyone since. Here, on Pentecost we have the first gospel sermon in fact preached by

the peerless apostle Peter, and we find the audience asking for the first time, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter told them to "repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," and the book says, "They that gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day were added unto them about three thousand souls." Now, since this happened on the first day of the week, is it not enough to interest people, captivate people, get their attention away from everything else?

Now, I want to call your attention to some other things. Listen to the word of God from the fourth chapter of Second Corinthians, verse 6, "For God who hath commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus." Will you let me point out another fact to you? Perhaps you have already asked if that refers to the beginning of the material world, when God made light to shine out of darkness. Turning to the first chapter of Genesis, we read further: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light.' And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light day and the darkness he called night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Now do you get the significance? That refers to what occurred on the first day of the first week of all times. It was then that God caused the light to shine out of darkness, divided the light from the darkness. The apostle then makes reference to it in the New Testament.

God, on the day of Pentecost, sent down power from on high. He sent the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire men who were to write the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, we have the apostles guided by the Spirit, led by the Spirit, giving us the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, written in this little Book that I hold in my hand. Where else could you go to get the gospel? There is no other place we can go to get the gospel, which began to be preached on the first day of the week, on the day of Pentecost, in the city of Jerusalem.

Friends, think of the things God has done on the first day of the week. He gave us light that we may find our way about in this world. Light had its beginning back there in Genesis, when on the first day of the week God brought light out of darkness, divided the light from the darkness for the very first time. Today, my friends, we have the light of the gospel in fact, not hidden in types and shadows and mysteries of Old Testament teaching, set before us on the first day of the week in the city of Jerusalem. Then, in the light of this teaching, "we should give the more earnest heed to the things we have learned lest at any time we should let them slip,"—lest we drift away from them.

I want to call your attention to another thing. The first thing we read in the Bible is a record of the marvelous beginning. It tells what happened on the first day of the first week of all times; and then the very last book in the Bible is a book of symbols, a book of figures, a book of mysteries. God is talking to us in language that perhaps we are not able to grasp or to understand now, but, at the same time, these things were -written for our learning by that venerable, worn, and aged apostle, John, who said that he "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." We find this disciple almost one hundred years old, whom Christ loved more than the others perhaps, on this island, lonesome, deprived of friends and companions and from the sweet communion that would come on that day, the Lord's day, to people who were more fortunate, as we might think. While he sat on the mountain top meditating, studying on these things, the Lord lifted the veil and let the clouds roll back and the sunlight through. He rolled back the scroll of the ages and let John read at least some of the wonderful things that are to be. What a wonderful event that must have been! I wonder if we will ever get that close to heaven; if we shall ever feel the hand of God upon ours; if we shall ever hear him call to us, "My child, be not afraid"? If we do, it will be the end of our peril and suffering. God permitted him to see with his eyes the things that were to be, that city of gold with its walls of jasper, the tree of life with its ambrosial fruits, the river of life, crystalline and fair, that flows forever in that land where the sun never goes down. He saw a country where the songbirds always sing their sweet melodies, that place where the souls of men may rest from their burdens, not for just a day or a year, but always. He

saw that place where the redeemed shall walk the plains of that wonderful land that lies foursquare in the land of fadeless day, where cares never come, and where there are no tears to dim the eye. He saw the innumerable host of ambassadors of heaven and heard them singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. All these he saw on the first day of the week. That is not all. This Book that we love so much, and from which we learn so much, begins with a story that happened on the first day of the week.

Brethren and sisters, the next time the Lord's day comes, what will be on your mind? About what will you be thinking? Will you be at the Lord's house to break the bread and drink the cup, or where will you be, and what will occupy your thoughts? You know the first Psalm says: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Are you going to be like the tree planted by the rivers of water? Are you going to be like the man who meditates on the law of the Lord day and night?

These things ought to interest you, friends. When I was a boy way back in the country, how I longed for interesting things to read on the winter days which were so long and lonesome. I often read the almanac recording events of various days, weeks, or months, when certain battles were fought, and so on. I was trying to entertain myself. We had a copy of this Book (holding up Bible) in our home, but I did not know the riches it contained. How I could have interested myself if I had known about its contents! How I could have seen God with his great hand making the world; how I could have seen him hanging out the curtains of night. I could have seen him hanging the stars, the moon, and the sun! I could have looked back in the beginning and heard his voice calling out of the darkness and by his mighty

power separating the darkness from the light, calling the one day and the other night. What a pleasure that would have been! How elevating and how uplifting it would have been for a young man to read!

That is not all of the story. In the New Testament we read that the disciples met together on the first day of the week to break the bread and drink the cup. (Acts 20:7.) Wouldn't it be a fine thing for us to stop for a minute in this rushing, reckless age on Sunday morning and go back and see how that little band of disciples met in Troas on the Lord's day, the first day of the week, to worship the Lord Jesus Christ, to tell the story of his undying love, and see them continuing in the fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayer? Can't you see Paul preaching to this little band of worshipers? I think it would help us to think about their faithfulness, don't you? How much thought do you give to the study of God's word? I believe we need to spend more time in deep concentration upon it until we can get the real meaning and the real significance of the first day of the week.

I turn your attention to another passage of scripture, "Upon the first day of the week, let everyone of you lay by in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come." I have read this to show you that it was the custom of Christians in those times to assemble on the first day of every week. I want to make mention of the fact that some things must be done in the assembly that cannot be done anywhere else. That is one reason why we should give more thought to it.

I have heard men stand in the rostrum and preach sermons on "The Lord's Supper," or "The Lord's Day," or "The Assembly of the Saints on the Lord's Day," but how many sermons do you hear preached about the first day of the week as it relates to man and his duty toward God? I want to ask you, my friends, where will you be next Lord's day? How many of you will be here to worship the Lord next Sunday morning? How many of you will be somewhere else than in the assembly on the Lord's day? I feel that if we would get the lesson as thoroughly as we should get it we would not think of being anywhere else. You would be there unless you were providentially hindered by circumstances over which you have no control, then we are excused on that condition. God never requires the impossible of man. Give these

thoughts your attention, friends. What are you thinking about when the Lord's day comes? Are you thinking about what God has done for you? Are you thinking about what Christ has done for you?

It would be exceedingly wonderful if we could see the waters of the Red Sea roll back and see God's people pass through that body of water. It would be indeed wonderful to see smoking Sinai echoing with God's voice, orally giving his law to people who could not stand it. It would be an amazing thing to see three thousand people die because of their disbelief. Wouldn't it be wonderful, though, if we could see Jesus Christ arise from the tomb never to die again? Wouldn't it be wonderful to hear that marvelous sermon that Peter preached on Pentecost and see three thousand souls respond to it? I am sure you would be wonderfully amazed if you will pick up this little Book and read its story through, beginning with the first thing recorded in Genesis and ending with the last "Amen" in Revelation. Notice this, it begins with the events of the first day of the week, and it ends with John's record on the first day of the week.

Our time is about up and we must hasten. I just want to leave with you this remark. I just wonder of what can we be thinking when we stay away from the worship, the assembly, the church, away from the called out of God on the Lord's day. How can we do it, friends? I just wanted to submit these thoughts, in closing, for your consideration.

In just a few minutes when that white cloth is lifted (referring to the communion table) and with shaking hands and trembling hearts we break the bread and sip the fruit of the vine, let's think about Christ's ignominy on the cross. Let us take that communion with awe, reverence, and respect. The clink of the plate and the sip from that cup will be a thousand times more glorious if we think of its purpose and its significance than all the tongues of men and angels combined telling the story of Jesus and his love.

We are all impotent, weak, helpless, and alone without Christ. Why not lean on God's arm? Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." His yoke is easy; his burden is light. He invites you to come to him. How many in this audience will make use of this opportunity of turning to the Lord? If you are not a Christian, don't you want to be one? Don't you

want to turn to the Lord now and live for him to the end of your life here, not being tossed about by every wind that blows, but being "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord"? Don't you want to get into the service of God with your whole heart, live faithfully until God calls you home and your work is done? Are you here who have not lived faithfully? Don't you want to make acknowledgment of that? Are there those here who are living as Christians should live who desire to take membership here? How many will come while we stand together and sing the song selected and announced to you?

"NO MIDDLE GROUND"

It is indeed pleasing to me that I have the privilege of being the speaker upon this occasion, and it is exceedingly gratifying to have such a wonderful audience to which to speak. We have had fine audiences from the very beginning, and the interest in our services has not waned. To have you here today is indeed very heartening to me. I want to read in your hearing a verse or two to get a start this morning for what "we have in mind to say. "Either make the tree good and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt and his fruit corrupt, for the tree is known by his fruit. Oh, generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." (Matt. 12:33-35.)

I want to point out to you that there is no middle ground. We must either be good or bad. John the Baptist, the forerunner or harbinger of Jesus Christ, used this language to the Pharisees and Sadducees, "The axe is laid at the root of the tree; therefore, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." (Matt. 3:10.) That's the way he put it. That's laying the axe at the taproot of all ancestral trees. It isn't a question as to what faith our ancestors were. The question is, "What am I?" Not only that, but you will observe that if a tree doesn't bear good fruit it is cut down and cast into the fire. If you don't yield good fruit, the same sort of thing applies to you.

It is my privilege and pleasure, and I hope your profit, to come to you for the purpose of doing good. I don't believe that I could select a better subject than the one we have chosen for today. In some measure it will be a kind of summary of the services that we have had during this meeting.

We often hear people talking about the fruit of the spirit, and a tree in the Scriptures is the individual man or woman. Thus it says, "Every *man* that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." It doesn't matter what other kind of fruit it bears, or whether it bears any fruit at all; it must bear good fruit, and if it doesn't it is cast into the fire. It must bear good fruit, being nurtured and watched over and cared for by the Great Husbandman. "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things." It would be impossible to guess at the striking points in this lesson. They are pointed, pungent, powerful, and it would be impossible to overlook them. See what you treasure most, and that is what comes out of your heart. If evil gets into your heart, that is what comes out. Yes, friends, the evil will come out and defile us. It isn't what goes into the body that defiles people, but what comes out of the heart. Deeds of goodness, acts of kindness ought to be done from the heart; and if they don't, indeed, they are not acceptable. If the heart is riot good, then the treasure will not be good, and it will not be acceptable. The question is: How and who is going to decide whether it is good or bad? You have as much right to decide whether it is good or bad as I have. One man has as much right to his opinion about it as the other; but a man, as much as he may try, is a little bit selfish. He wants to have his own way.

On the other hand, how are we going to decide whether a tree is good or bad? How are we going to decide what is good? Somebody likes one thing and somebody else doesn't want it; therefore, the fruit that I like, you might not care for. If you put it on that score, we are helplessly at sea without chart or compass. On the other hand, the Bible helps us, and we ought to turn to it for our instruction, for the apostle tells us that "every scripture inspired of God is profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3:

17.) Then, whenever we find something we cannot read about in the New Testament, it is not good work. When he is talking about fruit in the language of our text, he is talking about works. He talks about fruit in one passage and works in another. It is a question of conduct—what we do publicly, privately, collectively, or individually. We must understand that our conduct in word and deed must be in harmony with the teaching of the New Testament, since the Bible tells us that the inspired Scriptures thoroughly furnish us unto all good works. Then if the Scriptures say nothing about it, it is not a good work, and the person engaging in that kind of thing, according to John the Baptist when he said, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is cast into the fire," is in that same condition. The same speaker has this to say concerning Jesus Christ, ". . . whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3:12.) Wheat is used for the word "good," and chaff is used metaphorically for anything except wheat. Anything that you cannot read in the New Testament, that the New Testament doesn't say a word about or give any instruction concerning or offers no comment upon is not good.

I want to point out further that God has meant that we cannot be good and bad, half and half. We are either good or bad. I said a few nights ago that a person cannot be a quarter Christian, or a half Christian, or an octogenarian Christian. He just is a Christian or he isn't one. Therefore, a tree that brings forth good fruit is a good tree. If it is a good tree, the fruit is all right. We ought to remember that. Note further than that a statement made to one of the seven churches of Asia. The Revelator said, ". . . so then because thou art luke-warm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." (Rev. 3:15, 16.) Then, in that position you take a person who does neither evil nor good, who is the happy-go-lucky kind, you cannot make a Christian out of him. You can make a Christian out of a sinner; if you do, you have converted him and turned him into channels of goodness and usefulness. That's the only way. The person who says, "I have not done this or that; I have tried to be good," the sort of milk and cider Christian is distasteful to Jehovah God.

The Scripture says further, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2.) A branch that does not bear fruit is of no use. It is just a waste without getting any returns from it. Now, if I wanted a shade tree, I would not plant a fruit tree. It wouldn't be of any use for that. It is of no use unless it bears fruit. Friends, every Christian is a fruit tree to bear good fruits or works, for they are termed fruits, and fruit is the thing that God desires. You know the Scripture says, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit." (John 15:8.)

I read a long drawn-out article a number of years ago that was a kind of public discussion in the papers on the subject of "Faith." One man was contending that we are justified by faith only. Another man said that we are not justified by faith only, but by works as well. In course of time the man who contended that we are justified by faith only made the argument that faith is the root, and he wrote a whole page in the paper to prove that faith is the root. The other came back with a little squabble and said that what God wanted was fruit. I believe that the man was right. God does want fruit. There is no use to write a whole page on that question. Growth is what God wants. Fruit is what he wants. The fruit we are to bear is good fruit. Many people bear evil fruit, and some do not bear any fruit at all. That isn't all, friends. Get this: Some men bear good fruit, and him God will prune, care for, protect, take away certain things, and give to him certain things that he may be able to bear more fruit and be the man who loves God, for whom all things work together for good, according to the statement of the Bible. You know that it says the person who loves God everything works together for his good, and I believe, indeed, that we ought to be happy in that thought.

I want to read another passage just here in this connection. I believe that we have read it previously in this series of meetings. It is from the third chapter of First Peter and verse 12, "Let him eschew evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it, for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." I think, indeed, that there are people who don't

want to live because they are selfish and grudging, and the result is that they are ready to pass out thoroughly disgusted with everything. I want to say this to you. A person can harbor evil in his heart until everything he sees is evil. His taste is bad. He cannot hear right and do right. Why? Because there is evil in his heart, and he has harbored it there. He must get rid of it. The more good we do the more we want to do, but we can never do all we want to, for the world is a large place and humanity is a large field, and there are so many aching hearts, so many weak, so many sick, feeble, and tired, so many hungry, and so many needing the word of cheer and comfort, so many old people who need to be cared for, millions needing the word of God, and who need the children of God to pray for them. There are so many things for a man or woman who is fired with the Spirit of God to do. They can touch the withered hearts of men and make contacts with men and women who are cold and indifferent in order to revive the withered spirit, open the eyes that are closed, lift up the hands that hang down.

We hear people asking this question, "Where do you work?" They should ask, "Where do your services begin?" or "Where does the world end?" The whole world is our field for service. You hear people talking about foreign missions, home missions, separating it in that way, and we have learned to say: "Home first. Charity begins at home." Charity never ends, friends, as long as there is a man or woman on the earth that needs a touch of human kindness or needs to feel the sympathy that beats in the human heart of a redeemed child of God. *I* would to God that we could do that. I wish that we could realize that happiness that comes to the heart that revels every day in the knowledge that he has made one heart to rejoice, lifted up the hands that hung down, wiped the tears away from sorrowful eyes, and bound up the sorrow-riven heart. Wouldn't you rather spend life like that, going around doing good? Wouldn't you rather find joy in that than to put all the flowers that bloom on the grave of the dead? To be frank with you, I don't think it is wrong to put flowers on the graves of the dead, and I have done that myself many times and expect to put some more on the graves of the dead; but I never did that but what it has been thrown in my sight that perhaps sometimes I could have talked to him, sung

with him, prayed with him, instead of putting a wreath of flowers on his grave because of the lack of service that I could have done. Friends, let me ask you not to wait that long about giving service. Do good to people now. They need it now. Don't wait until they are dead. You know it is said of Christ in Acts that he went about doing good; and if he ever did anything else, I have not read it. He spent his life like that—in service. We ought to be like that. How much finer it would be to live like that! How many times have we done things that have not helped but have torn down rather than built up when we could have done good. This idea of going about doing good exalts Christ and makes his name adorable, his praises sweet, his voice heard, and his name printed in every civilized nation of the earth, and men may gather and revel in the joy that he is the world's Redeemer and Savior of men. He did not come for people to save him. He came to save people.

A lot of people are miserable because they say, "People don't care for me." I wonder how much good they accomplish. I read a statement of a man written just before he died that said, "I don't want to live; nobody cares for me. Nobody loves me." Often selfishness is the cause of that. How much service do you give? For whom do you care? Who do you love? Where are the ones you help? If you do enough of that, the reaction will make your heart sing and rejoice because you have followed the works of righteousness, and you can remember it with happiness as you grow old.

I have heard people talking about men when they are growing old and say that they are hard to get along with. I have no sympathy with that idea that when people grow old they are crabbed, cannot be pacified, and are implacable. I think that is incorrect. It ought not to be that way, friends, any more than an apple developing from the stage of a green apple to a rosy one with its cheek red, mellow, luscious, and fine. To men and women living in the service of God their declining years ought to be tenderer and sweeter than any other time in their lives. I feel that way about it.

Before we can do good, however, there is some ground work to do. You remember the Book said, "The man that would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile." There are certain things that

he must do, certain preparations that he must make. He must begin right, and then his lips are to speak no guile. He must get rid of evil, put it out of his heart, life, and thoughts, and turn to goodness and do good. It isn't enough to think good. Of course, that goes a long way toward helping a man to be good. We ought to study about it; we ought to think about good. But that isn't all. We ought to meditate on the Bible. You know it says that the man who meditates on it is "like a tree planted by rivers of water; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psalm 1.) I think we ought to think about good; we ought to meditate on it, study about it, but the execution of it is indispensable. We must put our thoughts, and our desires, and our meditations into action, because if we want to love life and see good days, that is necessary. It is all right to think about goodness; it is all right to sing about it, but we must put it into action. You must give your life over to good, but you cannot give your life to do good until you get rid of evil. There are not two hearts in one person or two minds in one person. You know the Bible says, "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.)

I want to suggest to you another idea about doing good. I think we expressed this thought this morning and impressed it on the audience today. We have the idea that doing good and serving is long distant. The thing we need to do is to give ourselves. We are perfectly willing to give something to supply the needs of people oftentimes, but never have time somehow to give ourselves. We have so many irons in the fire, so many things to do that we haven't time to give ourselves. We will hire nurses who are able to administer to the sick bodies for us, and perhaps they can do that better than we can attend the sick, but that is not what God wants us to do. He wants us to give ourselves. He wants us to administer to the sick with our own hands, to do deeds of kindness ourselves. He wants us to go ourselves. He wants us to sit up with the sick all night long ourselves. He wants us to go where men are dying and stand by them as the stream of life ebbs out and their spirit goes away from the body. There is something in that that you cannot get out of books. There is tenderness and

kindness in an act like that, and it does you good. It mellows you and softens you and makes you tenderer and kinder.

I have said this before, and *I* want to say it again: This mechanical service to God is not worth a dime. It is no account. It is no good. If I had a sweetheart and she would write me a letter on the typewriter, I would not like it. It would be mechanical, cold as steel, and would show nothing of her character and disposition, nothing that you would see in her when you talk to her face to face. If she would write me in longhand, there would be something in the formation of her letters that would tell me something of her character. It is just like trying to serve God at long distance. Yes, we try to serve God at long distance, and we can't do it. It can't be done, I tell you. I have read in the Old Testament that Elijah, that marvelous prophet, was called to come one time when a child died at its home. Elijah stretched himself on that child eye to eye, face to face, and that little stream of life began to move in the child, and his body began to warm. (1 Kings 17:18-23.) He opened his eyes and came back out of that world just as he was beforehand. When the warm personality of a real child of God comes in contact with the down and out, the poor, the cold, the suffering, it warms and softens them. Now, wouldn't you like to do that? What a joy it would be to serve like that!

I have a memory in my life that is thrown in my face so many times. It is a memory of one of my boy companions. When he was drowning he looked for me and called for me, but I could not reach him. He went down in spite of everything that I could do. How much pleasure it would be to look back and say that I lifted him out just in time to save him from a watery grave, but I couldn't do it. It has been painful to me all these years. For weeks and weeks afterward I could hear the cry of that boy companion calling for me out there; but there are voices calling to us. There are widows, orphans, the forlorn, and the forsaken standing with hands outstretched and calling to us to come and help them. We go on not hearing their cries when we ought to go and take them by the hand and lift them up, comfort them in their anxiety, smooth out the wrinkled brow, and straighten the tangled tresses. What do you think about it? What are you going to do about it? Are you going to stop your ears against

their cries that you hear ringing from their hearts? Or are you going to help them? Jesus Christ did this sort of service: he caused the desert to bloom and blossom like a rose. Eyes were made to see; the lame were made to walk; the dead were raised up from their graves. Jesus Christ did that. Those things are outstanding, but just to see him administering to people, taking little children into his arms and blessing them and pressing them to his breast, bestowing benefactions on many people and blessing them. He even went down to death and bore the ignominy of the cross and the disgrace of the world to bring salvation to men, and he is the hope of glory.

I want to call your attention to another passage. The apostle says, "Cleave to that which is good." (Rom. 12:9.) Still another says, "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." (1 Thess. 5:21.) We might even read other passages, but suffice it to say that doing good is a sacrifice. It is a sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. If you have an opportunity to do good to anyone, do it. Do good to all men regardless of the color of the skin or the brogue of the tongue. Somebody says of some person: "Oh, he hasn't treated me right. He has talked about me. He has stabbed me in the back. He has damaged my good name and my reputation among men." For me to be able, then, to put my arm around him and wipe the tears out of his eyes and give to him the things for which his heart is yearning is, indeed, magnanimous. It requires a magnanimous person to do that and a wonderful person to make an application like that.

"Do good unto all men," the Scriptures say, "but," listen now, "especially to the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10.) Make a specialty of that, for Jesus died for them, and the church was redeemed by him. The church is precious to him, for he gave his life for it. It is blood-bought. It was saved by him; therefore he loves it. So, then, we are to do good to all men, but we are to do good especially to those who are of the household of faith, to the children of God redeemed by his blood. Remember, we are to make a specialty of that.

The Lord further said, "When you do it unto the least of these, my brethren, you do it unto me." (Matt. 25:40.) Yes, when you do something for a child of God you do it unto him, whether it be good or bad. Do good unto God's children if you don't want

to drive nails into his hands. If you don't want Christ to shed tears, don't cause his children to weep. If you don't want to see his heart bleed, don't break the heart of a child of God. Don't forget that point. Do good to those who are of the household of faith. You know the Scripture says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me"; so when you do anything for the least of God's children, you have done it unto Christ, whether it be the giving of a drink of cold water or a crumb of bread, a little bit of food, or a little bit of clothing. Administer to the man who needs administering to. We sometimes hear folk say, "I don't know whether or not he is worthy." Well, that isn't the question. What if nobody would help? What if nobody would serve? Wouldn't we be robbed of a great opportunity if everybody were worthy, and if everybody else was willing to help. I don't believe that we ought to thank God that there are sick bodies or hungry souls or anything of that sort; but if you find a sick man who needs your help, it gives you an opportunity. Think about Christ now. The sick, the unfortunate, and the blind people came to him for help. That gave him an opportunity to come into their hearts. It is this sort of thing that makes his name so precious and so adorable now.

Think of the beggar at the beautiful gate of the temple. He is about forty years of age, and he has never walked a step in his life. He begged of people who came to the temple for his support. Peter and John came and looked upon him, and Peter said: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I unto thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6), and he arose and walked and praised God. That man who had been without the use of his feet and who had been a beggar all his life gave Peter an opportunity for the power of God to be made manifest. Now, then, in your city and all over the world just the same condition prevails. There are poor people always; there are always people who have sorrows in their hearts. There will always be suffering, distressed, poor, sorrowing, dying people. At the same time we ought to thank God for the opportunity it gives us, even though we don't want to thank God that such a condition prevails. It opens a door for us through which we can enter into the hearts and homes of people everywhere. That is

the thing for which the church, which Jesus Christ in travail brought into the world, is fitted.

The apostle says, "Overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:21.) That is meant for you; that is meant for everybody. When people do evil to you, you do good to them. When people talk about you and say bad things about you, don't you go out and talk about them. It is a hard thing to do. It is hard not to answer back, but God tells us to overcome evil with good. The Bible teaches us to do good for evil. It is not easy to do good when we want to answer back, but that is what God says for us to do.

I want to point out another lesson. We should do good every time we have the opportunity. Put your good intentions into action. There are many people here who can think of someone to whom they could have done good, but they just neglected to do it, and the opportunity passed by. I have meant many times in my life to do many things and just neglected to do so until it was too late. I have often meant to go and talk to someone about his salvation, to put my hand on him, look him in the face, and let him see that I was interested in him, but he went out one night never to come back. We have meant many times to do good to those who have gone on before us, but we neglected to do so, and now they are gone. We cannot reach them; it is too late. They will never come back to us. We cannot do them any good now. Words are empty then; they cannot hear them. I cannot do a thing for them. They have gone beyond my finger tips. I could have sung with them; I could have talked with them; I could have prayed with them; but I neglected to do so. I let the opportunity pass, and I can do nothing for them now. I might have done something for them while they were living, but I can do nothing for them when they are gone.

I want to call your attention to one other point before we close. Paul said in writing to young Timothy in the second letter: "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorous, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain, but when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he might find the mercy of the Lord in that day; and in how many things

he ministered unto me at Ephesus thou knowest very well." (2 Tim. 1:15-18.) The brethren turned against Paul, and his heart was caused to suffer. He was pained. A pall hung over him. That is what he said; he had gone about doing good. He had preached Jesus to them; he had planted churches; he had built up the church there as in no other place on earth, but they had turned against him, but Onesiphorous was good to him. He went to his house, and he wants Onesiphorous to find mercy in the eyes of the Lord, because he was good to him, and had administered to him, and was so thoughtful of him.

To know that you have done something for someone makes you love him. You can bring a little orphan into your home, feed him, and care for him, and through the years somehow he warms himself into your heart. You will love the little tyke; he becomes a part of you, and whatever happens to him will happen to you; whatever calamity befalls him will befall you. Why? Because you have done something for him, because of the service that you have rendered. That made you love him. That is the reason that a mother loves her children so much. She does so much for them. She went down to death to bring them into the world, and she has watched over them and ministered to their little bodies, bathed them, fed them, clothed them, nursed them, and with her own fingers she straightened out their tangled tresses. She has trained them and twined their little hearts about the throne of God. Any calamity that befalls her child befalls that great mother heart. The reason we think we don't love someone is that we have not done anything for him. Paul, that great man of God, expressed that lesson here when he tells about his being at the house of Onesiphorous. He said, I want him to find mercy in that day. I want the Lord to bestow mercy on that man because he was so kind to me and helped me so much and ministered to me so often. When I was in Ephesus and in Rome, he sought me out. We fail so many times when we have a chance to do good to take the opportunity to do so.

We often wait until it is too late and we cannot do good to someone. I have heard a story like this of a young husband and wife who had not been married long. They had a disagreement at the breakfast table. It was the first little quarrel that they had had. They were not yet in a good humor when the time came for the

young man to go to work. The wife did not go to the door with him and kiss him good-bye as she would have done if they had not quarreled. The young husband had to go out into the world with that sort of thing in his mind, and before the noon hour came news had come to the wife that the young man had been taken by death. She had let the last opportunity she had to take him by the hand and kiss him good-bye. Sometimes a mother finds the baby's finger prints on the window pane and it frets her; but if she knew that tomorrow those little fingers that left those prints there would be cold in death, how careful she would be not to quarrel about it. After they are gone from us, what would we not give to bring them back and let them make their little finger prints there. Wouldn't we rejoice then? But when they are gone from us, we cannot bring them back; there is nothing we can do.

In the Old Testament we have this kind of a story. Naomi and her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, were living in Moab when Naomi's husband and her two boys died. Naomi is going back home now; she has lost her loved ones, and she wants to go back to her old home place. How natural that is! Everything she had when she went out has been taken from her. She went out full; she is coming back empty. She says to her people in her old home place, "Call me no more Naomi, but call me Mara, which means bitter, because God has dealt bitterly with me." (Ruth 1:20.) Watch her as she says to her daughters-in-law, "You go back to your people now. I cannot do anything for you; so go back to your gods and to your people and to your country," and she kissed her daughters-in-law good-bye. In my fancy I can see Orpah turning away, great tears of disappointment and sorrow rolling down her cheeks and dripping off her chin, but she turns away and goes back to her own country. Ruth said: "I will not go back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live; wherever you die, there I will die; wherever they bury you, there I will be buried. Your God shall be my God, and your people my people" (Ruth 1:16), and she clung to her mother-in-law and would not leave her. Ruth became their means of support, and she went out into the fields to glean one day, and she came to the field of Boaz. Boaz saw her, and they soon formed an acquaintance. Boaz said, "I have heard much of

you and how good you have been to the living and to the dead." Afterward he took her to be his wife, and of that union Obed, Jesse, David, Solomon, Reoboam, and ultimately and finally Jesus Christ was born; therefore Ruth's name has hung in the family tree of the Lord Jesus Christ ever since because of her devotion to the living and the dead.

Let's see if we cannot follow that sort of course. When one of our loved ones, someone to whom we have ministered, has gone out to the other world, how do you know but what they can tell God about us? If they can do anything for us at all, at least they could do that. The thought would help us, anyway. I have heard this kind of a story about a man afflicted with a terrible disease. He was going to the Northwest for his health. He wanted to go to the mountains to get well. There was another man, a rich man, who lived in the community where this sick man lived. The man went away. He had been the pillar of the church in his home; and the rich man, without being solicited, wrote him a check for a given amount which was enough to take care of him and his family for a certain time, for the man had the White Plague and had no earnings. He sent him checks, enough to take care of him, regularly. When the last check came, the sick man was propped up in his bed gasping for breath, and he asked for a pencil and paper and wrote the man and told him what the checks had meant to him. He wrote: "I don't know what I would have done if you had not sent your checks. Before the time comes for another one I will be gone. This is the last one, and I acknowledge receipt of it. When I get to heaven, if I can, I am going to tell God how good you have been to me." Wouldn't it be good to be like that! It would be fine for people to go out of this world feeling good toward you because you had been so good to them.

We want from this time on to dedicate our lives to good living and live that way as long as God permits us to live in this beautiful world. How precious, how glorious, how wonderful it would be to know that people loved us because we had been good to them! We don't know whether they can tell God how good we have been to them or not, but, indeed, it makes us happy to think about it. It makes me feel bad for me to do something that is

not right to any person, especially to one who is going out into the other world. That is a serious thing.

I want to exhort you, as we close, to live a life devoted to doing good. We invite you to come to Christ and live like that. How many people will rededicate their worldly lives to Almighty God in service like that? How many in the audience will come this morning? I believe that 640 people in the audience last Sunday morning took the Lord's Supper out of possibly 1,000 or 1,200 persons. There are that many here today, and of that large number surely there are a great many who have never obeyed God, who are lost. Friends, why do you remain in that condition? Why do you stay away from God and out of his fold? Wouldn't you rather come to him, your Redeemer, your King, your Exemplar, today and let him lead you every step of the way? He asks you to come. He says, "Whosoever will let him come . . .". That means you; that means me; that means everyone. How many will come today while we sing?

GROWING UNTO SALVATION

"Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

"Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men but chosen of God and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

The group of verses to which you have listened were read from the apostle Peter. I began reading from the twenty-second verse

of the first epistle of Peter and read through the fifth verse of the second chapter. You will note that we have paid no mind to the division of the Bible into chapters and verses. I think I have remarked before that man divided the Bible into chapters and verses a long time after the last "Amen" was written by the pen of inspiration in the Revelation, and like fallible, mortal men are prone to do, it has been wrongly divided. They have done about as well in that as they have about anything else they have undertaken in religion where man uses his own thoughts. That is to say, it is not free from error. However, we are not here to criticize what has been done, but sometimes the end of a chapter cuts away the premise laid down, and if we stop there we lose the connection and cannot understand what God meant to say. Pay no attention, therefore, to the division of chapters and verses, but read on until you come to an appropriate place to stop. Read until you have finished the subject on which the apostle is talking.

In talking about our salvation, Christ made a statement that if we should gain the whole world and lose our souls it profits us nothing. That is to say, our home in heaven, the home of the soul at the end of this life, is worth everything else. There is nothing else that is comparable to that.

In another statement relative to our salvation, Christ tells us that we grow unto it. We grow unto salvation. If we reach it at all, therefore, we grow unto it. I would like to call your attention just now to a universal idea that we are saved when we are baptized, but there is more to it than that. We are saved, but that does not mean that we are saved eternally. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps," the Bible says (Jer. 10:23), and we can so conduct ourselves as to be lost. Yes, man can conduct himself in such a way that he can be eternally lost. I know we are saved from past sins when we are baptized. Everybody that reads the Bible intelligently accepts that. There is no doubt on that point. When Jesus Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), he meant just that. He said that, and it was just what he meant. We receive remission of sins then; we are brought out of sin, but we must remain out of sin. Jesus Christ offers us salvation from sin. He came to save people from their sins, but he could not save them in their sins. Even God cannot save men in their sins. The

church cannot save them in sin; Christ cannot do it; God cannot do it. The only thing the church can do, the only thing God can do, the only thing Christ can do, the only thing the Holy Spirit can do, is to save men from sin. This is a most difficult thing to do unless we can convict men of their sins. It is a hard thing to do unless we can show them their sins, condemn them, show them where they are wrong, and what the consequences will be, and the terrible and direful results that will follow.

There are two salvations spoken of in the Bible. One is when we are baptized, and the other is our salvation in heaven if we continue on as a Christian should. It is exceedingly problematical that we will get there; therefore the Bible suggests, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2:12.) We are saved when we believe and when we are baptized. That is the language used, but that is not all that is necessary. We must continue; we must go on. Peter speaks of "receiving the end of your faith" (1 Pet. 1:9), even the salvation of our souls in heaven. Faith grows on and on, and our final, ultimate salvation is in heaven. I believe the Revelator said this, but in different words, "To him that is faithful unto death, I will give the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) Now, this is our final and ultimate salvation at the time when we step off the stage of action and cross the stream of death, when we enter into that country where the sun never goes down, where no flower that blooms will ever die, where we are safe from trouble and worry, where cares never come, where there is no tear to dim the eye.

Our salvation depends on our growing. That is one reason that we have urged on the people during this series of meetings the necessity of spiritual development. We cannot afford to dry up, to shrivel up and die, just let things go on. It takes energy and effort on our part to make any spiritual growth. Almost the last words that fell from Peter's lips in the third chapter of his second letter were these, "Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." Now, there is one of two things going to take place. A man is going to fall away, or he is going to increase and grow on and on. There is no question about that. Whenever a man ceases to grow and develop, he begins to decay and fall away. The apostle calls attention to this fact when he tells us to "grow in the

grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18.) I want to make this suggestion: A man cannot grow in the grace of God unless he is in the Lord. A man cannot grow in the knowledge of the Lord as long as he is ignorant; therefore, we ought to read the Bible. We ought to study the word of God; we ought to concentrate on it, and, in the language of the psalmist, the man that meditates on the word of the Lord shall be "like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psalm 1.) You can read any other book and get a new acquisition of knowledge without much growth. You can leave it from your experiences, but we must study the word of God to grow.

The Book tells us to grow unto salvation, and we cannot grow to it without "growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." We cannot grow in grace of the Lord Jesus Christ without increasing in knowledge. That growth is simultaneous to that extent that as we grow in knowledge we grow in the grace of God. You remember, now, that Titus says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (Tit. 2:11.) Then a man cannot be saved unless he is taught by the grace of God. Yet, there are men that refuse to be taught by the grace of God. They refuse salvation, for the grace of God brings salvation to every man in the world. *I think that it would not be out of place to suggest that we grow in grace only as we grow in knowledge, and you cannot have knowledge except as you acquire it from the Lord.*

I have read with a great deal of interest a statement in the first chapter of the Corinthian letter. The apostle is writing to people filled with human wisdom and philosophy. Would you allow me to ask you this question: If you were going out to find the equal of the philosophers of Greece, where would you go? They could not be found. The apostle said, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, for the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the

Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1:21-24.) You will observe this: There is no way to find God by human wisdom and human ingenuity. If we find him, and if we lean upon God, we must learn of God. There is no way to learn of him outside of the Holy Scriptures. Man has nothing new to bring us. Oh, we can look about us and find out that God is, but where can we find out how to come to him? The Holy Scriptures—that is the only way. We must find out how to come to him; and if you take the Bible away, we are in the dark. We may believe that he is, for "the stars e'er singing as they shine, the Hand that made us is divine," declare that there is a God. They declare that there is a Creator who made us and who made all things, but they do not tell us how to come to him. It is utterly impossible for us to learn that except from the word of the living God.

I would like to refer your attention now to another passage of scripture which reads like this, "The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.) Then a man cannot be saved by grace and truth until he comes to Christ. Another passage says, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." (John 6:44.) A man that never hears -and learns of God cannot come to Christ, for grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. In this connection, I would like to read another verse. It is a statement from John, the fourteenth chapter and verse six, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Now, nobody can come to God except by Christ, and no man can come to Christ except that he hears and learns of God. That is the language of the Bible.

Now, we are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we grow into salvation. Let's remember that. A man cannot grow in the grace of God in ignorance. I want you to be careful not to overlook that. People who neglect to read the Bible, who trample it under their feet, and

who refuse to hear the word of God, indeed, have been injurious rather than helpful to the suffering sons and daughters of Adam's race. The lost must be saved, and they can be saved only as they grow to that salvation, and they cannot grow to that salvation in ignorance. These verses have taught us that much.

I want to read another passage written by Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, in the first chapter of the Second Epistle: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that *is* in the world through lust." Now, all of these things are attributed to the knowledge of God and the plan of salvation. The word of God talks about men growing in the grace of God, but a man cannot grow in the grace of God without being strengthened by the knowledge of the word of God. He ought to have the quotations of the word of God right on the tip of his tongue so that he can rattle them off when they are needed. I am dwelling on this point because I think it is important and because I believe that it is needed. We ought to read it more, study it, meditate upon it more and more; we ought to "desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby." Whatever the word of God contains is important. It is a great spiritual letter. The Bible holds every drop of the sincere milk by which we, the children of God, are to grow; and when we fail to take the sincere milk of the word, we cease to grow, and we will soon become stagnant and indifferent. We will soon fall and die. We need it; we cannot live on anything else.

The idea further is that they are to grow unto salvation. They have not yet possessed it. They are to grow unto it. The apostle talks about the hope of salvation. Well, friends, you cannot hope for it if you already have it. You cannot hope for a thing you already have. Hope is the anchor of the soul.

I want to read you another passage. The Bible says, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Pet. 3:15.) Then, indeed, hope looks abroad. It looks to the eternal salvation of the soul beyond this vale of tears and to our life in heaven when we step from the stage of action and fall asleep in the arms of Jesus free from corroding care forever and ever. Now hope does that. Hope looks beyond.

I would like to talk to you for just a moment about the Bible. I believe that the Bible is the most practical book in all the world, and I believe that Christianity is the most practical thing in the world; but did you know that folks try to improve upon the Bible and upon Christianity? Yes, they try to improve upon Christianity as if it were not practical, and they talk about "real" religion as if Christianity were not "real" religion. Christianity is "real religion put into actual practice, and when you put real religion into actual practice, it doesn't make anything but a Christian.

I want to get this before you: Before we can grow there are some things that we must do. Yes, there are some things that we must do for ourselves. Before we can grow, there must be a foundation for our growth. In the beginning of this series of meetings I believe that I said if a man were going to build a house he would not put on the shingles first and then build down, laying the foundation last. You wouldn't do that. You wouldn't find a tree growing with its roots in the air and its limbs in the ground. If you were to find such a thing, you would call in all your neighbors and friends and point it out as a strange thing; but in religion we sometimes begin at the wrong end. If you wanted to grow an oak tree, you would plant an acorn, and an oak tree would grow from it, but you could not take a big oak and put it into an acorn. No, you wouldn't think of such a thing; but in Christianity we want to begin with a fully developed Christian. That's the wrong way to start. When a person climbs stairs, he goes up one step at a time. That's the natural way for a person to climb the steps, and that's the natural way for a Christian to grow, step by step, one step at a time. The Scriptures say that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and

more unto the perfect day." (Prov. 4:18.) Now, that is perfect development. If a man were going to plant a garden, what would he do first? Would he plant the seed first and then take out the rubbish, or would he take out the rubbish and spade the ground and plant the seed? Why, he would get out his rake and his grubbing hoe, and he would clean up the ground and take away the rubbish, and he would spade the ground and make a seed bed and plant the seed in the ground.

I was making a speech a little more than a year ago along these lines and a young preacher got up and said, "We need more gospel preaching and less destructive criticism." Thinking I knew what he meant, I got up and said, "That is true, but there must be some destructive criticism before we can have any constructive criticism." Listen, friends, we ought to take out our rakes and our hoes and get the social dirt out. We ought to remove the surface rubbish and clean out a place for a foundation upon which to build. We have to have a foundation before we can build a building, and there must be a foundation upon which to grow. We are too lazy to clean out the rubbish and lay a foundation for growth. We cannot do anything until we have done that. We sometimes try to do things when we have not made a proper foundation and meet failure, and then somebody says, "We must do something about it. Do something about the Bible," and they put something in, or they leave something out, and they say it does not produce. Friends, there's nothing wrong with the Bible. The Bible is all right. The people may be wrong, but the Bible is not wrong. I am here to defend the Bible.

Not very long ago I had a man to write and ask me to come to a point in Texas and defend the church there and affirm that the church of Christ at a certain place was Scriptural and doctrinal in practice. I asked him if he thought that I needed to do that or if that was necessary. I am not here to defend myself; I have made mistakes. Anybody could point that out. I am here to acknowledge the mistakes I have made, but the Bible has none. The Bible cannot be wrong. I may be wrong about many things, but the Bible isn't wrong about anything. The Bible is incorruptible. It is the incorruptible seed. If a thing is corruptible, it rots, it decays, it falls apart, but I doubt that that is the meaning here. I doubt that that is the meaning of the incorruptible

seed spoken of in the Scriptures. In the idea of a seed's being corruptible, I believe the Bible means that a corruptible seed is not pure. If you wanted a thoroughbred Barred Rock hen, and you watch the little chicken grow up and it is not a thoroughbred, then it is not pure. It is not thoroughbred. It is corrupted. It is not a pure Barred Rock. Incorruptible seed means that there is nothing but pure seed used.

I heard a man trying to help God out and make the Bible story a little more impressive by adding a word that the Bible does not use. He was talking about baptism, and he spoke about "having our bodies washed in pure, clean water." "Having our bodies washed in pure water" was not impressive enough for him. He said, "pure, *clean* water." He put that emphasis in, but the Bible does not say that. Pure water is nothing but clear water. It is used as a type of the blood of Christ. It takes certain mixtures and certain chemicals to make it clean. Pure water is water and nothing but water. Nothing has been added to it. Hence, it is unmixed.

Now, we were talking of the incorruptible seed. The incorruptible seed of God will produce nothing but a Christian. It will not produce a half-Christian, or an octogenarian, but a *Christian*. Now remember that. The incorruptible seed produces a Christian—not a one-fourth Christian, not a one-half Christian, but one Christian. The incorruptible seed is perfect. About the first thing we do when we attempt to convert people and find that we are not successful in convincing them that the church is the place for them is to decide that there is something wrong with the doctrine. Then someone says to quit preaching doctrinal sermons. Don't preach about baptism. I want to go on record before you as saying that anybody who occupies that position is wrong, for the Bible is perfect. Oh, we may differ about what it contains, and we may differ widely, but the Bible is still all right. Two people may differ about it and both may be wrong. One must be wrong, but the Bible is right. The incorruptible seed is pure. It never dies; it never decays; it never grows old. If you were to take it out of circulation and away from all human life for a million years and somebody were to discover a copy of it that had not been destroyed and opens it and reads its precious promises, it would still produce Christians. It will produce Christians any

time that people read it and believe in Jesus Christ and become obedient to him. It has the power of germination, and it will produce again and again what it did a thousand years ago. This is the word of God, and it lives and abides forever, and for fear that somebody might deceive you on that, the apostle says, "This is the word which by the gospel is preached to us." (1 Pet. 1:25.) We cannot be mistaken on that point. He tells us that the incorruptible seed is the word of God, and it never decays, never dies. "Wherefore," he says, "lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." That is where the work is to be done. That is a big field. The work is to begin in the human heart. I want to point out to you that the human heart must be cleaned out. The church must be cleaned out. The pulpit must be cleaned out if the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and the cause for which he gave his life and every drop of blood in his body is to advance and increase. When we do that the church will be attractive to reasonable people of the earth. Therefore he said, "Lay aside those things." Some people say, "I cannot do so and so." Well, here's what the apostle said. He said to lay aside all malice. Why? That your soul may be saved and that it might be the seedbed for the word of God, where it will not be choked out, that your heart might be a fertile place to plant the seed of the word of God. That's what we have to do, friends. We have to clean out the human heart. We must take out all the filth, the malice, the guile, the evil-speaking, and then there will be growth. There is no doubt about it. If you were going to prepare a garden, the first thing you would do would be to take out the rocks and the rubbish and rake up the trash, burn up the filth, clean up the ground, and pulverize the clods. You would clean out everything that would prevent growth. That is not all. There are a lot of things that need to be removed in the lives of church members, in churches, in preachers, all over the country today in point of moral laxity. I am not saying that disparagingly. I am saying that deliberately, not in a fit of passion. I am talking to people who, I believe, are rational, and I say that that sort of thing must not be overlooked.

I want to read a passage in this connection. I am reading from the apostle Paul to Timothy. He says: "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. 2:20.) When a man is filled with such poisons of the flesh and blood as envy, malice, backbiting, strife, hypocrisy, and evil-speaking, you cannot expect him to be a hale and hearty man. If he is filled with these, the result is that he cannot ever succeed as a Christian. We ought to learn that lesson. If that is what takes your appetite, if that is what takes your time and your strength, they will reduce you to nothing, until you are nothing but a skeleton spiritually. Of course, I am speaking metaphorically. I am pointing this picture out to you as it relates to men and women spiritually. You know what the passage said. The apostle said that the man who had purged himself from those things is a vessel of honor. The man who has purged himself from those things is strong. The human heart needs to be purged. The poison must be taken out. Hence, to purge a life of impurity, to purge a heart of impurity, 'unrighteousness, a heart that is unjust and unholy and impure, is necessary before a man can grow. Yes, friends, that is absolutely necessary to the growth of a child of God or a church or a community. The hearts and lives of the people must be purged. The man who does that, whose life and heart is purged, is not only a vessel of honor, but he is set apart, sanctified, isolated.

I would like to take occasion to say this: It was a long, hard struggle to come out of the Dark Ages and to discover again the church; and when it was discovered, certain people began to isolate and separate themselves, devitalizing the rest of the world upon which the current of life is thrown.

The man whose heart is purged is a vessel of honor; he is sanctified and meet for the Master's use. Yes, he's fit for the Master's use. There are many members of the church who are not fit for the Master's use. If you were to send them out in the Master's service, they would be dangerous rather than helpful. They would harm rather than help. But that is not all. The first thing we must do is to sweep about our own door, purify

our own lives until we can stand foursquare to all the winds that blow and be meet for the Master's use and made ready for every good work. Men go out here unrepenting of their sins, the blood of the innocent dripping from their finger tips, vile, defiled, heart impure, and claim to be the servants of God. Do you think that God can use that kind of man? It just cannot be. No, friends, it can't be done. The apostle in talking to the Jews told them that by their ungodliness, by their course of conduct "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles." Of course, that I put in my own words. It is a terrible thing to have God's name blasphemed in the church. The apostle, in talking to the Corinthian Christians along this line, told them to separate themselves from such people. He said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (2 Cor. 6:17.) Therefore, brethren, let's clean ourselves from all the filthiness of the flesh and be spiritually perfect. "Come out from among them," he said. There are some folk who just cannot stand to be alone, but he said, "Come out from among them and be separate."

Now, that was the thing that meant the everlasting undoing of the Israelites. God said, "You shall dwell alone, and when you do that, there is no hand that can be lifted successfully against you." Rather than be satisfied to remain that way, the way that God wanted them to remain, they wanted their own way. God allowed them to do so, but they had a great deal of trouble. They wanted to be like the nations around them. They had no king, and they wanted to remedy the situation; so they said, "We want to be like the nations around us; we want a king." God tried to prove to them that it would mean their destruction and show them what it would mean. When he could not, he let them have a king, and look what happened. Their nation was destroyed.

Today, my friends, we want to be like the world. We want to be like the denominations around us; yet the Book says, "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2), and "Whosoever is a friend of the world is an enemy of God" (James 4:4.). It further says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:16.) He tells us further that we are to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the

world" (1 John 2:15); and, "If any man love the world, the love of God is not in him." Now, that is what God said about it. I am not responsible for it being in the Bible. I did not put it there. I am just responsible for one thing, and that is to tell you what is there. I'm just to tell you what is in the Book, without addition and without subtraction. That is the first thing to be done. The next thing is to take nourishment and grow. We have to take nourishment to grow. We have to study the Bible; we must meditate upon it.

Why is it that people do not read the Bible more? They are poisoned, but it is a tonic to their souls. Yes, the Bible is a tonic for their condition. The man who doesn't want to read it is dying. He has lost his appetite for it. He is diseased; he is sick. That is what is the matter with him, and the Bible is the only thing that will make him whole. "Oh," he says, "the commandments are hard." The only thing that makes the commandments grievous is our condition. That's the only thing that makes the commandments hard. Oh, we can make them hard. Take a hale, hearty man or woman and let him get cluttered up with the things of this world, filled with poison, get in a toxic condition from one source or another, his tongue coated, his appetite gone, and he runs temperature, and the next thing he is in bed, and he wants medicine to cure him. He wants to be healed. He wants to be purged of the disease. He needs medicine if he is to be successful in driving out the disease and being purged of the toxic condition. Whenever men get to the place that they cannot listen to the Bible, they have nearly reached that point. They are sick. They need medicine. They need the Bible. There used to be a time when people could listen for three hours to a gospel sermon, but did you know that now they cannot listen for thirty minutes without complaining about the length of the sermon. What is the trouble? Yes, times have changed. I know that; but the Bible hasn't changed. It is just the same as it used to be, and salvation is just as important as, ever. What is the reason that men can go to a place of amusement for thirty minutes (and if he didn't get more than that he wouldn't go) and never complain, and yet can't listen thirty minutes to a sermon? Now, why is that? I believe that I can point out members of the church all over the country that can sit up and play cards until two or three o'clock in the

morning and never complain about going to work; yet if they have to hear a man preach for thirty minutes, talking about the Bible, they never get through complaining about it.

Well, that is an indication of something. That person has no appetite for the Bible. Listen to the Savior when he spoke, "Your eyes you have closed . . . lest you see with your eyes, hear with your ears, and understand with the heart, and I should heal them." (Matt. 13:15.) What makes a man close his eyes to the truth? A gross heart. That's it. There are places all over this country where it is too hot to have meeting on Sunday night. There are hardly enough people there to hold meeting in some places on Sunday night. Now, what is the trouble? People have grown indifferent; their hearts have waxed cold. We talk about the moon waxing and waning, and we know what that means; but when we talk about man's heart waxing, we don't know what is meant by that. It gets that way. What are we to expect if we get a lot of impurity in our hearts and fail to take proper nourishment?

Listen to the apostle in the fifth chapter of Hebrews, beginning with verse 12: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Can you imagine such a thing? Here is a grown man who has passed out of the ABC class a long time ago, and he wakes up some morning and doesn't know A from B. There are members of the church and some preachers, it seems, who have forgotten the first principles of the oracles of God and what it takes to be a Christian. There they are just a few years after the church was established, and Acts of Apostles were about forgotten, and the church hardly knew there was such a book in the world, and he says, "When you ought to be teachers, you need to be taught." You hear folk say, "Well, I just can't remember things. I would be glad if I had a memory like him." Well, you have one. You have a memory. You have one that is just as good as anybody's memory, but the trouble is that you have not used it. We don't use our memory. If you want your memory to be useful to you,

use it. You wouldn't have a muscle if you didn't use it. Well, then, you ought to use your memory. Think of a man forgetting things he had been taught years ago!

What would you think of a man plowing in the field, and when the sun goes down he takes the mule out and forgets where he left his plow? He couldn't find it at all. What would you think of that man? Why, you would think that he ought to be sent out here on the pike toward Murfreesboro (location of Central State Hospital). All right, then, what would you think about a preacher or a member of the church forgetting how a man becomes a Christian or forgetting how to carry on the work and worship of the church as the New Testament has it recorded? Now, what do you think about a man forgetting that? But that is what the apostle said those people did, and the reason they forgot it was that they became such as needed milk instead of meat. A man that uses milk is weak. He is a sick man, and he needs milk just like a little baby. He can't eat meat. If you were to give a baby strong meat, before long you would be digging a little grave for him. Those people were full grown, but they had not exercised their sense by use. Think about that, friends. I want you to examine yourselves. Have you used your mind and exercised your memory as you should? Do you use your eyes as you should? Or are you like some other folk who never see anything? They use their eyes for nothing; they think there is nothing to see. A man who doesn't use his muscle will lose it. It will get away from him. To keep what you have, you must use it, and in using it you can increase it. When you loiter in church and refuse to live and practice the teaching of the Bible, you are not giving your best efforts. You are not using everything you have to serve God; and if you don't give your best, you will perish because you lacked that much.

I want to ask you tonight: What are you going to do about it? What do you think about growing unto salvation? You cannot grow until you get rid of impurities, and you can't grow unto salvation until you rid your heart of impurities, and you cannot get rid of them until you put them aside. You cannot take the sincere milk of the word until you get rid of impurity. That is necessary, and you cannot get to heaven without laying them aside. Friends, we may not be able to see very far, we may not be able

to get very far, but we can do our best. We can grow. Watch a little child as he grows and develops. Before very long he goes to school, and when he comes back ask him what he has learned, and what will he say? "Nothing." He will say that he hasn't learned anything, but after days have come and years have gone, he is called upon to deliver the valedictory address. Then you will see that he has learned quite a bit every day, picking it up a little at a time. He picks up more than he knows he is getting. He learns little by little and bit by bit, just a little every day. We can grow every day, a little at a time, but you can't grow without using what you have. If you don't use what you have, you will rust, you will perish, you will die.

I want to ask you tonight whether you want to go to heaven. Don't you want to bask in the sunlight of his love? Don't you want to live in that land where the sun never goes down? Don't you want eternal salvation? If you do, you will have to grow to it. That's what the Book says about it. Have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? Don't you want to come to him tonight? Won't you come and say, "All to thee I surrender; I surrender all"? Won't you say, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do"? Don't delay; don't procrastinate. You may not have the opportunity again. Before tomorrow's sun comes up, you may be called to stand before your God in judgment. Let me implore you in the adorable name of the crucified but risen Lord to come and give your heart and life to God. Won't you come and give him the best of your labors so long as he permits you to live?

SALVATION FROM SIN

My friends, it is needless to say that I am glad to be present with you again tonight, and we have tried thus far to deliver to you a series of sermons that had some connection, each one with the other. Tonight we are not going to depart very far from that rule. I have heard magnificent sermons preached in protracted meetings, and one would be from Revelation, perhaps, and the other from Genesis. They were fine sermons, but they were scraps and were far removed from one another, We have tried in the

evening meetings to place these sermons in somewhat natural order or sequence and to blend them as harmoniously as possible.

Tonight I want to read a passage, in part at least, that will give us a start for this evening's lesson. I am reading from Matt. 1:21, when the angel told Joseph about Mary, and told him when he was about to put her away privily that "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost," for Joseph was a just man and not willing to make her a public example. When he found out about her condition and the angel told him to fear not to take her to be his wife, he fulfilled the obligations he had taken upon himself. The verse reads, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Jesus Christ came into this world to recover man from sin and bondage. I have heard people talk of slavery all my life, but for myself, I do not believe that there is any slavery that man has experienced that is as bad and as destructive as slavery to sin. There is none other, I think, that is quite so terrible. Isaiah talks about Jesus coming to open the prison doors and let the prisoners out, to "proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn." (Isaiah 61:2.) Jesus conducted himself in Nazareth as a preacher and teacher and worker of righteousness.

We have had lots of trouble on that question of speaking to the spirits in prison, but I want to impress on your minds the fact that if you are in sin you are in prison, you are a captive, you are in slavery, and you are living under Satan, the worst taskmaster that has ever been. Jesus Christ came to open that kind of door. He came to set the captives free; he came to cut the coils of the serpent away from around the bodies of men and women, boys and girls. He came to give them the opportunity to a higher and nobler life; he gave them an opportunity to try again in their failures. I want to suggest to you tonight a little bit concerning sin and its consequences. You will observe that sin is a terrible thing, and it is universal. There is not a place that you can go where you can get away from it. Man cannot go to heights too high nor depths too deep where sin cannot follow him. It is ever present with him. It is the worst thing that can take hold of a man. Jesus came to deliver man from sin when he was helpless, lost, without God and without hope in the world, groping his way

in darkness, searching for relief everywhere, when he had drunk from every fountain he could find, when he had searched all the fields of nature, plowed into mountains, climbed the highest heights he could discover to find some relief. They had nothing to comfort them when they came to the valley and the shadow of death until Jesus came to deliver them.

Let us note this statement. God made the world, "but the world knew not God." (John 1:10.) They could not find him; and when they came to the place where they were burdened, broken down, groveling on the ground, helpless, God sent his Son down to the world. The Bible said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus," because that means that he is to save people from their sins. I want to make this point just here before I forget it: Jesus Christ never tried to save men in sin. He never undertook that sort of thing. He came to save them from their sins; and if he cannot save them from their sins, he cannot save them at all. If a man refuses to be saved and will not give up his sins, then he cannot be saved. The price he paid and the cost of man's redemption should convict and convince men of sin. When a man is in sin, he is living under the most terrible taskmaster known; he is a taskmaster without mercy. He drives men and women like slaves and leads them like sheep to the slaughter.

I think it would be a great thing to understand this. The Holy Spirit gave man the Bible, and the Holy Spirit is to convict and convince men of their sins, but you cannot save a man until he is convinced of his sins. There are lots of preachers in this world preaching to everybody except the man that needs it. If a man needs it, he is afraid to say it to him. He is afraid to tell him that he needs it. The Holy Spirit was to convince men of sin, and Jesus came to save men from their sins, not to save them in their sins. I don't believe that the Lord Jesus Christ could do that. When men have sinned, we try to cover it up instead of leading them to repentance by convicting them of their sins to get them to turn from sin. My judgment is that when people in the church have sinned, the spiritual demand ought to be so great that they will either have to quit their sins or get out of the church. I believe that would save the church of the Lord Jesus Christ much unnecessary embarrassment. Jesus Christ came to save men from their sins, not in their sins, and you could not save

men in sin. I think the most beautiful, prized, and precious thing in the eye and estimation of heaven is a penitential tear. The Bible says that "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repents than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." (Luke 15:9.) I know that a person might quit a sin and not repent, but I know that a person cannot repent and not quit a sin. If a man has repented of his sins, he has changed his mind and his heart, and that terminates in a change of life, and he ceases to do evil, and he turns to do well.

Sin is an awful thing. I referred to it last evening when I talked about the Garden of Eden. I wish you could picture in your mind the Garden of Eden. Imagine how beautifully terraced it was, how artistically the plants were arranged, how symmetrically it was laid out, remembering that God was the architect, and that he does all things well. It was perfect, indeed. Then we see sin enter into the world, and by sin death enters. Sin entered back there in the Garden of Eden, and since that time all the pain, all the sorrow, all the heartache, all the death have come as a result of sin. There is not a home in the land that is free from the devastating influence of this thing we call sin. Sin has destroyed more homes, taken away the purity and sanctity of the fireside, destroyed more souls than we can even imagine. It has taken the roses from our cheeks and made us become wrinkled and worn. Yes, sin has taken away the bloom of youth and made wrinkles come across the brow. I cannot but fancy that if sin had not come into this world there would be no wrinkled brows, no tottering forms, no tortured souls, no tears in the eye, no gray heads, no bony fingers, no aching bones, no tired muscles, no anxiety, not a sorrow, because there had been no sin.

I wonder, friends, just what the passage means in the eighth chapter of Romans which says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The blade of grass springing up this morning sprang up but to die, and the flower but to wither. Man is like that. Nothing is lasting. Everything is soon falling to pieces and deserted. Even the very foundation on which we stand now will soon decay. All this is a result of sin. Sin has made us to be slaves, either willingly or unwillingly. There never would have been a storm cloud, dark and lowering, without sin. There never would have been a cyclone sweeping over the land with

devastating results had it not been for sin. There never would have been a tornado across the country destroying property and imperiling human lives, not only imperiling them, but taking them, had it not been for sin. None of these would have ever been if sin had not come into the world.

Here is the strange thing about it, however. Even though sin has brought all the heartache, all the pain, all the sorrow, all the blight, all the tears and unhappiness into this world, people will nestle it to their bosoms, love it, apologize for it, excuse it, and handle it. Yes, friends, we will love it and practice it, even with all of its devastating results. That is the thing that is so disturbing to me. If a man were to come into your house and take away from you the purity and sanctity of your hearthstone, you would detest him, you would frown upon him, and it would take all the control you could command to keep from slaughtering him; yet, knowing the awful results of sin, we will love and practice it.

Sin will steal into your home and untwine the baby's arm from around its mother's neck, isolating it from the one who loves it most, and send it into that sleep that knows no awakening. It breaks our hearts and pulls out the strings of our hearts by the very roots, and with all its devastation we will press it to our bosoms. Can't you understand why wisdom would not allow us to meddle with sin? Sin comes into your home and takes away the father or mother, husband or wife, or son or daughter. It does not make any difference which one, for it has no favorite. Sin never sheds a tear; it is without mercy, no respect, no reverence. It will steal in when you least expect it and take away the dearest object that clings to your heart. It rejoices to see your bleeding heart. Sin, this thing I am talking about, we ought to hate it. It is dangerous for men and women, boys and girls to toy with sin. We think it is a joke; we think it is funny, but it is a serious thing.

I want to suggest another picture. Here is a little family consisting of father, mother, and a group of children. The rooms are burning brightly with lights and ringing with the melody of songs. They are happy and carefree tonight, and all is well; but before the sun rises in the morning this dark-winged messenger may come into that home and cut the tie that binds, leaving them brokenhearted and turning that cosy little cottage into an unhappy

pallor, leaving the lamps burning low, and people speak in undertones. What does it mean? There is a robber whose name is Death there. It doesn't matter with him who we are, he will get us when we get in his way. He is ever encroaching upon us, every hour creeping stealthily upon us, and one of these days he will take us. Sin is the cause of this. Are you going to love it and practice it? Are you going to handle it?

Young people, you cannot walk on fire and not get burned. When you practice sin, you are taking live coals into your bosom. You cannot practice sin without being damaged. I have heard people say, "I am able to take care of myself." I doubt that. Don't go places where sin abounds; for if you do, you are bound to be contaminated in the end. I have heard men say, "I can manage myself; I can control myself in drinking liquor." There never was a bigger falsehood in the world. There was never a man who touched it but that it did not control him. It certainly will control you. The way to control it is never to touch it. Young men, don't meddle with it; don't tamper with it. See how far away you can get from it.

It is sad just to think of a member of the family of God, redeemed through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, toying with sin. It is sad to see redeemed men and women go somewhere they should not go, or do anything that they should not do, for we don't fall in a day. Sin just grows upon us; and if we meddle with it long enough, it will consume us.

If you will take the first division of the Psalms and read carefully, you will find development. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Here is the point I wish to make. Here are boys and girls, members of the church, whether you be young or old, it does not matter which, the first step toward the "counsel of the ungodly" is the company you keep. You cannot be too careful about whom you run around with and where you go, for the associations you keep and the places you go will leave their imprint on you. You cannot help it. You cannot go into a coal mine and come out without the soot being on you. You cannot go to worldly places without being spotted by the world. It is utterly impossible to keep the dirt off when we go with company we should not. We ought to learn

that much about it, and we should seek company that will be uplifting. "Evil companions corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. 15:33.) Sometimes boys and girls will keep company they should not for a little while and not let it be known; but if they keep going with them and practicing sin, in a little while they will get harder and braver, and pretty soon they are just like their companions. They get the idea it is smart, and they think it is the way to do, and the next thing you see them do is scoff at religion. You can hear them scoff at going to Sunday school, scoff at preaching, scoff at the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, at the church, and at the Bible. Friends, I want to tell you that kind of thing is not development. It might come along by degrees, but it is not development of the right kind. Boys and girls, young people, let me impress this upon you: Seek good company. That is the best mold for character and society in the world.

I used to hear folk talk about good breeding, and I think that is fine. You can take the finest grade of stock with the best blood and turn him on the ranch with bronchos, and pretty soon he will lose his luster. His association causes it. If you want to have a luster about you and a good influence about you, keep good company. Keep free from the contamination of the world and sin. Learn to keep the right kind of company, for you cannot keep bad company and not be contaminated yourself. It is dangerous! These things are worth our attention and our study. Our ideals, our words, our manners, our speech, our dress, our walk, all reflect the kind of company we keep. That is the reason why some members of the church use certain language, because they have been with people who talk that way. We ought to remember that. What are we going to do about it? What does the Bible teach about it? Let me read to you, "Shun every form of evil." (2 Thess. 5:22.) "Shun the very appearance of evil," I believe the common version says. Shun it; that is the way to keep out of it.

That is not all. I want to read another passage, one of the sweetest in all the Bible. "The man that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." (Psalm 34:12.) Do

you want to live? Do you love life, or are you disgusted with life and everything? What causes a man to throw himself from the highest window of skyscrapers to death? or what causes a man to send a bullet through his brain? Because he does not want to live. Why doesn't he want to live? This passage says that "the man that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it." You can talk evil, practice evil, and think evil, and let it get such a hold on you that you will be so thoroughly disgusted with life that you don't want to live. I believe that this passage was written to stimulate us and to help us along lines of this kind. What are we going to do about it?

Are you going to take evil in your hand and hold it and love it, or are you going to shun it? Sin is the thing that has taken away your loved ones, taken the baby from its mother and torn out her very heartstrings, broken homes, broken hearts, brought tears to the eyes, taken away the rose from the cheeks of manhood and womanhood, and are you going to fondle it? Are you going to love it? Are you going to abhor that which is evil. I wish I could point it out so clearly that you would hate evil and would never indulge in it, and would stay as far away from it as possible.

What are we talking about? Is this thing invisible and intangible? Is it like the bag of gold at the foot of the rainbow and cannot be touched? Is it nothing but imagination? Is it only a vision? Is there nothing in it but a long talk and scary tales? Is there nothing real and actual about it? Just what is sin? I want to read to you from the Bible about it. John says that sin is lawlessness in the third chapter of First John. If we read the common version, it would say that "sin is a transgression of the law." The law is the word of God; and if you transgress the word of God, you have transgressed the law of God; therefore you have sinned. If you practice sin, you are lost; and if you don't do anything, just leave the word of God alone, then you have sinned. There are two classes of sin: sins of omission and sins of commission. Notice the sin of omission. I don't know but what that may be the bane of the church today, the most destructive and the most universal. People just leave it alone, pay no attention to it. They say, "I don't murder; I don't lie; I don't steal." Nobody

is accusing you of that, but you are not doing what God says to do when you don't do anything. Get it, friends. When you do nothing, it is sin in the sight of God. If you know to do good, and do it not, it is sin. You don't have to do a thing to sin. You don't have to move a muscle to go to hell. Folk who want to go to heaven have something to do. You had just as well tell me you can cut the shore line and let the boat go to the other shore without doing anything further as to tell me you can go to heaven without doing anything. You can cut the shore line and sit in the boat just as long as you please; but if you just sat there, the waves would take you down, down, down to destruction almost before you knew it. That is the point I want you to see. We can do nothing and be lost.

Jesus Christ came to save us, gave every drop of blood in his body to save us from this devastating thing we call sin. He died to save us from the dire results of sin, that we might live happily here and have peace and contentment, and that we might have a home in the land where the sun never goes down, and then be happy there. Listen to the apostle. He says that sin is a transgression of the law. Now, don't forget when you stay home on Sunday morning you have transgressed the law. You may persuade yourself that you can stay home and read your Bible and pray, but that is not what God says for you to do. They are all right, but they just aren't what God said for you to do on Sunday morning. He says that we are to assemble with the saints on the Lord's day; and when you stay home, you transgress his law and cannot keep from being a sinner. You are a sinner when you don't do what God says for you to do. You can go to hell without doing anything, but you cannot go to heaven without doing something. Let me tell you, my friends, if we ever want to pass through the gate that stands ajar, we have got to work. We must cover every inch of the ground; we have got to labor and strive for that purpose.

Let me read another passage. Listen to the apostle, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. (Rom. 10:23.) Get this passage, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) Then still another. John says, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:

4.) Even our faith comes by hearing the word of God, and our eternal salvation depends upon our obedience to the word of God.

Let me say this. I am saying it for the good of the people present and everyone upon whose ears this may fall. There is a growing disposition even on the part of professed Christians to feel that if they go to church on Sunday morning, break the bread and drink the cup that marks to the world the undying love of the Redeemer of the human family, drop a few cents in the contribution basket, they have done all that is required of them until the next Sunday morning. If that is all there is to it, it is a mighty little. That is just a little part of it. It has more to it than that. Religion is something that must be practiced every minute, every hour, every day, every month, every year. Every day brings certain problems that you must solve and certain duties that you must discharge. Every day brings some cloud. Jesus Christ, who came to save you, gave you the orders and commands that you must follow.

I would like to call your attention to another point. A baby is born into the world, just as pure as he can be. There is not a spot on his character; there is not a scar on his little heart. He is just as good as he can be. When that baby comes into boyhood and young manhood, sin takes his chance, and he loses his purity. I once read the story of a girl who came into the world like that. She stood at an open window one day looking at the snow. It had fallen to the earth and was covered with filth and soot, and she thought how beautiful the world would be if the snow would not become covered with soot. It comes from God just as white as white can be, and when it falls to the earth it becomes sooty and black and ugly. When we are born into this world, we are just as white and just as pure as the snow; but when we allow sin to take hold on us, our lives are no more beautiful. Listen to Paul, "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." (Rom. 7:9.) When Paul was born he was without sin. When he was a baby he was not subject to the law; but when he came up to the years of accountability, when the commandment came, he said that "sin revived, and I died."

What is death? It causes our hearts to sorrow when we have to sit over our children and watch them die physically, but that

is only a means of transportation into the joys of the eternal home. There is no question about that. When they die in innocent childhood, death is only a transportation to heaven, where they cleanse themselves of all mortality, where they are to robe themselves in spotless white. It is the arcade that leads out of this world of misery and pain to the land where the sun never goes down, where men and women never sorrow, and where God wipes away every tear from our eyes. We break our hearts over them then; but if they grow up to young manhood and womanhood and do not embrace God's law, they die spiritually, and the death they die in sin is a hundred times worse than physical death by far. The death of a baby only puts it where God is. We should grieve far more over them when they come to the years of responsibility and the commandments come and they transgress the law and die spiritually and become separated from God and from Christ, when they become cold, heartless, and indifferent.

Jesus Christ came to save people from their sins, and I think we ought to hear him. What are you going to do about it? Are you going to practice sin, hold it in your hand, apologize for it, say, "I don't see any harm in it"? Are you going to practice this thing that takes your health, breaks your heart, breaks your home, and takes everything from you? Are you going to love sin that causes all the loss, the devastation, the storm clouds and lightning that strike terror to our hearts? Are you going to love sin when Jesus Christ came to save us from it?

What is sin? Lawlessness. Leave it alone. Are you a sinner? Do you want to be one? I'll tell you how. Don't read the Bible if you want to be a sinner. "Oh," you say, "I am not bad." I know. There are lots of good folk in hell, but no Christians are there. They were good according to the estimations and standards of men, but they were not Christians. If you don't want to be saved, just don't read the Bible. Jesus Christ came to save us from our sins, but he does not do it without asking us how we feel about it. He does not drive us or force us. God is not going to bind you and make you be a Christian. If you want to be a Christian, you can; and if you don't, God won't force you to be one. In the palm of his good hand that was wounded for you Christ holds out the bread of life and pours out upon you the water of life. He wants you to come to him; he asks you to come and

drink of the fountain of life. Will you do it? Won't you let him lead you and help you, even when you come to the dark valley of the shadow of death, finally to cross to the shores of that eternal world? He is begging you, pleading with you, calling you. His big heart is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and he is able to save all who will come unto him. He will save you in death; he will give you faith, hope, love, purity of heart. He will cleanse your life of every stain. When you have passed from this world, then, he will take you to the city that lies foursquare in the land of fadeless day. Don't you want to go there? Don't you want to be a Christian? Jesus Christ is pleading with you. Won't you answer the call of the Crucified? He came to save you from your sins. Won't you surrender your life to him tonight? Won't you say, "Here, Lord, I give myself away; 'tis all that I can do"? Won't you allow him to take you by the hand and lead you through the entanglements and difficulties of this world? Won't you let him guide you to that land where the sun never goes down, where we will be free from pain, sorrow, and anxiety? Won't you come tonight? How many in this audience will come?

"WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH UNTO THE CHURCHES"

It is very gratifying, indeed, to have this splendid audience for the last service of our series of meetings. This has been quite a pleasure to be in your midst for these two weeks and engage with you twice each day in services and studies, and I hope that as we come to the end, we find ourselves nearer to one another and nearer to God. Lest I fail hereafter, I want to express my appreciation again of your cooperation, your continued coming, and of your sympathy and interest.

Our subject tonight is in connection with the sermons that we have had every day—I mean every weekday—when we considered the seven letters to the seven churches of Asia. Every one of those letters closes with this remark, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." I wish here to say to you that this is the only thing that the church is to hear; that the church of Christ must be governed in its service, in its teaching, and its worship—in everything that it believes and does

—by what the Spirit of God says. I know of no thing in all the Bible that would even alter or change that expression in the least — "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The Spirit of God has never made an impression upon any heart, at any time, as far as I know, without saying something. The Spirit of God talks to us.

Jesus Christ said, "When he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he shall teach you all things." He said also, "He shall not speak of himself, but whatever he hears that shall he speak." When he was telling his disciples of the time they should be tried for their liberty or lives, he said, "Think not what you shall say, for it is the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." The apostle Peter said, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Paul, writing to Timothy, said, "The Spirit speaketh expressly." It does not matter so much at this instance just what the Spirit said, but I am trying to make the impression that the Spirit illuminates, leads, directs, by talking to men; and as far as I know, it is impossible for the Spirit to guide, to make impressions on men's minds and hearts except by the use of words, and by the use of the words that the person addressed knows and understands. The thought that we cannot understand what the Bible says is, then, in error. When we read the statement, "every scripture inspired of God," we have the idea of the Holy Spirit writing and giving to you the Holy Scriptures. Suffice it to say that when we get out of the Bible, the Spirit of God has nothing further to do with us. There is nothing outside of the Bible that the children of God are enjoined to hear. Herein, from day to day, in every word we speak and every deed we do, we are to be governed; this is what the Spirit of God says. If the Spirit of God has said anything that is not in the Bible, I do not know what it is. That Jesus Christ did many things not recorded in the Bible we are certain, but I cannot tell what they are. They are secret things belonging unto God, and I do not know what they are; but I do know that the Spirit of God has spoken, and written also, and that which he has spoken and written, every item and every word and every point and everything that enters into the salvation of a man's soul, is revealed thereby. You hear people talking about being moved by the Spirit, and frankly I tell you tonight that the

Spirit of God, so far as I am able to know, never moved any man except as he moved him by talking to him. When Philip moved, it was as the Spirit spoke to him; and when Peter came down from the housetop, he was moved by what the Spirit said to him; and before the Holy Spirit came down on the day of Pentecost, he said, "It must needs be that this scripture which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake," be fulfilled. I remember from the book of Hebrews another statement, wherefore the Holy Ghost saith, "Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness"—a quotation from the ninety-fifth Psalm and the seventh verse, in which we have exactly the same words quoted there. The New Testament writer said, "The Holy Ghost said this"; and if we were to turn back and read it, we would find that David said it. And then I read elsewhere the twenty-third chapter of Second Samuel and the second verse, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." So, then, we understand how God's Spirit speaks to you and to me, and it is by men and through men. If he has ever told men what to do to be saved in any other way, I do not know when or where it was. And we read seven times in the second and third chapters of Revelation, in these short letters, as they closed, it having been dictated to John by the Spirit in the Isle of Patmos, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Mark you this means not only that we should hear it, but it carries with it the idea of believing it, receiving it, and becoming obedient unto it. If we would be led by the Spirit of God, that is the path, and that only.

I want to say this to you, that the church of Christ has no right to act upon any proposition from any other standpoint at all. The question is, what does the Bible say? What does the Spirit say? When we ascertain what one is, then we know what the other is. Whatever the Bible says is what the Spirit says. It is so full that the Book tells us that "the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work," and that "all things that pertain unto life and godliness hath been given unto us through the knowledge of him who hath called us unto glory and virtue." Now we read another passage in which he said, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Suppose I were

to read the converse of that, then "as many as are not led by the Spirit of God are not the sons of God." I tell you that I shall have the right, the perfect right, to call your attention to the opposite of that, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"—that many, and no more than that. I judge that is the reason why he said, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." But suppose we look just for a moment to show the opposite, to see the other side of that question. I read the underlying term of discipleship expressed by Jesus Christ in these words, "If any man shall come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." No man, then, can hear what the Spirit of God says and be led by the Spirit of God until he learns that one lesson, that he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

It does not matter what I think. I read where Jesus Christ said, "They shall put you out of the synagogue; yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Because a man thinks he is right, does that make it right? Because a man thinks that what he holds to be the truth is the truth, does that constitute it truth? Certainly not. There are those tonight who think they are serving and worshiping God in Spirit and in Truth, and that when their lives are done they are going to heaven, who are mistaken about it. I mention this to bring to your attention the things in view. If this were a question of dollars and cents, we might believe it; and if not, it would make but little difference when we pass from this world, if it makes any at all. But when we make a mistake about this thing, about which I am talking now, it does make a difference as long as the centuries shall come and go. Let me call your attention to some passages in the Bible that tell of men who serve God on what they think about it, and not on what the Bible says, not what the Spirit says. (You notice he tells the churches that if any man "hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," and not what they think.) So I read where Paul says, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, which thing I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison." But because he thought he ought to do it, that did not make it right. And for this reason there are people worshiping

God as they think it ought to be done, but they are wrong. It does not matter what I think about it, or what you think about it, but the question is, what does the Spirit of God say? and the churches are exhorted over and over to hear what the Spirit says. I read from the book of Proverbs that every way of man is right in his own eyes. And another that says, "There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof is the way of death." I read another statement from the book of Deuteronomy, the twelfth chapter and the eighth verse, in which these words are used, "You shall not do after all the things that ye do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes." Then what are we to do? Do what God says, do what the Spirit says, I frankly tell you tonight, as we shall demonstrate to you later, that no man can do what the Spirit says and leave the Bible out of it. If a man will do what God's Spirit says, be a spiritual man and spiritually led, he must adhere to what the Holy Spirit says in the words that make up the Bible, and when he does not read and believe that and incline unto that and obey that voice, he is not led by the Spirit of God and is not a son of God. Now, God wants his children to be spiritual. You hear people talk about men being so spiritual and so spiritually-minded. You hear them talk about the spirit of Christ as if they thought it was affable and gentle 'and noncombative and without the least bit of antagonism. Their idea is that those who know the spirit of Christ just believe everything and acquiesce in everything and do not combat and contend and refute and argue on any point. If I have studied the life of Christ to any profit at all, he was the greatest controversialist of any in the world, for there was nothing that came before him that touched human life or destiny that he did not discuss. I believe, then, that the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ challenges evil and brings the fight to the man he would save. I believe that from a study of the Bible. And the way that seems right to me—if I wanted to be a popular evangelist—is what I would present tonight, but it is not my desire to be popular. I am here to tell you what the Bible says and what the Spirit of God teaches. Then, too, I call your attention to the New Testament for a moment. In the New Testament, Paul said, "I have a conscience void of offense toward God and men," and in another statement he says, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."

And yet it is a common thing to hear people say, "If a man follows the dictates of his conscience, he will be all right," but he won't unless he follows the Spirit. The charge is to hear what the Spirit says, hear that and nothing else but that. There is nothing else we should hear, and when the church of Jesus Christ hears anything else and hearkens to anything else, it is an error. I would like for you to Understand that I would not undervalue conscience—a good conscience and a conscience void of offense— but that is not the measure. He might be in error and yet true to his conviction and true to his conscience. Paul was persecuting Christians; he was antagonizing the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus met him he was breathing out threatenings against the church, and he said he was doing it "in all good conscience before God"; he said that while he was doing it he had "a conscience void of offense"; and he had lived up to the time he was arrested at the end of his third missionary tour, in all good conscience before God. If you follow your conscience, that is one thing; and if you follow the Spirit, that is another thing. We must be governed by what the Spirit of God says in the Bible. That is our base; it is here that we get our meat and drink. From this we get every word and every bit of the nourishment and every bit of the guidance and all of the light that shall fall upon our path and every bit of the consolation and comfort that it is possible for us to get—we get it all from what the Spirit saith unto the churches. That is the duty of the child of God; that is his full duty, his whole duty, and whenever we get out of the Bible for one item we have added to it, and when we leave out anything that the word of the Lord contains, we have taken from it, and God's Book repeatedly says that we must not take away from it nor add to it; and if "we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, let him be anathema." I would not take away your good feelings nor your good conscience at all, but the church is not to act upon the way a man feels about anything. I would not take good feelings away that would warm your very heart and stimulate you, but your feelings are not good evidence and not very reliable. I would say that a man's feelings are just worth face value and nothing else, for what a man feels depends upon what he believes, and what he believes depends upon what he learns—upon whether he hears the truth

or hears a falsehood. Then his feelings are in accordance with what he believes. To illustrate: When Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brothers, they stripped from him the coat of many colors and dipped it in the blood of a goat, and they took it home with them and held it up before his father who loved him so, and said, "Is that Joseph's coat?" And he said, "Yes." He drew the conclusion that the wild beasts had killed him, and he said, "I will go down to my grave in tears," and for twenty-two years he labored under the delusion that Joseph was dead, and Joseph was not dead at all. He felt like he was dead because he believed he was dead, and he believed he was dead because of the testimony he had, but the testimony was false. Oh, it depends upon what we hear, and we ought to be careful about it. Jesus said, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Let me read you another passage: "And with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Then if a man believes an error, though he is sincere in it and thinks it is the real truth, the Bible says that he might be damned—all who receive not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.

I read of a man in the thirteenth chapter of First Kings who went up to a certain place as God told him to do, and had done God's mission as God told him, and started back as God told him, and he had stopped under the shade of a tree, and there an old prophet met him and told him, "God has sent me to bring you back that you may eat bread and drink water." And the Book says he believed it, but the old prophet lied to him. He went back, believing that God had sent the old prophet, but God had not sent him; he believed a lie; and the result is that he never returned to the sepulchre of his fathers. The Bible says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the *Spirit* saith unto the churches." If the *Spirit* does not say it, don't you say it. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." Now, I think this ought to be sufficient; but if we have left out any

detail on this subject, I think this will cover it: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23.) I wonder, then, what makes men try it. Do we believe that God stated the truth? Then why do we try it? I read a passage a while gone that said, "In old time the prophecy of God came not by the will of man, but it came by the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit was in holy men and through them wrote and spoke and revealed it—every item, every passage, and everything. Then should we get out of the Bible for our guidance in religion? Why, certainly not. That is what the Spirit says, that is the teaching of the Spirit, and so far as I know that is all that the Spirit has ever said or ever taught that in any wise connects itself with the salvation of the souls of men and women. It is not in man that walks to direct his steps, it does not matter how well he can see, or how well he can think, or how well he can understand and believe things and work out things. We must wait until we learn, then, the general term of discipleship, that if man will come after me, let him deny himself—deny his feelings, his thoughts, his conscience, deny everything, and come and lean upon the everlasting arms, lean upon the teaching of the Bible, trust in it, look to it. Whatever it says we will say, and when it ceases to speak we will refuse to speak. So true is this that one of the New Testament writers has said, "There are those who, comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise"—they do not understand. Certainly, then, Jesus is our pattern, the Bible is our guide, heaven is our home, and what a fool I would be if I did not go to it. I am trying to say these things to you plainly and pointedly, so that we can appreciate them when they are said. Now notice: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." If they are led by what they think and by the things that are right in their own eyes, or by their feelings, or conscience, or by what they believe, or by what they understand, or anything else other than the Spirit of God, they are not the sons of God.

Your body perishes here in working out these things and in planning and inventing and in scheming. There is nothing in the world that can help you on to the altar of God and the service of God but "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Turn with me and let me read to you again. The Bible said, "Eye hath not

seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of men the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." How did you ever find anything out about them, then? How do we know anything about them? Eye never saw it; ear never heard it; the heart of man has never conceived of it; then how do we find out anything about it? He said, "God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit." Do you know there is a home of the soul? How did you find it out? Do you know there are gates of pearl and walls of jasper? Do you know there is a street of gold? Do you know there is a city that lieth foursquare? How did you find that out? Do you know there is a garden of God that hath the tree of life in the midst of it? Then how do we find that out? I want to ask you, how did you find out what you must do to be saved? How do you find out what you must do? Why, the Spirit told you—God revealed these things to you by his Spirit, for he adds, "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Now that is the reason that we ought to hear what the Spirit says. "No man knows the things of God but the Spirit of God." No man knows the things of God—that is what the Bible says about it, and I believe it. Therefore, I want to impress upon your minds tonight that it does not matter what I say about it or what anybody else says about it, or what all the people of all the ages, and all the people of all the world have said about it. God's Spirit knows the things of God, and God's Spirit teaches those things and writes those things and brings them down to us so that we can get hold of them, so "he that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." You know you hear people say in these times in which we live, "Well, I want Holy Ghost religion." Well, certainly, I would not have any other kind, but what is Holy Ghost religion? Holy Ghost religion is that religion that the Holy Ghost speaks to us and into which it leads us. When I open my Bible and begin to read therefrom, I am reading Holy Ghost religion, and in this little Book we have these things recorded; we have them revealed and written unto us by the Spirit of God.

I want to suggest, then, that we hear what the Holy Spirit says to the churches. We hear a man say, I don't believe in baptism—I believe in Holy Ghost religion; I don't believe in water religion—I believe in Holy Ghost religion. But whenever a man believes the Holy Spirit, he will be baptized, and he will not be

very long about it, for the Bible teaches that we must repent and be baptized. That is what the Spirit said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins." (Acts 2:38.) You cannot have Holy Ghost religion unless you do what the Holy Ghost says, and that is what the Holy Ghost says. That is not all of it, but that is part of it; and when a man refuses that part of it, he has refused to hear what the Spirit says; and if he refuses to hear and hearken and do what the Spirit says, then he cannot be spiritual, and he cannot have Holy Ghost religion. That is what the Holy Spirit says. I have been criticized many times on that point. "He says we must be baptized, and we cannot be saved unless we are"; but you are wrong in your statement, for the Holy Spirit said that; I did not say it. The Holy Spirit said, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." The Holy Spirit says: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Now, the Holy Spirit said that and I would not mention it on this rostrum tonight if it were not in the Bible.

The Spirit of God knows fully the things of God, and the Spirit has taken pains to write these things in this book that we call the New Testament, and I am reading the things in this book which the Spirit hath written to the churches. Jesus said, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." How many people do you know who will not hear what the Spirit says, at least on this point? The Spirit of God means to tell us that we should reveal to the world that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and it tells us that when the people believed what Philip preached unto them in the name of Jesus Christ, "they were baptized, both men and women." The Spirit tells us that "if you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The Book says that without faith it *is* impossible to please God. Who says that? God's spirit said that. I am reading from the word of God these passages. I read where John the Baptist said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." I read again where Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." And again, "The Lord is not

slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." I did not say that; I would not have known how, but I read in this book what the Spirit of God has written. With God's goodness and mercy and grace we are provided with the word of God. That contains every line of it and everything in it.

I would not know how to worship God; I would not know to come and break bread on the first day of the week; I would not know how to pray or to sing or what to sing if I did not know what the Spirit said. I would be just as liable to get a banjo or violin or a piano or something like that if the Spirit had not said to use the vocal organs. The Bible teaches that when it comes to the conversion of the world, the gospel is to be preached and men are to hear it and they are to believe and to repent of their sins and be baptized for the remission of sins, and the Spirit says that when they are baptized they will be raised to walk in newness of life. And the Spirit says, "Behold, old things are passed away, all things are become new." The more I read this and the more I think about it, the more I am impressed with the passage, "Let him that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." I want to say to you that if you will hear what the Spirit says unto the churches, you will be right always. And you cannot know these things unless you read the Holy Scriptures, for "every scripture is inspired of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." "Therefore I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Therefore he said, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

We will never wander far, either, if we will just follow that one passage. The instruction there is well enforced and established

and liberally presented throughout the entire Bible, old and new alike, teaching and admonishing us that turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, adding nothing to it and taking nothing from it, and believing what it says. Whatever the Bible says, we accept, and anything it does not say we reject. I want to just rivet your attention once more to the Holy Bible. "Blessed Bible, how I love it! How it doth my bosom cheer! Oh! what hath earth like this to covet? Oh, what stores of wealth are here!" You can't afford to listen to anything else. Meditate upon this; study it; learn how to rightly divide and to rightly use it and be skilled in the word of righteousness, for the salvation of yourself and your fellows and to do honor to God.

We are now going to extend to you the invitation, as we have plead with you day after day and night after night, representing Jesus with his wings outspread, ready to take you under them and protect you from the driving rain and the storm. Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. Come, all that are weak. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest unto your souls." For as the prophet put it: "Come now and let us reason together, saith God, if ye be willing and obedient you shall eat the good of the land, but refuse and rebel and you shall be devoured. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Angels are ready to pick up your coming and bear it away to worlds unknown, rejoicing in heaven over your coming tonight. Won't you come in obedience tonight? Give me your hand and God your heart, while we sing.

THE WAY OF SAFETY

For the service at present, I want to read a group of verses from the Bible, and to this reading we ask the undivided attention of this people. We are reading from the last letter that the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, the last part of the third chapter and the first part of the fourth chapter. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, but continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them: and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make

thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry; for I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only but to all them also that love his appearing."

You will observe from this reading that we have paid no attention to the division of the Bible into chapters and verses, but read straight through our text. Man divided the Bible into chapters and verses a long time after the last word, the last Amen, had been written by the pen of inspiration in the Revelation, and like fallible, mortal men are prone to do, it has been wrongly divided. They have done about as well in that as they have about anything else they have, undertaken in religion where man uses his own thoughts. That is to say, it is not free from error. You will observe that the fourth chapter has been cut off and the connection lost from the premise laid down in the third chapter. Sometimes I note in Bible study that we want to know how many verses and how many chapters people have read. So far as that goes, it is very good, but it may be that we may read just a certain portion or number of chapters and verses and fail to get what the writer wants to say. The purpose in reading the Bible should be to get what God teaches, and we ought not to allow verses and chapters to determine our amount of reading for us.

Your attention could not be called to everything contained in this fine group of verses, which cover a very large field of work

and thought. Everything in these verses is important, but there is too much contained in them to dwell on every point at one sitting as the editor would say.

It is to the first part of the reading that we first wish you to give your attention. I am reading again the first part, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." That seems to be a sound of warning from the apostle. It is for our learning today; and so far as the battle against evil men and seducers is concerned, it looks to me from that reading that we may expect a long drawn-out conflict against them. The number of evil men has not only NOT diminished, but they have multiplied marvellously since that time. It seems that is what the apostle means to tell us. If that is not the object of his statement, I could not imagine what his application is when he says, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." So far as their type is concerned, they are going to any length to do anything possible to accomplish their task in the seduction of the children of God. They are going to do all they can to seduce men from the path of truth and righteousness, from the way of light that leads up to the tree of life in the midst of the garden of God, where no sorrows ever come and where there is no tear to dim the eye.

I want to call your attention to another point we might notice just now, which is this: If an evil man can get worse and worse in his evil path, then there is no reason why those who are good cannot get better and better. I don't see any reason why good folk cannot get better and better if evil folk can get worse and worse. There is not a person in this world who is as bad as he could be, and, on the other hand, there is not a person in the world who is just as good as he could be. No matter how good a man gets to be, there are still plenty of higher heights to follow and higher goals to be reached. I don't know just how big, how magnanimous, wonderful, and devoted a person might become spiritually. I don't know how much and mightily the tendrils of his heart might be twined about the throne of God. About that I cannot say, but I do know that men can get better and better, no matter what they are, how much they have learned, or how good they are at the present. There is still room for advancement on this ground. If a person ever reaches his goal, and feeling

satisfied with himself, starts to relax, then that person begins to slip. If people ever learn all they want to know, they will not have what they know very long. They will begin to lose something; they will begin to decay. I am glad that Almighty God saw fit to make man on the plan that the more he learns, the more he wants to learn; the more he gets, the more he wants to acquire; the better he gets, the better he wants to get; the greater he gets, the greater he wants to be; the higher he gets, the higher he wants to climb.

I want to suggest, further, that if evil men and seducers wax worse and worse—that being true—then there is not a totally depraved man or woman on earth. How could a man be totally depraved and, at the same time, get any worse? Total depravity means that a man is just as bad as he can be, and he cannot get any worse; but the Bible says, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." Then there must be something wrong with that theory. Inasmuch as people can get meaner, baser, lower, worse and worse, I think, and I believe logically so, that a person cannot be totally depraved. I have heard that doctrine advanced in the pulpit, and to my mind it is the seedbed of the majority of all the religious error throughout the denominational world today. That men are totally depraved, I do not believe, and neither can I see how a man can read the word of God and give one bit of attention to it and believe that sort of thing.

Jesus told his disciples to watch in all things. That puts us on a spot. We must keep our eyes opened lest, indeed, we are misled. Let me call your attention to this passage. The apostle says, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." If you think there is no danger in that sort of teaching, it is but idle thinking. I tell you, my friends, it is a dangerous thing to be misled into false teaching. Such teachings place the church in peril today in every place. The passage read in your hearing undertakes to show you and to impress upon you that there is no greater menace to the church than evil men and seducers, who continue to multiply in number. They are dangerous. They will teach anything to accomplish their purpose.

Christ told his disciples that after he was gone, men would arise from among them, even from their own ranks, even from among

themselves, who would draw disciples after them with false teaching. He told them they would not only arise from among themselves, but they would come from afar. He further told them to "beware of false prophets, who would come to them in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they were ravening wolves." They were not seeking the benefit of the flock, but "teaching things they ought not for filthy lucre's sake." I can imagine no meaner, baser, lower, more despicable thing than the man who would deliberately misrepresent the word of God for the sake of a paltry dollar. I cannot think of a meaner thing a man could do than to stand up in the church, the spiritual house of God, and preach other than the gospel of the crucified but risen Savior, just for the sake of money. Friends, I just cannot imagine anything worse than that. Can you think of anything worse than the man who would do that? Seemingly the apostle is making a stinging and striking allusion to that sort of thing in the passage read in your hearing. A remedy for that sort of teaching is found in the very pointed suggestion he gave, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."

I want to tell you tonight, my Christian friends, you are the hope of the world. You are "the salt of the earth." . You are to be the "light of the world." You are to be as "the city that is set on the hill," whose light cannot be hid. In fact, you are the only hope of the world. If the church is to continue, we must continue in the things that are written in this little Book that I hold in my hand tonight, the New Testament. There are two hundred and sixty chapters in it, and they contain the words of life. They contain the remedy for every disease in the religious world today. They are profitable, the Book says, "for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Now this point should be noticed. The passage does not say "furnished," but "throughly furnished" unto all good works. There is not a single necessary item of work and worship and service to God that he has not included in this book. He has thoroughly furnished us for all our particular work. So, my friends, anything the New Testament does not contain, anything the New Testament says nothing about, anything the New Testament gives

no instruction concerning, you can put it down that it does not belong to the work of the church, and it is not necessary to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. It does not belong to that class of works that Jehovah God calls "good works." On the other hand, neither does the New Testament, the inspired apostles, nor the Holy Spirit give one bit of "furnishing" to that sort of work. Therefore, it is dangerous work, if it is not instructed in this little Book.

Now, I want to impress on the minds of this people the importance of continuing in the things we have learned. The way to continue in the things we have learned is by continuing in the word of the living God, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, to get into his church, to get into his kingdom, to abide in it, to live in it, to stay in it, and to stay out of everything else. This matter, that we have been talking about, is clearly revealed in the Bible, and we ought to give our most serious and careful attention to continue in those things which we have learned. "Evil men and seducers, who wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," are constantly multiplying in number, and they are becoming more and more violent in their opposition to the truth and to "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The safety and the security of the preacher of the gospel lies in his "continuing in the things which he has learned." One of the most important things in the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is for men and women to continue in the things that are written in this little Book, for they are written for our learning. We should not continue in the things we *think*, but in the things we have learned. Our think-soes are not worth anything. My think-so is as good as yours, but neither of them amounts to anything. Our safety lies not in what we imagine, not in our feelings, not in our think-soes, but in the things which we have learned, the things portrayed upon the pages of the New Testament. That is the way he puts it down on the scroll, and that is the only safe course to pursue.

I want to read to you tonight the First Psalm, showing you the benefit, the joy, the peace, and the security we find by our continuing in the things that we have learned. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his

delight is in the law of the Lord; in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away." Chaff is the part that is not good for anything. It is just thrown away. "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." *I read that to impress on our minds the fact that we should meditate on the law of the Lord more and more, that we ought to continue in the things revealed, until we shall be like the righteous man who planted his tree by the rivers of water and bringeth forth his fruit in his season. The Book says, "His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." We don't want to be like the ungodly man, who is "like the chaff which the wind driveth away." We don't want to be the sinners that God says "shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous, for the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." I frankly say to you, my friends, that the arm of God encircles only those who are willing to learn his word, abide in the teaching we find written there, stay within the things written, and stay out of everything else. That is a rule that can settle any doubt on any question. Find out what the Bible says. If it says nothing about it, it is generally safe to leave it alone. I want to read another passage, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God: He that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.)*

Get it, friends—the man who goes onward, the man who transgresses, the man who goes beyond that which we have written, the man who goes beyond the truth of Christ "hath not God." What could a man do without God? What could the church do without God? Nothing! Therefore, I presume that it would be well to remember that the programs of the world for recovery seem to have left God out of them. With God, with the Father, with his Son Jesus Christ by our side, in our minds, and in our thoughts to fight our battles for us, we can accomplish anything, despite the evil men and seducers and opponents of the truth.

The Book further admonishes us to beware of strange doctrines. My friends, any doctrine outside of this book is foreign. It is strange doctrine. When the beloved apostle John, that disciple whom the Lord loved, tells you here that "he that abideth in the truth hath both the Father and the Son," then he comes to state another proposition. He tells you that if a man comes to you and brings any other doctrine than this to "receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed, for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds." The apostle thereby sounds a warning to us. There has been many a church split into factions, broken down, ruined, torn to pieces because they did not heed this warning and this information. We cannot have success or any possibility of success in the Lord's work when we toy with that which is dangerous. We can only prosper in the Lord's work when we continue in the things that he has taught us. Hear it: "Continue thou in the things thou hast learned and hast been assured of." Continue in them. That is the only way you can outwit the onset of evil men and seducers who wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Men and women, we should learn the things that Christ has written for our learning. We should abide in Christ, in the teaching of the Bible and in his church. The only way we can abide in Christ is to stand fast in his truth and continue in the things we have learned from this Book.

I want to call your attention to another passage. You know we get the idea that we cannot learn religion, that we cannot learn the Bible for ourselves. We can learn geography or mathematics for ourselves, but we get the idea that we cannot learn the Bible for ourselves. I have tried all of them, and, indeed, I find that it is more difficult to learn geography or mathematics than it is to learn the Bible. We can learn the Bible as well as we can learn geography or mathematics if we give as much time and as many hours to it as we give to them. Indeed, I find it is more difficult to learn geography, which has to do with the earth's surface, than it is to learn the Bible. I don't believe that this little Book that I hold in my hand is half as hard to learn as mathematics or calculus. When it comes to the Bible, we just haven't put in as many hours study on it as we have in the other subjects. How much deep meditation, how much serious concentration and study and thought do you give to reading the word of the Lord? In my

judgment, if we would meditate on the law of the Lord day and night, we could see development. We could see improvement, and our souls would soon be trained for things higher and nobler, and it may be within a short time we would be like "the tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in season." How much time do you give it? How many hours do you spend reading it daily or weekly? We find time to read anything else we want to, then, why can't we find time to read the word of God?

I am trying to impress upon you the necessity of studying the word of God to save yourselves from wreck and ruin and to save the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, for which he gave his life and every drop of blood in his heart to save men and women. Can you afford not to study and to meditate on the law of the Lord? Can you afford, my friends, not to do that? I want to call your attention to another passage which has been misapplied and misused, but we are not going to refrain from reading it because of what it says. "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up in the last day." (John 6:44.) That is universal, isn't it? It means everyone. It means that no one can come to the Lord Jesus Christ until God draws him. You could not get away from that proposition. That is the statement precisely. A person is lost until he comes to Christ. A person cannot render any sort of obedience until he comes to Christ in obedience and submission to his will. In Christ we have life and can hope for things beyond the grave. It would be impossible for an individual to come to Christ unless God draws him. That is the statement as it is made in the Bible. A person is lost until he comes to Christ, and he cannot render any sort of obedience until he comes to Christ. Then, in Christ, he has life and the hope of heaven beyond the grave; otherwise, it would be impossible for him to look ahead beyond this vale of tears.

Get this point, friends: The passage says, "No man can come to Christ except God draws him." Oftentimes we read just that, and we do not read any further, and sometimes we fail to get exactly what Jehovah meant to say. We fail to get the exact lesson which he meant to teach. I want to read the passage again to you just to impress it on your minds: "No man can come to

me except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." Now, you can understand by that reading that no man can come to the Lord Jesus Christ unless he has heard the gospel and hath learned of God; therefore, every person that hears the gospel and learns of God can come to him. The only way for anyone to learn of God is to read the Bible and by hearing the gospel preached from the word of God. We can learn the gospel by meditating and concentrating on the things written in the little book that we call the New Testament.

We should accept every word in the Bible, and we should all be able to understand the Bible. All the ordinances were written to teach men. Every word in the Bible, all the verses and chapters of the Bible, were given for one thing, and only one thing, and that one purpose is to teach man obedience to his God. We should never allow anything to blind our eyes to that issue or to becloud our mind to it. We ought to take every word, every symbol, every proverb, every example, every type, every shadow, and whatever else is written and let them be so construed and so interpreted as to blend into this one leading thought—obedience to God.

Just here, I would like to call your attention to another passage. Matthew is the writer. "Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.) The never-ending sweetness of that kingdom with all its glory and beauty is wide open and accessible to all those who will obey the will of God. Men and women living in sin are on the outside of that kingdom, and they will remain there until they have done what God has said for them to do in order to be saved. There is no other entrance into the kingdom of God. There is no other key by which men may enter his kingdom than by doing the Father's will and by obeying his commandments.

The Bible says for us to learn of God, and we cannot come to Christ until we do that. If you have never come to Christ, you have not been saved. You cannot come to Christ unless you learn of God, and you must hear the gospel to learn of God. The Bible

tells us that "faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) The Bible also says, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is." (Heb. 11:6.) I have already read you the passage which says, "Faith comes by hearing." That's the way faith comes, friends. We hear the word of God; we learn his word from this Book, for the Bible says that these things were written for our learning. Indeed, my friends, we ought to take heed, then, to the things written here. I don't know how to say anything stronger, anything more needful, or that would be better for this church and for all concerned than those clear, pungent, forceful passages just uttered.

I want to refer your attention back to the passage read in your hearing. "No man can come unto me unless the Father who hath sent me draw him." There is no exception to it. Any man who hears and learns of God may come to him. Two things are equal to the same thing, and must be equal to each other. God draws man, but he permits man to have his choice as to whether or not he will come to him. Men must learn of God, otherwise they cannot come.

Now, I want to read you another passage in which Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14:6.) Since no man can come to God except by Christ, and no man can come to God unless he hears and learns of God, you can see the wisdom in Paul's admonition to young Timothy when he told him to "continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." We ought to be able to get this point. You cannot learn of God from anything except this Book. I have heard people say that you can learn of God by watching the twinkling stars, by the babbling brook, by the trees, hills, and mountains. They say that these are a revelation of God. That is true, perhaps, as far as it goes. The poet was right when he said, "The stars e'er singing as they shine, the hand that made us is divine". I know all that. Those things do declare that there is a God, that there is a creator, but the point I am making is that they do not tell you where to find God; they do not tell you how to approach him. You have to learn of God. Just to know that he is, just to know of his existence means little or nothing to us. We must find out how we are going to come to

God, since the Bible says that "no man can come to God except that he believes that he is." No man can come unless he has sufficient faith to come, and faith comes by hearing the word of God. Take this Book away, and we are stranded; we have no way; we have no chance to learn of God outside of what is said here. When I say that, I want to say something I hope you will not soon forget. Anything not recorded in this Book is no part of it, and you had better leave it alone.

Since "without faith it is impossible to please God, and he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," and since "faith comes by hearing, and hearing comes by the word of God" (and the New Testament is that word), I think the argument needs no further foundation than that.

I want to call your attention to another point—the power that draws men. God draws men by power. Suppose I read to you again. "Where the word of a king is, there is power." That is God talking in Ecclesiastes. But listen, friends, the New Testament is the word of our King. Christ is our King, our Lord, and our Exemplar, and the New Testament is the word of Christ. "Where the word of a king is, there is power"; therefore, we ought to remember to study that word and to rightly handle it because our security and our safety depend on it. Our battle, our conflict is a long, drawn-out one. It is now on, and our victory in this battle is turning absolutely upon the things written in the New Testament.

You will observe that Christ said, "No man can come to the Father but by me." Then, it is impossible for a man to come any other way than by Christ. It is impossible to come to Christ unless you have heard and learned of God. That's the reason congregations send missionaries to teach people in darkness, who have not learned of God. I have read a great deal in literature the last few years about missions, foreign missions, home missions, this kind and that. Friends, the Bible only mentions one kind. The Bible tells us that the world is our field. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," the Bible says. (Mark 16:16.) Just as long as there is a corner where the gospel has not been preached, our work is not done. We have not done our part until everyone has the gospel preached

to him. Every once in a while I come across a brother who says: "I have done my part. Now let somebody else do his." No, you have not done your part. I, myself, am responsible to God, and my part is not finished as long as there is a man or woman, boy or girl, who is without God, without Christ, without faith, without hope. No, my work is not done! I must listen to Christ, and we must answer the clarion call. My friends, we ought to wake up to this situation, and wake up to it immediately. The safety of the preacher, the safety of the elders, the leaders, even the church itself depend upon "the things we have learned"—not in arithmetic, not in geography—that is not the subject under consideration, but in the word of the Lord Jesus Christ, your Savior and mine.

We ought to study the Bible more; we ought to talk about it more, about the plan of salvation, the cost of our redemption. Let's meditate on it more and more and continue in the things we have learned, because your safety and mine depend on it. You cannot get very far without it. Sometimes we find a man who studies the Bible, but who does not live it and does not practice its teaching. That is the harder thing to do—to practice it, to live it every day. When a man takes the Bible, reads it, studies it, meditates on it, practices its teaching, he is getting somewhere. Learning, teaching, and practicing make a powerful combination.

Not only have you "learned these things," but you have been "assured of them." I just want to make the emphasis that is placed in this statement. What assurance have you in anything not written in this Book. There is no dependence on earth to be put in anything that you cannot read in this little Book. You have not been assured of things outside of it. You are assured of the things written therein, for they have cost the blood of the world's Redeemer. They have come down the stream of time to us, and, indeed, how fortunate we are to have them written down for us to read. God has said this, "My word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the things whereunto I have sent it." (Isa. 55:11.)

Friends, what assurance have you in a doctrine you cannot read in this Book? Think about it! What assurance have you of any system of religion or doctrine that you cannot read in this Book that God has given us? Can we have any assurance, or can we

lean upon things outside this little Book, the revelation God has given to man, with security and safety?

The things written in this Book are lasting; they are eternal. Are you like "the wise man who built his house upon a rock, and the rain came and the floods came, the winds blew, and it beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock"? (Matt. 7:24, 25.) That is the sort of assurance we need. Do you believe that God meant what he said? God's word will never fail. The Bible has withstood the ravages of the ages, and it has come down to us today as "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway." Hence, we must know it; we must study it; we must meditate upon it and practice its teaching. It has wiped more tears away from eyes of sorrowing men and women, taken more burdens off men's hearts, given more faith, lifted up more hands that were hanging down, and given more courage to the suffering sons and daughters of Adam's race than anything else. Therefore, friends, we should "continue thou in the things thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them."

"Knowing of whom we have learned them" would have a great deal to do with it. Some man like Joseph Smith might teach you something he thinks, but it might not be the word of God; it might not be dependable.

Where will you go to find the commands of God? Where would you get them? Suppose a man were to come here preaching something you could not read in the Bible (and there are men doing that all over this country), then wouldn't you be allowed to call for the proof? Wouldn't it be prudent to say, "Where did you get it?" Wouldn't it be prudent to say, "Who said it?" "By what authority did you say it?"

Let me call your attention to the fact that Jesus Christ said to Peter, "I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:19.) Again he said to the apostles, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John 20:23.) Again we hear the apostle say, "We are ambassadors for Christ [ambassadors in Christ's stead]: be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. 5:20.) The

apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ were invested with power to act in his stead. They alone were the ambassadors of Christ. Christ has no earthly ambassadors today. Whatever they said was the word of the Lord Jesus Christ; whatever they have written is the word of God. Then it is right to ask men to learn it. If the apostles did not teach a thing, something is wrong with it. It did not come from the right source. It is safe, then, to leave it alone.

Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, and the only safe course for Christian men and women to pursue today is to "continue thou in the things thou hast learned and hath been assured of, knowing of whom ye have learned them."

Let me invite this audience tonight to come and sit down, not at my feet or at the feet of any uninspired man on earth, but at the feet of Jesus Christ and the inspired apostles. I invite you to sit at the feet of Paul, Peter, James, and John. They were men inspired of God; they were given the Holy Spirit of God to "guide them into all truth." The things they have spoken are infallible. Therefore, we should ask men today, "Of whom did you learn it? Did you get it from the inspired apostles? If not, you did not get it from the right source. You did not get it from the right person." Without the word of God, you cannot withstand the onset of evil men and seducers. Tonight, my friends, as we come to the close of the lesson, I want to submit these thoughts for your consideration: What did the apostles teach? What have you learned about it? Where did you learn it? The apostles gave instructions for conducting the work and worship of God. These things were written for the salvation of the souls of men and women and for the edification of the church, for the good of all, and for the glory and honor of our God.

Are you here tonight who are out of Jesus Christ, out of his spiritual body, out of his church, out of his truth? Out of this big assembly, surely there are those here who are out of Christ. If you are here, won't you pledge yourself to Christ? Won't you obey the word of God tonight? It is the word of life. Won't you believe it? Won't you repent of your sins? Won't you be willing to confess Christ as your Lord and Master? Won't you take him for your Leader, your King, your Exemplar? Then

won't you be willing to be buried with him in baptism to rise to walk in a new life? Won't you come, friends, in obedience to his written word that you may be saved? Won't you come with your whole heart and say, "Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'tis all that I can do"? I beg you in the adorable and precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ to come in obedience to his loving voice. Come and drink of the fountain of life. Won't you turn from the paths of evil and let the Lord Jesus Christ hold your hand and from now to the end of your life to lead you and at last take you home to the city that lies foursquare in that land of fadeless day? If you have been a Christian and haven't been faithful, won't you renew your allegiance to Christ, turn to the right, and live true to him to the end of your life. If you are a Christian living faithfully and true and residing in this community, won't you place your membership here and work and worship with this most excellent congregation? Won't you help them and let them help you? If so, the invitation is extended to you also.

Jesus Christ said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Won't you come and lay your burden on the Lord while we stand together and sing the invitation song?

FULFILLING THE SCRIPTURES

My friends, it is quite a pleasure to me to be able to be present with you again tonight and to resume our studies in the word of God. It was my pleasure, and I hope your good fortune and privilege, to be present last evening when we spoke on the subject, "The Things That Are Written." It occurred to me that it might be a splendid thing tonight to speak on the "Fulfilling of the Scriptures." I pointed out to you last evening that when we come to the judgment, we shall be judged out of the things written in the books, according to our works, and that no person shall ever be judged from any other standpoint, and by that standard we shall either be accepted or rejected. I called your attention to a passage to show you that "that which is written" substantially furnishes us for every department of life. There is nothing that comes into human experience that the word of God does not teach something upon that point. There is not a business that one

would pursue that the Bible does not say something about. There is not a thing we need to know about our present duty; there is not a thing we need to know about the future that we cannot find out from the Bible. There is not a thing smoldering in the ruins of the past that is necessary for us to know and that is worth the effort to read about, that the Bible, the word of God, the Holy Scriptures, does not record. The Scriptures unfulfilled will never benefit anybody.

I believe that is the thing that is the matter with your city, your state, and the world today. The power and the life is in the word of God; all it needs is application. All we need to learn today is God's word, and we should let its truth filter out in deeds through our finger tips.

In speaking of "Fulfilling of the Scriptures," I want to turn your attention to the scenes of sad Gethsemane. It was an ordinary garden of olive trees not far from Jerusalem. It was a place of often resort for our Lord while he was on the earth. When he had met with the disciples in the upper room, and had eaten the last supper with them, the desire of his heart had been gratified. He also instituted the Lord's Supper that night. In the thirteenth chapter of John we find a record of the Last Supper and the institution of the Lord's Supper, and after the Lord's Supper was instituted, then he spoke the fourteenth chapter. No one there seemed to have sensed just what troubles were on his heart or to know what the morrow would bring. He alone was aware of it. His soul was sorrowful unto death; his heart was as heavy as molten lead. The disciples knew that something was wrong, but could not tell what it was. In the fourteenth chapter he said to his disciples: "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3.) Just to what extent he could have relieved their curiosity and their troubled minds that night with such utterances I don't know, but I like to think of the Lord Jesus Christ that night as I look at the sun when it comes up bright and sparkling, and when noon is reached and the sun shines in strength and power, gloriously bright. I like to look at it when evening time comes on, when day is done, when the sun

is sinking to rest among the clustered isles of rubies and gold. Jesus Christ was suffering on that night. He was under cloud and shadow, his heart was breaking with grief, yet upon that night as never before there poured from that sorrowful soul a stream of truth that is like molten silver without alloy.

When the fourteenth chapter was finished, he said to his disciples, "Let us go hence," and on the way he spoke the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of John; and when the sixteenth chapter was finished, they were at the Garden of Gethsemane; and before he went into that garden, he kneeled down with the disciples and offered prayer. Every worker for the Lord Jesus Christ ought to read this story as a daily declaration of him who loved us and came to the world to redeem us, as a Savior who was really and truly interested in us, willing to do everything possible for fallen humanity.

After that prayer was finished in John 17, he left eight disciples on the outside and took three on the inside. They were Peter, James, and John. The midnight hour is about to appear. He said, "You stay here and watch while I go out yonder and pray." The silver moon was shining under the shadow of the olive trees. Watch him as he prays there. The sweat like blood ran from every pore of his skin as he knelt in anguish and prayed three times told. Three times told he said, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." When he had said this the third time, he came back to his disciples, and they were still asleep. Then came the flickering lights across the brook Cedron. They were coming to take him, being led by Judas Iscariot. When they came to him, Judas kissed him, thus betraying his master for thirty pieces of silver. Peter who stood close by, and the bravest perhaps of all from one standpoint, drew his sword from out of the stock and cut off the ear of one of the men. Jesus saw it, and he touched the ear, stopped the flow of blood, and healed the ear. He told Peter to put the sword back into its place, for whosoever "used the sword would perish by the sword." Then he turned to his disciples and said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, and thus it must be." I want to show you, if I can, my friends, what it cost Christ to fulfill the Scriptures

as they relate to him. Often did he say, "I did not come to do my will; I came to do the will of my Father who sent me."

When he preached that marvelous and incomparable sermon on the mount, he introduced what preachers and editors are pleased to call the Beatitudes, probably because the word sounds good, but we may simply say they are traits of character or conditions of the heart. They are found in the first twelve verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew. They deal with us in our relation to our Lord and in our relation to the world.

Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy; I am not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it, and not one jot or tittle shall pass from it till all be fulfilled." Of course that is another reference to the things written in the law, and it meant that all things written in the law must be fulfilled. Hence, Jesus Christ came to suffer, to die, to redeem the world. He met the demands of everything written in the law and satisfied every prophecy. He never stopped until he had met every demand, until everything was fulfilled. I have sometimes felt this way about it: One trouble with us and one reason we do not succeed is that we will not decide exactly what we want to do. We don't decide what we want to accomplish. We don't know just what we are going to do. When Jesus Christ left heaven, he left with a definite purpose in his mind—to do the will of his Father. That's why he left heaven, came to this vale of tears to live here about thirty-three years, and then be crucified to redeem a lost world. There was not anything that could keep him from doing that. He never stopped until he had done what he had come to do, and it was only done when we see him draw his last gasping breath on the tree of the cross and say, "It is finished." I have done what I came to do. And he bowed his head and died.

But that is not all. I want to suggest that there are many ways we can do, many a substitute we could offer, many courses we could follow, but in these the Scriptures never would be fulfilled. There is but one course men and women can pursue to fulfill the Scriptures. Since Jesus Christ is our exemplar and our leader, and suffered and died to leave us an example that we should walk in his steps, I think it is inexcusable if we fail in doing it. That's the only way for us to fulfill the Scriptures.

I want to suggest this: The Garden of Gethsemane is memorialized, drawn as a picture, a theme of prose and poetry, the melody of song, not because Jesus suffered there, not because he sweat his blood there and prayed there, but in the sweating of that blood, and in that prayer, and in that intense and terrible conflict he suffered in the garden, the Scriptures were fulfilled. These transform dark Gethsemane into the most delightful garden in the world.

Now, I want to turn your attention to another garden we read about in the Bible, the Garden of Eden. It is marvellously excellent; it is perfect in arrangement; it is adorned with every flower that blooms; it is bedecked with every fruit that is good for food. There was not an evil wind that blew in it. Look at the home God had given to the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden. They were to dress it and to keep it and live in it in peace and happiness. Then sin entered, and we see that garden turned into a place of desolation and caused to disappear out of the picture, until today it is utterly impossible to locate the place where it once existed. Leaf by leaf the foliage fell; petal by petal the flowers fell; the land dried up; the streams ceased to flow; the fruit fell from the trees; gradually the trees fell, and the garden faded from the earth. Do you know the reason? God's will was disobeyed. Because Christ prayed and showed his obedience to God's will in the dark Garden of Gethsemane, it is transformed into a garden of light and pleasure, because of the scenes that transpired there and the interest it has for human beings. On the other hand, we see the most beautiful garden in the world, Eden, where there was everything good to look upon, where there had never been an evil thing, where there had been no shadows to cross it or hide its glory, where there was nothing to make the heart of man anxious or pained, we find that garden turned into a place of desolation and become nonexistent because of disobedience.

There are some things, I think, that are written in the Bible that God's children ought to especially study. One is "fulfilling the Scriptures," another is "doing the word of God," and another is "keeping the commandments of God." We might find others, but that will be enough to think about tonight. I suggest these just to show you the large field opened by those terms mentioned. Yet, at the same time, "fulfilling the scriptures," "doing the word

of God," and "keeping the commandments of God," when they are boiled down to the finest analysis, mean exactly the same thing.

Just think of the nail prints in the Savior's hands, think of the crown of thorns on his head, think of the soldier's spear thrust into his side, think of the ignominy heaped upon him, the stripes on him, the cross he bore when he went to Calvary and carried my sins with him there—all for what purpose? To fulfill the Scriptures. Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine, suffered to redeem man, and in that suffering he fulfilled the Scriptures. Think about it, friends. It becomes beautiful when we think upon these things. This is the thing that makes heaven so delightful, a place of concord and harmony. The psalmist tells us that the "heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." (Psalm 19:1-5.) I don't know just the reason why that was written; but he is talking about the stars, the moon, and the sun, because they all do his will. Wouldn't it be wonderful if human beings would fulfill his word, keep his commandments, and perform their duty only as God's word would command. Now mark this: Every one of those—the sun, moon, and stars—was made for a certain purpose, and for that purpose only. They are to fill that one place. What if one of them should get out of its place? What if it were to get just a little out of time? What if it got out of line? Just think about it. I wonder what a crashing of worlds that would be. That may account for some of the things we have read in the Bible, like this, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Pet. 3:10.)

We must never allow anything to come between us and our duty to our God if God's will is to be done. Nothing should crowd out our duty toward him. When Jesus Christ taught his disciples to pray, he told them to say, "Thy will be done," and, indeed, it ought to be our deepest interest and hope, never to try to do any-

thing else. If we will set our minds on that and settle our desires on doing only his will, there is not a picture thrown on the silver screen that can halt us, and nothing that occurs can turn us away. We ought to think about the Lord Jesus Christ coming to earth, living here as a human being, living in a human body, subject to human weaknesses and human temptations, and yet he lived without sin. He came to do the will of God, and he did it.

I want you to notice another passage in the Bible in which we find these words, "We know now that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) What is his purpose? What does God desire of us? Why did he call us out of the world, separate us, isolate us from the rest of the human family to be followers of Christ, members of his body, the church, over which he is the head and every Christian a member, each for some specific purpose? I can think of no purpose, indeed, but the fulfilling of the Scriptures. I have no time to give to anything else or to any other organization. I have been asked many times is this or that wrong, or is it right. Well, where did it start? Where did it come from? Where did you get it? When I find it did not come from this little Book, I lose interest in it. I have no more concern about it, and I shall give no more attention to it. My desire is that before I fall asleep and awake in the land of the living to remember, as far as it is possible, I have fulfilled every scripture that related to me.

I would like to read some more scripture relative to Christ. I remember that in the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ the Bible gives the circumstances under which he is to be born, and they are very uninviting indeed. He was to be born in a stable in Bethlehem, and he is to be wrapped in swaddling clothes, clothes that were just wrapped around him. We read about the shepherds watching their flocks by night on the hills of Judea, about the wise men watching the heavens for the star that showed the place where the young child lay. We read about the heavenly chorus that sang, "Peace on earth, good-will toward men," announcing that "there is born unto you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10, 11.) We see those shepherds as they turned away from their tasks that night to go and pay the homage in their hearts to him that was born king of the

Jews. Why did all these things happen this way? Just because the Scriptures must be fulfilled. To fulfill the Scriptures God's son must be laid in a manger. Do you know why the manger is idealized today, and why the stable is transformed into a place of beauty and sweetness? Just because the world's Redeemer was born there. Because of his birth there in poverty, the Scriptures were fulfilled. If the Scriptures had not been fulfilled, it would have been just an old manger. If the Scriptures had not been fulfilled, the stable would have been just another old stable. Likewise would that be so of the Garden of Gethsemane if the Scriptures had not been fulfilled. It would have been just an old garden; there would have been nothing else to it. It would still be some unknown place.

We see Jesus Christ living in abject poverty, in privation, and in want, and we hear him say, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. 8:20.) All this was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. He is the Lord of glory; he made everything that was made, and everything was made by him and for him. He was rich, and yet he became poor for our sake, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Why? To fulfill the Scriptures. Had you thought about it? It ought to interest you that your Exemplar and mine, your Lord and mine, died that we might be made rich. He gave up the riches of heaven for us. There was nothing too dear to him to surrender, nothing so precious to him that he would not sacrifice it for us. He even gave the last drop of blood in his heart, gave up his home in glory, and came to a cold world to be an outcast, despised, rejected, forsaken, persecuted, betrayed, and nailed to the cross. He never complained because it took that to fulfill the Scriptures.

I want to tell you, friends, we ought not to complain about the things that befall us. I believe these things ought to be driven to the hearts of men and women today. How impossible, it seems, to think just why we are here. What do all these things mean to us? What does the Bible mean to our lives, and how do we handle it and talk about it? I wonder if we will mutilate it, twist or contort it, or will it have been fulfilled to our salvation and to the life and light and labor of a people in the bondage of sin? I just wonder if we will succeed in fulfilling God's purpose.

I want to turn your attention now to a peculiar turn in the fulfillment of the Scriptures. I call your attention to the fact that there have been people who fulfilled the Scriptures when they absolutely had no intention of doing so. Of course, Christians must do it intentionally, willingly, because they want to. I am tired of seeing people driven like dumb cattle to get on their knees before God because of circumstances of one kind or another. God wants men and women who are wholly, in body, heart, and mind, all for him; who will be willing to humble themselves before him that he might lift them up and that from his beneficent fingers might be poured out blessings on their withered souls. Yet, it looks like we will go our limit, like the prodigal son, until we have disgraced home and name and made ourselves bankrupt in honor and manhood, having lost our innocence and purity. It seems we are prone to go on until we have reached the extremity, and yet God remembers us and suffers us until we come to ourselves as did the prodigal son, and we see just how foolish we have been. He wanted to eat, drink, and be merry; he wanted to gratify every animal appetite and lust, and every passion, all the proclivities of the flesh.

If the first couple had kept the commands of God, fulfilled the commands of Jehovah, there never would have been a single sorrow, there would never have been a stream that would have gone dry, there would never have been a tear. They chose to transgress God's law, and it brought death, destruction, and blight, everything that goes to create excitement, anxiety, heartache, and to take away from us the dearest and most precious ones to us and pull our very heartstrings out by the roots. A little child would never have been overtaken by death and a mother's heart caused to grieve, for there is nothing sweeter than a mother's love.

What if you have chosen the wrong kind of road to fulfill the Scriptures? Have you obeyed the gospel as the Scriptures teach? Are you keeping the commands? Are you walking in his pathway and following his words?

It is a pity that we have to have a broken heart before we have mind enough to serve God. It is a pity that we can never see the necessity of his never-failing care or lean upon his *everlasting* arm until our heart is broken. Will you let me illustrate by this? That night in Bethany in Simon's house, supper was being served,

and Christ and the disciples and Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead, were there. Mary, a girl of that time, who was an admirer of Jesus, had a box of alabaster ointment, and the alabaster was worth about three hundred pence. She had it in the folds of her garments, and as Jesus sat reclining at the table, she took the ointment and poured it over him, and the room was filled with the odor. Judas Iscariot said that it could have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor, not because he cared for the poor, not because he was economical. Jesus said, "Let her alone: against the day of my burying has she kept this." (Matt. 26:12.) Mary did not have to do that, but I want to make this point. The precious ointment that was broken and poured all over the Lord was a test of Mary's faith. She wiped his feet with her hair, which would indicate to me her broken heart. The heart that is callous, the heart that is hard has to be broken before we can come and serve Christ. I wish we could get the lesson here. Are we going to wait until we are broken-hearted, sprawled on the ground, bleeding and dying before we will humble ourselves before him? I hope not!

Now, I want to turn your attention back to the queer turn of the Scriptures where they are sometimes fulfilled by a man who did not intend to do it. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Herod was on the throne. Wise men came from the east to Jerusalem asking where he, who was King of the Jews, was. Herod heard about these things and called the scribes and chief priests together to ask them where Christ was to be born, and they told him that it was in Bethlehem. Herod called the wise men together and asked them what time the star appeared and sent them to Bethlehem in search of Jesus. They saw the star and went to Bethlehem, taking him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but were warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, and they went into their own country another way. The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to "arise and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt" and stay there until he told him to leave, because Herod would seek to destroy the child. Joseph fled into Egypt with them and remained there until the death of Herod, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." (Matt.

2:12-15.) When Herod was dead, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him to go back to Israel, for Herod was dead. When he came to the borders of the country, he heard that Archelaus reigned in Judea in his father's place, and he turned aside into parts of Galilee and went and dwelled in a city called Nazareth, that the Scripture might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets that "he shall be called a Nazarene." (Matt. 2:23.) Nazareth was a little place. Nathanael had asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" It was just an obscure place with no importance but that the Scripture might be fulfilled, that the Exemplar and the Leader of the human family should be called a Nazarene. He spent his boyhood and his young manhood in that place and came out stalwart and true, the son of righteousness. Herod did not mean to fulfill the Scriptures here. He did not know he was contributing to God's purpose.

Let's come now to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The soldiers cast lots for his garments. (John 19:24.) They did not do that to fulfill the Scriptures; they did not know that they were fulfilling them. When they came to take him down from the cross to bury him, the legs of Jesus were not broken, as were those of the thief. "A bone of him shall not be broken" that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. (John 19:36.) They did not know that they were fulfilling scripture. When it comes to the service of God, we cannot fulfill the Scriptures acceptably without knowing it. We must do it with a purpose of heart and mind.

We must cleave to the Lord Jesus Christ to be pleasing to God. We cannot drift about like driftwood on a swollen stream. We must serve him with a purpose in mind. Do you have testimony for what you are and do religiously? Do you serve God with a purpose, keeping your eye on heaven? I don't care how high or how far away heaven is, for men and women who have their hearts set on going there, I don't think heaven is too far away to be reached. It can be reached by any man or woman who may want to go there, but men and women want to go somewhere else more, it seems. I know that it is not easy to fulfill the Scriptures. I know we will sometimes have to sweat blood to fulfill them. I know that it is a cross for us. It may be that we want to follow our own course, and then we think it is hard to fulfill the Scriptures. John said, "The commandments of God are not grievous." The

trouble is that we want to pursue our own course, but to be pleasing to him, the flesh with its proclivities must be buffeted and subdued. The only thing in the world that can make the Bible hard for God's children to follow is that they want to go places they have no business to go, and they want to do things that they have no business to do, and things that they ought not to do. When I come to master myself and control my spirit, I am just as great as he that taketh a city. When I can buckle down and fulfill the Scriptures, then I am the master of myself.

When Jesus died and was raised again from the dead, the Book says that "all things written in the law of Moses, and the Psalms, and the prophets concerning me must needs be fulfilled." In the first chapter of Acts, after Judas had betrayed Christ, we find that Peter stood up and said, "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas." It does not matter what the scripture is, it must be fulfilled. Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Scriptures, and he did it. God has called us out of the world to fulfill the Scriptures. Will we succeed? That is the problem. It is exceedingly problematical as to whether or not we succeed. We can do it, but the question is, WILL WE? How much attention do you give to fulfilling the Scriptures as they relate to us? You cannot fulfill them simply by reading and memorizing them. Reading and memorizing them and telling others about them is all right, but you cannot fulfill them until you have done what they tell you to do. Take this passage, for example: When Jesus Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), he said it to every man and woman in the world. Then the Scriptures cannot be fulfilled without believing and being baptized. You cannot do it any other way. There is no substitute anyone can offer that would be acceptable; there is nothing else to do. If you are going to fulfill the Scriptures, you must do exactly what they say.

In the second chapter of Acts, verse 38, we read these words, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." If you have not done that, then you have not fulfilled the Scriptures. There are many other Scriptures that we could pick out like that, but we must hasten. If you have obeyed,

you have fulfilled the Scriptures. What account is the Scripture unfulfilled, and what blessing can it be to anybody unfulfilled? When Peter said, "Repent and be baptized," you cannot fulfill the Scripture without repenting and being baptized. Not only must you repent, but you must be baptized for the remission of your sins to fulfill the Scriptures. You must also be baptized for the remission of your sins, for to be baptized for anything else would not fulfill the Scriptures. There is no use for us to waste words and offer arguments and excuses, for we have not fulfilled the Scriptures until we do what these passages say. What are we going to do about it? I am just using these as an illustration, so you can take some time out in the gridiron of life, and sit down on the side line and think them over. What use are you going to make of it? What course are you going to pursue? How are you going to treat the Bible, the Holy Scriptures, the word of God? Are you going to ignore it, or are you going to read it, talk about it, obey its commands? You will never in this world fulfill it any other way.

For instance, let's take another passage. The Bible says that the disciples met together on the first day of the week to break bread. (Acts 20:7.) They left us an example to follow, and I want to tell you, my friends, that there is not a Christian in the world that can fulfill that by staying at home on the first day of the week. That passage must be fulfilled to mean anything to you and for you to get any blessing from it. Then listen again, "Upon the first day of the week, let us lay by him in store as the Lord has prospered him." (1 Cor. 16:2.) Do you do it? The Scripture is not fulfilled until you have done that. Do you meet on the first day of the week to break the bread and to contribute of your means? If you don't, you are not fulfilling the Scriptures. If it cost Jesus Christ his life to fulfill the Scriptures, don't you think it could cost us a little to fulfill them? Aren't you willing to sacrifice a little to fulfill them? The idea of a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ on Lord's day morning getting his gun and going to the fields and woods to hunt on that day! How does he think he can go to heaven when he dies when he is not fulfilling the Scriptures? He has trampled them under his feet. Yes, he has trampled under his feet the sacred word of God. The Book says that "he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under

two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, that he shall be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace." (Heb. 10:29.) That's what you do when you don't pay any mind to the things Christ has commanded. When we refuse to do anything that God has commanded, that's what we have done. We have trodden under foot the Son of God. I want to tell you, friends, it is serious. What are we going to do about it? The Scriptures can be understood, and they are not difficult to comply with and to obey. The only thing that makes them difficult is our appetites and our proclivities of the flesh. We want to follow them instead of following the Bible. When you get to the judgment and have not fulfilled the Scriptures, what do you think God is going to do with you if he is going to judge you by the things that are written? If your works do not fulfill them, then he will cast you aside and banish you from his glory to that region where hope is a stranger and where mercy will never come.

If you are not a Christian, won't you become one? Jesus is calling tonight. He is asking you to come to him and be the light of the world and the salt of the earth. He will lift you up if you will come to him. Won't you let him put you on higher ground and finally give you a home in the land of fadeless day? Won't you enter the kingdom of God and help carry on the work of Jehovah among the sons of men? Won't you come tonight in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and surrender your life, your all, to him? Jesus said, "Ye that labor and are heavy laden, come unto me and I will give you rest." Don't you feel that the burden is too heavy for you to bear? "Cast your burden on the Lord." If you have not obeyed the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are lost, and you are groping your way in darkness, and you ought to come to him. How many in this audience will come tonight?

SELF-CONTROL

We would like very much to have the attention of the audience tonight to the reading of a text from the Old Testament Scriptures. Just here permit me to say that oftentimes we have made

contact with people who said that they were tired of the Old Testament and wished that the brethren and preachers would select texts from the New Testament, that the Old Testament had been done away, was antiquated, old, and useless. Nevertheless, we have taken our text for tonight from the Old Testament Scriptures. Just because it is in the Old Testament is no reason why it is not a good text. Just because we read it from the Old Testament is no reason why it is not true. We would do well to read it more. It contains some of the choicest, some of the richest, finest, deepest lessons that ever have been taught. These lessons are found in the Old Testament Scriptures, and the apostle tells us that "these things were written for our learning." (Rom. 15:4.) They are on record for our admonition "upon whom the ends of the world are come." I believe that some of the finest lessons on faith, endurance, and fortitude are found in the Old Testament. I believe that some of the most pungent and forceful texts are recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures.

I am reading from the sixteenth chapter of Proverbs, the thirty-second verse, in which we have these very terse words, "He that is slow to anger is better than -the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." That is so contrary to human reasoning! It is a little bit hard for us to receive it at first. I used to think that a man who could stand at the head of an army and could control the men under him and lead them from one victory to another in conquest of the world was the greatest man of all. I used to think of Alexander the Great who conquered the world and then sat down and wept because there was not another world to conquer. I used to think of him as the greatest man who ever lived. I have often thought of Hannibal, who was able to command a mighty army, and I thought he was one of the greatest characters in history. I have thought of Napoleon and the blood that was shed for his glory. I have considered Lee and Jackson as two of the greatest men among our people and on our continent. I have thought of them as marvelous and wonderful men, but after reading the Bible carefully and coming to maturity, I have reversed my decision. Yes, friends, I have reversed my decision on human greatness. I am mighty glad God has permitted me to live long enough to see certain things and read certain declarations that we find in the Bible, and they are things

that we can find nowhere else. One of them is this, "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth. . . ." (Isa. 40:6-8.) Man is like that.

We consider men great because they can build airplanes, because they can erect skyscrapers, make elevators, and invent numerous things. The Bible says of them, "They are as grass, and their glory as the flower of the grass." Yes, human flesh is all like that. Everything men can do is like that; therefore, human greatness does not depend on these things. It does not matter how useful they may be to us or whatever we may think of them. This language means to tell us that the man who controls his own spirit is a bigger man and a better general than Alexander the Great ever dared to be, because he did not control his own spirit. You remember that he died at the tender age of thirty-three; he was intemperate, died of intemperance. We might call your attention to Hannibal and many others. They were not able to control their own spirit, and the Bible tells us that the man who can control his own spirit is better than he who takes a city. The man who can master his own spirit is captain of the bark on which he is sailing. He can control his appetites; he can control himself; he can master himself; he is the chieftain of humanity; he is the greatest man on earth, the greatest man now or who will ever be. I think from the reading of this passage we have the most vital questions introduced to us at all. We are constantly envying men of their achievements, and because they have achieved something they are extolled as the greatest men of modern civilization. That might not be true in the light of the Bible. It tells us that the man who is really great is the man who holds his own spirit captive. He can master his own passions and govern himself. That is real greatness. I tell you that the washerwoman, or the humblest woman on this earth, the woman who bends over the washboard and labors hour after hour, if she can master her own spirit, control her own self, rules herself and governs herself, she is bigger and better than the general who leads a mighty army. Yes, she is better than any general that ever lived.

You remember the apostle talking in the ninth chapter of First Corinthians has this to say in the last verse, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means,

when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." What do you think about the man who makes such a sacrifice as he made? What do you think of the man who is willing to give up family, relationships, and home to go and preach the word of the living God? Now, he made a choice. He was willing to give up professions and the emoluments of office and home and go preach the gospel. He was willing to go across land and sea preaching the word of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was willing to go preach to benighted souls of this earth and open their eyes that they might turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. He brought to them faith and hope that they could not have outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. And now hear him say, "If I don't keep my body under subjection, I will be a castaway in hell." To keep his body under subjection is to master himself. The man that rules his own body and himself and controls himself is greater than the man who takes a city. That means bringing your heart, your hands, your eyes, your mind, your whole being into subjection. The man that can do that and give up that which he would want and those things for which his nature would call is, indeed, a great man. I want to suggest to you that I think that is one of the most magnificent utterances that ever fell from the lips of anybody. Now, he was willing to suffer and forego the pleasures and blandishments of this earth to serve Jehovah. He lifted up the fallen, the weary; he lifted the hands that were hanging down; he smoothed the wrinkles from the troubled brow; he wiped the tears from the eyes that sorrowed. He was willing to stay here and do those things because of the service he could render.

I think the man that rules his spirit, keeps his body under subjection, controls himself is the greatest man on earth today. I want to suggest further in reading the life of this great man that you look over his utterances and then hear him say, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. 5:1.) Those words, I KNOW, mean to express faith. He never had seen it; he never had touched it; but his faith developed so strongly that he said, "I know ..." I know that when my spirit leaves this body it will go to that city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Now, that is the

way he talked. He told us that he kept his body under subjection, my brethren and sisters. He continued to do it. He did not do that for a while and then run wild like bees among the clover— eat, drink, and be merry. The apostle further said, "I have suffered the loss of all things and count them but refuse that I might win Christ." (Phil. 3:8.) Think about that. What loss have you suffered for Christ? What have you given up for the excellency and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? What sacrifice have you made that you might win the Lord Jesus Christ? Now hear him say, "I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13.) There is a prize for serving God, and Paul is reaching out, in this figure of speech, for it. He is on his tiptoes reaching for it. He is reaching for it with his finger tips, and it takes every bit of his strength to be able to get some hold on that prize. Now, that is what he means.

I want to say this. I don't want to be over-critical about anything, Anybody can criticize, but there are two ways to criticize. One can build up and the other can destroy; but I am afraid the majority of people in power today and the majority of preachers in the pulpits now are not taking their burdens on their hearts or taking them as seriously as they should be taken. Are you sufficiently interested in the service of God that you can keep your body under control? Or do you eat when you want to eat, drink when you want to drink, go to bed when you please and get up when you please, go everywhere you want to go, and then make ten thousand excuses to justify yourselves? I want to read something else the apostle said. Listen with what confidence he talked when he came to the end of his life. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day. . . ." (2 Tim. 4:6, 7.) This greatly differs from that which you have heard from dying men so many times. I don't know the times that I have stood at their bedside and heard them beg for prayer. "Pray to God for me. I don't want to die this way. I am not

ready to die." See them in their agony and mental anguish, and the hardest of all suffering is mental anguish. It is bad enough to suffer pain in the mortal body, but mental anguish tortures us, lashes us in the compunctions of conscience. The apostle said, "I am ready to be offered." He was ready to go.

I had a man to call me once in the city of Birmingham and wanted me to come to him. He was going to have a major operation. It was really a serious operation, and he knew it. I met him at the hospital. I had never seen him before. He told me he had not done his duty; he had not lived right; he plead with me with tears in his eyes to save him as if I could do that. I sat in the room with him until they came to take him to the operating room, and then walked by his side to the door of the operating room, where a person in street clothes could not enter, and the last word he said was, "Pray for me. I don't want to die as I have lived." Now, that is the difference. See how differently a person who is ready to die can talk about it. It is bad enough and severe enough to see our loved ones go, but it is worse when the time comes to go to have to give them up when there is no hope I cannot think of anything worse than that. The apostle said, "I am now ready to be offered." People who are ready when the time comes to go can talk like that, and "though we asunder part it gives us inward pain, but we shall still be joined in heart and hope to meet again." He said, "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." Now, that looks different from the man who is not ready to die.

When you come to die, it looks different. We can stand here talking over somebody's loved ones, and do what we can to comfort the sorrowing ones, but we cannot put ourselves in their place. Indeed, it is a different thing. It depends on whose baby it is; it depends on whose husband it is; whose wife it is; whose father it is; whose mother it is; whose brother or sister it is as to how it affects us. I want you to understand that when the apostle left this world whatever earthly relations he had, whatever friends he had, whatever brethren in the flesh he had, they could hope to meet him again far beyond where the earth and the sky meet, in heaven, in the home of the soul, far beyond the stars that are "ever singing as they shine, the Hand that made us is divine."

If I don't keep my body under me, bringing it into subjection, *I* will be rejected when I have come to the end of the trail, when day is done and the sun goes down with a flaming ray. Then I will be cast aside, rejected, driven from the presence and the glory and power of God. I will be cast out into outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, where hope is a stranger and where mercy never can come. It turns on one thing, doesn't it? We have been having it in our Bible school lessons in the quarterly, which is arranged by the International Committee, every quarter for a long, long time. It is a lesson on temperance, but it does "not seem to have gone very far into the souls and lives of men and women. The lack of it takes away from men the dearest things that cling to their hearts. The lack of self-control does that. The lack of temperance does that. Therefore, we ought to live righteously and godly in this present world, but before you can do that you must deny yourself. You must deny yourself of ungodly things and worldly lusts before you get to that point. You must not live according to your passions, lusts, and proclivities and propensities of the flesh. You must learn to control yourself and bring your body under subjection. Then we can enjoy the promises of God. If we expect to have peace in this life and help in all the struggles of life, we will have to get the lesson. We must learn to control the tongue, control the body, control the mind, control the heart. That is the thing about which we are talking, self-control. I suggest that we ought to think this matter over and give it a little serious and prayerful study.

Let me suggest to you further that the apostle said, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." (1 Cor. 9:26.) The man who doesn't control himself is running uncertainly. He does not know where he goes. The apostle said he was not running uncertainly. He was not fighting uncertainly. He was not running as one that beats the air. The apostle understands that everyone may run in a race, but one wins the prize. He said, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." (1 Cor. 9:24.) Run that you may obtain in the race under consideration. One will receive the prize. That's what he says, but everyone in the Christian race may receive the prize. Then we ought not fail to run so we can win the prize, ought we? We

ought to keep our bodies in subjection; we ought to control our spirit; control ourselves.

There are men and women, boys and girls, all over the country who will do without coffee, Coca-Colas, and ice cream in order that they might be physically fit to engage in football or to be able to go on the gridiron or in the gymnasium and excel there. In order to play well, they will have to do without a great many things to eat; they will have to go to bed early and sleep long enough to get the necessary rest to be physically fit to learn how to walk wires or train in the gymnasium. They will spend a lot of time trying to learn that; but when it comes to learning Christianity, learning to be a Christian, learning to walk in that path that leads to life eternal, that leads to the throne of God, how many are willing to give up something for that? How many are willing to give up their cigarettes, ice cream, and Coca-Colas, and food for which our bodies call? We must bring our bodies under subjection. That's what the apostle said. God wants man power and woman power.

We think, apparently, that religion is what is inside a man, and the body is left outside. God wants our bodies. He wants our hands, our feet, our minds, as well as our hearts. He wants everything about us physically—our hearts, our hands, our feet, our minds, our eyes, our ears. Yes, he wants everything about us. He wants our feet to go and work for him. The body of man may become broken, twisted, and emaciated by disease and excessive intemperance until he cannot attend to his spiritual duties, and that man will be a failure. Certainly he will. We ought to care for our bodies, be temperate, control our bodies. God needs man power and woman power; therefore, we ought to keep our bodies in subjection to serve him.

Of course, we must serve God from the heart. We can't leave that out of it. We must sing from the heart, for he said to sing and make melody in your hearts unto the Lord. How could a song be pleasing to God when it is not in the heart? If it is outside the heart, it is outside the body. Indeed, friends, how could it be pleasing to God, then? How could we lift up the fallen, cheer 'the brokenhearted, comfort the dying, help the feeble outside of the body? We cannot do it; therefore, we ought to control the body, for we cannot do the will of God outside the body. God

needs man power and woman power. He can use plenty of it, for there are countless men and women in the world today without hope and without salvation. He needs preachers to go out and preach the gospel to them. Indeed, the gospel must be preached to men and women if they are to be saved, and how can the gospel be preached except through somebody that has control over his own flesh and its proclivities and lusts. He wants men to go and preach to the lost.

I want to suggest this to illustrate what I mean when I say that God needs man power. I have thought of it on this score. When I was a boy, back in other days, when rains would come, the rivers, the creeks, and the branches would get out of banks and cause great devastation. As time went on the water caused greater devastation, and finally men put their wits together and learned to build dams across great streams and control that water. They learned to send it where it should be and where it was needed. Before this, there was nothing that could be done about the water. It was running wild, tearing up and destroying everything in its reach. Now men and women can control their own bodies, and God needs man power. There are men and women all over the world to be converted to the service of Almighty God, men and women who have not heard the gospel of the crucified Lord. They may not be easily converted, but it is possible. Look at Paul. Before he was converted, every word was to tear down, to devastation, to destruction. Now, it may be hard to convert them, but when they become Christians, that man power and that woman power turns into channels of usefulness. They can preach the gospel to the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, comfort the feeble, sing songs to the weary, pray to God to bless men. Think of the service that men and women can render after they have been converted, brought into the service of God, and that man power and woman power has been turned into channels of service and usefulness. That is what we need now. We have members of the church who should do that. The church has many men and women in it, enough to carry a mighty load, and do you know that we have churches all over the country that have hardly been able to carry on and meet the demands common to their own bodies? I don't know whether you know that or not, but I am informing you about it, and yet there are members of the church

who say, "I have done all I can do." They think they have done wonders. There is plenty of service for Christians to render.

That is not all. Listen: God wants man power and woman power. Man learned to convert that water into power. He learned to hold it where it should be. Man can bring his body into subjection. He can learn to control himself, and he can do the will of God. Yes, he can subject his body to the will of God, buffet it and make it do God's will. Oh, we excuse ourselves for our derelictions on the ground that the flesh is weak. I know that the flesh is weak. I have lived long enough to realize that, but I hope we can also learn that we never can depend on flesh and blood and big muscles in the Christian race. We cannot depend on these, for in that case we would be no better than we were. We want to depend on something better. Let's depend on something else. Let's turn all we have over to God. Let's do his will. He knew that the flesh is weak. When he saw man lost, he sent Christ to live in human flesh, to live in the human body, in flesh and blood. Yes, he came to the earth and lived in a body just like mine, and while his flesh and blood battled against his doing God's will, he lived without sin. In so doing he has preached a sermon that has echoed over hill and plain down the stream of time all over the world.

We ought to learn that flesh uncontrolled is dangerous. You know the Scriptures say, "Let not sin reign in your mortal body." (Rom. 6:12.) There is a song we sometimes sing which says, "Take my feet and let them be, swift and beautiful for thee; take my hands; take my tongue; and take my will; take everything," but there is another verse in that song that people don't follow very well. It says, "Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold." They won't give that up, but God can take all the rest. We have to give him all, everything, if we are Christians. We are here for just a little while, and whatever the place is where we are to spend eternity depends on what we are here, but that is not all. I must hasten.

I want to call your attention to another fact. There are people all over this country who are living beyond their means, dressing beyond their means, driving cars beyond their means. If his neighbor buys a new car, he has to have one just as good or better. Think of a man making twenty-five dollars a week and spending

thirty dollars! It won't be long until he will be broke and break his friends with him. Friends, we ought to live within our income. When you don't do that, you will soon bankrupt yourself, either voluntarily or involuntarily, and that is a spot on your name and an injury to the church. You never do get over it, and the church is injured by it. We ought to remember that. You see many people dressing beyond their means. They are too proud to put on a dress that they are able to pay for. Isn't that bad? I want to tell you that I had rather wear a suit of overalls than a suit I could not afford. Yes, I'd rather wear a suit of overalls and stand here tonight on this rostrum and deliver this sermon, if the overalls were clean, than to have a broadcloth suit I could not pay for. As I said a few moments ago, if someone drives a big car and the man sees it, he has to have one just as big and just as fine if he can get it on credit for a dollar down and a dollar a week as long as he lives; If he can get it that way, he buys it. I have found that a man who buys things he cannot pay for is a dangerous man. A woman that will do that is dangerous, too. It is common to both sexes to buy things they cannot pay for, and it is deceptive to other people. They think he will pay for it, and that is deception. Today people will buy some kind of mercerized piece of goods and make somebody think he has on silk and wear a big rhinestone on the finger to make someone think he is wearing a diamond. That's deception. Why anybody wants to do that, I cannot understand. Now, that's the thing we are after. That is deception. A good rule is to avoid it. Oh, you may make the impression all over town that you are something. You may have a bank account in the bank and be able to draw a draft on the biggest bank in town; you may put on a diamond front, but behind all this you might be mighty bad.

We need to study the Bible more; we need to learn to control ourselves. We need to learn to manage ourselves. As a Christian, I must learn to manage myself; and if I don't do that, I am my greatest enemy. Yes, if I don't control myself as I should, right here before you stands the most dangerous adversary I have. Yes, he stands right here on this rostrum, and everywhere I go, he goes. I cannot shake him off. He is constantly pleading with me to do this or that contrary to the wishes of God. Will I be big

enough, will I be man enough to say, "NO"? Will I be big enough to submit my spirit under the entire control of my God?

Further than this, I want to call your attention to an illustration or two now before we are done. In the sixteenth chapter of Acts we have a prison scene. An earthquake shook the prison doors and they stood open. The keeper found them open, and, thinking that the prisoners had fled, he drew his sword and started to kill himself, but Paul cried out, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." (Acts 16:28.) "Do thyself no harm"! If anybody ever harms you, you will do it yourself. Oh, somebody can injure your reputation. I'm not saying that they cannot do that, but it is not real; it will rub off. The ones that you put on your character will not come off. There is no such a thing as a remover of the stains that you put on your own character. God only can take them off, and he cannot do that until you acknowledge and repent of your sins. Nobody else can do that for you. Now, that is the lesson I want to get before you.

I want to point out further that the Scriptures teach us that the man that is slow to anger is better than the mighty. We ought to study the Bible. We ought to learn it. We ought to learn to control ourselves. I have thought of Moses. He is a wonderful character, one of the most amicable and best who ever lived. He was born in obscurity in a cabin in Egypt, but within three months the king's decree would put him to death. His own mother could not keep him, so she carried him to the Nile River and built a basket for him, daubed it with slime, put him in the basket, and left him for all she knew to be the food of a crocodile. Under the providence of the Almighty, however, he was brought out by the enemy's daughter. The cry of that little baby stirred the milk of human kindness in the king's daughter's breast. She pressed him to her heart, and Moses' sister was watching her. She asked, "Shall I go get a nurse?" The woman said, "Yes." She went and brought the baby's mother, and under God's providence he is back in the arms of his mother. See him brought up in this fine country with its alluvial soil. It was enriched by the inundations of the Nile. See the ripening billows of the golden harvest of wheat which grew there as in no other place beneath the sun. Moses was a keeper of the sheep for forty years, and the next forty years he was leader of the people of God out of Egyptian

bondage, across the Red Sea, and built a tabernacle to worship God. He led them to the land of promise into which he could not cross. God had told him to speak to the rock to draw water. In anger he smote the rock; he disobeyed. He thought he would get more glory to himself instead of doing what God had said for him to do. Because he disobeyed God, he could not cross the river into the land of his hope and dreams after he had led the children of God out of bondage. He never thought of such a thing. He thought he would enter that land.

I would like to call your attention to another passage. James said, "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." (James 1:19.) There are some things that men cannot do to us. You can do things to yourself that man cannot do to you. You must buffet yourself. You can poison your own self; you can ruin your character. We ought to be careful, therefore, every one of us, to do just what God wants us to do. We ought to listen to the apostle when he tells us to keep our bodies in subjection.

I refer your attention now to another character. Samson, the Bible tells us, was the strongest man who ever lived. God made him physically strong and raised him up for a purpose. Now listen carefully. God said to his mother before he was conceived, "You are going to be the mother of a man child, physically the strongest in the world. Don't you eat any unclean thing, and don't drink any strong drink." I wonder what we can expect in the future? How can we expect the future generation to be physically strong with the eating and drinking and cigarette smoking mothers we see today. What kind of people will come into this world? They will come with constitutions already broken down, and will come with disease transmitted from parent to child. What better can we expect, men and women, under these conditions? It is bad enough for us to bring our own selves to a physical wreck, but it is even worse when it involves the future generations. If nobody were involved but me, it would be bad enough; but it is worse yet when it involves my children unborn, when I have acted so that my bloodstream is poisoned and corrupted and the children of the future will come into the world diseased mentally and abnormal physically. I don't know, friends, but what we

should say a lot more about it, but time is passing fast, and we must hasten on. Just remember, now, that Samson was to be the strongest man in the world, and those were the instructions given to his mother. He was so strong that they could not make a cord that would bind him or a spear to kill him. Just as long as he 'did what God told him to do, he was mighty and strong, but after a while Samson made his fatal mistake. There is a woman among the enemy, and Samson fell in love with her when he had no right to do so. The woman said, "Samson, if you will have me, tell me where your strength is." One day he told her where his strength was, and while he was asleep she cut his hair off, and Samson's strength left him. When he awoke his strength was gone, and his enemies, the Philistines, punched out his eyes. The woman tantalized him every day until he told her where his strength was; he disobeyed God and lost his strength. I tell you, friends, we ought to listen to God instead of men and women in this world. We ought to have strength enough to say, "I will NOT" when they tempt us to do things we should not. If we can have strength enough to do that, we can succeed and we can overcome the world, for God is with us. If God is not with us, we are lost.

Let me point out just another example to you: the sweet singer of Israel, the one who wrote the beautiful twenty-third Psalm that we like to read so well. It is so tender and so sweet and contains so many fine things. We see David one day on the housetop in the cool of the day. He saw Bath-Sheba, Uriah's wife, bathing, and he lusted after her, and took away the sanctity of another's home. He defiled another man's wife, and in order that he might cover it up he sends for the man and tries to get him to go and spend the night with his wife. Uriah would not do it. He felt it his duty to be out there on the battlefield. He was too much of a patriot to go home. The next night he called him and wanted him to go home, but he still had sense enough and patriotism enough not to go that time either. Then David had the general put him in the front ranks where he would be killed. Did you ever read anything worse than that? David let his lust over rule him. What we need today is self-control. We need men and women who can control their spirits. Now, you remember Nathan, the prophet, came to David and spoke to him about his great

sin. He said that two men lived in a city, and one was rich and had everything that his heart could want, and the other was poor and had but one little ewe lamb. She was his entire life, all he had. The rich man had a visitor one day, and instead of going out into his flocks to select a lamb to feed his visitor, he took the lamb of the poor man. He said, "David, what ought to be done about that?" David said, "The man that has done it shall die." Then the prophet said, "David, thou art the man, and it is you who have done it." Sorrow never departed from his house because he committed this sin. Can't you see an old man, wrinkled, gray, and brokenhearted because Absalom conspired against his father? Hear him crying like a child, "Absalom, my son, oh my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" when Absalom was killed. He is brokenhearted, aged, and sad.

Now Moses fell the victim of his anger; Samson fell the victim of his sensuality; and David to his own lusts. How much better are people in the service of God who never yielded to that! Look at Joseph, a seventeen-year-old boy, sold by his brothers. Look at him at Potiphar's house when Potiphar's wife forced herself on him. He fled from her and took his prison sentence without souring on the world. He stayed in that dirty, greasy, lousy prison for a long time, but he never complained. Now, which character had you rather be? Had you rather have a character like Joseph or one like Samson sprawled out there on the ground with his eyes punched out? Or had you rather be like David, who fell because of his lust and brought sin into his own family and among his own children? Or would you rather be like Moses, standing on Pisgah's lofty heights viewing the land of promise, but denied the privilege of going into the land of his hopes and dreams because of his anger? Which had you rather be? Had you rather be Joseph or the others who fell victims to their own lusts?

You remember the Book says that "he that rules his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city." Don't let the flesh and the proclivities of the flesh rule you, for the man who can control himself is better than the man who takes a city. Don't listen to the siren song; don't yield to that kind of call; turn a deaf ear; listen to what God says. God is calling us to life, to never-ending days in the land that is fairer than day. He wants you to make your

home in that land where the shadows never fall. Do you choose to make your home with Satan and with all the degenerates of earth or with him with all the pure and good? Don't you want to go to heaven to live there always, not for just a day or a year, but *always*? How many will embrace this with your whole heart? How many will say, "All to Jesus I surrender, I surrender all"? Won't you surrender all you have to Jesus Christ and let him be your guide and your Exemplar? Don't you want your name to be in the gallery with the names of God's great men? Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and you will find their names. See their names shining and glittering there, and hear the apostles quoting certain things they said. They were men of faith, men of purity, men of self-control, men of self-denial.

Won't you come to Christ tonight? If you have never obeyed God, come. If you are not living tonight as a child of God should live, won't you come and make confession of that and start anew? How many in this audience will come while we stand and sing the song that was selected?

ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH

It is very gratifying, indeed, to have this fine company of people here again tonight. Personally, I appreciate your continued coming, and am sure that I speak for the entire congregation also. We are very much pleased to have such fine attention. We have had it all during this meeting, and I want you to know that I deeply appreciate it.

Tonight, I want to read from the third chapter of Acts of Apostles, beginning with the nineteenth verse and read a group of verses to which your attention shall be particularly invited. "Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you." I want to stop here just long enough for you to observe the statement that is made, that Jesus Christ has come into the world once, and he is going to come again. Then the apostle proceeds by saying: "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses

truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." I want to stop at this reading.

Now, my subject, for the want of better terms, will be, "Established in the Present Truth." There are people in the world today who are thoroughly conversant with the truth of the Bible. They could tell you a great deal about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, yet they would be impotent to tell you the story of Jesus Christ and his love. Then there is another class of people who have concerned themselves about things yet to be. I remember in the language of the apostle Peter in the second letter and the first chapter, in which we have these words, "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth." (2 Pet. 1:12.)

I have lent my influence and given my time to try to establish the church wherever I go in the present truth. The present truth is not truth in the future. It is not truth yet to be, when we have passed from the walks of this earth. Neither is it truth as applied to people in days of the past, in the days of the patriarchs or the Mosaic economy. It is truth as it applies to us now. This passage has been the victim of much bad interpretation. It has been used to attempt to prove things that Jehovah never intended it to say. I believe that we are at liberty to use any passage of Scripture for the purpose for which it was given, but to ruthlessly take any passage from its setting and its context and surroundings, making application of it or use of it that God did not intend is a dangerous procedure, and Jehovah will not hold him guiltless who engages in it. I remember in the Bible that Peter says of Paul's writings, "There are many things hard to be understood, which they that are ignorant and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Pet. 3:16.) If a person misapplies a passage knowingly, or if he does it ignorantly, he does it to his own destruction, whether it is a prophecy of the law in the Old Testament or whether it be the deep symbols

of Revelation in the New Testament, or of Daniel or Ezekiel in the Old, or whether it be a plain utterance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. To make improper use of any of them, a use Jehovah did not intend, is indeed a serious blunder upon the part of anybody.

Now, on the question of prophecy and the fulfillment of prophecy, we can get into a great deal of mischief. You know he said, "All the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken have likewise foretold of these days." You will observe another utterance, when he talked about the heavens receiving the Lord Jesus Christ "until the restitution of all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the foundation of the world." They have spoken of this or had talked about this. We cannot be mistaken. When we talk about the present truth and being established in it, the question is, **WHAT IS THE PRESENT TRUTH?** Is it possible for us to come to it? Of course, the undertaking is too big to give much time and effort to it tonight, and for that reason we are not going to give a great deal of attention to it now, except in a general way.

First, I want to point out to you that I have heard people talk about being able to tell the meaning and application of unfulfilled prophecy. Every time anything unusual happens in this world somebody runs to the Bible and finds a prophecy and marks that out as a fulfillment of that prediction. I want to say that there is not anything in the Bible or in prophecy that I would not like to know, and I am not objecting to anyone's studying prophecy or any other book of the Bible; but when it comes to the point of making the word of God say certain things that happen in Europe or in the United States is the mark of the beast or some other prediction fulfilled, then I will have to say that is not true. I want to suggest that in my judgment there is not an uninspired man now or who has ever been or ever will be who will be able to tell prophecy when it is fulfilled. If there is one in the New Testament, I fail to recall it, and I believe that I can point out to you what I mean to the extent that my meaning will be sufficiently clear. A man unaided by the Spirit of God, an uninspired man, never knew exactly when prophecy was fulfilled, and prophecies were being fulfilled all the time right before the eyes of people who were acquainted with the prophets and the law and the Psalms.

They were just as well acquainted with them as we are today. I read from the second chapter of Acts where there were people at Jerusalem, devout people, from every nation under heaven on the day of Pentecost. They were religious enough to leave their business and earthly interests to meet at the appointed place and time to worship. They had the prophets, the Psalms, and the law. They had the Old Testament Scriptures that contained the predictions, types, and shadows of things that were to come in this dispensation; but when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the apostles that morning, these people mistook it so far as to say, "These men are intoxicated." Now, friends, remember that they were just as well acquainted with the Old Testament Scriptures as they could be; they were as well acquainted with the predictions as anybody could be; they were as well acquainted with the prophets as anybody could be here or anywhere else; but they didn't know that this outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the fulfillment of prophecy. When the apostles started speaking in other languages, they said, "These men are drunk." Peter then arose and said, "These men are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day, but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16), giving the exact words of Joel. How could any uninspired man see that this was fulfillment of prophecy? The fact that he did not see it was sufficient proof that he could not. That is the reason the apostles were inspired. The Holy Spirit was poured out on them on the day of Pentecost, and they knew that the prediction was being fulfilled. Yes, they knew that this was the fulfillment of prophecy, for they were inspired, and they referred the people back to the time and place when this was predicted. Where is the uninspired man who could do that today? If he could prove that he could do it, he would relieve men of much distress and study.

The inspired men did not have any doubt about it. They knew that Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled which said, "In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." (Acts 2:17.) The Holy Spirit talking through Peter said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," and those inspired apostles knew that this was fulfillment of prophecy.

Now I want to turn your attention to another instance in the eighth chapter of Acts. Here we have a man sufficiently religious and sufficiently devoted to the Jewish religion and to God that he could leave Ethiopia and drive to Jerusalem over roads that were dusty and rough. He was willing to drive that distance to observe the appointment of Jehovah to one of the feasts at which he must be present. He was doing this in obedience to the command of God. He was treasurer of Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians; he took care of her money, yet he could get away from that place long enough to go to Jerusalem to obey God. We learn that he went to Jerusalem to worship God; and when he had done that which he came to do, we find him on his way back, and the Bible tells us that he was reading the Holy Scriptures, the prophecy of Isaiah, to be exact, and the chapter which tells about the sufferings of Christ. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, just as we have it today, was the exact chapter on which he was meditating, poring over it, and endeavoring to understand it. When he was on the road back home from Jerusalem, Philip met him by the side of the road, and he got in the chariot and asked the man this question, "Do you understand what you read?" (Acts 8:30.) Then he answered, "How can I except some man should guide me?" (Acts 8:31.) Now, the prophecy that he was reading had been fulfilled right before his eyes, so to speak, for evidently he was acquainted with what had occurred in the city of Jerusalem and had heard of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The prophecy was fulfilled right before his eyes, but he was unable to see it; but when this inspired man preached unto him Jesus, he could see it, know it, and understand it. We learn from this that the uninspired man could not understand the prophecies and did not know when they were fulfilled until some inspired man told him about it, showed him that it was the fulfillment to some prediction that was made some years before. How could he know when it was fulfilled unless he was inspired?

Not only is that true, but I want to call your attention to some other points that arise on the subject. I refer your attention particularly to a passage in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, because people have used it for the wrong purpose. "After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the

residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." (Acts 15:16, 17.) When Simeon made his speech in the fifteenth chapter of Acts, he said that God had visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name, and then when James came to make his speech he said that Simeon had referred to that fact and that it agreed with the prophecy, and he quoted the prophecy. It said, "I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord." This prophecy that I am talking about has been used to show that Christ is coming back to this earth some day and rebuild or reconstruct the old city of Jerusalem, reconstruct its walls and temple, and reinstate all the sacrificial offerings as they were carried on under the Jewish order of things. The passage tells us that God visited the Gentiles to take a people for his name. You could not make any mistake about its meaning, but you could not recognize its fulfillment until some inspired man stepped on the scene and pointed out the fulfillment.

I believe from my reading and study of prophecy that if one should be fulfilled right before my eyes it would be very different from what I would expect it to be. I would not recognize it. To illustrate what I mean: when the wise men came to the city of Jerusalem following the star which appeared to guide them to the place where Jesus lay, asking, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (Matt. 2:2), Herod did not know a thing about it. The people in Jerusalem knew nothing about it, and Herod called his scribes together and asked them what the prophecy had to say about this. They told him that he was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea according to the prophecy. Herod could read the prophecy, but he did not know when it was being fulfilled. It happened right before his eyes. It happened right there among those people in that time, but they knew nothing about it. They did not know the prophecy was being fulfilled. It is about all we can do today to understand fulfilled prophecy, much less unfulfilled.

I want to call your attention to another fact and another thought that is connected with this. The Book says that when Herod had sought out the place of the birth of Christ and found out from the

wise men at what time the star appeared, then it was that Herod busied himself with the making of a decree to put to death all male children two years old and under. I want to call your attention further to the fact that just in this community, about this spot on the earth, in the long, long ago when Jacob was on his way from Bethel to Beer-Sheba, it came time for Rachel to bring Benjamin into the world, and she died and was buried there on the way, and she called the baby's name Ben-oni, meaning "in my sorrow." In the New Testament we find the prophecy of Jeremiah fulfilled, "In Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they are not." (Matt. 2:18.) Rachel had given her life here to bring Benjamin into the world. You have to put all these facts together to see the fulfillment of that prophecy, and it would have been utterly impossible for us to have told when it was fulfilled.

Now, I want to call your attention to another passage. That is, when Herod sought the young child's life an angel appeared to Joseph and told him to take the young child and flee into the land of Egypt. Joseph did that, and stayed there until he was told that Herod was dead. When Herod was dead, he took Jesus and his mother and came into the land of Israel, but heard that Archelaus reigned in his father's place, so he "went and dwelt in Nazareth" (Matt. 2:23) that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which said, "Out of Egypt have I called my son, and he shall be called a Nazarene." (Matt. 2:15.) Now, that was written in the long ago when the children of Israel were called out of Egyptian bondage and went across the sea; but when you read this prophecy, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," would you have dreamed that it had reference to this little baby, Jesus Christ, being called from Egypt? Would you have known that it referred to Joseph's leaving Egypt at the death of Herod? I am referring this to your attention to show you that an uninspired man cannot tell when prophecy is fulfilled.

Now, I want to turn to the first chapter of the first letter of the apostle Peter, talking about the prophets speaking by the Spirit of God. They did not know what was meant by the very words that fell from their own mouths or the sentences. The Spirit of God was guiding them. Now, they didn't understand all this, but

we have men today who say that they can understand unfulfilled prophecy, and they will presume to proceed to tell you the meaning of the prophecy. The man who made the prophecy was speaking by the Spirit of God, and he did not know the meaning of the prophecy; but we have men today who say they can understand unfulfilled prophecy, and to prove it he will then proceed to tell you what the meaning of the certain prophecy is. The man who made the prophecy spoke by the Spirit of God and did not know its meaning.

In the first letter of the apostle Peter we have these words, "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." (1 Pet. 1:10, 11.) Not only that, but get another statement made in this reading, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us did they minister the things which are not reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Pet. 1:12.)

When an inspired apostle, a man inspired of God, says "this is fulfillment of a prophecy" from Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, or any of the other prophets, then let's hear them. We have the true fulfillment then, and we cannot be mistaken about it, because an inspired man says that it is the fulfillment of prophecy.

A large amount of the Old Testament is prophecy. It includes the history of the Israelites or Hebrews, for we never had any Israelites until Jacob wrestled with the angel. Then for one hundred twenty years we find a united kingdom, but when Rehoboam came to the throne it divided. Many of these prophecies in the Old Testament were literally fulfilled, and I think there could be no question about it. Some of them were not fulfilled until the church of the Lord Jesus Christ was established, the spiritual Israel. Many passages refer to the establishment of the kingdom of God, when Jesus Christ is the spiritual king of a spiritual realm.

We find people today who say that Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and the Jews will come back to Jerusalem. Yes, they think that

the prophecies teach that Jerusalem, which had been besieged, robbed of its gold and vessels, the temple destroyed, and not one stone was left on another of the mighty structure where God had met and blessed them, will be re-established. Now, on the day of Pentecost the church was established in the city of Jerusalem, and I don't believe there is a passage to show that there is a time coming when the city of Jerusalem is to be rebuilt and its worship restored, or that Christ is coming back to this earth to reign over the people in an earthly kingdom for one thousand years. If the Jews are going back to Palestine and the Israelite kingdom restored the passages are absolutely silent on it.

We should be established in the present truth. That is the point. Our salvation depends on that. It precludes any speculation whatsoever.

Now, I want to call your attention to another point. Some folk tell us that the land promise back in the Old Testament was never fulfilled when God promised Abraham that they should have all the land from the Euphrates River to the Great Sea, but Joshua tells us that they possessed the land and dwelt in it. Therefore, the land promise was fulfilled, for Joshua says that it was, and I presume that he knew more about it than I know. I am perfectly willing to take what he says about it.

Now, we come further to consider the passage read. You know it says, ". . . whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." It goes on further to say that all the prophets since Samuel and those that follow after have spoken of these and foretold of these times, but note that it says: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up of your brethren like unto me [Moses]; and him shall ye hear in all things. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." I want to ask you, is Jesus Christ that prophet? Isn't he the supreme authority in religion? Isn't he our king? Let me call your attention to a passage in the book of Ecclesiastes in which we find these words, "Where the word of a king is, there is power." In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is our king, and the New Testament is his word. "Where the word of a king is, there is power." Then Jesus Christ must be enthroned; he is authority;

he is *all* authority in heaven and on earth. Yes, all authority is given unto him, and therefore the gospel should be preached to every creature, to every nation. Every nation is to be taught, for he commanded his disciples to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every nation, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19, 20.) Jesus Christ is now our Lord and Savior; he is now our authority in religion, and whatever he says we must obey. It does not matter what it is, we must do it; and if we refuse to do it, we are "destroyed from among the people." It talks about these days, from the time Jesus Christ goes to heaven to the time when he comes back. When he came the first time, he came to do something specifically, and he did it. When he comes back the second time, he is coming to do something just as specific, and he will do it again. There are two comings of Christ mentioned in the Bible—one has occurred and one is to be. To show you how carelessly people sometimes handle the word of God, there is a song based on a statement that Job made a long time ago that does not use it in the way Job did. The song says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and on this earth again shall stand." Job said, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job said that before Jesus Christ ever stood on the earth. Jesus Christ had not come to the earth when Job said that, but someone comes along and misapplies the passage, and somebody says that is poetic license. There is not any such course to be pursued. Job did not say that, but Job said, "I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand the latter day upon the earth." Jesus did stand on the earth, and there is no question about it, and now he has gone back to the Father. Now we are living in the period of time between his first coming and his second.

We ought to take the present truth and learn it. We need to be established in it. When we allow anyone to take us away from the present truth, our destruction has been very well secured. I want to call your attention to the fact that the words of our text for tonight were used in the second gospel sermon on record, preached by an inspired man. It was preached by the same man

who spoke on the day of Pentecost. Peter preached the second sermon on Solomon's porch, and it is recorded in the third chapter of Acts; therefore these sermons must harmonize. The truth must be in harmony. If he preached one thing on Pentecost and another on Solomon's porch some days later, of course he would not be preaching the truth. I want you to notice the harmony here. In the second chapter of Acts he said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." In the third chapter he said, "Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out." They are parallel. "Repent and be baptized" (in the second chapter of Acts) means the same thing as "Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out" (in the third chapter of Acts). They carry the same message; they mean the same thing; they are parallel. The same preacher preached the second sermon, and no doubt many of the same people who heard the first sermon were present to hear the second one. So effectual was the first sermon that three thousand people were baptized, and immediately after we reach that point we learn that the number of disciples increased in point of men to five thousand. After that numbers are not used, but men and women were being added to the church. If there had been discrepancies in those sermons, men and women would not have believed the gospel. Note further, in Acts 2 he said, "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." In Acts 3, "The times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" is the same as the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2.

Your attention is further invited to the reading of the text for tonight, "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heavens must receive." He says that he will send Jesus, but the heavens must receive him "until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Jesus Christ has gone into heaven, and the heavens have received him. That's what the third chapter says. The second chapter says that he "ascended to heaven and sits at the right hand of God." He is going to stay there "until his foes are made his footstool." The third chapter of Acts says, "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things." Don't you see the harmony? I don't believe that it ought to be hard to get the connection.

Take these passages and lay them side by side and note how parallel they are. I want to call your attention to another point in this connection. The first verse of the one hundred tenth Psalm says, "The Lord said unto my lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool!" This verse is often quoted in this connection. Heb. 10:12, 13 says, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." Mark you, the passage says FOREVER. He made one sacrifice for sins FOREVER, and he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, "from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."

I am trying to get the point before you just as I would like for you to see it. Jesus Christ came into the world the first time and lived thirty-three and one-half years, and he made one sacrifice for sins, and that sacrifice was made for all men and women forever. "One sacrifice for sins forever" is the way Hebrews puts it. Another quotation in the book of Hebrews says, "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." (Heb. 10:26.) Jesus made one sacrifice for sin. That sacrifice was made for us. There "is no more sacrifice than that. It is never to be repeated. That is the statement. It is that or nothing. When he had made that sacrifice he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and he is going to stay there until he has made his enemies his footstool for his feet.

Another point arises in the second chapter of Acts that might be exceedingly interesting, and that point is an argument made by Peter guided by the Spirit of God. He referred to David, a prophet of old, who said that God had sworn that of the fruit of his loins he would raise up Christ to sit on the throne. Now he is "at the right hand of God exalted, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which now ye see and hear." I want you to observe, friends, when Jesus Christ was raised up according to prophecy, elevated to the right hand of God, sat down on the right hand of God, sat down on David's throne, he received the promise of the Holy Ghost. Now, what was the promise of the Holy Spirit? What was the promise as it related to Christ? The promise that the Holy Spirit made

through Samuel in the long ago when God told David that he would raise up one of his own flesh and of his own seed, of his own family, to sit on his throne—that was the promise. When Jesus Christ was raised up and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, he received that promise. That is what the Book says about it.

I read again from the Psalms. David put it like this. He said that God had sworn that he would preserve it. "His seed shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon as a faithful witness in heaven." When Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and exalted at the right hand of God, he sat clown on that throne.

The Book says that Christ received the promise of the Holy Spirit. That is, the Holy Spirit made the promise, and it was actually and literally fulfilled. Ordinarily in our efforts to read this we say that means the Holy Spirit promised on the day of Pentecost poured out on the apostles. That's not what he is talking about. Of course he includes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

I want to point out another passage. I am reading from the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, verses 23, 24: "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end." How many people in this world, how many preachers and modern prophets have said that the end won't come then; we are going to have another dispensation after that. The apostle said that "Christ is the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming, then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, for he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." When Christ ascended to heaven, he began his reign, and he must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet, until he has made his enemies the footstool for his feet. The reading said that when death is conquered the last enemy is conquered; therefore, the purpose of his reign has been satisfied.

I want to suggest that we have been singing a song that contains the wrong teaching; and if I were to stand here on this rostrum and preach it, you would stop me. If it is all right to sing

a thing, it is all right to preach it, for singing is teaching. You cannot sing a thing that you cannot preach, for the song is supposed to teach. Considerable error has crept in when we have done our level best to keep it out. When Jesus Christ has accomplished his task, he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet; and when that is done, this is the end. The apostle said that the heavens must receive him until the times of restoration of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets. He must reign until the last enemy, death, is conquered; and when that is conquered, that is the end. We have people who sing today, "We will reign with him forevermore." Yes, they sing, "We'll reign with him through endless days," and he is not going to reign through endless days. He came to do something; he came to reign until something is accomplished, and he is going to stay there until that is done. Then he is going to turn the kingdom back to God for the reason that his reign is no longer necessary.

Friends, I wonder if we have ever permitted anything or Anybody to disturb us or mislead us on this question. We ought to be established in the present truth; we ought to be captivated by the truth; we ought to know the present truth; we ought to know the truth as it applies to us, and we ought to know when it applied to somebody else and not to us; and we ought to be guided by his word. We cannot go wrong when it is our guide leading us through the conflicts of this life. That alone is the first and the last; it is the alpha and the omega; it is the beginning and the end. Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, and we should know how to carry out his will. In the language of Peter, "Let's be established in the present truth." Let's be captivated by it, not to the visions and dreams of the visionary. I believe it is important that we be established in this. I want to suggest that it is our business to listen to Christ.

Are you willing to believe him? Jesus Christ said this, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) The apostle said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38.) It is necessary to believe, and it is necessary to repent, and also necessary to be baptized. It is necessary that we do that, for Christ told us to, and he is the ultimate authority in all things.

He told the disciples to "make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19, 20.) Don't you want to render obedience to him tonight? Won't you come tonight in obedience to the crucified but risen Lord? Won't you come to him and be established in the present truth? Don't you want to be a member of that body for which he gave every drop of blood in his body? Don't you want to do just what the New Testament tells you to do? It is spread before us; it is our book, our guide. It contains all the words of this life; therefore, you ought to take your stand on it. It is the word of your King, your Savior, your Redeemer, your Exemplar. Won't you believe him and be obedient to him? Don't you want to be saved from your sins? I hope that you will come tonight and live for Christ just as long as you are permitted to live in this world, and then when this life is over you will be permitted to enter into the gate that stands ajar. If you are living in this world tonight without God and without hope, I am asking you to obey him. If you have not been living as faithfully as you should, won't you come back to him? If you are living in this community and wish to identify yourself with this congregation, you, too, are invited to come.

"HANDLING ARIGHT THE WORD OF TRUTH"

I am profoundly grateful, friends, to be able to appear before you again tonight and to resume our studies of the word of God. I thank Brother Ijams for the very complimentary remarks, and I shall strive the rest of my days not to disappoint him. I have given my life to the study of the Bible, almost fifty years now. I have not read many books outside that. If I had my time to go over, I don't know that I would increase that number. I would try to read the Bible more.

We tried to urge on the audience last night and made an appeal to return to the word of God, to go back to the Bible. People have left it out of their lives. Preachers have left it out of the

pulpit. It has been driven out of almost all our schools. There used to be a time when people in authority had the destiny of the nation and the good of the people at heart. They had something to say about God's will and knew that God was overhead. People used to discuss it, but you never hear anything about it now. People never talk about God. We are going to this organization and that and to one thing and another in civic governments. We talk about economic and industrial affairs. But what we need to do, my friends, is to go back to God. We need to learn of God. We need to have faith in God. We need God to help us. We cannot help ourselves; and if it is ever done, God must do it. Remember, friends, he holds in the hollow of his hand blessings that are inexhaustible, treasures that cannot be estimated, wonderful and even unknown to the finite mind. God is ready to give them to us, but he cannot give them to us unless we are willing to receive them.

I want to select for my text tonight another simple statement in the Bible, just two or three verses. I have learned that the best way to be able to preach a good sermon is to take a good, easy text and talk on that. The easier the text, the easier it is to talk about. I used to think when I was a young preacher that the best thing to do was to get the hardest text and the most difficult passage I could find and then preach with all my power. I have heard brethren who spent their lives preaching exhausted after speaking so loudly. How differently were speeches made in those days! When the preacher sat down, he was pale and breathless. I was tired and exhausted at the end of my sermons. Then I did not know what was the matter with my preaching, but I know now. I thought that was the way to preach. Get the hardest text possible and use all the big words possible. My audience did not know what I was talking about. My voice was lifted too much. My breath was too short. My words wouldn't come as they ought to have come. Oh, I don't have the vocal power to "holler" now as loud as I did then when I addressed my audience. Now we are just turning to the Bible and talking about the things in it in the simplest and most straightforward way possible. We are here to preach the gospel. We are here to build up; we are here to extend help to people who will receive that help; and, indeed, if I

know my heart, I will never do one thing that will injure, but I will do everything within my power to make folk a little better.

Let us listen now to the reading from the Bible, and it is not necessary, perhaps, for a single bit of comment from me. It is just as powerful without any elaboration or embellishment so far as I am concerned. You know we have the disposition to want to put in our think-soes and such like to suit our own tastes, dress it up like women do food. They call it garnish, I believe. They put parsley and things all over the dishes; and when you get through taking off the trimmings, there isn't much left to eat. Personally, I have never been able, indeed, to enjoy that kind of thing. In my manner of life, I am not able to live on glassware, polished silverware, and so on. You know, so much polish is put on sermons sometimes until they bury the thought and everything that is in it under an avalanche of human rubbish. It ought to be clear and simple as possible. Here is the text for tonight: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth. Shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who, concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already and overthrow the faith of some; however the foundation of God stands sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and let everyone who have named the name of Christ depart of iniquity." (2 Tim. 2:15-19.) If I did no more tonight than to review these words of Holy Writ, this service could not be lost. That is what we need to do, preach the word of God. I have felt, friends, if you will let me say it to you tonight face to face, plainly and positively, that I believe we would do better and accomplish more good if men would talk less and read God's word more. It would be a wonderful sermon and lesson if we would read one quotation after another from the Bible each minute without any comments on my part; but you know we have to show how we can oil it up and fit it together, and be so particular and nice about it, and after all, one reading from the Bible after another would be, perhaps, the best thing. That is the word of God, and that is the thing for which the hearts of men and women are craving tonight, longing, and yearning, and pining, and starving tonight above everything else. You could

listen to my prayers and my talks the remainder of your days, and that would not be enough to produce any faith whatsoever in your hearts, because faith doesn't come that way. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. The passage that I just read tells us to study, and you might be surprised if I tell you that there is mighty little of it done. People will not study; preachers will not study. They are using the books of men and outlines of men for preaching; therefore, they will sit down and memorize those outlines instead of looking to the Book of Life. They don't look to the Bible; they will not study it. We aren't reading it, friends. We will not study it. In addition to those remarks of mine, I might read by way of exhortation this passage from the Bible. It is talking about the man that meditates on the law of the Lord, and it says he is "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psalm 1.) I want to urge you to study the Holy Scriptures. Study the Bible, and thus not wait for somebody else to dig out everything and predigest everything and prepare everything for you.

I don't think there is anything wrong in our lesson papers and in our quarterlies. I don't think there is anything wrong within themselves in things of that kind, but to abuse the nature of these things, depending upon them instead of reading the word of God, is wrong. We need to take the word of God and go off to ourselves and sit down with the Bible in our hands and read it and meditate upon it. Don't you hear Paul say to young Timothy, "Till I come you give attention to reading," and that was in the days when the Holy Spirit supplied the thought and gave the words by which thought was to be expressed. It was before the New Testament was revealed; still Paul told Timothy to "give attendance to study until I come." (1 Tim. 4:3.) Read the Scriptures because "in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me. Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures and the power of God." (John 5:39.) You know further that the apostle said, "I am writing these things to you that you may know how to behave yourselves in the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15.) Not only is that so, but he added also, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"; not "furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim, 3. 16.) That is not the strength of the statement, but the strength is in "*thoroughly* furnished."

The Holy Spirit does that for us. Then why should we turn our attention to anything except the word of God? Why spend time wading through seas of literature and history and books that men have written to find the plan of salvation? The Holy Spirit tells us that, and he was sent to guide the apostles into all truth. In order for men to find the way of life and plan of God's salvation to men, the Holy Spirit has written two hundred sixty chapters in the New Testament to men and women. They were written for everybody to follow—for father, for grandfather, for mother, for grandmother, for son, and for daughter, for everyone. Yes, friends, they are for everyone to follow and never leave. *I* want to tell you, friends, we need to turn to that Book and study it. How many people study the Bible today? Don't wait for somebody else to do it. Don't wait for somebody else to burn the midnight oil. They can't study for you. Somebody finds something the Bible does not say and puts it down in literature, and we read it. Somebody else would not put something in. We pick it up and swallow what somebody else has written, and it is so twisted and warped that there is very little of what the Bible teaches in it. Now which is easier? Are you going to stand on the sidelines and allow someone else to talk about it, or are you going to study yourself? Somebody says we differ about it. Friends, we will never differ as long as men and women stand on the truth, but men and women are standing on the sidelines. They are not studying. We need to get into the study of the Bible ourselves.

You hear folk say that we cannot study the Bible alone. They say it cannot be done except somebody helps us. Well, it has been done, and it can be done again. I am confident of that fact. Somebody did it. Somebody can do it again. People are bewildering themselves by a mistaken notion that it cannot be done. I want to tell you, friends, it can be done. We are able to do it. It will not be possible, therefore, to learn God's will as long as we are idle, as long as it is not used, as long as it is not preached. We need to encourage folk to read it. That is how to learn it.

You hear folk talk about a "practical education." They want their children to have a "practical education." They are asking, "What is a practical education?" Well, I don't know. I have never been able to find out, but it is not something you study in school, for nothing you study in school will ever be worth a dime to you when you get out, only as the things studied in the classroom will enrich your brain and develop your mind until the problems of life can be picked up, and you can make your own decisions and solve your own problems. That is the object of education. The man who says that we can learn it without any effort on our part whatever is wrong, therefore. Study is necessary and essential. The apostle said, "Study."

We read again: "No man cometh unto me except the Father which sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." (John 6:44, 45.) The man that never hears of God, the man that never learns of God, can never come to Jesus Christ, the whole denominational world to the contrary. Notice: the Bible says, "Study to show thyself approved." (2 Tim. 2:15.) I wonder if we would stop at that, a careless reader, paying no attention to the punctuation of sentences, periods, colons, semicolons, reading on like that and stopping when we get ready, making no reflections as we read. I wonder what we would accomplish by reading like that. I wonder how far we would go astray.

Did you ever see a man in the pulpit trying to preach a gospel sermon begin with ostentation and a demonstration of what words he can use? He knows how to make gestures at the right time, and he wants to stand at the right angle, show how much he knows. He wants the praise and the approval of men; but that is not what the Book says about it. The Bible says, "Study to show thyself approved." We might stop at that. Men might applaud and praise the sermon, and we might show ourselves approved unto men. We might have burned the midnight oil; we might have read books; we might be able to talk about Latin and Hebrew and Greek.; and we may be able to show ourselves approved unto men and pleasing unto men; but we may not be pleasing unto God. Are we to please men? Certainly not. If I seek to please men,

I am not the servant of Christ, in the language of the great apostle; therefore, seek to "show thyself approved unto God," to conduct yourself before God so that he won't frown on you. We need to turn our faces in another direction. We need to learn what to do to get the approval of God so that God will be pleased with us and smile on us. We need to do the things that will meet his approval. That is what the apostle said. That is what we ought to do. The Holy Spirit has written this little Book that we might be guided, that we might be qualified, that we might be capable, and know how to behave ourselves before God, direct our steps, our words, and our hands, and every member of the body till everything we do will be acceptable unto God Almighty, and when the end comes and we face him at the great judgment day we may hear him say: "Well done, thy good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." (Matt. 25:21.) Why do you read the Bible? Why do you study the Bible? Why do you give your time to that sort of thing? Do you do it just to show up somebody else? It is a shame that some people will turn such a potential thing into such a weak, selfish hope. We must not study to show what we know, saying by that, "If there is anything you want to know, ask me." No, friends, I want to study every day, every night, every hour till the sun of my life goes down for what purpose? To show myself approved unto my Father, until my Father will own me and approve me for standing foursquare to everything he has said.

There are several passages in the Bible that I think we ought to read and study tonight which show that we should study to win approval in the sight of God, but time does not permit. I hope God will lend me the grace the rest of my life to study his word and to read the Holy Scriptures, to lead me to say the things that God says as he says them, and to look at things the way he looks at them. You know whenever we get to looking on things as God looks at them, we put on his grace. We put on his goodness. People see God in our lives. Now, that is the real thing. That is the reason we want to study. That's why the Book says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God."

We ought to stop long enough to comment on this. We need to "study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman." What is the use of a workman if he has no work to do? Well, you

know it is going all over this country, and people are talking about it, and it is published in the newspapers, and you hear it over the radio that there isn't anything you can do to be saved. That is preached from about every hilltop in the land—that we cannot do anything about it. We just have to wait until God does it for us if it is ever done; and if we are not saved, then we are just the nonelect, and that is the reason we aren't saved. No, friends, that is not it. That is not what God says.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman . . ." You know if a man is to be a workman, he ought to be a well-furnished workman. If there is anything a Christian ought to be ashamed of, it is to do a piece of botchy work. A man who is a Christian ought to do the work just a little better than anybody else. *I* see people who are Christians plant a garden sometimes, and, indeed, the rows they plant are as crooked as they could be. Wherever a Christian goes there ought to be footprints; there ought to be something about the place where he left and where he has worked that will show to people that that man who did the work was guided by the hand of God, that he is a Christian. "Study to show thyself approved, a workman . . ." the apostle says. Get out there in the path of life, in the field, in the vineyard and work. Work for God. Work until everything we do is done perfectly, absolutely done perfectly, and God will be pleased with that. That is why I say we ought to study so we will be schooled, qualified, efficient, and capable to work for him. You know, friends, I hope you will let me tell you this. I may seem over-critical perhaps, but I am merely trying to do good. No church is what it should be until there are men in its membership who are capable teachers, who know how to use and how to handle the word of God. People need to be taught. For that reason for several years I have taught no less than three Bible classes each week, taking nothing but the text, verse by verse, passage by passage, I want to see everything in it and talk about each verse in it. By that means we will familiarize ourselves with passages and be in a position to tell other folk about it.

There are some things we need to have impressed upon us. It is more encouraging to work whenever we study. A man cannot be a Christian and never study the Bible. Christianity is in the Holy Scriptures, and we need to study them and meditate on

them. That is the one Book that tells us about Christianity. It is the one Book that tells Christians what to do and what not to do. It indeed goes into the minutest details of Christian life and contains some of the vastest things that concern a Christian.

I want to suggest further that a Christian ought to be ashamed to do a piece of work that he would be ashamed for anybody with a trained eye to see. He ought to be ashamed to do work that would be embarrassing to him, but some Christians act like that. They do things like that. They remind me of some young ladies that I have seen trying to get married, and they couldn't sew a straight seam on a sewing machine. They couldn't cut a straight line with the scissors; and if they made a garment, it would be lopsided, hang long on one side and short on the other, and, indeed, would not be fit to wear. If you ladies are going to make a dress, you have to study. You must have a pattern. If you are going to be an engineer, you must study. You must study engineering if you wish to be an engineer. If you are going to be an astronomer, you must study astronomy. If you are going to be a Christian, you must study Christianity, and Christianity is revealed in the New Testament of two hundred sixty chapters. Here we are absolutely incapable of carrying on, in many cases, because we don't know what to do and which way to turn. We don't study. Friends, we must "study to be a workman who needs not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."

Let me remark just now that there would not be a denomination on the face of the earth tonight if that had been followed. There would not be a division or faction in the ranks if that passage had been respected. There would not be a faction on earth if folk had done that. If that Scripture had been followed, there would not be a false religion or false bodies in religion today. Let me say, friends, that division doesn't have its origin in the New Testament. People ought to learn that. They ought to study; they ought to handle aright the word of truth. The word of God will destroy denominationalism overnight. It would destroy all the religious error in the world if accepted and followed, if we would go with it and handle aright the word of God. That is what the apostle wants men to do.

Many times we hear folks say the Bible says this or that. Well, the Bible says a great many things, but could you do everything

in the word of God from Genesis to Revelation and be pleasing to God? Folks will say, "Oh, it is all right, for the Bible says it." Well, in other words, if you did everything the Bible says, would you be handling aright the word of truth, the word of God? Would you? I have known men to undertake to defend the use of mechanical musical instruments in the worship because they were used in the Old Testament. They say that it's all right, for it's in the Bible. Friends, the man who does that is guilty of paying no mind to this passage of Scripture. If this passage is followed, if we handled aright the word of truth, they would not be used in the worship. The man who will have them must get his support somewhere else. I was asked last spring to preach a sermon in a town in which I held a meeting and speak to the congregation on the subject of "Mechanical Instruments of Music in the Worship." I said, "I can't do it, for I wouldn't have a text from which to preach a sermon." To preach a sermon you must have a text from which to start. Then I said: "If you would ask me to preach a sermon on 'Infant Baptism,' I could not do it. If you would ask me to preach a sermon on 'Sprinkling for Baptism,' I could not do it, for there isn't a text in the Bible on those subjects." I said: "If you will ask me to tell why we don't use mechanical instruments in the worship, I will be glad to tell you. If you will ask me why I don't baptize babies, I will be glad to tell you that. Ask me why I don't use sprinkling for baptism, and I will be glad to tell you." There isn't one passage on them for a text with which to start a sermon, and, friends, there isn't an argument on any of those things that is not based on mistake and mishandling of the word of God.

If that passage had been strictly adhered to, if we had studied our Bibles as we should, if we had spoken only where the Bible speaks and had been silent where it is silent, there would not be a bit of trouble on the face of the earth about them. There wouldn't be a division; there wouldn't be a faction about any of them. People who are careless on that point are inclined, it seems, to be stiff-necked about it. They want to put things their own way and according to their own wills. They will take words and passages out of the Bible, reconstruct them, and take them from their setting and surroundings, and make applications and use of them entirely foreign to the principles that Jehovah intended. For

the same reason there is not a false doctrine in the world that did not arise from this broken commandment. There is one thing we need to do, friends: we need to return to the spirit, and system, and support of the New Testament. We need to "study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."

From my youth up I have heard preachers take that very text, and I have heard some fine sermons on it. I am quite sure that what they taught was fine, and yet, in my maturer years of thought in my life, I have come to this conclusion, that perhaps Paul never had in mind just what they said. The apostle wants us to be able to take passages from the New Testament and the Old Testament and make the right application and use of them. That is what Paul is talking about, and you will note further in this reading that he says, "Shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness." You know there are lots of babblers. Lots of people think a glib talker is a good preacher. Words! words! words!

I don't know whether it will be complimentary to tell you this, but I want to say this. If you have ever gone hunting with a pack of hounds, you have probably seen within that pack an old hound that, as soon as he hits the woods, thinks all he has to do is bark. He is never still; he just barks. There are some preachers and teachers who act about like that. They think all they have to do is to open their big mouths and throw out their chests and babble—nothing except words. When they get through talking, there is nothing in what they have said. That is what the writer means when he says to avoid profane and vain babblings. I want to remind you that profane does not necessarily mean a man who uses curse words. Profane is just the opposite of sacred. For example, the Bible is sacred history; other history is profane history.

A man in the pulpit who makes his sermon out of things not in the Bible is to be avoided, for such things will increase into more ungodliness. There is no end to it. The first thing you know is that that is all he knows and that is all he talks about. It would be better to listen to God and to the Bible instead of continuing to give ear to profane and vain babblings, listening to a man talk about things not in the Bible, and then when he gets

through there isn't a thing in the world in it but words, just words. "Shun profane and vain babblings," he says, "for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." (2 Tim. 2:16-18.) If I stood on this rostrum and talked about the resurrection and said that it was past and gone, indeed, that would overthrow the faith of some of my hearers, and when I have overthrown their faith, I have committed a serious offense. It would be better to take the physical life of a man than to kill his spiritual life, since, indeed, "if a man gains the whole world and loses his soul, it profits him nothing." (Matt. 16:26.) If I should take the physical life, I would take nothing, comparatively speaking, as to his spiritual life. If I poison the heart and send poison through a man's bloodstream, that means the end of his physical life; but if I poison a man's faith, that means the end of his spiritual life with God and the angels and all the pure and the good in the home of the soul far beyond the sky, far beyond "the stars e'er singing as they shine, the Hand that made us is divine." Instead of vain babblings, therefore, we ought to speak as the oracles of God, ministering according to our abilities that God gives us that we might save men.

So, then, friends, these verses don't need a very great deal of embellishment on our part. We don't need to garnish them much. It is plain. We can read it ourselves and understand it. We need to study it, learn how to handle it. That is the reason we have gone over these words, "handling aright the word of truth."

Now, anybody who knows anything about the Bible at all ought to know that there are three dispensations recorded, three periods, and as many laws. The first of these laws began with Adam. The patriarchal dispensation had a priesthood and law peculiar to that time. The people who lived then were to live in obedience to that law. Then a new law was given at Sinai. God came down to the people of Israel to give them the law, but they could not bear it. God wrote the Ten Commandments on tables of stone, and Moses gave them to the people, and here the priesthood was changed from the head of the family to the house of Aaron,

to the tribe of Levi. Thus there had to be a change of law when the priesthood changed. When the priesthood changed, there was of necessity a change of law, not *in* it, but *of* it. The patriarchal had one kind of worship and the Levitical another. Now we have another law, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We won't take time to comment on these a great deal, but now suffice it to say that Jesus Christ is our high priest, and every Christian is a priest, with Christ as the high priest. With the coming of a new priesthood, there had to be another law and another worship. I want you to get this point. When the priesthood is changed, there must be a change of law. When the priesthood changed from the Aaronic to the priesthood of Melchisedec, there had to be a new law, and that is the everlasting priesthood, and we have another law, the New Testament.

Suppose, friends, you take a man today in America, and he is guilty of some infraction of American law, and you undertake to try him by British law, or German law, or Spanish law. That would not be right, would it? Well, you would not judge a person living today under the regime of Jesus Christ, under the law of the New Testament, by the Mosaic law. We live under a new law. We live under the New Testament, and Jesus Christ is our king, and where the word of a king is, there is power. Jesus is our king; he is our word; he is power. There is that which redeems us, and saves us, and preserves us, and purifies us. He is the Savior of men and women, and salvation cannot be anywhere else. Since Jesus Christ is our Savior, and the New Testament is our law, we are safe as long as we follow that. He is presented in the New Testament. That is his law, and don't forget it.

Oftentimes you may have a person come along and say, "Abraham was saved by faith, and yet he was not baptized." Well, that is so, but I cannot be saved by faith without being baptized. "You can be baptized," they say, "but that is not necessary." Yes, it is so that Abraham was saved by faith, and he was not baptized, but saying that I can be saved without it is quite a different matter. Abraham did not live under the New Covenant. He did not live under the law of the New Testament. Now, that's where you get in trouble. That's what is the matter with men now. Abraham lived under a different law. The man who says he can be saved without baptism because Abraham was not baptized doesn't know

that he isn't handling the word of God aright. Remember this, friends: Abraham lived in one dispensation; we live in another. He lived under one law; we live under another, and we are not judged by the law under which he lived. We are living under a new law that governs the world today.

You hear folk say, "David used mechanical instruments of music, and so can we." Well, I know that David used them. Nobody disputes that who knows anything at all about the Bible. We read in Psalms that he praised God with those instruments. I know that he used them, for that is what the Book says. Now, then, I want to ask you, is it possible that we could read this passage of Scripture about which we are talking and say that we can use musical instruments in the worship today and still handle aright the word of truth? David used them, but would that prove that we can use them today? No, David lived under a different dispensation and under a different law. Why do people mention that? Simply to attempt to justify their practice. You will let me say this: If people had not fallen into the habits and practices not taught in this little Book, there would not be a passage in the Bible that relates to human conduct that would be hard to understand. I was asked to teach a lesson in our assembly once from the first sixteen verses of the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians, and I perceived why. It deals with women cutting the hair. Just in this connection I want to say that if women had not got in the habit of cutting their hair there would have been no occasion to question this or to understand what the passage means. Sometimes I fear we are not studying the Bible to find out what it teaches, but to find what will justify our practices and our conduct. In these later years I fear that people are not reading the Bible to learn the truth, but to seek to sustain their practices.

I don't want to do a thing like that, friends. I want to learn the truth. I have but a little while yet to remain here. I can even see the end of the trail sometimes. I can sometimes see beyond the sunset's radiant glow. I can see the sunset of my life not far away, and life is too precious, and life is too short for me to take a chance or guess like that. If my practice cannot be maintained by the Bible, I ought not to do it. I ought to give it up. I ought not to read just to find something that will seemingly

justify my doing this or that or the other. If we are doing something that we cannot find written here, if we are preaching something that we cannot read in the New Testament, we ought to give it up. We ought to quit practicing it, for it means our salvation. If we would just listen to God, we would not have a bit of trouble understanding it. If preachers, and editors, and religious teachers of this country were to give as much time and effort to get people to do what God says as they do to keep people from it, we would have a far better condition in this land of ours. Now, that is the trouble. Why would a man get up here in this pulpit and do a thing like that? How can a man get up and teach that because Abraham was justified by faith and was saved without being baptized you can be? Is it just because it would make somebody feel easier? Why would a man get on this rostrum and argue that we can use musical instruments in the worship today because David used them, with no purpose in the world but to get you to do something that God has not commanded, something that the Lord Jesus Christ never taught? Now, that is the trouble. We listen to them instead of to God. Not a passage in the Bible is hard to understand if we just listen to God, and if we will "study to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."

I wonder if just such arguments as those I have pointed out, that men use to justify their practices, ought not to come under the heading of "vain babblings." Wouldn't it be a tragic thing for me to give my consent to or say one word or do one thing in this pulpit that would cause somebody to feel easy and satisfied in religious error? If I should do that, his blood is on my hands, and I cannot go to heaven responsible for that sort of thing. We don't want to seem cruel or unkind about these things. That is not it, but the salvation of your soul is at stake. When people are hard-pressed to prove that men can be saved without being baptized, they will babble and babble about it. They are hard-pressed all right, for they never get through talking about it; or when and if they do get through, they will ask, "Well, what about the thief on the cross?" They will say, "Wasn't he saved?" We are not arguing that. Take whatever position you want to, but let's see what about the thief on the cross.

Jesus Christ was living then, and as long as he was living he could do whatever he wanted to. I can do with my own whatever I want to so long as I live. I can give it to you or anybody else. I can do whatever I want to with what I own so long as I live. I can make a will and change it as much as I want to as long as I live; but when I die, that will cannot be changed. It can't be done, and a man who will take the will of a dead man and undertake to thwart that will is just about the smallest person I can think of, for a dead man cannot talk back. What do you think about a man who will take the New Testament, the will of Christ, and try to twist it and break it, and take things out of the Bible? Yet there are people who are guilty of that right here in this land of ours. What about it, friends? Christ could do as he pleased as long as he lived, but he has left us his will, the New Testament. It is not to be toyed with. We need to submit to it. We need to do it mightily bad. We need to "study it to show ourselves approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." People with their sins somehow seem to think they must oil it up and lubricate it. They will just pick up a passage and reconstruct it and take it out of its setting to attempt to prove something on which it has no bearing.

We want to stand before God justified in his sight. If you will obey him, God will look with praise at you and claim you as his own when you get to the judgment bar of God. How is a man going to know how to please God unless he studies his word? Let me point out to you that I don't know a lot about Revelation and its dark symbolisms. I don't claim to, and I don't think anybody else can tell you much about it. Lots of folk undertake it, but they never seem to agree about it. One says one thing, and another another, but John said, "*I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.*" (Rev. 20:12.) Under what book are we to be judged? The New Testament! When you get to judgment, by by what law are you to be judged? The law of Christ! We cannot go back, then, and justify our course of life by what is written in the Old Testament, for you will not be judged by that, for Christ nailed it to the cross, and it has been taken away. We live

in a new day. When we stand before God, our purity of heart and conduct as children of God will be judged by the New Testament. When you stand in the august presence of Jesus Christ, will you be able to meet the requirements?

Friends, I cannot talk longer tonight. I want to ask you, if you have not come to Jesus, to come to him now. Now is the time. All the time you have left to live in this world will be just enough to round this out. Let me plead with you tonight to waste no time, to make no delay by thinking there is plenty of time yet. I remember the words of another: "On the plains of history, there lie the bleaching bones of millions of our fellows. While they stood at the door of victory one day, they waited and died." All they needed to have done was to have stepped across, but they waited. They hesitated a moment too long and were overtaken, and went out into the great night from which people cannot turn back unprepared to meet God. You are going to judgment to stand before Christ, and you are not going to be judged by what Moses or Elijah said. You are going to be judged by what Jesus Christ said. You are going to be judged by what we read in the New Testament containing two hundred sixty chapters. Does your manner of life correspond to that? Do you give the devotion of your heart and soul to Christ? Are you in his church?

Are there those in this audience who will listen to the pleadings of the world's Redeemer? If you will come to him, he will bless you exceeding above all that you can think or ask. He will hold you by his hand if you will listen to his voice. Heart within, God overhead, Christ leading the way. If you will live for him, he will meet you at the end of the way and take us home where we will be free from corroding care forevermore.

THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN

We are certainly very much pleased with the very fine number in our audience this evening, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to speak to you upon the greatest question in the world, for it has to do with our salvation—not the salvation of the body from disease, but the salvation of the soul from death and eternal destruction. We want the attention of this people to a study of the group of verses we read in your hearing last eve-

ning, at least in part. For the want of a better name, we are just calling our talk tonight, "That Which Is Written." The things written in this Book constitute the entire field of operation. Outside of that, no man has any right to go; short of that, no man can be justified in stopping.

The verses we want to take up out of that group of verses read like this: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:14-17.)

This, within a word, then, is a very pointed and useful text in connection with what we have to say. I do not believe that there is a better way for us to be brought up than to be reared in the Holy Scriptures and to know them from our youth up, because the things we learn in our youthful days are the most lasting. Things we learn later in life seem to get away from us. I think that this passage would be quite a rebuke to a lot of Christian parents, so-called now, in the way they are bringing up their children. How many children are there in this city, or in this state, or the entire land, who are so reared that it can be said of them that "from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." Of course, this reference is made to the Old Testament Scriptures. They were all that they had in those times, and all that could be known to them, but the Old Testament Scriptures were written for the learning of people in any age.

I believe, further than that, that we might suggest another point. We are, perhaps, not aware of how far-reaching this teaching of the Holy Scriptures is, and just how much of learning and a desire to know the Holy Scriptures may be transmitted from parent to child. Paul told this young man, Timothy, that he was persuaded that the unfeigned faith that was in him dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and in his mother Eunice before him. (2 Tim. 1:5.) I wonder if it would not be a good thing for parents

to take that into consideration. Probably if we did, we would be able to understand the crime wave that is sweeping over the country, taking millions of the youth of our land in its wake. Children are not being taught the Holy Scriptures today. They are taught everything else but the word of God. That is the cause of the crime wave sweeping youth down to destruction and ruin. In another passage the same writer admonishes parents to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4.) Wouldn't it be wonderful if parents would do that? The wise man said to "bring up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6.) It appears to me that it would be a mighty good way to begin education of our children in the Holy Scriptures by beginning with their grandparents, who are devoted to the word of the Lord, and then parents who were devoted to the study of the Holy Scriptures long before their children are born.

I was asked in a city in Western Kentucky a few years ago to make an address on "Better Babies." They said it was Better Babies' Day. People have Mother's Day, Father's Day, and other kinds of days, but they do not make much out of the Lord's day. That was the first time I had heard of Better Babies' Day; but if it will make better babies, I think we ought to have it. I told them I could tell all I knew about it in very few words. I said: "You must have better fathers and mothers before you can have better babies. That is the way we get everything improved, and in order to get better babies, just get better fathers and mothers. Get fathers and mothers who are interested and consecrated and captivated by the Holy Scriptures, who concentrate and meditate upon them, and who talk about them so much that when their children come into the world the first thing they will hear falling upon their ears from the lips of their parents will be citations and quotations from the Holy Scriptures."

The Bible tells us that Timothy was so brought up that even from a child he knew the Holy Scriptures. In addition to that, we have the apostle saying that "every scripture inspired of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." I want to hesitate here long enough to say this: Anything written in this book is Scripture. It was written by inspired men, but any uninspired Scripture is not worth

the paper on which it is written. It is inspired Scripture that we want to talk about. It is this sort of thing that determines our standard of conduct.

I want to submit to you the fact that we have an advantage over any people who ever lived prior to this time, prior to the time the New Testament was given. People who lived before had to have another to read them the prophets, the law, and the Psalms, and such other things as might come under the Old Testament. Today we have all that written down and circulated, and we have in addition to that the New Testament, which we can buy for just a few cents.

"Every scripture inspired of God," then, "is profitable for doctrine." There is not a religious organization in this world that can exist without doctrine. People now say that they don't like doctrinal sermons. If I preach the gospel, I cannot preach at all without preaching doctrinal sermons. We have come to the point when people say, "We don't like doctrinal sermons," but the Book says that it "is profitable for doctrine." Every Scripture is given by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and it was written by the Spirit of God. If the Scriptures, then, are profitable for doctrine, I believe it would be utterly impossible for any man, under any circumstances, to preach a sermon which would not be doctrinal, unless he would get entirely outside of the Bible. Since every Scripture is profitable for doctrine, then if one Scripture is doctrine, they are all doctrine, and there is no such thing as preaching a sermon that it not doctrinal. Note now: There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible, and every one of them constitutes one doctrine. Every Scripture has some relation, some thought, or some bearing on the doctrine.

Not only are the Scriptures profitable for doctrine, but they are "profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." We need to know how to reprove people. This is the only way to learn how to reprove them. A person who does not know what the Book contains does not know how to reprove people, and most likely will do harm instead of good when he attempts to reprove them. The effort to reprove those in the wrong can do no good if it is not given in the way the Scriptures teach us to offer reproof.

We find that the Scriptures are also profitable for discipline in righteousness, or instruction in righteousness, as one version puts it, to the end that the man of God may be perfect and thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Then there is nothing lacking, nothing wanting. If there is any work to do that is for the good of human life and destiny, it is there for your instruction. Every thought, every word, everything that has to do with human life and destiny must be here, and these are given that "the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." I see no reason or no wisdom in getting outside of the Bible for anything. I have prayed for a long while to be able to say nothing but what God says, and I have used all the powers I have to refrain from saying anything other than what the Bible says. I try never to tell anybody what I think on this question or that, because that is dangerous, and we ought to avoid it. We ought to tell that person just what the Bible says about it, not what we think about it.

When we come back to the verse read in your hearing, we find that the Scriptures were given not only that the man of God might be perfect, but that he might be "throughly furnished unto all good works." That is why we ought to read the Holy Scriptures. My contention is tonight, and shall be forever, that the things written constitute everything necessary to human life and destiny. They are the limit, the length, the breadth, the depth, the height of human activity and concern, when it comes to spiritual affairs.

I read another passage to show you more on this subject. The apostle Paul said to Timothy, "These things I write unto you, hoping to come unto you shortly, but if I tarry long, that you may know how to behave yourself in the house of God, which is the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15.) Proper behavior on the part of the children of God is necessary. It is important that they know how to conduct themselves and deport themselves properly that the whole course of their lives may be acceptable, that the way they walk, every step, everything they do may be acceptable, edifying, uplifting, and free from error. Therefore, Paul wrote these things that we may know how to behave ourselves properly. I think good behavior is essential on the part of God's children. It is necessary on the part of anybody's children, but especially so on the part of the children of

God. I have sometimes felt that God's children ought to read the New Testament more so they would know better how to behave themselves in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you ladies want to know how to make a dress, you go and buy a pattern to make the dress like you want it. You want it to be in style; but if you want to be in style religiously, you had better read God's word and learn how. Buy the New Testament if you want to know how to behave yourselves properly. It won't cost you very much, just a very few cents. If you want to know what to eat or drink, study the menu of Jehovah. If you want to know how to dress and what to wear, read the Bible. If you want to know when to proceed and how, and never make a mistake, read the New Testament. It thoroughly furnishes us to all good works.

The New Testament tells us how to behave ourselves in the house of God. We have this attitude today that God's house is a house like this in which we have assembled tonight. The house of God is the church, and the church is that group of saved men and women who are called out of the world, who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, who have been saved from their sins. It is that group who are a peculiar people, who are isolated, set apart, and separated from the world. I want to tell you, my friends, good behavior on the part of God's children is indispensable, because they are to be "the light of the world," "the city that is set on a hill," "the salt of the earth"; and "if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?"

I want to read you another passage or two dealing with the same question. You know we sometimes see people who think that the things written in the Old Testament are no good, that it is antiquated and out of date and that it has been outlived. Just because anything is in the Old Testament they think that it ought not to concern us at all, but that is not true. I want to read you just a few verses to show you our relation to the Old Testament and show you how indispensable the Old Testament Scriptures are. Listen to the apostle. He says, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4.) This passage is referring to the Old Testament, of course. None of those things written then would help us in becoming a Christian. They do not tell a man how to become a Christian.

We have the story of Abraham, a man of rock-ribbed faith, and of high personal integrity. We have the story of how the world was created. We have lessons in fortitude and moral courage and endurance and obedience. It also points out the faults of those people, the results of sin, its devastation and corruption. These things were "written for our learning" and serve as guide posts for everyone traveling along the road of life. They ought to be read. They should be studied. They are a record inspired by Jehovah of the way those people in Old Testament times conducted themselves, and we ought to be wonderfully benefited by reading it.

I read again from 1 Corinthians 10:3-5. The apostle is talking about the Israelites being baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and he says, "They did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink," for they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and "that rock was Christ." They followed the same pillar of cloud by day and the same pillar of fire by night, "but," the Book says, "with many of them God was not well-pleased." It tells of the things that befell them. Those things are given to us for examples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the end of the world is come. What I am trying to do is to make clear to you that everything that was written was written for our admonition, and we ought to give more time to studying the things written therein. My time shall be given tonight to that proposition, to show you their importance and how impossible it is for men and women to carry on without the "things that are written." In talking about "the things that are written," I am not talking about the writings of men like Shakespeare or Wells or other great writers, but I 'am talking about just those that we have in the Bible.

I would like to refer your attention to another passage, 1 Corinthians 4:6. The verse says, "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other." Some think that it does not matter about a man's learning, his education, whether he has traveled or not, what he has seen, or what he has observed. Indeed, that does not matter. The point I am making (and the passage clearly states this point)

is that you might learn all there is to learn, acquire all that can be acquired, but Paul says we must not think of men beyond that which is written. The preachers today and the church today ought to read and study the New Testament more and more, stay in that, and stay out of everything else. This is the supreme issue of today. We ought to stay in the cradle in which God's children should be nestled, and that, indeed, shall come to be his arm, and this alone is the place of safety. Outside New Testament teaching we cannot go. It does not matter how smart a person is, what he may say, how well he can write in prose or poetry, the Book says, "You must learn not to think of men beyond that which is written." Hence, if anyone comes to you telling you something about the plan of salvation for which he cannot produce testimony in God's word, which you cannot read in the New Testament, pay no mind to it.

I have remarked that, since the New Testament has been completed, since John wrote the last Amen on the lonely Isle of Patmos, there has not been one chapter, there has not been one precept, there has not been one word added. When the apostle wrote the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, it is apparent that he was looking forward to a time when the perfect law is to be in effect. He says, "For now we know in part, and we prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." (Verse 9.) He seems to reach the point exactly when he wrote the fourth chapter of Ephesians, where he goes on to tell us about Jesus' ascending to heaven and giving gifts unto men. "And he gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. 4:11, 12.) These were to last a certain time, "till we all come to a unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto a measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Verse 13.)

I have a copy of the Holy Scriptures in my hand. They constitute the whole plan or the whole scheme of human redemption. We cannot add one word to them; we cannot take one word away from them, for John said that if we add to them, "the plagues written in this book shall be added unto us, and if we take away from them, God shall take away our part out of the book of life, out of

the holy city, and from the things written in this book." (Rev. 22:18, 19.) No, friends, no one has the right to add one thing to the things written herein. When John wrote the last word, the last Amen to the Book on the Isle of Patmos, that closed the Revelation; that closed the Book. I know that there are people all over the world who claim that they have received visions and that they are inspired by Jehovah and try to draw men after them. I don't care if it is the teaching of Mrs. Eddy, Joseph Smith, or anybody else, we cannot accept that. There has not been a word given by inspiration since the New Testament was completed. We have a complete record here. God has put it within the reach of every person in the land. It is printed and circulated for us, and it doesn't cost much.

This same apostle said that in days to come there would be those who would draw men from the faith, and there he sounds a warning to us, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. 4:14.) You will get the point, I believe. When the New Testament was finished, the record was done, and there is nothing further to be added. No church, no preacher, no individual has the right to preach any other doctrine. "Be not," therefore, "tossed about by every wind of doctrine." If you haven't a copy of the New Testament, buy one and see what God has said. See what the ambassadors of Christ, inspired men of God, have had to say on the thing in question. Then that is all there is to it. There are many people who do not rightly handle the Bible, and they seem to feel little responsibility when they come to read it. Peter said this, ". . . even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you, as also in his epistles speaking of them in these things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest as they do also the other scriptures unto their own destruction." (2 Pet. 3:16.)

When the apostle talks about the Holy Ghost, he also uses the word "power." The power of God, in the original, meant dynamite. Dynamite is a fine thing handled rightly; but when it is wrongly used, it is dangerous and destructive. This book was written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. I want to tell you this

evening, my friends, this little Book which I hold in my hand has been dissected, mutilated, and murdered by men all over the world. There are men today who say that they have seen visions, that they have dreamed certain dreams, and they undertake to make people believe that they have been inspired by Almighty God, when it is just their peculiar ideas. The man who does that does it to his own destruction. The place whereon we stand is holy ground; therefore, when we read this book we ought to bow our heads and humble our hearts before it, respecting it as the sacred word of God.

I want to call your attention to another point. Listen to what John says, "Many other signs did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book." (John 20:30.) I don't know what they were. Somebody else might be able to tell us, but I don't believe there is a man in this world who can tell you. If you can, I would be willing to sit at your feet all night, if necessary, to hear about them. If I don't know what they were, I ought not try to tell you. The reason I don't know is found in Deut. 29:29, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and unto our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." Anything that Jesus did in the presence of the disciples which is not written in this Book has nothing in this world to do with our needs, and we don't have to study about it. This is sufficient for us.

I read again: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (John 20:25.) I am sure that you understand, now, that the things written that he did are just a few in comparison with all of the things which he did which are not written.

None of these things have any bearing on us. The things that Jesus Christ did in the presence of his disciples that are written "are written that we might believe, and believing, we might have life through his name." (John 21:31.) I am sure there is enough written to accomplish the purpose for which it was given. If not, then we must accuse God of having made a wonderful and terrible mistake in not recording enough that a man might believe

and have life throughout the adorable and precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to read another passage, Rom. 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." I have taken occasion to use the Revised Version. I would like to remark further that God speaks to us only and exclusively through this Book. In Heb. 1:1 we have these words, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his son." He speaks only through his son to us now. Rom. 10:17 says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." Of course, all of it is the word of God, but the New Testament is a new order. Moses and the prophets spoke the word of God, but they did not tell us how to be saved. God has spoken to us today through the Lord Jesus Christ. Mark these two passages, lay them down side by side, and see how they compare. Of one thing we are certain—the things that Jesus did in the presence of his disciples that are written in this book are written that we might believe the word of God. Notice that the passage said that "faith comes by hearing the word of Christ." I want to make this point just now: The things written constitute the word of the Lord, every bit that is written in this Book that I hold in my hand tonight. That seems to be enough to cover the ground upon that one particular point.

Well, I would like now to read another passage or two. Listen as Jesus talks. The Sadducees were trying to trap him by a question. They said that Moses taught that if a man died childless, his brother should marry the wife and raise up seed unto his brother. There were seven brothers. The first died childless, the second, and the third, and so on down the line, and finally the woman died. They asked, "Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection?" See how Jesus answers them. He said, "You do err not knowing the scriptures or the power of God." (Matt. 22:29.) That is the truth. There is not an error possible from any other standpoint unless a man willingly disobeys and with malice aforethought would violate the word of God. This is our trouble today. "You do err not knowing the scriptures." That is what the Lord Jesus Christ told the Sadducees. He said, "You do err not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God, for in

the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage." If they had known the Scriptures, they would not have made that mistake. You remember the apostle said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15.) You know, I have heard sermons on this passage. I have heard men preach sermons and have seen them plead for right division of the Bible, for the Old Testament and the New, for its subdivisions, for the plan of salvation to alien sinners and to an erring child of God. In my judgment, none of these things even touch the point he has under consideration. To know how to handle every passage, to know how to make the right application, is what he is talking about. We should not take a passage out of its setting and out of its place, away from its surroundings, and make it prove something that God never intended it to mean. That is the point under consideration in this passage.

"You do err, not knowing the scriptures," he says. They say to know them is to study them. That is one reason that I don't believe there is a lesson paper or a human outline of the Bible that covers it substantially. I believe that every child of God owes it to himself and to God to study the Book; for if we follow those other writings exclusively, it will be only a portion of the Scriptures, for they never cover them sufficiently. Every child of God owes it to himself to begin at the first verse in Genesis and read the Bible through, meditating on every word, every phrase, every sentence, every line, every precept, every example, from the very first word in the Book to the last one in Revelation. I am not objecting to human outlines or lesson papers, but the point I am objecting to is that if we depend on them exclusively, there will be many things in the Bible that you never will see and that will never be impressed upon your mind. Let us buckle down and study the Bible with such zeal as will be pleasing to God, until the word of God just filters from your finger tips, so to speak.

There are misuses made of these passages. The one I just read, "You do err not knowing the scriptures," relative to marriage, for example, I have heard men say that we can use mechanical musical instruments now, because the Bible says, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10), and they

say that there are musical instruments in heaven, hence we are justified in using them now. Just think of men making that sort of an argument! It is- exactly as if we said, "We have to do on earth exactly as the redeemed do in heaven." All right, on earth we marry and are given in marriage. According to that argument, then, we would have to quit marrying here, for the Bible says that in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage. If you would apply it that way, then we would have to quit marrying here.

That is not all. I want to read another passage. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." (John 5:39.) I want to read again from the Lord Jesus Christ. He said: "I will not accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, on whom you have your hope. For if ye had believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me." (John 5:45, 46.) I am trying to group these passages together to get you to see how indispensable and how thoroughly important and substantially "that which is written" covers the whole question. Everything that has to do with human life or destiny, condition or circumstance, everything necessary to the worship and service of God, may be suggested or plainly stated in "that which is written."

I want to call your attention to another fact. After Jesus Christ was baptized in the River Jordan at the Hands of John the Baptist, the harbinger of Christ, and a marvelous character, one of the most beautiful scenes, perhaps, in all his lifetime transpired. He had come from Nazareth in Galilee to be baptized. See him pass through that audience and make his wishes known and see that rough preacher, John the Baptist, refuse to baptize him. Hear Jesus say, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he suffered him, and the text says that he was baptized. Then the Spirit of God descended like a dove and rested on him, and then God said: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him." (Matt. 3:17.) Then he was led away from the audience, from the preacher, and from the historic Jordan to be tempted of the devil. I just wanted to get those things before you, because, indeed, we have some fine things we want to point out to you.

Look at him as he climbs to the highest mountaintop with nothing in the way of food, no companion, not the voice of anything but the wild cry of the jackals or the scream of the night birds. He is emaciated, weak, and trembling, having been forty days and nights without food. Look at the Son of God in the fastness of the rocks and the wilderness in solitude. See him pale, weak, trembling, and ready to die. See him as the devil came and said, "If you be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." His reply was, "It is written that man shall not live by bread alone." (Matt. 4:4.) I want to tell you, my friends, if we know what is written in this Book, we can guard ourselves, and we can save ourselves, we can depend upon it in trouble, and none of the devil's temptations shall ever overcome us. If we would be safe in life's journey, we must know this. It is the only thing in the world of which the devil is afraid. Listen to Jesus, "It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that procedeth out of the mouth of God." How easy it would have been for a hungry man, for a man starving to death, to have been persuaded that he would be justified under the circumstances in doing a thing like that; but on what God had not spoken my Exemplar, my Leader, my King, my Lord and yours refused to do. I wish, indeed we could remember that at all times. Further than that, when the next temptation was made, hear him say, "It is written." In the third temptation hear him say the same thing, "It is written."

Now I want to point this out to you. These things have been written since the book of Deuteronomy was completed, after Moses had completed his work and stood on the bank of the river which he would not be permitted to cross, gazing at the land of possibilities and dreams. His eyes are cast on the scene, but he could not cross. He gathered the Israelites around him, and he gave to them his final message and dying speech, if it be right to call it that. Now let me point out that the book of Deuteronomy is the dying declaration of that wonderful man of God. In that book every one of these quotations are to be found that Jesus Christ used in the hour of his peril and temptation, when he met the archfiend and enemy of the human race as one gladiator would meet another in the arena, where "to the victor belong the spoils." How unfortunate a man would have been

there not to have known "that which is written"! A man who was hungry, tempted on every occasion, but who did not know what the Scriptures said, what would have become of him? What would he have done? What would have become of Jesus if he had not been acquainted with "that which is written"? It is not something that is going to be written, but that which is already written, that which God had given to us in the hour of temptation, in the hour when you come to the forks of the road, when you come to the dividing line between truth and error, if you don't know what is written, you are likely to go wrong. Let's begin to pray that whenever we reach that point that God will give us the courage and the wisdom to walk on the side of ascertained truth, be led by "that which is written." Then you cannot go wrong. "That which is written" is the solid ground, the foundation of our hopes, and all that pertains to our future welfare. I want to point out just another thing, turning your attention further into this. I read the story of two men, one a rich man clothed in purple and fine linen, who fared sumptuously every day, and the other a poor man, sick and full of sores, who begged for all that he received. All that he desired was the shakings of the tablecloth. The dogs came and licked his sores, and the Bible says that he died and the angels came and picked up his spirit on the pinions of their snowy white wings and brought him away to the bosom of Abraham. Then the other man, the rich man, died and was buried, and I can just imagine that there were wreaths of flowers all over his casket, and that he was given an ostentatious burial. The Bible does not say that the poor man was even buried at all. The Book goes on to say that "in hell the rich man lifted up his eyes and saw Lazarus afar off in Abraham's bosom." This conversation ensued. "Father Abraham, send Lazarus, and let him dip his finger in water and cool my parched tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. Abraham said: "Son, remember in your life time you had good things and likewise Lazarus evil things. Now he is comforted and thou art tormented." And beside this he said: "There is a great gulf fixed between you. He cannot get to you, and you cannot come to him." When the rich man thought of his brethren back in the world, he said this, "Father Abraham, send Lazarus back to yonder world. I have five brethren back there in the old home. Let him go and tell

them not to come to this awful place of torment." Did you ever think how human that it? He thought of the old home when he was in trouble, the old friends, his family, and his loved ones. After one leaves this life, goes over the great divide into the land from which none ever comes back, he can do us no good; he cannot come back to warn us. Did you ever stop to think about it?

The rich man wanted Lazarus to go back and warn his brethren in the old home, but he could not. Boys and girls, men and women, do you ever think about where you are going now? Do you wait until disease lays hold on you or until you are overtaken by misfortune? What do you think about then? When you have spent all, broken, worn, and weary, then you think of the old home place. When you are in distress, is the very first thought that runs across your troubled mind the thought of the old home? Do you ever think about having an eternal home in the torments and misery of the underworld? Ever think about it? Think about a home there with the knowledge that you will be there forever and ever. There is no hope for relief. That's where the rich man was, and the first thought he has was of the old home and his kinsfolk. You don't want to go there, do you? The rich man asked that Lazarus go back to tell his brethren not to come to that awful place of torment, and Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." He demurred and said, "Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went to them from the dead, they will repent." Then said Abraham, "If they will not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one arose from the dead." Moses had been dead for several hundred years, yet they had that which Moses and the prophets had written, and Abraham said, "Let them hear them." "No, Father Abraham," the rich man said, "but if one went to them from the dead, they will repent." (Luke 16:19-31.) We have the writings of Moses and the prophets, and in addition to that we have the writings of the New Testament, the Holy Spirit giving to us the new law in the New Testament with its two hundred sixty chapters, covering every detail, all the things necessary for our recovery and our redemption.

I want to ask you tonight, what do you think of people now who won't listen to "that which is written"? We have it right at our doors, right at our finger tips, yet we find people turning

away from it to the wide-open spaces, seeking God in ways no man has ever been able to find him. We ought to come to the Book with an earnest heart, with the purpose of seeking and finding, and then we shall find that for which we seek.

Just one more thought, friends. I want to call your attention to this passage. John is writing, and here is what he said, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books according to their works." (Rev. 20:12.) Friends, when you get to that land across which no shadows ever come and stand before the judgment seat of Christ, will you be able to meet the test? When the books are opened, will your life correspond with the things written therein? No man will be judged on points outside. Just the things that are written will decide how far you go and what will be done with you.

Let me ask you if you don't think it would be wise to take the Savior's word and obey him tonight. Won't you be like the tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper, and then won't you continue in this way until the words of your mouth and the meditations of your heart are acceptable to God? Then, in the hour of trouble, when things have gone wrong, when the clouds are dark and lowering, when shadows fall across our pathway, when the winds blow and the thunders roll, when friends forsake and foes deride, we can get this Book and steal away to ourselves and read it for our comfort and consolation. We can then ask the Lord for guidance and say: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (Psalm 23.)

I want to ask you if you won't make use of this opportunity of beginning that life that will make your life happy and help you to find rest when you are weary, contentment and peace when you are troubled. Will you not come and surrender your life to the crucified but risen Lord? I wonder how many in this audience tonight will turn to the Lord. You know Jesus Christ cannot do anything for you unless you are willing to come in faith and trust. He doesn't force himself on anyone. Christ said, "You will not come unto me that ye might have life." (John 5:40.) He stood on Olivet, and when he had exerted every power he had toward his homeland and native city, and said: "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killed the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather a brood, under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. 20:37.) Did you ever watch the old mother hen in a storm as she gathers the little chicks under her wing to protect them? If his own city, Jerusalem, had turned to the Lord, there was not an hour when Christ would not have put his arm around them and protected them from every evil. He would watch over them in every wind that blew, but "they would not." Won't you come to the Lord tonight and let him be your Lord, your Master, and your Exemplar, who will protect you from all harm? Come tonight. How many in this audience will come?

THY WILL BE DONE

All those who are familiar with the study of the Bible will remember that soon after the beginning of the personal ministry of Christ the disciples came to him and asked him to teach them how to pray, as John taught his disciples how to pray. Sometimes we make the mistake of calling that simple prayer, that model, that pattern the Lord's prayer. We have not done a very great injustice to it, but we have not stated the fact. It was simply an example of how the disciples were taught to pray. In it we have this statement, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." And on this the first Lord's day of the year, we want to talk to you on this subject. I think that ought to be the uppermost idea of every heart that is Christian, and until we get that

fixed in our hearts and in our minds, we cannot accomplish a very great deal. The thought is that God's will must be done on earth. No matter what else we may do, it will never contribute to the salvation of our souls. God never can be glorified by all the activities of men until his will is done. Neither can it demonstrate or show it is any work until his will is done on earth as it is in heaven. I take it that he is not here talking about the place where God dwells and the angels gather about his throne, but where the sun and the stars and the moon are—those things that can be beheld by men. And if we can look out and see harmony, the friendship that exists among all the heavenly bodies —no friction, no quarreling, no disturbance whatever—then we might get the idea that is embraced in that wonderfully wise, yet brief, suggestion, that thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. I believe that is the reason Christ came into this world. He never came for any other purpose, and in the hour of death these words were uttered, "I have finished the work thou hast given me to do." These are the words that fell from the lips of the Crucified that day. He came to this earth to do God's will, and he did not go out of it until it was done. On the midnight hour of the night before, when he was facing the cross, when the flesh was shuddering and shrinking, the blood ran down from his brow like sweat, he fell on his face on the ground in dark Gethsemane, and he uttered these words, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, thy will, not mine, be done." Friends, until we have that thought rooted and grounded in us, we never can go far in the service of God. Why do we carry all the sacrifices? Why should we wish to deny ourselves and to live our lives, save only that the will of God may be done? That seems to be the motive, the end of prayer, and the spirit of every disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is molded and shaped by the divine- pattern. When things have confronted us, when things have gone wrong, when eyes weep, and when hearts break, then our thought, our prayer should be, "Thy will, not mine, be done." When Paul was returning from his first missionary tour, when he had put forth the most stupendous effort of any in the whole world to plant the seed of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ; when he had reached Caesarea on his final return, and in the presence of the disciples there he was told by Agabus that bonds

and afflictions awaited him at Jerusalem, and the whole church begged him in tears not to go; and when their begging and pleading was of no avail, they finally ceased and said, "The will of God be done." I would that we might learn that. Why should we do anything save that the Father's will be done? Why should we have any other purpose? Why do anything for any other cause other than that God's "will be done on this earth as it is in heaven"? It would not be a long while until this terrestrial globe would be turned into a celestial paradise. There is nothing else that can wipe the tears away, lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees; neither is there anything else that can be a light to those that are in darkness, and salvation to those who are plunged beneath the waves of sorrow like the sea billows roll save as God's will be done. The glory and the peace and all things that contribute to the peace and happiness of mankind all arise from the doing of the will of God. Then why should we do anything else? Why should the church do anything else? Why should a lover of the Lord Jesus Christ endeavor to do anything else?

Jesus was hungering, and the disciples had gone into the city to buy bread, and when they returned he was in conversation with the woman of Samaria. They were astonished at it, and he said to them, "I have bread to eat that ye know not of," and they did not understand that, and he said, "My meat and my drink, is to do the will of my Father in heaven." (John 4:32-34.) Whenever we learn to sing to do God's will and to pray to do God's will and to work to do God's will, then there is something definite and something certain about it and every lick counts, and the blessings of God shall be poured out on those who thus endeavor. What do we sing for, make a contribution of our means, or attend the meeting of the saints on the Lord's day, such as this day, or at any other time? Only to do the will of God. And when we pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, then there will be no additions and no subtractions, and nothing save to do the will of God, and the language of the Bible, we will winnow out the wheat and save it in the garner of the Lord, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

The stars that twinkle upon night's brow are there beholding in their beauty and order and symmetry and in all the glory that they express. We used to say, "How I wonder what you are, up above the world so high, like 'a diamond in the sky.'" They were there when we were children; they are there today; and when our mortal frames are in the dust, they will still be there, sending their twinkling and imperfect light through the shadows that gather upon this earth. Well, why? To do God's will. They have no choice in it. They are not asked about it. Their will is not consulted. They are driven on in their path of omnipotence. God spoke it, and it was done. But the difference is that we have a choice. He does not drive us on like dumb cattle and objects of inanimate matter, but we have the choice of good or bad, and God always pleads and exhorts that we might choose life that we might live. And so when we bring our wills into subjection to his will, then we will have accomplished the very thing that we have tried to relate.

David coming out of his room at night, beholding the heavens above, the stars and the moon in all their might and glory, no wonder that he exclaimed, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him." The sun and the moon fill their mission; the stars never depart from their course, but they are driven on by omnipotence, day after day and year after year, as long as God sees fit to continue their course, they will do it. But now, what is man that thou art mindful of him? The elements are more glorious, and why should God turn from the mighty and more wonderful and greater things unto an insignificant creature that is likened unto dust and ashes and to a worm, and yet capable of living forever? Because man is out of his place, he has gone astray, he is intelligent enough to choose his course, and God pleads with him to do the will of God. The first disciples were taught to pray like that. The church ought to be taught to pray like that. Our Savior prayed like that. For a man to talk with a tongue of eloquence about these things is admirable, is delightful, but to see a man go out and in silence do the will of God, there is a power and eloquence in it that language does not have. I think it would be well enough for us to learn that. When the psalmist began talking about it he said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Would you not like to de-

clare God's glory? Wouldn't you like to be one that reflects the glory and power of Jehovah? Well, there is only one way to do it, and that is: His will be done. Is that your purpose, your prayer, your aim? Everywhere we are taught to pray as Jesus prayed. Paul wrote in Heb. 10:7. "In the volume of the Book it *is* written of me, I come to do thy will, O God." That is what he came to do, that he might show and tell us how to do it. I know sometimes that our services are put upon a different plane from that. We do things we know not why, and we have no definite end in view. On the other hand, when we come to think about it, we do this because it is God's will, and it is the outstanding thing in our life. It is the only aim we have: to do the will of God. The heavens above make known the glory of God and reveal the power of God. Not only is that so, but we also show his handiwork. We are to do his good work that "God has before ordained that we should walk in them." When we do those works, then the earth, too, shall show the handiwork of God and declare the glory of God. Isn't there a need for it in the spiritual realm? The sun, the moon, the stars, and the earth are all material and physical, and yet he takes that material, physical universe, with this wonderful system we call the solar system, with their attractions and relations to each other, so much in unison and agreement with each other, and they show forth his handiwork. They never say a word, yet they declare his glory. Men do not have to use words to speak sometimes, but they can speak in actions, and actions speak louder than words, and we can declare the glory of God as the heavens do, by showing it in actions.

The sun, the moon, the stars, the earth—just look at the harmony, the agreement, the good will, the fellowship, and every other word we might use to qualify or apply, and yet, when we trace it down to the final analysis, it simply means that they do God's will. Why do wars arise? Just by failure to do God's will. There would never be another war, another cross, another trial, if God's will were done. We would see eye to eye and face to face and be shoulder to shoulder, and thus be builded together, growing together into a building in which God makes his habitation in one body and one Spirit.

I read, in connection with the early church, that there were multitudes of men and women who accepted the gospel. Reading from the fourth chapter of the book of Acts, it says, "They were all of one heart and one soul." -Now, there is but one way in the world to have it. You know the idea of division in the religious world is not a new thing. It began in the very beginning of things, even with Cain and Abel, when one did the will of God and the other did not. God had spoken unto them, and one man adhered to what he said and accepted it, the other did something other than what God had said. In other words, whatever God says now is the will of God now, and no man can do the will of God, and obey the word of God, and not do what the word of God requires.

Jesus prayed that all who believed on him might be one, as the Father and I are one; one in us, is the way he puts it. (John 17:2.) And Peter enjoins, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Pet. 4:11.) And Paul said, in writing to the Corinthian brethren, that they "all speak the same thing, and be perfected together in the same mind and judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10.) Men cannot be one from any other standpoint. And let me further say that if we can get this principle rooted and grounded in us that would relieve the situation greatly, because the things that have divided and made parties in religion are not in the word of God; they are not divided over what God's word contains, but over what it does not contain. People say the Bible does not say anything about it; but it is not a question as to what it does not say, but what it says. Let us remember, the things are not in the Bible that causes the trouble, and Jesus is striking at the taproot when he says, you pray, "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10.) There they only pay attention to what he did say, and what he did say they obeyed. They had no choice, as I explained, and the Book says: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out

of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." (Psalm 19.)

One of the most remarkable flights of oratory in all the Bible is predicated and based on that, when David said, "I beheld the sun, moon, and stars," and then, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4.) Whenever we get men to do God's will, then harmony will prevail. In Matt. 7, when Jesus is about to complete the most remarkable sermon ever preached by anyone, anywhere, launching a discourse that has no time limits, is to every creature in all the ages in all the world until the end of the world; Jesus came to close that remarkable sermon, and he reveals the underlying principles of the church of the living God, the kingdom of heaven, these are the words that he employed, "Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.)

Friends, what does the kingdom of God mean to you? What blessings can you find in God's kingdom that you could not find out of it? The Book says, "It is not meat and drink." Why, of course not, for you can find that elsewhere, but it is "joy and peace in the kingdom of God." (Rom. 14:17.) There are blessings in that kingdom that are incalculable. Every mind that is accountable before God today, and since the New Testament gave the authority, is barred from those blessings and from those fortunes that would have belonged to it only as that man or woman, boy or girl, may do the will of God in heaven. There are those who say, "Lord, Lord, ..." and no one can keep them from it, and no one should try to do it; but he said: "Many will come to me in that day and say, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, depart from me, I never knew you." (Matt. 7:22, 23.) You can do many things that are not in the Bible, but notice the passage says, "I never knew you." God does not recognize it; Jesus does not recognize it, but he says those that "do the will of my Father which art in heaven" will enter the kingdom. Then do his will that you may enter into the kingdom of heaven. That kingdom is wonderful, glorious, and sweet, and in it are blessings that cannot be had outside. No one can enter that kingdom save

those who do the will of God, and no one can remain in that kingdom in Christian integrity and citizenship except as he keeps the law that regulates the subjects that dwell in the kingdom. His word is the law, that is the will of your King, and I wish we could learn it now. That kingdom with its blessings and joys cannot be entered, cannot be appreciated, cannot be bestowed upon men only as they do the will of God. Now, then, let me say this to you, that limits your obedience to the will of God unto a certain point of obedience. There is in some a sort of halfway obedience, and we say, if I never listen to any more, I am all right; but listen, as the will of God is done in heaven, I pray that it may be done on earth. I wonder, then, to what extent those heavenly bodies do the will of God. Then there is still room to work and pray and strive until God's will be done completely on earth as it is done in heaven. That is the meaning of it. Just the same kind of obedience. Can we do that? Well, God says, "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein . . . that man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:25.) And as the writer in Romans said, "And be ye not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is the good and perfect and acceptable will of God." (Rom. 12:2.) Now, that is our purpose, and our only purpose, as far as I know.

We want now to call your attention to another point in this connection. "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (1 Thess. 5:18.) Now this strikes me with much force. It is of interest to us, of course, what the will of God was concerning Abel or Abraham, and the people who lived previous to our era, but the question that strikes me is: what is the will of God concerning you and concerning me? Let the Bible tell us. When Christ was on earth, doing miracles and teaching the people, someone came and said to him. "Behold, your mother and your brethren are outside seeking thee," and he said, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, my sister, and my mother." (Matt. 12:47, 50.) If we hear God's will and do God's will, we are his brothers and his sisters. That is the way he talks about it. Do you see the reason for praying like that, then? We ought, then, to be able to say on

all circumstances, "Thy will, not mine, be done." Is that the way you feel about it when you make your contribution to the Lord? If not, you wait until you get this spirit fixed and grounded. Is that the way you sing? If not, then get this principle rooted and grounded in your heart, then sing. Then you will have enthusiasm and interest and power and everything else that will carry the message of the Most High God to the hearts of those with whom you may associate and come in contact.

Just to make the application clear, suppose, now, that we look at it like this: the will of God concerning you. Here is a man not a member of the church of God. Now, what is the will of God concerning him? That he might be in the kingdom and be the recipient of all of these blessings and enjoy this peace. The Bible says, "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16), and, "If you believe not that I am he, ye shall all die in your sins" (John 8:24). There are many passages that would show the same thing. The Bible says, "unless ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3). God "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (1 Pet. 3:9.) And still another, "If ye shall confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:9, 10.) Now another, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) "Go ye therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19.) "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, unto the remission of your sins." (Acts 2:38.) "When they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." (Acts 8:12.) "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16.)

Now, what is the will of God for those in the world? That they should believe in Christ, and repent, and confess, and be baptized for the remission of sins, and be raised up with him to "walk in newness of life," and "old things are passed away, and ' behold, all things are made new," a new creature, a child of God.

But now suppose a child of God errs, then what is the will of God concerning him? The Book says, "Repent of this thy wickedness and pray God if perhaps the thought of thy heart be forgiven thee." (Acts 8:22.) The Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." (1 John 1:9.) Then, if you are a child of God and sin, God's will is that you shall repent of that specific sin and pray to God for forgiveness.

Now, what is the will of God to those who are living the Christian life and striving to do his will? The Book says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge self-control; and to your self-control patience; and to your patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love." (2 Pet. 1:5-8.) Now, what is the will of God concerning his people in the church? Suppose we look at it like this! What is the will of God concerning worship on the Lord's day? "On the first day of the week the disciples met together to break bread." (Acts 20:7.) "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." (Heb. 10:25.) "And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in prayers." (Acts 2:42.) Now, regarding the contribution, what is the will of God concerning this point if you are a Christian? "Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him." (1 Cor. 16:2.) That is the will of God concerning Christians on that point, and we might continue, on and on, to show you what the will of God is concerning every item of service, and worship, and duty. I might say this, the Bible says, "Whosoever turns away his ear from the hearing of the law, his prayer is an abomination." (Prov. 28:9.)

Today, when we sing, do we do his will? When we break the bread and drink the cup, have we done his will? When we pray, have we done his will? When we contribute of our means, have we done his will? We must link the worship and the will of God together, for nothing else counts. Not everyone that sayeth unto me, "Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.) The power of his will thus will be felt around your city, and county, and state, and the nation, and the world will know about

it. The faith of that little congregation in Rome was spoken of throughout the whole world. And to do the will of God without an addition or a subtraction, that is God's desire. "Who is my mother, my sister, my brethren? They that hear the will of God and do it, the same is my mother, my brother, my sister." Is that your prayer? Is that your life? Is that your aim and your motive? Is that the outstanding thing in you, and around you, in all that you undertake to do?

Now, my friends, we are going to close. I want to ask you this, don't you want to do the will of God? Wouldn't you like to have this old earth to reflect the answer that we show God's glory just as the stars, and moon, and sun do? Can't we do the will of God so that the whole world sees it? Don't you want to do the will of God? We want to extend to you now the will of God, so generous and so complete that we do nothing, and obey nothing, but just what God says, just what God wants you to be and to do. Time is now fleeting. Won't you come today, enter into the family of God, and from now to the day that he calls you from this earth be faithful and true? If you have been careless and fallen by the wayside, I beg you to come back today, come back to the church of God, come back to your friends. If you are a member of God's family here in the city, just drifting around without a church home, come and give us your hand and let us give you ours; let us strike hands over the Bible, and work, and live, and do as the Bible teaches God wants us to do. Come today.

Miscellaneous

ACTS OF APOSTLES

This book is the only historical book of the New Testament. It is the history of the work of the apostles under the directions of the Holy Spirit. It does not contain a complete history of all the work of all the apostles as its accepted name implies. "The Acts of the Apostles" would mean all the acts of all the apostles, which is not true. Instead, it is some of the acts of some of the apostles. If all the things that all the apostles did had been written, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should have been written," as John (21:25) said of the things which Jesus did. But enough has been written to serve the purpose of Jehovah. If one would not be convinced as to what conversion is, how it is effected, what part God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the apostles have in it, he would not "be persuaded though one arose from the dead." It has been said that Acts is "the gospel of the Holy Spirit." It is the book of conversions. It is here, and here only, that we have conversion set forth, simplified in detail. All the books of the entire Bible have some bearing and sustain some relation to salvation, but here, and here alone, is the question asked and answered fully and completely, which answer, when obeyed, brings the sinner for the first time into the name of Jesus Christ and remission of sins through the blood of Jesus.

This, then, is conversion by the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit was upon the apostles and guided them unerringly into all the truth. Acts of the Apostles contains a brief history of the results. The first verse of this wonderful book tells that before Jesus was taken up he "gave commandments through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen." This verse also tells us that the book of Luke tells of what "Jesus began to do and teach until the day in which he was taken up"—that is, his ascension. After that, Acts tells what happened. Then Acts is a continued story begun by Luke in the book of Luke. Acts begins, therefore, where Luke ends—just lapped enough to tie the two together. Therefore, the chronological setting of this book is correct, as it is

placed in our Bibles. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are written for the same purpose—that is, that people might "believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then Acts is for the purpose of telling those who believe what to do to become Christians, members of the body of Christ, which is the church. The twenty-one letters that follow were written to tell Christians how to worship God acceptably and to live the lives of Christians. Revelation gives the faithful, toiling, suffering Christian glimpses of the future for his encouragement and consolation.

THE PART THE APOSTLES PLAY IN SALVATION

There is God, Christ, the apostles, and the Holy Spirit in the order mentioned. First, God gave his word to Christ and sent him into the world. So Jesus said: "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12:49, 50.) Second, Christ gave his Father's word to the apostles and sent them into the world. "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15.) "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." (John 17:18.) "I have given them the words which thou gavest me." (John 17:8.) Third, God sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles to guide them in giving it to us without error. "He [the Holy Spirit] shall testify of me." (John 15:26.) "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49.) And, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8.) Then we have it: God sent Christ, Christ sent the apostles. God commanded Christ, and Christ commanded the apostles, and then sent the Holy Spirit upon them to guide them unerringly in speaking and teaching this commandment to the whole creation. The Acts of the Apostles contains what the Holy Spirit taught sinners to do for remission of their sins, or salvation, or how to become Christians.

**HOW CHRIST REGARDS THE WORK OF THE APOSTLES ACTING
UNDER THE GREAT COMMISSION AS THEY WERE**

GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:19.) "Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained." (John 20:23.) "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matt. 10:40.) "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (John 13:20.) "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me." (Luke 10:16.) "We are of God [that is, we apostles]: he that knoweth God heareth us [the apostles]; he that is not of God heareth not us [the apostles]. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." (1 John 4:6.) "If any man think himself to be a prophet [that is, a teacher], or spiritual [that is, full of the spirit), let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. 14:37.) "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both by signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will?" (Heb. 2:1-4.) "And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. 5:18-20.)

These passages teach: To receive God we must receive Christ. To receive Christ we must receive the apostles. To receive the

apostles we must receive what they taught. To despise the apostles is to despise Christ, and to despise Christ is to despise God. To despise is to disregard or set at naught what they taught. To hear the apostles is to hear Christ. To hear Christ is to hear God. The apostles are of God. To know God is to hear the apostles. By hearing the apostles we know the Spirit of truth. By hearing the apostles we know the spirit of error. The great salvation was first spoken by Christ and was confirmed unto us by them who heard Christ. There is no escape if we neglect what the apostles taught. Anyone who thinks himself a prophet or spiritual must acknowledge that what Paul and the other apostles wrote are the commandments of God. Christ gave the apostles the ministry of reconciliation. He also gave the apostles the word of reconciliation, and the apostles are the ambassadors of Christ. They were, therefore, in the stead of Christ and praying the world to be reconciled unto God. How, then, can one be saved in ignorance of the Acts of the Apostles? Anyone who neglects Acts, therefore, "neglects the great salvation." Where else would you find the questions: "What must we do?" "Lord, what will you have me to do?" and "What must I do to be saved?" Where else would you go to find the answers to these questions, respectively?: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"; "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." He was told by the Lord to go into the city, and there it would be told him what he *must* do. So, then, if the reader thinks he can be saved without being baptized, he provokes a controversy with Christ, not with me. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts of the Apostles contains these answers, and they can be found nowhere else. "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." And when "they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women." In the midst of this great meeting God told Philip, by an angel, to arise and go to a road which runs from Jerusalem to Gaza. Upon reaching this road a man from Ethiopia was passing by in his chariot reading the scripture. The Spirit said to Philip, Go and join yourself to the chariot. He did so, and said to the man, "Do you understand

what you read?" The man said, "How can I except some man should guide me?" He invited Philip up into the chariot and said unto him, "Was the man talking of himself or of some one else?" Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus, and as they went on their way they came to a certain water. The eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me from being baptized?" Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The chariot was stopped, they both got out of the chariot, they both went down into the water, and he baptized him. They both came up out of the water. The Spirit caught the preacher away, and the baptized eunuch went on his way rejoicing. This full and simple case of conversion is found in the eighth chapter of Acts of Apostles. We make this discovery also in the study of this book: That the preacher and the one to be converted came together. The preacher began by preaching unto him or teaching him, and ended by baptizing him. Every recorded case of conversion in Acts records this simple fact.

THE DIVISIONS OF ACTS

The first chapter of Acts tells what took place from the ascension of Christ to the descension of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The next six chapters give the history of the work in Jerusalem for the first two years of the church's existence. These six chapters tell of the happenings on Pentecost when the first gospel sermon in fact was preached, the conversion of the three thousand, the healing of the cripple at the beautiful gate of the temple, the sermon in Solomon's porch, and the number of men were augmented to five thousand. It contains, also, the Sanhedrin examining the apostles by what authority or by what name they had healed the crippled man, the episode of Ananias and Sapphira, the complaint that the Grecian widows were being neglected in the daily ministrations, and the appointment of seven men to look after the needs of these Hellenistic Jews, the speech of Stephen, and the stoning of him to death.

The next four chapters tell of the scattering of the disciples, of Philip preaching in Samaria, the conversion of the Samaritans, of Simon the sorcerer, of the apostles sending Peter and John down from Jerusalem that they might receive the Holy Spirit, of

the sin of Simon, of Philip preaching to the eunuch on the highway and baptizing him, of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, of Peter making a tour through the upper part of Palestine, healing a cripple at Lyda, of being called to Joppa at the death of Dorcas, where he abode certain days. Also, how he was sent for to come to Caesarea, the conversion of Cornelius and his house, of Peter being examined for going to one of another nation, of Barnabas being sent to Antioch in Syria, of his going to Tarsus to get Saul, and of the church sending them to Jerusalem to carry certain aid to the famine stricken; also, of the death of James, and the imprisonment of Peter, the prayers offered for him, and the whole church praying all night, and Peter's miraculous deliverance from prison.

THE FIRST MISSIONARY TOUR OF PAUL

Beginning with Acts 13:1 to Acts 14:28. This journey began about 45 A.D. and lasted to about 50 A.D., or approximately five years. Barnabas and Saul started from Antioch in Syria, down the Orontes River to Selucia, thence by ship to the island of Cyprus, landing at Salamis. Then through the entire length of the island to Paphos. Here the first Roman officer of high rank, so far as the scripture relates, became obedient to the faith. His name was Sergius Paulus. Elymas, the sorcerer, withstood Barnabas and Saul, but to no avail. Soon after this Saul was called Paul. Always after this, with but few exceptions, it was Paul and Barnabas.

From Paphos they went to Perga in Pamphylia. It was here that John Mark, who had been in the company, deserted and did not go with them to the work. The passes of the Pisidian Mountains were fearfully dangerous, and perhaps John Mark was afraid or homesick. At least he turned back to his home in Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas, however, were unmoved by the seeming dangers of the wild passes of the Pisidian Mountains, came to Antioch in Pisidia, where they preached the word of God. They then came to Iconium, then to Lystra, where Paul was stoned, then to Derbe and regions round about. They then retraced their course to Lystra, Iconium, Antioch in Pisidia, Perga, Attalia, where they took ship and sailed to Antioch in Syria, where they had been "recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled." Arriving at Antioch, they "gathered the church together"

and "rehearsed all that God had done with them." (Acts 13:26, 27.) "And there they abode a long time with the disciples."

WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND

MISSIONARY TOURS OF PAUL

Certain men came down from Judea and said: "Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles about this question." (Acts 15:1, 2.) "And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them." (Acts 15:4.) But there were certain of the sects of the Pharisees who contended that the Gentile Christians should be circumcised, and that they should be commanded to keep the law of Moses. When the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter, after there had been much disputing, Peter rose up and declared how God had chosen him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and how they "should hear the word of the gospel, and believe," and how God "bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us," and how he "made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith." He concluded then that they should not tempt God by putting a yoke upon the "neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear." When Peter concluded his address, all the multitude gave audience to Paul and Barnabas as they told of the work which God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. After Paul and Barnabas had finished, James spoke. He referred to the speech of Peter and his visit to the house of Cornelius, and thereby God took "out of them a people for his name." He declared that this agreed "with the words of the prophets." (Amos 9:11, 12.) This, then, is the fulfillment of the promise of God, "I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down! and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things," (Acts 15:15-17.) So the tabernacle of David was not rebuilt of the seed of Abraham after the flesh, but of the spiritual seed,

Christians, taken from the Gentiles; all who do what God commands. James suggested a letter to be sent to Antioch which contained four points, "that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." It then added, "from which if you keep yourselves, ye shall do well." This letter was prepared by "the apostles and elders and brethren," and "pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church" to send the epistle by chosen men of their own company, with Paul and Barnabas, who would "tell you the same things by mouth." Thus ended the contention over the question of circumcision in the Antioch congregation. "Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also." (Acts 15:35.)

THE SECOND MISSIONARY TOUR OF PAUL

"And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." (Acts 15:36.) Barnabas was determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. Paul thought it not good to take him with them, because he had departed from them on their first tour from Pamphilia. The contention was so sharp that they departed asunder. So Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus. Paul took Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. He went "through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches." They then came to Derbe and Lystra and picked up young Timothy, who was well reported of by the brethren in Lystra and Iconium. Him Paul took and circumcised because of the Jews in those quarters. They passed through the cities, delivering unto them the decrees that were ordained by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. So the churches were "established in the faith, and increased in number daily." Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were "forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia," after they were come to Mysia "they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not." This shows clearly that they were being led by the Spirit, and that they were perfectly obedient to the Spirit's directions. They passed Mysia and came to Troas. It was here that Paul had a vision in the

night. A man of Macedonia appeared unto him and prayed him to "come over into Macedonia, and help us." After he had seen the vision, "immediately we endeavoured to go," understanding that the Lord had called them to preach the gospel unto them. This is the first time the writer of Acts joins the company. For the first time he used the pronoun "we." Luke, the writer of Acts, therefore, joined Paul and his company at Troas for the first time. They loosed from Troas and came to Neapolis in two days, from which place they moved into Philippi, the chief city and a colony. They were in that city certain days, and on the Sabbath they went out of the city by a riverside where prayer was accustomed to be made, and Paul spake to the women who resorted thither. God opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended to the things spoken of Paul. Thus we have the first convert on European soil, so far as we know. Lydia was away from home and on expenses, but it did not keep her from observing the Sabbath. She did not know of Christ and the New Testament. God has always shown an interest in those who are faithful to what they believe. To mention some we note: Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius, and the Ethiopian eunuch. Lydia and her kind mean something to the church when they are converted. People who are not true to what they believe will not be true to the gospel, perhaps. After Lydia's conversion, a girl who was possessed with the spirit of divination followed Paul and Silas daily, saying, "These men are the servants of the most high God who show unto us the way of salvation." There are many sane people who do not know that. If people ever learn the truth, it must be shown them by the inspired men of those times. That is what Paul meant when he said, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," but we have it in the New Testament now. So the inspired men had to show it unto the people. But we can take the New Testament now and find it out. When Paul rebuked the spirit in her and commanded the spirit in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her, and it was so. "When her master saw the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market place before the rulers," where they charged them with troubling the city and teaching customs which is unlawful for them to receive, being Romans. These false charges so enraged the multitudes and magistrates till they rent their clothes and

commanded them to be beaten. When they had laid many stripes on them, they thrust them into prison and gave orders to the jailer to keep them safely. He having received such a charge, put them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks. At midnight they sang and prayed, and the prisoners heard them. An earthquake came, the foundations of the prison were shaken, and every man's bands were loosed, and all the doors were opened. The jailer, awaking out of his sleep, supposed that all the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and would have killed himself, but Paul cried: "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." He called for a light and came trembling, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" This is the greatest question ever expressed in human language. The answer was: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." So he "spake unto them the word of the Lord." For no man can believe without hearing, and no one can hear without the word of God. (Rom. 10:17.) No one can be saved without he calls upon God. (Rom. 10:13.) No one can call upon God who does not believe. No one can believe who does not hear, and hearing comes by the word of God. (Rom. 10:14-17.) Therefore, it was necessary to speak unto them the word of the Lord. Since it pleased God by the "foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21), it is still necessary to preach the word to the whole world. Then it is said: "He took them the same hour of the night, . . . and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." Then he brought them into his house. Note that they were not in the prison when the question was asked, "What must I do to be saved?" for he brought them out first. Then they spake unto them the word of the Lord—to all that were in his house. Then he took them, and was baptized, and then brought them into his house. Therefore, he brought them out of the prison into his house, from which he took them to the place of baptizing, and after this he brought them into his house. All of this shows that they were not in the prison when they were baptized. It has been argued in support of "sprinkling" and "pouring" for baptism that he could not have been immersed in the prison. This shows conclusively that such argument is without foundation in fact. But they say there was no water even

near by. A little reading will show differently. There was a river near by, not over three-fourths of a mile away, for Lydia and her company went out of the city on the Sabbath day by a riverside where prayer was wont to be made. She was a Jewess and observed the law which forbade a journey over this distance on the Sabbath—in other words, a Sabbath day's journey. The next morning Paul forced those who had mistreated them to come themselves and fetch them out of the prison. After they had visited Lydia's house and comforted the brethren, they departed and passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, then they came to Thessalonica and went to the Jewish synagogue. Here for three Sabbath days he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus, "whom ... I preach unto you is Christ." As a result, some believed and consorted with Paul and Silas, as well as a great multitude of devout Greeks and chief women. But the Jews, moved with envy, gathered a company of the "lewd and baser sort" and set all the city in an uproar. They assaulted the house of Jason, where seemingly Paul and Silas were lodging, but they found them not. They drew Jason and certain of the brethren before the rulers and charged that they had "turned the world upside down," and Jason had received them. They further charged that they "all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar" by "saying that there is another king, one Jesus." The people and the rulers of the city were troubled when they heard these false charges, and they put Jason under bond and let the rest go.

The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas by night unto Berea, who went at once into the synagogue of the Jews. "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so." This resulted in many of them believing as well as a great number of the honorable women of the Greeks as well as men. But when the Jews heard that the word of God was being preached at Berea, they came from Thessalonica and stirred up the people. The devil and his angels are opposed to preaching the word of God. One can preach anything else and will meet no opposition from Satan. So if the men of God wish to oppose him, "preach the word" in every place and

always. Nothing else will put Satan to flight. Nothing else will save the world. In the days of inspired men they preached the word to convert men; so, also, in the days of the inspired Book we should do the same with an enthusiasm and zeal unparalleled. It will take this to save the church, as well as alien sinners. Immediately the brethren sent Paul away, but Silas and Timothy remained in Berea. When Paul reached Athens, he sent for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed. While Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him because the city was given wholly to idolatry. He, therefore, disputed with the Jews in their synagogue and with the devout persons. Also, he was in the market places daily disputing with them that met with him. "Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him." Some said, "What will this babblers say?" Others said, "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Jesus and the resurrection." They brought him unto Areopagus and asked him about this new doctrine "for you bring strange things to our ears." For the people spent their time only to tell or hear some new thing. It was at this time that Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and delivered one of his masterful addresses on the subject of "The Unknown God." (Acts 17:22-31.) Space forbids that we give the particulars of this address. When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, but others were more reasonable and said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." However, certain men believed, among whom was Dionysius, and a woman named Damaris, with others. Paul departed from Athens and came to Corinth. He met Aquila and Priscilla, who had been commanded to leave Rome. Paul abode with them, and they were not only Christians but tentmakers also. Thus these three, being of the same craft, formed the nucleus of this congregation in this great metropolitan city. They continued here for at least eighteen months, preaching and teaching the word of God." "When the Jews opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go to the Gentiles." He then entered into the house of Justus, whose house joined hard by the synagogue. Crispus believed on the Lord with all his house. Many of the Corinthians also believed and were baptized.

We also know that Crispus was baptized, because Paul said he baptized him himself. (1 Cor. 1:14.) It was here that God told Paul to "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." They brought Paul before Gallic, who was the deputy of Achaia. The Jews made insurrection against Paul, saying, "This fellow persuadest men to worship contrary to the law." When Paul was about to speak, Gallic interrupted him and said to the Jews, "I will have nothing to do with such matters as pertain to your law," and "he drove them from the judgment seat." After this, the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallic cared for none of those things. After Paul had remained there a good while, he took his leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria with Aquila and Priscilla, whom he left at Ephesus. After speaking in the synagogue, Paul departed for Jerusalem, and he sailed from Ephesus. When he landed at Caesarea, he went up, that is, to Jerusalem, and saluted the church. Then he went down to Antioch. It was always *up* to Jerusalem and *down* from Jerusalem.

HIS THIRD MISSIONARY TOUR

After he had spent some time there, he departed and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. In the meanwhile a certain Jew named Apollos, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus, but knowing only the baptism of John. When Aquila and Priscilla had heard him, they took him unto themselves and expounded unto him more perfectly the way of the Lord. Apollos went to Corinth, and while he was there Paul, passing through the upper coast, came to Ephesus. Here he found certain disciples. He said unto them: "Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?" They answered, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." Paul said, "Unto what then were you baptized?" They said, "Unto John's baptism." Paul explained that John baptized the people who were to look to Christ when he came, but since he has come, John's baptism was no longer valid. Hence they were commanded to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, for "for there is salvation in no other name known among men." (Acts 4:12.) After Paul had imparted some spiritual gifts to them by the

laying on of hands, he "went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when many were hardened and believed not, but spake evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. This continued for two years till all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus." Also God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul. Garments were carried from the body of Paul to the sick, and they were healed, and evil spirits went out of them. "Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." There were seven sons of the chief priest who did so. The evil spirit said: "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" The man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them and overcame them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. When this was known to all the Jews, fear fell on them all, and the name of Jesus was magnified. Many of those who believed confessed and showed their deeds. Many of those who practiced these curious arts brought the books and burned them, and found the price of them to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. After this episode "there arose no small stir concerning the Way." Those who made idols for their temple Diana, led by one Demetrius, said: "Sirs, you know by this craft we have our wealth. You see not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands. So not only our craft is in danger, but the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipping." On hearing this, "they were filled with wrath, and began to cry out, great is Diana of the Ephesians." This continued till the town clerk made a speech to quiet them and dismissed the assembly. Immediately Paul left for Macedonia, and when he had gone over those parts he came into Greece.

Paul remained in Corinth some three months, where he wrote Romans and Galatians. As he was about to return there were

certain Jews lying in wait to kill him. He therefore went by the way of Macedonia as the rest of his company went another way. At Philippi he was joined by Luke, and his company waited for them at Troas. He remained there over the Lord's day where the disciples met together to break bread. They met on the first day of the week—manifestly what we call Saturday night, as the Sabbath ended at six o'clock, or sundown, and the first day of the week began immediately. Paul was long-speaking, and a man overcome by sleep fell from the window and was taken up dead. Paul restored him to life. When they had come up into the place of meeting "he broke the bread" and continued his speech till the break of day, ready to depart on the morrow. They met together on the first day of the week to break bread, and I am persuaded they did what they came together to do. Since it was after midnight, it was not on Monday morning, as some have said, but on the first day of the week. It should be observed that it was sometime after midnight, and before sun-up, that Christ was raised from the dead. It was about the same time that Eutychus was raised to life again, and the Lord's supper was eaten by them. Leaving Troas the next morning, he came to Miletus, where he called for the elders of the church at Ephesus and delivered his solemn charge to them. He rehearsed his conduct while he had been with them from the first day he came into Asia. He told them he had not shunned to declare all the counsel of God unto them, and, therefore, he was "pure from the blood of all men." He warned them that after his departure grievous wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the flock. Even men would arise from among themselves, speaking "perverse things to draw away the disciples after them." For that reason he charged those elders, whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers, "to feed the church of God which he has purchased with his own blood." A failure upon the part of the overseers of congregations today to feed the church has meant the downfall of many. Many times the men appointed to the overseership of the congregations are not able in word or deed to feed or tend the church. They are appointed, not because they are qualified, but for other reasons—often for political reasons. The result is, we have a set of dictators rather than shepherds to tend the flock. In such appointments often the third chapter of First Timothy and the first chapter

of Titus are not considered any more than if they were not in the Bible. Only calamity will follow when the Bible teaching is thus ignored. The last thing Paul said to them was to commend them to the "word of his grace." When he wrote young Timothy the qualifications of elders to be appointed, he said, I am writing these things to you so you may know how to "behave yourself in the house of God." Therefore, any who do not follow his instructions as given to Timothy are not behaving themselves in the church as they should. Brethren, let's follow the Bible in all things. Let us stop building up machines to the disgrace of the church.

In taking his leave of them they all wept sore and fell on Paul's neck, weeping most of all for the words which he said, "You shall see my face no more." When they prayed he took ship. They "landed at Tyre; for the ship was to unlade her burden." He found disciples and tarried seven days. These disciples said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem. When the seven days were accomplished, "we departed and went on our way." All the disciples, "with their wives and children," accompanied them to the seashore, where they kneeled down on shore and prayed. They stopped next at Ptolemais and saluted the brethren and abode with them one day. The next day they departed and came to Caesarea and entered into the house of Philip, the evangelist, who was one of the seven, who had four daughters who were virgins and did prophesy. While they tarried there several days a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Jerusalem. He took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet and said, "So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." Then the whole company besought Paul "not to go up to Jerusalem." Then Paul answered, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." When they discovered that their begging him availed nothing, they ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done." Shortly after his arrival in Jerusalem he was arrested on a false accusation. He was sped away to Casarea for safe keeping, for certain of the Jews had vowed to kill him. From our viewpoint it would be tragic to take this great preacher from the field of

evangelism and confine him as a prisoner. However, this gave him opportunity that he never could have had without it. His speeches before Festus, Felix and Drusilla, and Agrippa are gems and outstanding. In order to save himself from the Jews he was forced to appeal to Caesar. So after two years he sailed for Rome. It was autumn, and the danger of the storms at sea was apparent. Paul's advice was not taken, and as a result they experienced a terrible storm. But it was here again that Paul's influence was again seen. God gave to him all that were on the ship. The ship was wrecked, and all were saved on the island of Melita—Malta, now. It was here he demonstrated the power of God over disease and the bite of the serpent. After three months here, he again sailed for Rome. On reaching Rome he was permitted to hire a house and teach the word of God. This continued for two whole years. During this time he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon. Before he was arrested he wrote First and Second Thessalonians from Corinth on his second missionary tour. He also wrote First Corinthians from Ephesus on his third tour, Second Corinthians from Macedonia on the third tour, and both Galatians and Romans from Corinth on the third tour. After he was liberated he wrote First Timothy and Titus before he was re-arrested. He wrote Second Timothy while imprisoned the last time. There is no definite proof that he wrote Hebrews at all. He was still in prison at Rome when Luke concluded the book of Acts.

SOLOMON'S ADVICE TO THE YOUNG

The importance of beginning the Christian life while young is apparent to all thoughtful persons. Of course, one must be old enough to understand, but just as soon as one is sufficiently developed mentally is the proper and best time. The reason given by Solomon is, "before the evils days come or the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." (Eccles. 12:1.) Therefore the longer one lives in sin, the harder it is to quit it. Sin hardens the heart. Then, too, after a long practice in sin, habits form to which we are slaves. It amounts to a bondage. It was this condition that brought Christ into the world. In his own words, he came "to open the prison door and set the captives

free." Sin is the most terrible taskmaster and crudest slave driver at all. It has no mercy and never lets up.

Therefore, from the time of one's accountability to God to the end of his life on earth he should understand that the "whole duty of man" is to "fear God, and keep his commandments." (Eccles. 12:13.) No other thing is any part of his duty. Then why should we be troubled about things not commanded by the Lord? The "whole" of anything is all of its parts. To leave one thing out that God commands is not to do your whole duty. To put one thing in that God has not commanded is still not to do your whole duty. The reason given for this is best expressed in the very words of the Bible, "For God will bring every work into the judgment with every secret thing whether it be good or bad." (Eccles. 12:14.) The New Testament also says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. 5:10.) Therefore, the exhortation to "flee youthful lust" {2 Tim. 2:22), and "young men exhort to be sober minded" (Tit. 2:6), or else we cannot remember our Creator in the days of our youth.

The beginning of this fearful course is in the home, no doubt. As terrible as it may seem, it is a fact. The first command with promise is to honor thy father and mother. (Eph. 6:1-3.) Children are reared without proper discipline today and speak and treat their fathers and mothers very ugly—even in a spirit of rebellion against this command of the Lord. Children need to be taught the proper respect for their seniors, and especially of their own fathers and mothers. This means eventually the breaking down of the homes and the destruction of the church. The children of the homes come into the church when they come to be older and bring with them the same spirit of rebellion. They have never known how to deport themselves in the home and as a result will not know how to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church.

I have been suspicious of what is called the young people's meetings for a long while. Such divides the church into parties more or less and will eventually show such. From this standpoint the various societies and "Christian Endeavors" have come into existence. These things are but the beginning of trouble

for the purity of the church in doctrine and practice. It soon will be but another denomination. I recall that the organ was worked into the church through the children of the church. It was argued that the Sunday school is no part of the church, and therefore we can use the organ. When those children who were thus trained came into the church, they brought the organ with them. Just so today in these young people's meetings where the girls are trained to speak publicly. When they come into the church later, women preachers will be the result. Look at the "Christian Church" today with its women pastors! Where did they come from? Certainly not from what the Bible teaches, but rather from just such practices as are described above. So, also, all other innovations get into the church—not by divine approval, but by human practices which are untaught in the Holy Book.

When these things happen to a congregation, it is as hard for them to ever break away from it as for one who has grown up in sin from his or her youth. They get to the place where the gospel loses its appeal, and by their sinful course their senses are deadened. It is described by inspiration, "this people's heart is waxed gross." (Matt. 13: IS.) As a result they cannot see with their eyes nor hear with their ears. Did you ever hear anyone say, "I can't see it that way"? And again, "We can't understand the Bible alike"? What is the matter? Just the thing we are talking about. The heart has grown to be gross, and that by sinful practices. These practices begin in youth and continue through the years. Therefore, the wisdom in the exhortation to "remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." The evil days are those days which are sure to come when you will have no pleasures in the church or any of its services. Why? Because sin has destroyed your love for God and things divine. Satan has enthroned himself in the throne chamber of your soul, and as a result your only and greatest desire is the gratification of animal appetite. No wonder the apostle said: "To be carnally [fleshly] minded is death." (Rom. 8:6.) The carnal mind is not "subject to God's law," and "to be carnally minded is death." The tragic thing about it is, we have been taken captive by Satan at our own will. We have surrendered to him who is the archfield and enemy of the whole human race, and that to the destruction of the church for which the Lord gave his life. Certainly we did not mean it

that way, but that is what has come to pass. So, then, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. 8:8.) We must begin at the cradle, or even before the children come, to avoid the awful catastrophe. All the human doctrines and organizations cannot prevent the damnation of souls and the destruction of the church. We must return to the divine order or else we perish.

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

A Christian in the broad sense is anyone who believes in Christ—all those who recognize Jesus Christ as Lord, whether they do what he says or not. From this standpoint the United States is regarded as a Christian nation, yet more than half of its subjects do not use the name of Christ at all. This broad, loose use of the word "Christian" we do not approve. To be a Christian means something definite. This is self-evident, for there are but two classes of people, viz.: the Christian and non-Christian. Therefore, to be a Christian is to be in opposition to the world and sin. Yet one might oppose the world and fight sin and not be a Christian. There are, therefore, many good people who are not Christians, but there are no Christians who are not good. To be good is fine, but to be a Christian is much better. To be a Christian, then, is to be a man or woman of faith, of hope, and of love. To be content, to be only good and do good, we will fall short of being a Christian. Christianity is a life and not a bare theory, and the life is to be according to the law of the Lord, unmixed with anything. A Christian, then, is the purest and the best. He is the light of the world and the salt of the earth. By his pure, faithful life he is to lead souls from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. To be a Christian is to be an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ and, therefore, to be a child of God. To be a child is to be an heir and, therefore, share in the Father's estate. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." (Prov. 24:1.) God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." (Eph. 3:20.) His wealth, then, is unsearchable and inestimable as received by a child of God—a Christian—and an heir of all these things. But, also, to be a Christian is to be a joint heir with Christ. That is, "all thine is mine and mine is

thine." It cannot be divided; it is ours jointly to have and to hold forevermore.

To be a Christian one must be redeemed. Redeemed means to 'buy back. The price paid was the blood of Christ. (1 Pet. 1:19.) Then by the blood of Christ one is redeemed, bought back, saved from his past sins, pardoned, forgiven, his sins washed away, cleansed from all sins, the debt has been paid, and his sins remitted. To be a Christian, then, is to be saved, washed, redeemed, forgiven, a new creature, dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, whose treasure is in heaven, whose home is in heaven, whose life is hid with Christ in God, who lives "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Tit. 2:12), as he denies himself of all "ungodliness and worldly lust," who "loves neither the world nor the things that are in the world," for he has been "buried" with his Lord "by baptism into death" (Rom. 6:4), and has been raised "with him to walk in newness of life," all "the old things are passed away," and "all things have become new," "having obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17), "ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:22).

Now, be it remembered that the blood of Christ redeems and that the blood is reached in Christ—in his death—and we are baptized into Christ—into his death. (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3.) Hence, baptism is the crowning act of obedience by which we are translated into the "kingdom of the son of his love in whom we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:13.) Note, we are "baptized into Christ," "into his death," "into the name of Christ," as well as "into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19) "for the remission of sins." Then a Christian is not one who believes only, or believes and repents only, but is one who believes, repents, and is baptized for the remission of sins, baptized into Christ, baptized into his name, baptized into his body which is the church. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) Baptism, then, is the dividing line between the world and the church, the believer and the unbeliever, the old life and the new life, the saved and the lost. The Christian does not stop at this, but presses on to higher ground whose life is only that which "becomes the gospel," controlling his appetites and carnal desires,

denying himself and bearing the cross for Jesus' sake, remaining faithful unto death, and receiving the crown of life which fadeth not away. To the Christian there "abideth faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13:13.) And "this is the love of God that you keep his commandments." (1 John 5:2.) This do and you shall be a Christian and nothing else while you live and go to heaven when you die.

ELDERS

Both in the Old Testament and the New Testament we have much said about elders. In the light of these passages we should get a clearer conception of the Bible teaching on this important question. I am convinced that much erroneous teaching has been done on the subject. The church today is greatly hampered in its work by this false teaching.

First of all, it takes age to make elders. Nothing else can. Even then we should know that it takes more than age to make elders overseers of the work. All overseers are elders, and, therefore, sometimes they are spoken of as elders. The reason elders were not appointed in some of the New Testament churches at the first was, no doubt, there were none qualified. But after those who are qualified are selected and appointed, they become overseers and deacons, but not till then. Of course, they were elders still, and it is not surprising if we find them called elders, though elders mean age and not office. We called President Grant general because he was a general before, and not because president and general are equivalent terms. So likewise with elders and overseers. Overseers are sometimes called elders because they were elders before and not because overseer and elder are equivalent terms. Neither are the terms synonymous, for elder means age, and overseer or bishop means oversight.

I think we can get some wisdom from what Moses did in selecting seventy elders to assist in the judging of Israel. He was told to "gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people." Then notice how careful God was to state their qualifications. Here is what he said: "Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and

place such over them," etc. (See Ex. 18:21, 22.) Again, of these men who were selected it is said: "Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee." (Deut. 16:19, 20.) Should the churches be as careful today and follow as explicitly the instructions, we would not only have better churches, but would avoid much of the trouble that afflicts the cause everywhere. The churches of Christ in many cases ignore the word of the Lord when they want to appoint elders. The result is hazardous to the church in the end. Men are often appointed who are not married, who have no believing children, who are not able to teach and who have an unsavory report among the people. Politics are played and cliques built up in the face of the very plain orders of the Lord. (See 1 Tim. 3 and Tit. 1.) There are some things which cannot be learned from books. They cannot be told in word. They must, therefore, be learned by actual experience. Therefore, the old men are to be selected. Growth, experience, and development are indispensable to leadership in the church. It takes time, therefore. The idea is always expressed in the word elder.

Another lesson from the Old Testament just here should serve a good purpose. When Solomon was dead and Rehoboam came to be king and trouble arose over taxation, the people came to their new king and asked for relief. He told them to come back in three days for his decision. In the meanwhile he called for the old men who had been with his father. They gave him their advice. He then called for the young men's advice. They gave it, and he accepted the young men's advice and rejected that of the old men. Thus we have the beginning of the end. The kingdom divided. Had he listened to the old men, it would have been different, no one can doubt. The elders or old men of Israel were consulted. In New Testament times we have the same idea brought over. In Acts 15 we have the matter of circumcision disturbing the churches. Paul and Barnabas, with others, came to Jerusalem and "were received of the church, and of the apostles, and elders." The church nowadays is not consulted. The elders here are no doubt the old men of the church. Their experience

and wisdom was sought by the inspired apostles as well as all concerned. In these days the "elders and deacons" meet to the exclusion of the whole church, and often settle their disputes by a majority vote, and expect the whole church to abide by it. The wisdom of the church is not sought today. There is no doubt but Peter is talking about the same thing when he exhorts "the elders which are among you." He also said he was an elder, but he was an apostle, too. He was an elder because he was an old man and apostle by divine appointment. Those aged men were to take the oversight, not wait to be appointed to it. They were not to take the oversight by constraint, that is, forced into it. Then before he gets through he admonishes that the "younger submit yourselves to the elder." (1 Pet. 5:1-6.) Honor for the old man and respect for the hoary head! Yea, all of you be subject one to another. For "where no wise guidance is, the people falleth; but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." (Prov. 11:14.) Again, "Where there is no counsel, purposes are disappointed; but in the multitude of counsellors they are established." (Prov. 15:22.) Yet once more, "Every purpose is established by counsel; and by wise guidance make thou war." (Prov. 20:18.) It has been a strange thing to me for a long time as to why the wisdom of the congregation is not sought, and why out of a number of men who are equally qualified only three, or five, or seven are selected. The apostle told Titus to appoint elders in every city, "if any be blameless." Now, by what process of elimination could a number be discarded and a few taken when the qualifications are the same? Would it not be a great blessing for any church if it had fifteen or twenty qualified men instead of two or three? One brother said, you could not transact any business with such a large number. But the Bible thinks it would be safer to have a multitude of counselors. I believe the Bible is right. There are numerous churches today dead and dying just for the lack of leadership.

It is easy to find out the function of the overseers—what they are to do and what they are not to do. I am afraid that too many times they do what they are not to do and leave undone what they are to do. They are not to be lords over God's heritage. For them to rule arbitrarily and try to enforce their power to rule is just the thing they are not to do. Think of an elder being a boss

or dictator! All such is wrong and severely condemned in the Scriptures, Let them read and study the word of the Lord and be an example to the flock in word and deed.

ELDERS, OVERSEERS, BISHOPS

The church today is suffering for the lack of efficient and capable leadership. The idea somewhat prevails that it cannot be a New Testament church without elders and deacons. Therefore, the appointments are made of such material as it has as if the appointment made elders. Such procedure has been a hindrance to the church rather than a help. It takes time to make elders. They must grow and develop till they possess the scriptural qualifications as given in the New Testament, and then they are appointed. The appointment makes out of elders overseers. No one, therefore, is appointed to make him an elder; he is appointed because he is one. Paul appointed *elders* in every church, and he left Titus in Crete to appoint *elders* in every city. (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5.) He certainly could not appoint elders unless there were elders to appoint. The word translated elder cannot be translated overseer or bishop. Neither can the word translated overseer or bishop be translated elder. There is no such instance in the entire New Testament. I might remark that all overseers were elders, but all elders were not overseers, for the simple reason it only takes age to make elders, while overseers must have the qualifications laid down by the apostle. The third chapter of First Timothy and the first chapter of Titus advise us on this point.

The word "elder" always carries the idea of age. It may be by comparison, but the idea always adheres. It is used in contrast with the younger. It is ridiculous to call a young man an elder. The word "overseer" does not within itself carry any such idea, but it shows that those designated are to look after the work. I doubt very much that the word "elder" is ever used in an official sense. Sometimes Acts 20 is cited for this, but it does not necessarily follow at all. It is often said that the Holy Spirit makes elders, and this passage is taken as a proof text. But it does not say anything of the kind. It does say the *Holy Spirit made them, overseers*. But it does not say that the Holy Spirit made them elders. According to the first chapter of Titus, elders were to be

appointed provided they met certain qualifications there laid down, and then he said, "for a bishop must be." One might be an elder without these qualifications, but he certainly cannot be a bishop or overseer without them. The appointment, therefore, does not make elders. Neither does it make overseers out of elders when they are lacking in these qualifications. Just to appoint the best we have does not satisfy the Scriptures. The Book says they "must be." The same word is used when people were told what they "must" do to be saved. Sprinkling for baptism arises from that very idea. Nothing will do except what the Lord says. It is hard for people to get away from the idea of office. And yet just a little effort will soon convince you that the word "office" is not there in the original language. When the apostle said, "desire the office of bishop," according to the common version, he never used the word "office" at all. It is clear to all who will learn that it is the work that is to be desired and not the office. The Lord is not concerned about offices and filling them, but he is anxious about the work, and when the work is done the office is filled. Paul said in Rom. 12:4: "All members have not the same office." So every member has a work to do, and when he does it the office is filled. To say that someone has authority in the church today is saying too much, for Christ is sole authority in religion today. The leaders or overseers can only teach and try to enforce the word of God. They have no authority to make anyone do what they say. After all, then, it is a matter of what the Book teaches and their ability to enforce it. No congregation, therefore, or part thereof, is under any obligation to do or follow what the elders say unless it is the word of God.

The elders today are almost impotent in a great many cases to direct the affairs of the church. About all they do is to meet at a stated time to rule on some petit matter. The business of the elders, who are overseers, is to "feed the flock," "take the oversight," "being ensamples to the flock," and then it is specifically stated, "neither as being lords over God's heritage." It is clearly shown that they are the undershepherds and must give an account to the chief Shepherd for all they have done. Many who have been appointed today cannot lead a public prayer or teach a class or do anything except vote when the time comes to decide something. The elders and leaders cannot decide anything by a

vote any more than the congregation can. All matters spiritual must be settled by the word of the Lord and not by a vote, among the many or the few. If the elders should differ on any question, they should do nothing till they have studied the Scriptures and found out what they teach.

GOD'S THINGS AND OUR THINGS

It is manifest that some things are God's. They are exclusively his. We have no part nor lot in such things. Concerning them, we know nothing, and can know nothing. With such things people seem to be more concerned than with the things that belong to them. Our text is found in Deut. 29:29. It says, "The secret things belong unto the Lord your God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." The secret things are the Lord's. They are the unrevealed things. Anything, therefore, we do not read about in the Bible is a secret thing and belongs exclusively to God. It would be refreshing to find someone as interested in his own things as he is in the things of others. Many people are spending a large part of their time trying to find out the secret things. Would it not be better and more conducive to the best interest of men to study and seek those things which are ours. We read, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord." (Isaiah 34:16.) Anything not written there is none of ours and in a field where we are not supposed to seek at all. The Bible, therefore, contains all revealed things; and since the things which are revealed are our things, all of our things are in the Book. None of them are out of the Book. Why should I give my time, therefore, trying to find out the unrevealed things? Why not read and study the word of the Lord to find out my duty? This is made clear, since we read that to "fear God and keep his commandments" (Eccles. 12) is the whole duty of man. Since that is the "whole duty of man," nothing else can be a part of it, since the whole includes all the parts. All the dreams of men are but as chaff as compared to the wheat. Why, then, should we take up our time in search of the unrevealed things? Such efforts steal away the word of the Lord and rob us of eternal life.

I have never been in a community long that someone didn't want to know who Cain's wife was. No one knows, and cannot know, because the Bible does not say. If people would search as diligently to find out what to do to be saved, it would be much better. We can find out this, but we cannot find out who Cain's wife was; and if we could, it would not be of any help to us at all. Just to satisfy our curiosity, we go to great lengths, but to find out our whole duty to God and man we fail. People have been trying to find out what Jesus wrote on the ground that day when they brought the woman to him who had been caught in adultery. They haven't found out yet, because the Bible does not say. In the neighborhood where I was reared there was a blacksmith preacher who wasn't very well educated but had plenty of good common sense. He preached a sermon one day on the subject, "The Bible is no mystery." When he was through, a man came up and said, "Parson, you say there are no mysteries in the Bible." The preacher said, "That is right." He said, "Will you tell me, then, where Samson got the foxes with which he set the Philistines' corn fields on fire?" The preacher replied, "That isn't in the Bible." The man said, "Yes, but it is." The preacher said: "But it isn't there. The Bible says that Samson got three hundred foxes, and tied their tails together, and put a firebrand between them, and they went through the corn fields, and burned them up. But where he got them isn't in the Bible." So, reader, this is true. People are not so much concerned about what is in the Bible as they are about what isn't in it. The things not in the Bible have divided the churches and the people always. The things in the Bible bring people together. People are, therefore, not divided over what is in the Bible, but over things that are not in it.

It is said of Jesus, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book." (John 20:30.) What they are no one knows nor can know. They are secret things and belong to God. But "these are written that you might believe and believing you might have life through his name." (verse 31.) It is universally agreed among almost all religionists that we are saved by faith. But faith never comes by the unrevealed things, but only by the revealed things. Remember that anything not written isn't revealed. Too many peo-

ple are trying to serve God by what the Bible does not say. Too many are trying to go to heaven on what the Bible does not teach. Yet, those very persons will contend that we are saved by faith. Don't they know that faith does not come by what the Bible does not say but always by what it does say? No one can please God in anything without faith, we are told. (Heb. 11:6.) "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17), and "these things are written that you might believe" (John 20. 31). Our text tells us, therefore, that the "revealed things are ours and our children's forever, that we may do all the words of this law." Now pray tell me what the unrevealed things do for us save take us away from the study of our duty? The things revealed are our things. The things written are the revealed things. The apostle tells us that the Spirit of God only knoweth the things of God. (1 Cor. 2:11.) He also says the apostles received the Spirit of God that they might know the things freely given to us of God and that God has revealed them unto us not in the words of man's wisdom, but words of the Holy Spirit, (Verses 12, 13.) It is clear, then, that the Holy Spirit came upon the inspired men, and through them revealed these things unto us. Before their work was done, they wrote them down in the New Testament.

While they are ours to have and hold forever, they are not ours to handle carelessly. If we wrest them ignorantly or otherwise, we do it to our own destruction. We are warned to add nothing to these revealed things or to take anything away from them. We are also warned against ignorant or untaught questions, for they gender strife. Vain babblings, old wives fables, endless genealogies, and striving without words to no profit. Since the time is foretold when they will not endure sound doctrine, it behooves us to study the revealed will of God that we may obey it ourselves and teach others to do it. Don't permit the things which are happening to turn you aside from the revealed things which are ours, and of which we have been assured.

THE JUDGMENT DAY

The day of judgment is one day when we will all be present. No excuses will be offered then, and none will be accepted. We

can make a thousand puny excuses for our absence from duty and the gathering of the saints now, but none can be given then. If everyone could realize that this is true and that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10), and that "God will bring every work into the judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Eccles. 12:14), it might have a wholesome influence on us. It would no doubt serve as a deterrent from certain things. Even the secret things will be made manifest in that day, and there is no respect of persons with the judge of the living and the dead. It will be an impartial sentence passed upon all alike. That is, according to each man's life. From this, therefore, we should learn that even the judgment that we shall receive in that day is in our own hands and not another.

Paul in his matchless address to the Athenians said: God "hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:31.) This all grows out of one declaration, viz.: "At the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30.) It is easy to be observed, then, that our relation to what God commands shall decide the judgment we shall receive in that day. Peter also shows the same point when he asks, "What will be the end of them who obey not the gospel?" Our obedience to the gospel in one passage and obeying the commandments in another are the same, and both show that if we would stand in the judgment obedience from the heart must be rendered to the Almighty. This obedience must be rendered before we die. It cannot be done afterwards. For "as it is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment" is conclusive evidence that it must be done now. No wonder, then, that the exhortation is so often found, "today is the day of salvation," and "now is the accepted time." I have often said that if there is anything we are going to do for ourselves we must do it now—before we die—and if there is anything we are going to do for others, we must do that while they live. It is too late to bring the flowers when they are

dead. We influence people while they live to be better men and women and as a result go to the judgment better prepared to stand. I think we should clearly understand that if we fail it isn't 'because God willed it so. For he plainly says he is "not willing that any perish, but that all should come to repentance." So, then, if we perish, the blame must be upon us. We must repent of our sins or else we perish. No one can doubt this in the light of the passage already quoted. But there is another: "The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them who know not God and obey not the gospel." This shows clearly when it will be and also the nature of the punishment as well as the cause for such banishment. We have warnings all through the New Testament against that day. For an instance, "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries, and "of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant with which he was sanctified an unholy thing and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace." When people fail to obey the gospel and keep the commandments of the Lord, they have done this very thing as described in the above quotation. Presumably there is no punishment too severe, for one would thus abuse the holy command delivered unto him. The gospel brings increased responsibility, and we must meet it or be destroyed in the end. The gospel means life to some and death to others. Because some obey it and live, others disobey it and die. The gospel is a powerful instrument. It can save one from death and hell when believed and obeyed, but to the disobedient it is just as destructive.

These passages plainly show that there is a judgment day to come and that our standing then will depend upon our relation to the gospel now. Everyone should know that there is to be an end to our earthly affairs. What shall it be? That depends on how we treat the word of the Lord. I firmly believe that in proportion to the number there will be more preachers in hell than any other class of people—their preaching on the one hand and their conduct on the other. This no doubt was in the mind of James when he said: "Be not many teachers knowing that you shall receive the greater condemnation." People are not only

required to "hearken unto all that he shall command," and that it shall be required of him, evidently in that day, but that prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak" shall die. True enough did Jesus say that "many will come to me in that day, saying, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name," etc., "Then I will profess unto them I never knew you". There are preachers all over this country speaking things he never commanded and doing things unbecoming honest men, much less preachers of the gospel. It doesn't matter, either, how well one can preach if he is an adulterer, bankrupt, or in any wise dishonest and unscrupulous. Let them first show themselves honest and pure before they put themselves up as teachers of God's law. They do more harm than good. So I believe there will be a larger per cent of preachers in the bad place than of any other class. It should be remembered, also, that the judgment will not begin at the tail and come up, but will begin at the head and come down. The judgment begins at the house or family of God, and not with the infidels or the children of the devil. The preachers, perhaps, will be the first to answer the call. If the righteous be judged, where shall the hope of the unrighteous to escape be found? There is no escape for them. So I might ask, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Ask yourself, my friends, this solemn question.

OVERSEERS, BISHOPS, ELDERS

This question has caused much confusion and much bad interpretation of certain Scripture. All that anyone should desire on this or any other question is just what the New Testament teaches. There are three words in our English Bibles as indicated by the title of this article, but only two in the original language. One of these is translated elder and the other bishop or overseer. The one translated elder is never translated bishop or overseer. So likewise the one translated bishop or overseer is never translated elder. The terms, therefore, are not synonymous. They are different terms meaning different things but applied to the same person. To illustrate: We have the terms church, kingdom, and

body, all applied to the same institution, but they are not synonyms. The word "kingdom" means government, the word "church" means the called out, and the word "body" signifies the union and unity of the children of God. In the same way, then, elder means age, and bishop or overseer means one who is, by reason of growth and experience, to look after the work and see that the will of the Lord is carried out in the work and worship of the church.

It should be kept in mind that all overseers are elders, but all elders are not overseers. There are many old men in the church who cannot be the bishops or overseers because they do not meet the qualifications. Anyone appointed to be an overseer who is not qualified is a failure, and as a result the cause suffers. To make this point clear between elders and overseers, we might say that in Old Testament times: All priests were Levites, but all Levites were not priests. All overseers are elders, therefore, but all elders are not overseers. All the priests came from the house of Aaron, which was of the tribe of Levi, but one coming from any other house, even though he be of the tribe of Levi, could not be a priest. So, then, all overseers come from the elders or seniors of the congregation, and not from any other source. Paul said to Titus, "to appoint elders in every city," and then gave the qualifications and said, "for a bishop or overseer must be," etc. (Tit. 1:5, 6.) He also said to the elders of Ephesus, "The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." (Acts 20:28.) It can be plainly seen that the appointment never made an elder. But the appointment made overseers out of elders. Therefore, one not an elder before appointed will not be an elder after appointed. Elder always signifies age. It may be by comparison, but, nevertheless, age is always in the word.

Elder is never used in an official sense. The word "office," if used at all, is associated with bishop or overseer. "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (1 Tim. 3:1); but even then there is no word in the original here for "office," therefore it is not the "office" desired but the work. Every member of the body of Christ has an office, according to Rom. 12:4, just as every member of the human body has a work to do peculiar to its connection with the body. This is an office, but it is the work and not an official position that is meant.

There was a time when we had "this treasure in earthen vessels," but now we have it in the New Testament. (2 Cor. 4:7.) The inspired men had authority to bind and loose, but no inspired man has ever had such power. If, therefore, any uninspired man should require the church, or part thereof, to do anything that the New Testament does not teach, they would be under no obligations whatever to do it. Elders and overseers have no authority to bind anything, but to see that the will of the Lord as revealed is done.

Their work is clearly set forth in the New Testament. They are "to feed the church of the Lord." (Acts 20:28.) "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being en-samples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5:2, 3.) The elders, though they be appointed, who cannot do these things cannot be scriptural overseers. They are, therefore, a hindrance rather than a help. If the work is not done, the office is not filled. When the work is done, the office is filled. The Lord is not interested in the office, but he is in the work. The work must be done, or else the church cannot grow. Men in the lead of the church who can do these things are a great blessing, but to have men there who cannot do these things creates an unholy situation. Men who are not qualified should never be appointed to the place, therefore.

The qualifications of elders to be appointed are given somewhat in detail in the third chapter of First Timothy and the first chapter of Titus and should never be treated lightly or disregarded. The words "must be" are used in each reference and mean just the same as they do elsewhere in the New Testament. So if you can determine what it means when it says, "What must I do to be saved?" you can also determine what it means when it says, "A bishop must be blameless," etc. It should be remembered that Christ is the chief Shepherd, and the elders are the undershepherds, and only can act as the chief Shepherd requires. (1 Pet. 5:4.) So, then, to "obey them that have the rule over you" would hardly apply to the present-day elders or overseers. They were the guides of the people in those days and therefore the inspired men. If the people wanted to find the right way, then they would go to these men; but if they want the right way now,

they go to the New Testament instead. Since the New Testament has been completed we need no guides in the sense in which they were guides. The New Testament is our only guide now. From the time the church was established till the New Testament was revealed, spiritual gifts were necessary to the edification of the church, but not so now. The New Testament is our guidebook now, and not men. Men who do not know the New Testament and who do not believe in it are not only not qualified to be overseers, but not even members of the church. A group of godly men in the lead of the church who are able and clean, faithful and loyal to the teaching is a great blessing. There is no way to overestimate their worth to the cause. But to have men in the lead of the church who are not qualified and cannot lead is the greatest stumbling block to any congregation. Men whose lives are above reproach, who are able to teach, who are respected, and therefore of good report even with those who are without, are a great asset to any congregation as its leaders.

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION TODAY

There are so many things done in religion today without proper authority, and I am prompted to write this article. People practicing something, or desiring to practice it, are seeking some justification for it. These things are unknown to the New Testament. People who read the Book to justify what they are doing will likely find excuses for such practice. Of course, all such justification is based upon a mishandling of the truth. It might even be said, they "turn the truth of God into a lie" in such procedure. It is not a question as to what authority was yesterday or in the former ages, but what is authority today? Neither is it a question of what authority will be in the world to come. It is a question of what is authority today. We read from the Book where we are exhorted to "be established in the present truth." (2 Pet. 1:12.) So it is not a question of yesterday; nor tomorrow, but today. Well, then, did the apostle say, "Today is the day of salvation," and "now is the accepted time," and if you will "hear his voice harden not your hearts." (2 Cor. 6:2.) We must live by the law of our time. The law which applies to us today is authority, but nothing else is.

People are constantly running to the Old Testament to prove that certain things can be done today. They try to prove that mechanical musical instruments can be used now by certain passages in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is not authority today. True enough, it used to be authority, but not now. The New Testament, and the New Testament only, is authority today. The New Testament is the "present truth" in which we are exhorted to be established. If one, therefore, should do all the Old Testament required today, he could not be saved, because all contained in it is out of date and does not apply to us now. I think this is apparent to any casual observer. A "right handling of the word of God" will clear up all this trouble. Anything which cannot be proved by the New Testament in the work and worship of the church today cannot be proved at all.

Whenever we preach something no apostle ever preached, or practice something no New Testament church ever practiced, we are doing it without the proper authority. We have, therefore, carefully put the word "today" in our caption above. That which was authority in other dispensations is not authority *today*. That which will be authority in the future is not authority *today*. What we need is to find out what authority is today. What is it that applies today? It would not be right for us to be judged by a law under which we never lived. So Jesus said: "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48.) This should be enough to tell us what authority is today. For Christ is *sole* authority in religion today. His word is all the authority there is for us today. Therefore, we read, "ever looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." (Heb. 12:2.) He is, therefore, the alpha and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, and to the Christian "Christ is all and in all." It is foolish, then, for anyone to run to the law of Moses, or the Psalms of David, to find support for anything in religion today. Since "all authority" has been given into the hand of Christ, no one else has any authority. Not only "all authority," but "all authority in heaven and on earth" has been given to Christ. There is but one other dominion of power, or authority, and that is hell. Jesus also said he had the power or "keys of hell and of death." (Rev. 1:18.) It should be remembered that the word "power" is in one version, the King James, and the

word "authority" in the Revised Version. Not only does the word mean authority, but power as well. Authority to command and power to execute. Some lawmaking bodies have the authority to write laws, but are impotent to execute them or enforce them.

Just when Christ became the author of eternal salvation might be interesting just here. Hence we read again: "Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Heb. 5:8, 9.) This shows that Christ became the author of eternal salvation. It says that he became the author of eternal salvation when he was made perfect. It states, also, that he was made perfect by the things which he suffered. We should not expect him, then, to authorize anything in religion till after he suffered and died. Another highly important matter is, he learned obedience by his suffering, obedience to his Father's will. "Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:8-11.) This should settle the matter of authority in religion forever. He suffered. He learned thereby obedience. He was made perfect by obedience. So reading again Jesus said: "Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." (Luke 13:32.) This refers to his resurrection. The third day he was raised from the dead by the mighty working of the power of God and then became "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." While he was in the flesh he authorized nothing. After he ascended to heaven, he authorized nothing. But from the time he arose and before he ascended he did authorize the great commission and sent the apostles out, guided by the Spirit of God, to preach it to the whole creation. Therefore, anything they did not preach, or anything the church did not do under their guidance has no authority now. It is not strange then to read of the first church continuing in the apostles' doctrine. (Acts 2:42.)

THE CHURCH

To those who think that the church does not amount to anything and that people can be saved out of it as well as in it, we would ask, Isn't an article worth as much as we pay for it? The principle of buying and selling is that the article purchased is the equivalent of the price paid for it. All honest and honorable merchandise is based on this principle. The church, therefore, is worth as much as the price paid for it. One statement is that Christ so "loved the church, and that he gave himself up for it." (Eph. 5:25.) Therefore, whatever Christ is worth the church is worth. Who can tell what Christ is worth to the individual and to the world? What is he worth to your soul in relation to your salvation? All that he means to the salvation of the souls of men the church means. Whatever relationship he sustains to the salvation of men the church sustains. Anyone who thinks that people can be saved out of the church are forced to think they can be saved out of Christ. Because the price paid for the church was "himself," the church, therefore, stands in his stead. It is his body, and he is the head of it. (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18.)

Another passage tells us: "Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28.) All, therefore, that the blood of Christ is worth the church is worth. We sing "there is power in the blood," then there is the some power in the church. Since the blood of Christ alone takes away sins, no one can have his sins remitted out of the church. When the price is paid for anything, we accept the article in its place and regard it as of equal value. Since he gave his blood for the church, we accept the church in the place of his blood. We must give up the price in order to make a purchase. One is given in exchange for the other. The church is the only institution in existence that has a drop of the blood of Christ on it, therefore the only one in which a person can be saved. To him be "the glory in the church" throughout all ages. (Eph. 3:21.)

THE BIBLE TEACHING ON WOMAN'S DRESS AND DEMEANOR

This question is giving a great deal of trouble now. Not because what the Bible teaches is hard to understand, but because

of certain customs and styles of today. To justify these fads and styles in the light of the Bible is impossible. What the Bible teaches on any question is not hard to understand, only as we try to make the Bible justify something it does not teach. To illustrate, the Bible cannot be made to justify denominationalism for the reason it does not teach such. What the Bible teaches is easy, but to make it justify the denominations is impossible. So, also, what the Book says on the question of woman's dress, her hair, and place in the church is easy; but to try to prove from the Holy Book that a woman can dress as she pleases, cut her hair after the latest fashion, present herself in the public meetings without having her head covered with an artificial covering, and teach men in classes or otherwise, or make public speeches, is plain enough. There would be no trouble at all in understanding the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians were it not for the fact that women have got into the habit of cutting their hair and going to the church meetings bareheaded and are seeking to defend such practice.

It is even made more difficult because certain preachers have lent their influence to such practice for one reason or another. These preachers should know better than that which they affirm on this question. Anyone runs a great risk of losing the friendship of another when they condemn their practice. The women in general today have lost all sight of God's order and arrangements in such matters, and these preachers become partakers of their sin by condoning such practice. We cannot afford to allow the practice of people to influence us in the teaching and application of the Holy Scriptures. But rather they must be taught just as they are and let the chips fall where they may. No one can read carefully the first sixteen verses of the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians without discovering that the apostle is censuring that church for certain practices. They had evidently written him that they were "*always mindful of my teaching, and keep unchanged the rules which I delivered to you.*" (Conybeare and Howson.) Then he proceeds to tell them wherein they were not keeping his teaching. He states to them that "the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." *This is no custom.* This is the divine order from the beginning and cannot be changed. Therefore all that is taught

here is to show the order of God. A woman, therefore, must not cut her hair, nor come into the congregation without an artificial covering on her head. All that do so are in plain violation of the authority of God. That is what is meant when he says: "The woman should have power [that is, a covering in sign that she is under the power of her husband] on her head." So, then, when she cuts her hair or leaves off her additional covering she flaunts the authority of God. No one can read the Bible and imagine "God's woman" cutting off her hair, dressing immodestly, teaching a class of men, or making public addresses. A man must not wear long hair. A woman must not wear short hair. A man must not put on a woman's garment. A woman must not put on a man's garment. All that do so are an abomination in the sight of the Lord. (Deut. 22:5.) A man who wears long hair dishonors his head. The woman who cuts off her hair dishonors her head. A woman who "cast off her veil, let her shave her head at once; but if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her keep her veil upon her head." (Conybeare and Howson.) It should be observed that the word "veil" here, when applied to the hair in verse fifteen, is from an altogether different word. In every other occurrence the word denotes an artificial covering, but this time it is the natural covering.

The hair is given her as a covering, and therefore she should wear an artificial covering to show that she is submissive to the authority of God. To say that this teaching applied to Corinth and was entirely local is wholly unwarranted, for what he says here is applicable to all the churches. In verse 16 he says: "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." Paul disallows it, and all the churches of God disallow it—the custom of women cutting their hair and casting off their veil in prayer. No one is justified in contending for any custom, but on the contrary, no one is justified who does not contend for the truth. So, then, it is only a matter of what God teaches. He teaches the head of the woman is the man. He teaches that God gave a woman long hair for a covering and that it is her glory. He teaches that she should have a veil on her head in prayer. Let it be remembered that it is something in addition to her hair. Where did style decree that a woman should have long hair? Again, where did style decree her hair should i

be short? Who ever heard of such a thing till someone would seek to justify the practice? Just as well argue that style decreed that the man should be the head of the woman, and, again, style repealed that law to the end that it is no longer true. There are many arguments made (if it be lawful to call them arguments) to justify this most unholy and unscriptural practice. But the Book stands unchanged. By it we shall be judged in the last great day. What is said to the Corinthian church is likewise said to all "the churches of God" and "as in all the churches of the saints let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." (1 Cor. 14:33-35.) The law to which reference is made here is found in Gen. 3:16: "And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." The woman who cuts off her hair, casts off her veil, and speaks in public is in violation of the law. This not only applies to the Corinthian Christians, but to all Christians everywhere and for all time. Fancy "God's woman" with her hair cut off, dressed immodestly, without her veil in prayer, and up taking the place of man in public affairs! Besides this the apostle says: "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. 14:37.) We talk about obedience, and argue that one must obey God or perish, and then turn right around and teach that a woman can cut her hair if she so desires, and that it is a matter of style and a custom, and that she can leave her hat or veil off in the meetings if she desires. I can think of one passage now: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10.) What is sin? It is transgression of the law. What difference, then, does it make which particular law you transgress? The law is plain as to a woman's place in the church, as to her work, and how she shall wear her hair and cover her head. To refuse to do this is a sin. We can plead woman's rights all we please. No one wants to make a slave out of a woman. All we want is to see them saved. They cannot be saved when they depart from the place and work for which God created them. All these things

over which we have gone are but outward manifestations of rebellion against God. We can talk all we please about the Bible being our rule of faith and practice, but unless we follow its teaching our claim is but a subterfuge—it is false. Women "shall be saved in childbearing, if she continue in faith and charity and holiness and sobriety." (1 Tim. 2:15.) That is to say, If she abides in her place and not attempt to take the place of man in the public affairs of the church. If she gets out of her place, she cannot be saved. She must obey God. She cannot cut off her hair and obey God. She cannot cast off her veil and obey God. She cannot take the place of men in the public meetings and obey God. She cannot teach men and usurp authority over men and obey God. She cannot wear men's clothes and obey God. If she cannot obey God, she cannot be saved.

There are several things recorded in the Word of the Lord that lends much strength to this teaching. While these passages were not written on this subject at the same time, they incidentally teach some strong lessons on the subject. For an instance, Luke 7:36-50 says the woman stood at the feet of Jesus weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and "*did wipe them with the hairs of her head.*" This shows that she had long hair. Had she cut off her hair, she could not have done it. Again, John 12:3, when Mary anointed the feet of Jesus, "*and wiped his feet with her hair.*" This also teaches that Mary had long hair. Someone has said the Bible says nothing about a woman having long hair. This doesn't say she had long hair, but it shows beyond a doubt she did. But the Bible does say something about it in 1 Cor. 11:15: "But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her." Still another passage says in speaking of that which becometh women professing godliness is "not braided hair" (1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:3.), which is braid or plait. This shows also that women had long hair. In Revelation 9:8: "And they had hair as the hair of women." Therefore, women's hair must be peculiar to them and different to men. Men with short hair and women long. *If she wears her hair short, she violates the teaching of the New Testament.*

EXCERPTS FROM *THE WATCHMAN*

"Be at peace among yourselves" is a fine practice.
Preaching just anything won't save anyone.
Lots of well-educated people are not going to heaven.
No one can have a clear conscience with duty undone.
Obey and live or disobey and die. Take your choice.
Some people have just enough religion to make them miserable.
Remember, no one can "obey Him" save only by doing what He says.

How many people who, rather than do wrong, will suffer wrong?
Everyone would go to heaven if they would try hard enough.
All Christians should work, watch, and pray, and not leave it to a few.
Why can't as many come to the meetings on Sunday night as any other time?
Remember, my brother, my sister, that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

What relation does baptism sustain to remission of sins? See Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38, etc. Baptism sustains the same relation to remission of sins as repentance does, therefore.

Three hundred true, loyal soldiers are better than thirty-two thousand half-hearted, indifferent cowards who think more of themselves or property than they do of the cause of Christ.

Whenever advertisements of gospel meetings read like that of moving picture shows and street fairs, it is time to offer strong rebuke, for such is beneath the dignity of the gospel and tends to cheapen it.

In reading the subjects of the various city pastors as carried in the daily papers, one would hardly know they were religious if they were not listed under churches.

Christians must learn that they cannot have their good things in this life, but rather evil, their good things in the world to come. Let us learn to "wait meekly, wait and murmur not."

The Watchman has been criticized because it criticized the conduct of other congregations and preachers, but none of these things moved us. We will do it again when we think it is necessary.

Why should anyone want to do anything God has not commanded, since to "fear God and keep his commandments" is to do

one's "whole duty"? Does anyone want to do any more than his "whole duty"?

I am not opposed to having the Lord's Supper prepared twice each Lord's day for those who cannot attend the morning hour, but it is a serious thing for members to stay away for any cause. See Numbers, ninth chapter.

We have been accused of "putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples," but this is not true. All we are trying to do is to get people to "fear God and keep his commandments" and let everything else alone. Those who would thus accuse us are trying to put a yoke upon the church in mechanical instruments of music and human societies, things God has not required of his church. To these we object, and we mean to stay in the "objective case" till life ends or the war is over.

We have a circular announcing a camp meeting to be held by a group of churches of Christ in West Texas that is ridiculous. The preacher is called "Rev.," "well-known," and "noted." It is announced as an "old-time camp meeting," and the "noted" evangelist of this "faith and order" will "have charge of the gospel corral," while three other helpers are to be "straw bosses" and "take part in this gospel round-up." It is also announced that "the beautiful Clear Fork is near by and catfish and bass" are plentiful; "don't forget the hook and line"; "a fish fry every day"; and, say, "get out your bathing suits; the water is warm and the swimming will be good"; and, "doggone, it makes the red blood." Yes, "it makes the red blood" do, just as seeing Bathsheba bathe herself made David's red blood do in the long ago. Whoever heard of an old-time camp meeting allowing any such? The men and women bringing their bathing suits! Shame on these churches! May they learn the error of their way and repent. As to the preacher, I understand he knew nothing of the advertisement and that he opposes it. To what are the churches coming?

No one can obey God unless he does what God says.

Any institution one can join is not the church of Christ.

How many have sufficient love for the truth to contend for it?

Wish I could find someone as devoted to the truth as others are to their hobby.

Every tree that does not bear good fruit is a corrupt tree, though it be in the church.

I had as soon be a member of one denomination as another and none as any.

Since faith comes by hearing the word of God only, why should anyone preach anything else?

Since the priesthood of Christ is an unchangeable priesthood, the law is unchangeable.

When Jesus was asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" he said, "How do you read? What does the law say?" The man told him, and Jesus said, "This do and live." What would a modern denominational preacher say to such a question?"

The church is not only the house of God, the body of Christ, but "the pillar and support of the truth." The church, therefore, cannot support anything else, neither filling the church with other fuel will give power.

The hardest and most unkind thing can be said and done against the church by those who have gone away after false doctrine. They are the worst enemies the truth has.

The only thing we see wrong with some practices among the brethren is that they were neither taught by the apostles or practiced by any New Testament church; they are not in the New Testament, therefore.

Since baptism is the answer of a good conscience, no one can have a good conscience till he is baptized if he is instructed in the teaching of the New Testament. Anyone who has a good conscience before he is baptized is deceived.

We enjoyed teaching the truth over the radio to audiences we could not number. Much good was done. We regret that we could not continue. We had regular listeners in many states of the Union. Every place we go many people remark, "I heard you over the radio."

How could any practice be apostolic when the apostles neither taught nor practiced it? Let some brother who practices quartet singing in the worship try his hand on this. Day by day the brethren are locking their mouths against denominational error by doing things not taught. It is no less than tragic.

It is no trouble to rejoice when things go to suit us, but it is more difficult to smile through our tears. A Christian is superior

in this, for he is represented as "rejoicing in hope and patient in tribulation." Let no cloud of muttering or complaining ever settle upon your horizon, therefore.

All things in the way of temptation, tribulation, and sorrow is designed by Jehovah for our good if we love "the Lord. These things teach us to rely upon God exclusively and always say, "The Lord will provide." But remember this only applies when we do our "whole duty"—that is, when we "fear God and keep his commandments."

A knowledge of remission of sins always is the occasion of rejoicing. This might be an aid to help us ascertain when sins are pardoned. Did you ever notice that the rejoicing in New Testament times came after baptisms? Anyone who rejoices over remission of sins before baptism must, therefore, be misinformed.

If anyone says "baptize" means to "sprinkle" or "pour," let him try to put such meaning in the stead of baptize in any passage where it occurs in any form and see the difficulty he encounters. For example, "he baptized him" would read "he sprinkled him." You cannot sprinkle a man, but you can sprinkle water or anything you can diffuse into drops. Try this, "he immersed him," or "dipped him," or "plunged him." But to "pour him" or "sprinkle him" is impossible. It cannot mean sprinkle or pour, because it destroys the sense of the passage.

I am tempted to propose that four or a quartet of the best paying members do all the paying the next quartet that gets up to sing where I go to preach. Isn't singing worship? and isn't giving worship, too?

Some years ago the University of California in making some experiments made one with whiskey. Many individuals have experimented with the death-dealing stuff to their sorrow before the university was founded. The experiment proved that buds formed on flowering plants would not bloom in liquor, but they would bloom in water. A well-known jurist said, "When they further demonstrate that fire is hot, ice is cold, we can feel even more assured that our stock of knowledge is increasing. Bootleggers who have tried to create a market for liquor in which to bloom flowers will be the only ones to find fault with these experiments."

Of course that means that the flowers of manhood and womanhood, boyhood and girlhood are blasted when saturated in the damnable and soul-destroying poison. He further said: "Flowers will not bloom in liquor. Buds that grow on stems like roses, or the poppies such as the scientists used in these experiments, will drop and languish when subjected to the influences of alcohol. So will roses that grow in the mind and soul—the flowers whose stems are in the heart. Liquor has the habit of causing things to blister and languish. It has never been known to induce a flower to grow, to shed fragrance, and be a delight. A thousand times over it has taken the bloom out of innocence and the rose out of the cheek of love. Many is the time that the accursed thing has brought youth to destruction and gray hairs to unhonored graves. Its victims are unnumbered and its toll has been taken from every rank of life. King and peasant, the rich and poor, the learned and unlearned have fallen withered before its fatal breath. Liquor has murdered fathers, broken the hearts of mothers, and denied little children the joy of life. It has robbed men of honor and women of virtue. It has filled jails, penitentiaries, and poorhouses with its victims, and has been the recruiting officer for asylums. It is the great waster of time, money, and health. There is no use to experiment with its dreadful power to realize what it will do. The world has carried on the experiment since the beginning and the record has been set down. It is a long, dark one written in letters of blood and singed with fire.

"This is a joyful season of peace and good will. How often though do we turn it into a veritable hell with liquor, when peace assumes the horrid form of murder, and good will turns to hate. If I had the power, not another drop of the poison would ever be made or sold on earth. Law has not destroyed it, perhaps never will. Every man must write his own law of prohibition before the statutory one becomes wholly effective. I would like to know that I could keep even one boy from taking his first drink." Amen. Let everyone read and take heed.

A Baptist minister in San Antonio has been turned out of the association because he believes that some others can baptize as well as the Baptists. You know that Baptists teach that no one is baptized unless a Baptist preacher does it. Yet they say there are

Christians outside the Baptist ranks, but no one is a Baptist until baptized into the Baptist Church, and no one does that but a Baptist preacher. According to their own admission, one can be a Christian and go to heaven without being baptized by a Baptist preacher, but no one can get into the Baptist Church without it; therefore, it is harder to get into the Baptist Church than it is to get into heaven. It appears that they have turned an eighty-year-old preacher out of their association for violating that rule. Yet they are liberal!

According to the Catholics, there is no marriage; you are living in adultery and your children are illegitimates unless a Catholic priest says the ceremony. According to the Baptists, no one is baptized unless a Baptist preacher does the baptizing! Selah!

The word "church" in one of its uses in the Bible means all the saved. So, then, if we come in contact with the saved anywhere, that is the church. To illustrate: suppose you go to New Orleans and see the Mississippi River, you go to Memphis and see the Mississippi River, and again to Cairo and see the same river. It is not three rivers, but three places of coming in contact with the same river. You wouldn't say *a* Mississippi River at New Orleans, *a* Mississippi River at Memphis, etc., but *the* Mississippi at each place. So also is the church. The church at Corinth, the church at Ephesus, etc. Only different places of coming in contact with the same thing—the church which is the body of Christ. So no inspired man ever speaks of it as *a* church, but always *the* church.

We might say to some of the editors who agreed to "celebrate Pentecost" what the Lord said to Cain, "Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." To make false charges and fun will not relieve the situation.

If people can lay aside their differences for a period of time and worship together as one, they will be condemned if they don't do it all the time. If there is no material difference, why separate? If there is, why be hypocritical? Above all, let's be honest.

The Greenville Avenue Christian Church and Riggs Memorial Presbyterian Church a few blocks away have arranged to worship together while the former house of worship is being completed.

I wonder why they do not worship together all the time. If they can for a few weeks, they could all the time.

Don't forget your prayers are needed, but also your presence. When you pray for the church, be sure to attend all its meetings. The word "church" suggests an assembly; and if you neglect to assemble, "as the manner of some is," what will become of the church? It is in your power to make it or destroy it. Attend and make it. Stay away and destroy it.

There are many movements being started in Dallas and elsewhere said to be by the churches of Christ. The people should be alert and watchful, for many false prophets "have crept in unawares" calling themselves churches of Christ which are not churches of Christ at all. Jesus says, "Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing!"

The pure wheat is the gospel or word of God; all else is chaff and should be burned. Any preacher who does not separate the wheat from the chaff and condemn the chaff, "the doctrines and commandments of men," and "earnestly contend for the faith," is not a safe leader or teacher. No fence straddlers are wanted, but only those who preach the word without fear or favor, reproving and rebuking, for Christ said: "I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword."

"The churches of Christ salute you" was used by Paul to the Romans, but in this good year of 1930 it appears in *The Dallas News* as a whole page advertisement made "possible" by certain business firms which are listed. There are four pictures of church buildings, namely: the First Baptist, George W. Truett, pastor; Sacred Heart Cathedral (Catholic), B. H. Diamond, rector; the First Methodist, Carl C. Gregory, pastor; First Presbyterian, William M. Anderson, pastor, and how many more, I cannot say. These churches cannot be the church of Christ, for Christ never founded any of them. Christ is the head of his church, the foundation of his church, and his teaching its sole rule of faith and practice. Do these meet the requirements? Certainly not. Does the First Baptist Church teach that the Roman Catholic Church is a church of Christ? Does Pastor George W. Truett so hold? Do Baptists believe that Methodists and Presbyterians are churches of Christ? If they are, one can be a member of the church of Christ and not be immersed, but he cannot be a Baptist without

it. If the doctrine of either one of these is right, the rest must be wrong. The fact is, neither of them is a church of Christ, and to call it that does not make it so. The church of Christ comes from "the seed," which is the "word of God," and not from "Baptist doctrine." Why did they leave the Christian Church out and the Jewish synagogue out, since they were among the number to "promote good will among the religious cults of the southwest?" I would like to see the union and unity, but such a thing as this is despicable, and all honest souls should spurn it.

The editors who agree to join in to "celebrate Pentecost without regard to their differences" are "celebrating" all right by charging one another with hypocrisy and falsehood—each one trying to convict the other of sin, as if that would justify him. Only one way out of sin, and that is to confess it. All this shows a great lack of Christianity. "See that none render evil for evil unto any man" and "recompense to no man evil for evil." Religious periodicals have almost destroyed their usefulness by such. Honorable controversy is to be commended, but bickerings and backbiting abhorred.

We were delighted to be back on the air Sunday morning, April 28. We had been informed that all religious services would be discontinued for the chain broadcast out of New York. We had about concluded that in as much as the devil is "the prince of the power of the air," he was exercising his lordship by replacing all religious effort with modern jazz. The people, press, and all are deploring the crime wave sweeping the country. No wonder. You cannot get the gospel in the dailies nor much on the air, neither can you get it in schools. The papers are filled with reports of crime, the air filled with jazz and Negro dialogues, and the schools saturated with atheistic evolution, while the gospel is segregated to church meetings. The remedy for crime: preach the Word!

There is quite a discussion going the rounds as to how to speak of the church now so as to avoid sectarianism. I am not so much concerned about avoiding sectarianism as *I* am to speak as the oracles of God speak. No condition can exist that will justify a change in the wording of the Holy Scripture.

SYMPTOMS

"Open Membership Is But a Symptom" is an editorial in the *Christian Standard*. Of course it is a symptom. But a symptom of what? Doctors have learned long since not to treat symptoms, but causes. What is it that causes such symptoms? Find it and cut it out and the effect will stop. Grub up a tree and it will stop bearing fruit. Just so if we grub out all error from "the apostles' doctrine" and sow nothing but the pure seed, "open membership" or receiving people into the church on sprinkling for baptism will disappear. All innovations that have crept into the church are but symptoms. But they are symptoms of the same thing—unbelief. Had all preachers and teachers been faithful to the word of God, we would have no such symptoms today because there would be no cause for them. The remedy for all spiritual trouble: "Preach the word" and "contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints." But many do not want to contend now. That is "a symptom" too. The Book plainly says that because they love not the truth God will send them "a working of error." All these symptoms are the working of this error and no "love of the truth" the cause. Why, it even says that "they should believe a lie and be damned." The cause, no love for the truth which is the word of God, the "symptom" or result is "believe a lie," and the end damnation. Better dig up the cause and let the symptoms go, and "this will we do if God permit."

Any preacher who is afraid he will hurt somebody's feelings is sure to sacrifice the truth, for they think more of their audiences than they do of God's eternal truth. Any teacher who thinks more of tolerance than he does of the Bible is dangerous.

If I wanted to be a popular preacher, I would preach "that which anyone thinks is right to him it is right." But since I had rather be a Bible preacher than a popular preacher, I cannot preach that. I prefer to be right. God says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts," therefore we can see how much in error it is to do what I *think*. It doesn't matter what I think. One can do what *he thinks* all of his lifelong and never obey God, and therefore never enter the kingdom of God. For those who enter the kingdom are those "who do the will of God," not what they *think*. Paul said: "I thought with myself I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which things I also did,"

but at the same time he was the chief of sinners. If people are right because they think they are right, then Jesus died in vain and the disciples suffered needlessly. Jesus said to the disciples that they would be put out of the synagogue, and some of them even put to death, and those who did it would think they were serving God. But because they thought it didn't make it God service. Jacob thought Joseph was dead, but he wasn't. We *think* we are serving God with human inventions and devices, but we are not. No one can doubt the sincerity of those who use such, but that only proves one thing and that is that they think they are right—they believe they are right and therefore feel like they are right with God. But not till we accept his thoughts and reject ours are we right with God.

The only time it is said in the Bible, "Thy heart is not right in the sight of God," is when a man *thought* he could purchase the gift of God with money. The Bible says: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." So, then, when anyone thinks "with himself," his heart is not right. Saul, the first king of Israel, thought he had obeyed God and that it would be proper to offer unto God the animals for sacrifice, but God said: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." It, therefore, does not matter what we think, but what does God say is all to us. The underlying and general term of discipleship is 'to "deny himself." No one has done this till he does what God says regardless of how he feels or thinks or what seems right to him. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Then why should we undertake to do it by "what I think" or what "seems right" to man, and so on. Do we believe God? Once more the Bible says, "We walk by faith, not by sight." Just two things then, "faith" and "sight." "Whatever is not of faith *is* sin" and, therefore, sight. For faith comes by hearing the word of God. Anything the Bible does not say, then, belongs to "sight" in religion. Since "without faith it is impossible to please God" and "faith comes by hearing the word of God," anything in religion the Bible does not teach is displeasing to God, therefore.

One Mr. Jenkins, pastor of "Linwood Christian Church," has gone so far as to say that "Christian Church and churches of

Christ" are sectarian, and he calls it "The Community Church," which means that "persons having been baptized in any fashion may join the church," and that persons who have "not been baptized" at all may join. If it keeps on, it will soon be sectarian to use the *Bible*. This is but a sample of what "our" editors got into when they agreed to join in to "celebrate Pentecost."

They are now proposing to pass a law to legalize a light beverage of not more than three per cent alcohol. The reason is, it will encourage law enforcement. Wonder why they don't pass a law to allow people to carry a 22 caliber pistol to encourage law enforcement against the carrying of concealed weapons? It is ridiculous. No; that stuff has destroyed more people than all the wars combined, and yet they want to sell it in some form. What will the politicians do next? Any political party that adopts the liquor plank will have to make the race without us both now and forever.

Whatever possessed people to put on a special drive for this Pentecost more than any other? Why is this Pentecost any more important than any other? Is the nineteen hundredth birthday of the church any more important than the other eighteen hundred and ninety-nine? It took somebody sixty years longer to find that out than it took him to find out that "psallo" meant to sing with a musical accompaniment, and then it took some more time to find out that you could sing "with" or "without" it, and the word means that. No wonder they say, "We can work together to a common goal without regard to our differences"! It is nothing but buncombe.

Brother T. H. Ethridge in *Firm Foundation* writes on the subject of "Pentecost," which closes by saying: "Let us go on to Pentecost." Why, my brother, don't you know that Pentecost is nineteen hundred years behind us? How can you go on to it, then? Just as well say, let us go on to the "law of Moses," which was done away at the cross. The "law of Moses" and all its appurtenances, Pentecost, with all the rest, was abolished nineteen hundred years ago. Still we hear it, "Let us go on to Pentecost." The Jews observed Pentecost till Jerusalem was destroyed. But now, after so long a time, the church is asked to "celebrate" it.

This "hide-and-see," "peekaboo," making "goo-goo eyes," playing in the double corners of the religious checkerboard is no good, and the people should stop it. If you have convictions, stick to them. I won't fall out with you, although I differ with you; but if you undertake to play on both sides, agree with everything and everybody, you will lose the respect of all honest men and not be long about it. I have been hearing it said, preach the gospel and let everything else alone, but you can't do that. I challenge any man to try it, and it won't be long, unless he is hopelessly stupid, that he will find it out.

We notice a church of Christ announces a meeting "differing somewhat from the ordinary meeting. We are to use a different preacher each service and have them limited to a subject neither directly on *first principles* nor *Christian duty*, but back to the fundamentals of God's purposes and plans. We are going heavy on 'special songs,'" etc. Yes, it looks like they are "going heavy" on most everything except the plain teaching of the Book, What are the "purposes and plans" of God? How many "purposes and plans" does he have? We read of his "*eternal purpose*" and "*the way*," but "ways," "purposes," and "plans" are different. I agree that this meeting will be "different to the ordinary meeting," even if they do go "heavy on special songs." It will be different to any meeting we read about in the Book.

The *Christian Standard* says: "We can work to a common goal without regard to our differences," since this Pentecostal celebration has been "agreed" upon by "the papers of the Christian Church and the churches of Christ." Since when could we not have had unity with them on the same terms? We could get along with Satan if we would work with him "to a common goal without regard to our differences." So also with bootleggers and all other evildoers if we would work "without regard to our differences." We could on the same ground have unity with every religious cult on earth. If "our differences" do not involve "fundamental truth," we should have no "differences." "Let us alone" rang out from the devil a long time ago, and that is all he wants now. Work with him "without regard to our differences," but we won't do it.

Since the seed is the word of God, it is impossible for anything to come out of it that is not in it. If you see anything not in the

seed, it came from somewhere else. Beware of false teachers.

We need not be looking for false teachers to come from afar, for Paul said to the elders at Ephesus that men would arise "of your own selves speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." Watch the inside workers.

No one can walk with God unless he agrees with God (Amos 4:4), and God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself (2 Cor. 5:18). Now, since to be in Christ is to be in his body and to be in his body is to be in the church, no one can agree with God and, therefore, walk with God out of the church.

Be it known by all that what is said in this paper or otherwise is in behalf of truth and righteousness; therefore, we cannot for the love of money or friends on the one hand or the punishment of our enemies on the other allow our utterances to be warped or our heart biased. Let the truth be said for the love of and loyalty to the truth.

Some of the older preachers are afraid to make it too strong for fear the churches won't stand for it and will put them on the shelf. At least that is what one said recently. I had rather be right on the shelf than wrong off of it. After all, that very thing may happen. They put Paul on the shelf in Galatia, but that never stopped him from making it *strong*.

No denomination can be the church of Christ because it is bigger than a local congregation on the one hand and smaller than all the saved on the other. The word "church" is used only in two senses in the New Testament. It occurs one hundred and ten times. Ninety-two times it means the saved of a locality, and eighteen times it means the saved in their intense aggregate on earth.

One of the churches of Christ in Dallas reports that they have a "Ladies' Club" with the preacher's wife as president. Slowly but surely that church is drifting upon the rocks. Any church that does such a thing is inconsistent when it condemns denominationalism. To change the name of a Ladies' Aid to something else does not remove the thing itself. Likewise, when you have a B. Y. P. U or Christian Endeavor and call it Young People's Meeting or Young People's Classes, you have not killed the trouble. If you have the same thing, why call it by a different name? If you have an untaught practice, quit it.

I have been anxious many times in seeing children come forward for baptism because I feared they were not sufficiently taught, although they had been reared in the church. Then someone comes who has been fed on sectarian teaching, claiming he was scripturally baptized, when he had been taught nothing on the subject, but all against it. I don't believe in such. It is a bit amazing to see the number of people demanding baptism since they have grown up who were immersed under these high-powered evangelists. Don't you see, one can be immersed and not be baptized, but no one can be baptized without being immersed?

When any church of Christ has gone after strange doctrines to the end they have divided the body of Christ, no amount of preaching seems to be sufficient to correct them. If every true church and true preacher would stay away from them and have nothing to do with them, it would do more to correct them than all the oral preaching possible. "Mark then and turn away from them," is Jehovah's remedy. The brethren excuse themselves on the ground, "I will preach the gospel anywhere." Yes, but when you go and "preach the gospel" to those who are in error and leave them still in error and better fortified against the truth, it is time to stop and see what you are doing. Something is wrong.

The Bible teaches that we are to "put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" by "well-doing," and wives may win their unbelieving husbands "without the word" by their chaste living, "whose adorning let it not be that outward, of plaiting of the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart," "that of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price." (1 Pet. 3:1-4, which see.)

When I am preaching for some church and condemn instrumental music, and some brother says nobody here believes in musical instruments, then I condemn infant baptism, and no one says a thing about it, or where I condemn sprinkling, no one says anything, then I grow suspicious. Such churches are but feeders for the digressive city churches. Why say no one here believes in instrumental music, and, therefore, you should not preach on it? That is the very reason it ought to be done, lest someone should believe in it and be condemned.

W. W. Phares is quoted as saying recently that the New Testament is silent on the subject of instrumental music in the worship, and, therefore "Jew and Gentiles . . . felt free to sing with or without instruments." Suppose they did. The assassin of Garfield said he felt he ought to shoot him. That is no proof of our being right. O. E. Payne, in his book, one of Phares' own brethren, said no one could obey Eph. 5:19 without using instrumental music. If that is true, how could one feel he could "sing with or without the instrument?" One of these brethren must be wrong, or both of them. No one is trying to put a yoke on anyone's neck by objecting to such innovations, but merely trying to keep people from doing the thing the Lord "commands them not." (See Lev. 10:1.)

We have almost all things to eat now brought on in cans. Now someone comes along and suggests that the gospel "be canned," the church buys its supply for the whole year, and all the preachers would have to do would be to open up a "can" and serve it at the proper time.

There are no blessings in any denomination that cannot be had out of it. Why be baptized into it, then? But redemption is in Christ and nowhere else, and you are baptized into Christ. If you have not been baptized into Christ, you are uncircumcised and, therefore, out of covenant with God.

The blood of Christ is in Christ. (Eph. 1:7.) Remission is in Christ. (Col. 1:14.) "For as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ." (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27.) Now, since the blood of Christ washes sins away and the blood is in Christ and we are baptized into Christ, can't we see the relation of baptism to remission of sins? Unbaptized, you are out of Christ and your sins unforgiven.

We have received a copy of *The Apostolic Times*, a paper edited and published by Brother James A. Allen of Nashville, Tennessee. It is devoted to the "propagation of primitive Christianity." It has a sharp, clear ring of the old Book. The world is perishing for the old Jerusalem gospel, and let every paper and preacher get down to the work of preaching the word. No time for delay.

Saul of Tarsus was told to "arise and be baptized and wash away your sins." Suppose he had arose and stopped at that—had not been baptized! Do you believe his sins would have been "washed away"? Certainly not. Do you remember what Christ told him on the way? Go into the city, and it will be told you what you "*must do*." Do you believe he could have had his sins washed away till he had done what he "must do." Must do for what? To have his sins washed away, of course.

Have you been baptized? If not, how can you expect to be forgiven? If repentance is essential, so is baptism, for no one can lawfully separate "what God hath joined together." Then, too, the Book says: "Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins." Repentance and baptism, therefore, are coupled together, and both look forward to remission of sins. In other words, we are baptized for the same thing for which we repent, namely, remission of sins. Have you repented? Have you been baptized?

The old proverb that "the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are on edge" never did sound just right, and it isn't. If "the children's teeth are on edge," it is sufficient proof that they have been eating sour grapes themselves. The prophet said, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, nor the father that of the son, but the soul that sinneth it shall die"—the predestinarians and the advocates of total depravity and impossibility of apostasy to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Book says: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Christ," "and there is salvation in none other name whereby we must be saved." Have you been baptized? Remember, you can be immersed and not be baptized, but you cannot be baptized without being immersed. Why were you immersed? To get into some denomination, or "because your sins had been forgiven?" If so, you have not been baptized, although you have been immersed. You are baptized into the name of Christ, and there is salvation in no other name. Can you be saved, then, and not be baptized?

Can people be saved till you hurt their feelings? Peter hurt their feelings on the day of Pentecost when they were "cut to the heart," and Stephen hurt their feeling in Acts 7. In fact, whenever a sinner is convicted and condemned, his feelings are hurt.

The Holy Spirit was to "convict" people when he came—that is, "hurt their feelings"—and he never tried to save anyone till he did this very thing. But look out, my brother, whenever you do it! They will either repent and be baptized or else they will turn on you as they did Stephen.

The relation of baptism to remission of sins can be best understood by what the Bible says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Here faith and baptism both look to salvation. If one believes, therefore, and stops at faith, he has not reached salvation, for salvation is on the other side of baptism. Just as the flood divided between the old world and the new, the Red Sea between Egypt and the wilderness, baptism divides between the church and the world. One who is not baptized is out of the church and unsaved. For the church is the saved.

A great apostasy, maybe, is being planned unawares in the various things the local churches are doing under the eldership. Institutionalism is dangerous because it is a departure from the apostolic way. Human societies to do missionary work is wrong, but no more so than some human organization to take care of the orphans or old people or even the young folks. Happy is the man that condemneth not himself in that which he alloweth. Why not take care of all the work of the Lord as in New Testament times? Do you say times have changed? Then the church is not sufficient, eh? Look out for a great fall!

Some of these brethren who have gone with the organ and human society crowd and returned after a time don't understand why we refuse to trust them. Well, just to be plain, I am like a certain young lady was by her suitor. He insisted on kissing her, but she would not. The night before they were to be married next day he insisted on a kiss in as much as they were engaged and the wedding but a day off, but she refused by saying, "Wait till we are married." So the next day at the conclusion of the ceremony he grabbed her and kissed her several times and said: "Why wouldn't you let me kiss you before?" She said: "I tried that twice before, and it didn't work." So there are many preachers who have stood at duty's post all the time, and to take an unstable one is not wisdom. We have tried that too many times before.

We are now living 1,895 years this side of Pentecost. Let us be up and doing. Let us every one ask from the heart: "Lord, what will you have me to do?" Read the Bible, learn the truth, and obey it. The time is now short. The day is far spent, The night comes when no man can work.

All this shows how little some folk know about it. The Lord put it all in one big can—the Bible. But I suggest that if such is ever adopted the "canning" be done under the Lord's "pure food act" laid down in his law—Acts of Apostles—to avoid inferior quality, short weight, and ptomaine poison.

How many preachers in Dallas would tell penitent sinners what Peter told them on Pentecost? And how many who would not? I imagine the answer would be very interesting.

"What must I do to be saved?" is the supreme question. Yet there are many preachers who would tell you there is nothing to do. I often wonder why ask the question. There would be no need for it.

I read of a man once asking this question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" and when he was told to keep the commandments, he answered, "Which?" He must have been a pagan.

You hear people talking about the Sabbath day when they mean the first day of the week. Let's call Bible things by Bible names and talk of the things of the Bible in the language of the Bible.

Many people have sorely regretted their conduct after they are face to face with the consequences, as Judas Iscariot and Esau, to no avail. Better look before you leap.

The voices of conscience and memory will reprove us someday for misdeeds. Their lashes are terribly severe, but there is nothing we can do about it then but take it.

All the children are in the family. The family of God is the house of God which is the church of God. Therefore, whatever makes one a child of God makes him a member of the church.

To be in Christ is to be in his body. To be in his body is to be in the church. Therefore, whatever puts one into Christ makes him a member of the church.

The church should be able to settle all difficulties between its members and not in any case appeal to the court of unbelievers. Israel under Moses did. Were they better than we? No, indeed.

It is a pity the Lord's day cannot be given wholly to the Lord. People will be sorry someday that they did not "give unto God the things that are God's." Let's do it now lest we be found to repent in vain.

When someone sins, let him not say, "If I have done wrong," but let him say, "I have sinned." David did it, and so did the prodigal son. I do not believe anyone is fit to serve God who doesn't do it.

Let us follow after the things that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another, and there will be more peace and building up and less tearing down. Many churches would be saved from ruin.

There are eleven hundred and eighty-nine chapters in the Bible. How many of them have you read? How many have you not read? How can the Bible be a blessing in directing your course when you do not know what it directs or says?

Many a preacher has been fairly well supported while he was young and able to go and do the work, but when old, like the faithful old horse, turned out on the commons to die. We owe some duty to those who have spent their lives for others.

John the Baptist was not like "a reed shaken by the wind." John was not "carried about with every wind of doctrine." Popular currents never influenced him. Neither should they influence any gospel preacher today. Stand fast, my brother.

No one can preach Christ but by telling all about him, and no one is eligible to be baptized until he is taught these things and believes them. Hence, when one would be baptized, "if you believe with all your heart, you may." "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then he was baptized.

I am not opposed to helps in studying the Bible, but the use that is made of them today is not at all to be commended. If there were less books and pamphlets by men, there would be less plagiarism by the preachers. Men who preach then would have

to resort exclusively to the Bible. Hence, there would be more Bible reading and preaching.

As little as men may think of it, "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them who believe." Now since the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation," the preachers should preach the gospel exclusively. Much of the present-day preaching will save no one. Let's preach "the word instant in season and out of season."

John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. It is a pity every Christian is not in the Spirit on the Lord's day. If they were, we would have a much better attendance each Lord's day and fewer visiting or fishing or some place else where they have no business and Christians should not be found at all.

It is argued that the Lord's Supper has been overemphasized. I do not believe a word of it. No one can overemphasize anything the Lord commands. Something else may not be emphasized enough, but that does not prove that the Lord's Supper is overemphasized. Let's emphasize all the Lord teaches and be careful not to encourage anyone in indifference—to the Lord's Supper.

Since there is nothing larger nor smaller than the local church through which to work and worship in the New Testament, we should be careful not to band several congregations together for any purpose, neither should we have a class or a clan in the local church doing anything independent of the church. So, then, we would have no ladies' Bible class or any other class doing work independent of the church.

Sometimes you hear it said by some preachers: "I am too busy preaching Christ to say anything about baptism." But no inspired preacher thought he could preach Christ and leave baptism out; neither do I. Jesus was baptized himself; he made and baptized more disciples than John, and then before he ascended he commissioned the apostles to teach all nations, baptizing them. No apostle ever baptized an infant, for an infant could not be taught.

"Not of necessity." Don't wait till you are driven to your knees or that you are made to do. The religion of Christ is founded upon a willing mind and freewill offerings, and its invitation is, "Whosoever will." Do you not will to do his will? "He that willeth to do his will shall know of the doctrine."

One can hold a meeting for any church and preach nothing but the truth and still build up and strengthen that church in its error. All he preached was the truth, but was not all the truth. Paul was pure from the blood of all men because he preached all the counsel. No one can be guiltless and do less.

The Jew relies upon four things for salvation that never can bring it to him or anyone else. First, his relation to Abraham; second, circumcision; third, legal religion; fourth, God's partiality. This is the Jews' foundation. Paul, in the book of Romans, takes it all out from under him. Until this is done, the Jew never will be converted. Those preachers and teachers running all over the country teaching that the Jew has advantages do not know what they are talking about. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, and "God is no respecter of persons." "The judgment of God is according to truth," not fleshly relations and blood strains, but deeds of truth and "thy word is truth." "But glory and honor and peace, to every man that *worketh good*, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God." Let some of these sentimentalists take notice.

They talk about "the fundamentals of God's purposes and plans," and we are all agreed on "fundamental truth in the preaching of the gospel." Are we to understand that if we agree on faith, repentance, and baptism we are agreed on "fundamental truth"? What the Bible teaches on the work and worship of the church is just as much "fundamental truth" as anything else it teaches. Anybody who talks as the foregoing needs "fundamentally" overhauling. Anyone who adds to or takes from what the New Testament teaches by the use of mechanical musical instruments or human societies or anything else is "fundamentally" wrong, even if they do talk about the "fundamentals of the purposes and plans of God," whatever that may mean. These "special" dishes on the religious menu are but a make-believe—a fraud.

It is impossible to please God without faith (Heb. 11:6), and just as impossible to have faith where God has not spoken (Rom. 10:17). Then faith and obedience alike depend upon what God has said. "By faith Abraham when he was called to go out into

a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." No one can do anything by faith without obeying God, for faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Rom. 10:17.) Then by works was faith made perfect and the Scriptures fulfilled. (James 2:21-24.) So, then, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Don't forget the Lord's day is the Lord's.

Don't forget to meet with the disciples on the first day of the week.

Don't forget to study the Bible.

Anyone so busy preaching Christ he has no time to preach on baptism does not know what preaching Christ means.

It is impossible to obey God unless we do what he says. "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." He is "the author and finisher of our faith." As the voice on the mountain said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," Jesus, through the Holy Spirit by the apostles, says "sing." No substitute, therefore, can be made. One can make music without singing, but one cannot obey God without it, *unless he can obey God and not do what God says*. Neither can one love God without he obeys God, "for this is the love of God that you keep his commandments," and "he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," "therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Then we know "all things work together for good to them who love God." But no man can love God and not obey God. The first command of the law is to love God. This divides the "law" into two sections, the first to love God and the second to love man. The first four of the Ten Commandments is the duty to God, the next six the duty to man.

"Let love be without dissimulation." It is impossible to add dissimilar fractions. It is just as impossible to add Jew and Greek, bond and free together until they are upon a common ground which is love, and "this is the love of God that you keep his commandments." "There is no difference between the Jew

and the Greek," then, for they must all do the same thing to be "one body in Christ and every one members one of another."

No one can do his "whole duty," no one can enter "the kingdom of God," no one can be "happy," no one can "love God," no one can receive the Spirit of God, no one can be saved, no one can know he "knows" God, no one can have a "right to the tree of life," no one can "enter in through the gates into the city," unless he obeys the commandments of God. "How, oh, how are you living, my brother?"

Those who build upon the rock are those who *do* what Jesus says. Those who build upon the sand are those who *do not do* what Jesus says. The only difference between the two builders is: one *does* and the other *does not*. In which class do you belong? It is specifically said we must *do* the *sayings* of Jesus. To do anything else will not suffice. With every Christian it ought to be: "Lord, what will you have me to do?" "What must I do?" "Not my will but thine be done." May the Lord hasten the day when this will be so. None can enter the kingdom save only by doing the will of God. All the blessings of the kingdom and blessed promise that he "shall never be moved" and "abide forever" and his house "shall not fall" when the rains descend, the winds blow and beat upon it. Let us "put on the whole armor of God," that we may be able to "withstand in the evil day and having done *all to stand*."

There are people in the church that by reason of their curiosity or by reason of a lack of a proper knowledge of the doctrine of our Lord will lend their influence (to those whose practice and teaching they condemn) by attending the services of those who teach and practice divisive doctrines and are ever ready by their teaching to discredit those that are fearless in their faithfulness to the doctrine of Christ. Had we not better stay away from those whom we know are in error, not lending our moral support to their audiences by our presence? Think what you may, but think so as to think soberly.

Christians are in Christ, and to be in Christ is to be in his body, and to be in his body is to be in the church. (Eph. 5:30; 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18. See also Gal. 3:26, 27.)

When some proposition is stated that does not meet popular favor it is often asked: "Who believes that?" What difference does it make as to who believes it? Must a proposition be believed by a certain number of people before it is the truth? The truth does not stand on whether a majority of people do or do not believe it. It is the truth regardless of whether anyone accepts it.

One preacher—a Baptist—said you cannot connect an active and passive verb together with a copulative conjunction. Acts 2:38: "repent," active, "and be baptized," passive. Well, it is done anyway, and the Holy Spirit did it. He was trying to get rid of baptism in the plan of salvation and plunged into more trouble than ever. Many passages show the same by coupling active and passive verbs together.

It is argued that we cannot understand the Bible alike. This is buncombe. We may differ and neither understand the truth. We may also differ when one understands the truth, while the other does not. But it is impossible to differ when both understand it. We "can't understand it alike" is but an excuse for denominationalism. From whence came these tares? While men slept an enemy sowed the tares among the wheat.

The brethren in politics take warning that the "tics" in politics have about sucked all the spirituality out of those in such, and the "club" in the clubs have beaten all the spiritual life out of the church member in them and the human organizations among Christians have a strangle hold upon the church till it is smothered to death. Let Christians beware of all such. Get in the church and stay in it, and stay out of everything else, and you cannot go wrong.

We read of two going up to the temple to pray. One stood and prayed and thanked God that he was not like other men, not even this publican. I do this and that and the other, while the publican stood afar off, never lifted up his eyes, but smote himself on the breast and said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Jesus said this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.

Jehovah does not like the bragging spirit. He knows one's uprisings and downittings.

Heb. 7:12 says, "the priesthood being changed," there is made of necessity "a change also of the law." Heb. 7:24 says the priesthood of Christ is unchangeable and therefore "after the order of Melchisedec." The law then cannot be changed as long as Christ is High Priest. Another passage says (Heb. 8:4) that "if he were on earth, he could not be a priest." Now, if he comes back on earth, he will cease to be a priest, and the law will be changed. If he should reign on earth, who would be priest, and what "change of the law"? My, the difficulties of a false position!

All are the children of God by faith in Christ, for as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Gal. 3:27.) To be in Christ is to be in the body of Christ, which is the church. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) Therefore, all of God's children are in the church. One passage makes the church God's family (1 Tim. 3:16); another says the Lord adds people to the church (Acts 2:47); another says "born again." Therefore, all who are born again are his children, members of his family, which is his house, which is the church. It is preposterous to talk about joining the church, much less the church of your choice.

Each congregation is a sovereign within itself. It, therefore, is clothed with power to manage its own affairs and maintain its independence. It is so individual that every other congregation might perish and the one be unharmed. Someone illustrated it a long time ago by the panes of glass in a window. If one pane is broken, the rest are not harmed. But if it be solid glass, all is ruined. Anything, therefore, that would so unite the local congregations together is evil and antisciptural. Human organizations to do missionary work and the like have done this very thing. The Lord arranged it so the local congregation could live or die by its own condition, and not by what some other did. The Lord said, speaking of individuals, "The soul that sinneth it shall die"; so likewise would this apply to each congregation. Anything bigger than the local congregation through which to work and worship is wrong. Anything smaller is also wrong. This

being true, each congregation should be careful to maintain its independence, avoiding cast, clans, and classes in the church acting independent of the whole church. Let there be unity in all things, that "Christ may be all and in all."

A Presbyterian preacher trying to get baptism out of the plan of salvation said of John 3:5, "born of the water and of the spirit" should read "born of water *even* the Spirit," and that the original Greek word should always be translated "*even*" and not "*and*." Then Mark 16:16 would read, "He that believeth *even* is baptized shall be saved. Acts 2:38 would read, "Repent *even* be baptized." Acts 22:16 would read, "Arise *even* be baptized and wash away your sins." My, what a tangled web we weave when we practice to deceive!

Christianity is an individual matter. Each one must answer for himself before God, but the body of Christ, which is the church, is so tempered together that if one member suffer all the members suffer with it. Each member is an independent sovereign, as well as each congregation, but all the members and all the congregations make up the body of Christ over which Christ is head, and in which every Christian is a member.

Some fellow carried his baby up in an aeroplane to have it baptized, but they just sprinkled a little water on it and called it baptism. The baby was no better off. Sprinkling water is all right within itself, but when it comes off the fingers of a priest it is abominable.