

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa

Vol. 35, No. 44

130 Gerrard St. E., TORONTO, FEBRUARY 14, 1957

Whole Number 1812

THE BIBLE AND MORAL TRUTH

THE intellectual is a subordinate element in Christian faith. This will appear if you reflect that the whole Christian revelation is a disclosure of moral truth. The Bible, from beginning to end, assumes a great moral catastrophe involving the ruin of human nature. Like rescuers bringing light, and air, and food from an upper world to entombed miners, the Bible unfolds a plan for the liberation of the soul from the spiritual darkness and death in which sin has involved the race. And, as such rescuers would be likely to do, when bent on saving life, the Bible keeps to its task. It does not teach science or philosophy directly; but it will never be found unscientific or contrary to sound reason. You will never learn astronomy, or geology, or any other branch of science, from Genesis; but I venture to say you will never find any absolutely established fact of science to contradict its pregnant speech. And so the Book throughout. Its function is to reveal a moral order, and the Person of the moral Ruler. It ultimately fulfils its function in its record of the divine Incarnation, adjusting the moral balance in the atonement by blood, and releasing for human salvation a regenerating moral Power through resurrection. The record of the preparation for, and the consummation of that incomparable achievement will never be found to be untrue to fact,—to any fact of history, or of science, or of experience. Its consonance with truth, however, in all these aspects, essential as it is to any theory of divine inspiration, is yet subordinate to its main purpose, to make clear the relation of man to his Maker and the divine plan and purpose of redemption.

This being so, the Christian revelation, as a written Book, as a record of the Incarnate Word, as a promise of a regenerating Spirit, and as a prediction of a day of reckoning and judgment, lays siege to our moral natures. It never asks whether you have been to school, whether you know anything about the origin of species, or the measure of ethereal spaces; its first and last word to you is of sin and salvation. It speaks of origins. It assumes you do not know, and tells you; and its assumptions are as true as its assertions. It thunders at the castle gate demanding surrender to Deity — "In the beginning God"! The voices of Sinai and Calvary are the same; they declare the same truth; they proclaim the majesty of the divine law, the perfection of the moral order, and the glory of the divine Ruler; and while offering amnesty to the rebel, they summon you to an accept-

ance of the divine government. But nowhere is the King uncrowned. God is mighty in generation in Genesis, and mighty in regeneration in Jesus. The Word predicts the curse of thorns in Genesis, but wears the thorns in Jesus, albeit as a crown. And as He sovereignly lays down His life upon a cross, it is indelibly written above His head, "This is the King."

Thus the demand of the Christian religion is for submission to a moral government, operative in all the created order; not mechanically or automatically operative, but transcendently resident in and directed by God Himself.

Hence Christian belief is essentially a moral act. It consists in assent to, and reliance on moral truth — moral truth incarnate in Christ. Unbelief, therefore, is not an intellectual disability, but the expression of a moral bias against God. And therefore it is written, "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." The condemnation resting upon unbelief is not a divine judgment upon intellectual incapacity, but upon positive moral turpitude; by that I mean the "enmity against God" which inheres in "the carnal mind". Hence faith is not cardinally an intellectual act or attitude, but an act of the will. The purely intellectual faculties are exercised in the confirmation of the choice which a quickened conscience has perceived to be right, and a re-enfranchised will has made. But the act of believing, or trusting, in a word, Christian faith, consists essentially in the enthronement of Christ as the embodiment of all revealed truth; and whether by a little child or a man of mature and highly trained mind, the act is the same; it is the simple surrender of the will to God...

Perhaps I ought here to explain what I mean by the word "moral". When I say that unbelief is to be accounted for on moral grounds, it is not implied that it has its root in any kind of immorality. In extreme cases that may be true. I use the term "moral" in contradistinction to that which is non-moral: the Christian revelation being an unfolding of truth concerning the laws of the moral realm, having to do with principles governing the oughtness of things, or of right conduct. Our attitude toward that revelation is an indication of our attitude toward the moral principles revealed, and therefore is chiefly determined by purely moral considerations.

—DR. T. T. SHIELDS, in *Other Little Ships*

DR. AND MRS. SLADE

Dr. and Mrs. Slade, at present on a missionary tour in the West Indies, have arrived safely in the French island of Martinique, their first main appointment. The following cable was received on February 9th from Dr. Slade from Fort De France, Martinique:

Delightful fellowship in Miami with Dr. Cole's son and family and with Mrs. Eastwood. Arrived Fort De France, Friday morning. Itys very hospitable. Meeting to-night. Warmest greetings and love to Dr. Kinney, Church and Bible School.

—Pastor and Mrs. Slade

The prayers of the Lord's people will follow Dr. and Mrs. Slade in their journeyings.

LATEST BULLETIN FROM DR. SLADE

Porto Rico, February 12, 11.30 p.m.

UNFORGETTABLE SIGHTS AND EXPERIENCES AT MARTINIQUE. PHYSICAL, MORAL, SPIRITUAL STATE LOWEST EVER WITNESSED. GOSPEL ONLY ANSWER. CHRISTIAN MISSIONS INC. ESTABLISHED EIGHT PREACHING STATIONS IN ELEVEN YEARS. MR. ITTY'S WORK AT FORT DE FRANCE LARGEST BY FAR. ABOUT ONE HUNDRED ASSEMBLED EACH SERVICE SUNDAY. RADIANT FACES BESPEAK PHYSICAL DELIVERANCE FROM SLAVERY AND SPIRITUAL FROM SIN. PREACHED IN PRISON ALSO SUNDAY TO FIFTY MEN. FIFTEEN CONVERTED THROUGH MR. ITTY. MOST TOUCHING SERVICE. ONE PRISONER READ LETTER OF WELCOME. ANOTHER PRESENTED TORTOISE SHELL PAPER KNIVES, HIS OWN WORK. GOOD TRIP TO SAN JUAN TODAY. ANTICIPATE MEETING MR. KNIGHT TOMORROW KINGSTON. BOTH WELL.

SLADE

REWARD FOR UNAPPRECIATED LABOUR

Cheer up, men and women of unappreciated services. You will get your reward, if not here, hereafter. When Charles Wesley comes up to judgment, and the thousands of souls which were wafted into glory through his songs shall be enumerated, he will take his throne. When John Wesley will come up to judgment his name will be mentioned in connection with the salvation of millions of souls brought to God through the Methodism which he founded, and he will take his throne. But between the two thrones of John Wesley and Charles Wesley, there will be a throne higher than either, on which shall sit Susannah Wesley, who with maternal consecration in Epworth Rectory, started those two souls on their mission of sermon and song through all following ages. Oh, what a day that will be for many who rocked Christian cradles with weary feet, who patched worn-out garments and darned socks, and with a small income made the children comfortable for the winter. What a day that will be for those to whom the world gave the cold shoulder, and called them nobodies, and begrudged them the least recognition, and who, weary and worn, and sick, fainted by the brook Besor. Oh, that will be a mighty day when the Son of David shall distribute among them the gar-

The Gospel Witness

and

Protestant Advocate

FOUNDER AND FIRST EDITOR—Dr. T. T. Shields
(Editor 1922 - 1955)

Published every Thursday for the propagation of the Evangelical principles of the Protestant Reformation and in defence of the faith once delivered to the Saints.

\$3.00 Per Year. Postpaid to any address. 10c Per Single Copy.

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lands, the crowns, the scepters, the chariots, the thrones. And then it shall be found out that all who on earth served God in inconspicuous spheres received just as much reward as those who filled the earth with uproar of achievement. Then they shall understand the height, the depth, the length, the breadth, the pillared and domed significance of that verse: "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff."—TALMAGE.

JARVIS STREET CHURCH CALENDAR**SUNDAY**

- 9.45 Bible School for everybody, from grandfather to the baby.
- 11.00 Morning Service.
- 4.30 Afternoon Class.
- 5.55 Young People's Bible Fellowship Hour.
- 6.00 Prayer Service in Greenway Chapel.
- 7.00 Regular evening service.

TUESDAY

- 8.00 Departmental Conferences of the Bible School, followed by the teaching of the lesson at 8.45.

THURSDAY

- 2.30 Senior Dorcas Sewing Meeting.
- 5.30 Junior Dorcas Sewing Meeting.
- 8.00 Bible Lecture by Dr. H. C. Slade.

FRIDAY

- 7.00 and 8.15—Junior and Senior choir practices.
- 7.00 Friday Night Round-Up for boys and girls.

SATURDAY

- 8.00 Great Weekly Prayer Service in Greenway Hall.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"I Have Found the Book of the Law"

A Sermon By Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, December 21st, 1924

(Stenographically Reported)

"I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord."—II Kings 22:8.

WE HAVE been studying this morning the story of a lost book, of a book that was lost in the house of the Lord — a very extraordinary thing that such a book should be lost at all; but that it should be lost in the house of the Lord was still more remarkable! It was the Law of the Lord; it was the one Word to which all the people ought to have listened. But they neglected it so long that, like the alarm clock, it ceased to speak at all. And it was lost and forgotten.

It is still possible for us to lose the Book of the Lord. I am afraid there are a great many Christian people who have lost their Bibles, in the sense that their Bibles have ceased to speak to them, or to exercise any authority whatever in their lives. It may be there are homes represented here this morning in which the Book of the Lord is lost; where its words are never heard, where it is never read, where its great truths are never discussed. I should not like to ask for a show of hands this morning; but it is quite possible that some of our scholars come from homes in which the Book of the Lord is lost. You may know where the material Book is; but it is never opened, its voice is never heard.

I.

IT IS STRANGE THAT THE WORD OF THE LORD SHOULD BE LOST IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD! But I am afraid that that is the sin of God's people to-day, that the *word of the Lord has been misplaced*. There are many pulpits that could do very well without a Bible at all. They are not needed. The sermons that are preached are not found in the Book. It has ceased to be the Book of the Lord. I listened to some discussions on church union. I was in one great religious assembly, and I noticed that in their discussion of that subject very few speakers even referred to the Word of the Lord. One or two did quote the seventeenth of John: "That they all may be one". But here was a great organization, building a still greater organization like a great business corporation; and in those discussions there was no special reference to the teaching of the Word of the Lord.

The Book of the Lord is lost in some places in this sense, that *men never refer to it*, to learn therefrom their duty in respect to the commandments of God. We shall see in a moment or so that the king learned something about the divine ordinances from God's Word; he learned that the people had been living in neglect of that which was commanded. And there are thousands of people in so-called Christian churches to-day who live, for instance, in neglect of this ordinance, this ordinance of baptism. If you mention it they say, "I am a Methodist", or "I am

a Presbyterian", or "I am an Anglican". That is not the question. What is written in the Book of the Law? But they never have consulted the Book on the subject; never have looked into its pages. A lady asked me one day to call at her house. She said, "I have been a Methodist for thirty years, and in all that time I have been perfectly satisfied with my baptism." And she said, "Do you suppose the Lord would have allowed me to rest in contentment if I were wrong?" "Well," I said, "Have you ever asked the Lord if He were satisfied with your baptism? Have you ever opened God's Book, and asked Him the teaching of His word in respect to this matter?" She said, "No, I never have." For thirty years and over, so far as she was concerned, in respect to this important command, the Word of the Lord had been lost. She had been guided by what her friends and other people did.

And so in respect to a hundred other things, the Bible may be lost in the sense that we do not consult it; that we do not follow its teaching. I read a story of a man whose son was in college. The father was a very orthodox man; he boasted that he believed the Bible from cover to cover. (I never like to hear anyone say that. It does not do you any good to hold a theory that you believe the Bible from cover to cover unless you know what is in it. A great many people who say that don't know what is in it. I believe that it is all true; we ought to accept it in its entirety. But it is the part of the Bible which we believe and act upon that really affects us, not any theory that we believe it from cover to cover, and then leave it in the parlor with the dust on it.) This man boasted that he believed the Bible, and when his son came home from college — the boy was really full of mischief — he told his father some of the things that his professor had taught him about the book of Jonah; and he rather took the professor's side just to tease his father a little. And he told him that his professor had said that the Book of Jonah was only an allegory, that there never was a real Jonah. His father was horrified, and said, "If you don't believe Jonah, I do. I believe the whole Bible, and I won't part company with it anyhow." And so the boy ceased to argue. He went back to college in due time, and in six months or so he came home again. He renewed the subject, and the father was still more concerned. He said to his son, "Have you not got rid of that notion regarding Jonah yet?" And the boy teased his father a little further, but the father insisted that his Bible would be of no use to him, if the book of Jonah's prophecy was not there. "Oh, come now," said the boy, "you don't need Jonah, dad." "Indeed I do, I have got great help out of Jonah." "Yet," he said, "Jonah is not in your Bible at all." But he insisted that it was. And

when his father examined the Book, he could not find Jonah. He turned back to the minor prophets, and turned over the pages, but he could not discover the book of the prophecy of Jonah. The mischievous boy had cut it out of his father's Bible, and his father had never discovered it. He believed it; but he was not reading it and profiting by its precepts!

Now there is a possibility of losing the Word of God in a theory of the Word of God, and just boasting of our orthodoxy and making no particular use of the things we profess to believe. The Book was lost in the house of the Lord.

II.

Now this chapter tells us of THE RE-DISCOVERY OF THE BOOK. They were renovating the temple, clearing out the rubbish. It is wonderful what you can find when you begin to clear out the rubbish in your own house. And in the course of that cleansing process Hilkiah came upon this forgotten Book. What an extraordinary thing it was that the priest, too, should have forgotten his Bible, should have lost his Bible, and should have gotten along so well without the Law of the Lord! Preachers may lose their Bibles. There is just the possibility of turning to the Bible as a book of texts, just as a doctor opens his bag and takes out his medicine, when a patient calls him in. He does not use it for himself; it is not food for him — only medicine for a sick man. It is possible for Sunday School teachers to do that. By the way, it is possible for you to lose your Bible in the very work of the Lord, and to turn to these lessons because you are going to meet your class on Sunday. Now you cannot prepare yourself to teach that class, and teach the lesson without any relation to yourself. Here was a man who found the Book of the Lord; and it is a great thing for a person to discover the Bible. I have known people who had it on their shelves. They have known where the paper was; but they did not know anything about the Bible, until a day has come when, by the blessing of God, they have discovered that in this Book there is a treasury of truth; and they have rejoiced in it as one who finds great spoil.

Now the real revival began, as we shall see presently, when Hilkiah the priest, re-discovered the Law of the Lord. I am sure that a revival would spring up everywhere if the people of God could find their Bibles once again, really find them — discover in this Book the law of the Lord. I don't know how we may discover them, by what means God may drive us to look for them; but when Hilkiah found the Book, the important thing to observe is that he read it. Now it is a great thing to read the Bible, just to read it and let it speak for itself. Hilkiah handed the book to Shaphan the scribe, and the scribe took it to the king, and the book was read in the king's presence. Now mark this: Hilkiah the priest did not argue with Shaphan as to the character of that book; he did not argue about the inspiration of the law; he did not discuss the human authorship of it — whether Moses or someone else wrote it — but he read it; and it so impressed him that he handed it to Shaphan the scribe. The extraordinary thing about the Bible is that when you read it yourself, you want everyone else to read it; when the Word of the Lord really speaks to you, you become enthusiastic for the Book. There was a time when Moody shut himself up to Isaiah's prophecies for a month. He said, "I will read nothing but Isaiah for a month"; and he saturated himself with Isaiah just for a month. And he said

that after spending a month with Isaiah, every man he met on the street he wanted to take by the collar and say, "Have you read Isaiah? Have you read Isaiah?" He was so full of the Word of the Lord that he was like Jeremiah when he said, "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay".

Now, boys and girls, read the Bible! Just read it thoughtfully, quietly, prayerfully; and let the Bible speak to you for itself; and as you do that, you will want everyone else in the world to read it. Hilkiah read it for himself, and then he handed it to the scribe, and he read it and said, "The king must hear this; he must read it, too." And they took it to the king; and thus the word of the Lord is multiplied. It multiplies itself, if only it is given a chance in our hearts and lives. Now note this: when the king heard that book read — he was a young man; he never heard it before; he never heard the Law of the Lord read to him before — when he heard it read, he rent his clothes and he said, "What a sinner I am! And what a sinful nation this is! I have discovered that a lot of things we are doing we ought not to do. And a great many things that are commanded in the Law of the Lord we are not doing at all."

I don't suppose the king got through that Book in twenty minutes; it must have taken him a long time to hear the Law of the Lord read. But because it was the Lord, Josiah was willing to listen. I wonder now if His Majesty the King were standing here this morning — although he is only a man — and he desired to talk to us, I wonder how many would be impatient? But how wonderful it is that the Lord God Himself condescends to speak to us out of His Book! And He will speak to us by the hour, by the day, and by the year, if only we will give attention to the things that are written in His Word.

Now I don't believe anyone can read the Word of God without being uncomfortable. A man came to see me yesterday. He was in very hard circumstances; he had had to sell his clothes, and he had a suit of clothes on that put me to shame. He said, "I cannot come to church; I should feel conspicuous; I have never been used to this; I should feel uncomfortable." I don't wonder; I suppose we all would in similar circumstances. But we ought to try to get over that, and not be influenced by these external things. Why, I have known boys and girls who felt uncomfortable when they looked into a looking glass, haven't you? Sometimes, boys, even after you have washed your faces, you feel uncomfortable if you look in the looking glass and find out you have not done it properly. Did mother ever tell you to go back and do it over again? Well, you know, the Bible is just like a mirror; and it is impossible to look into that Word and let that Word speak to us, without our discovering just what Josiah discovered — *the need of correction* in our lives. We read this morning, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?" You want to know what is the matter with you? Read the Bible, and let the Bible speak to you; and the Lord will show us what is wrong.

And then when Josiah had read the Word, he called all the people together to the house of the Lord to repent and to turn back to the Lord. And he told them there were certain things taught in the Word of the Lord which the nation, as such, had been neglecting, and which it was requisite they should do. So they held a Feast of the Passover such as had never been held before. They came from all parts of the country to Jerusalem, and

such a crowd had never been seen on any Passover occasion. And the blessing of the Lord was upon them.

Now I know what would happen if some people here would read their Bibles. You don't need anyone to interpret it: you don't need any preacher, or any teacher. And to you who are Christians: Then Josiah read in the law that they were commanded to keep the Passover, the Passover of Blood. If we would betake ourselves to our Bibles, we should find that there are certain things plainly commanded there which we have not obeyed. Referring to that matter of baptism again: you don't need to be a Greek scholar to understand that; you don't need to take a course in a university; you don't need to go to any preacher in the world. You just need to read God's Book! And when you read and find out what the law requires, then obey it! Do what He commands you.

And very especially the reading of the book led Josiah to see the great central truth of the Book, namely, that *there is nothing but blood can wash our sins away*. And that is the message we give this morning; that we have sinned so grievously, all of us, that none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good; and that nothing but the blood of Jesus can wash our sins away.

May we all find the Book again this morning, and finding it, find it precious to our souls. Let us pray.

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Dr. K. R. Kinney of Johnson City, New York, Vice-President of the International Council of Christian Churches, ministered most acceptably in Jarvis Street Church, February 7th to 10th. Dr. Kinney is one with us in aim and purpose, due to his experience as Pastor of First Baptist Church in Johnson City, as Chairman of the Board of Administration of a Baptist Bible Seminary, and as one of the outstanding leaders in the large group of Baptist Pastors and Churches which have withdrawn from the Modernistic Baptist Conventions in United States.

On Thursday evening Dr. Kinney gave an illustrated lecture on the work of the International Council of Christian Churches, of which Dr. Carl McIntire is President. The principles of the organization were clearly expounded, its separation from Modernism and Communism, its uncompromising stand for the Word of God in these days of apostasy, and its determination to preach the Gospel of saving grace to the ends of the earth. Dr. Kinney showed views of the various European cities in which past conferences of the organization had been held, including London, Amsterdam, Geneva and Lebanon, Syria. Finally, he took us upon a journey to the Holy Land, where we visited such sacred places as Bethlehem, Bethany, Nazareth, the Jordan and Jerusalem.

On Friday morning Dr. Kinney gave a fine message to the Faculty and Students of Toronto Baptist Seminary, outlining the principles of the Separatist Movement, emphasizing the historical background that we might understand the setting and the reasons why, as Bible-believing Baptists, it was necessary for us to withdraw completely from those organizations which stand for compromise with evil. His powerful exhortation to continued faithfulness to the Lord and to His Word will not soon be forgotten.

On Sunday morning, February 10th, Dr. Kinney delivered an inspiring and enlightening message on the

great theme, "The Splendours of Orthodoxy" (Jeremiah 6:16). Defining, Orthodoxy as "Soundness of faith; a belief in the genuine doctrines taught in the Scriptures" and Heterodoxy as "Heresy; an opinion or doctrine contrary to the doctrines of the Scriptures, or contrary to those of an established church," he invited his hearers to consider the glorious accomplishments of Orthodoxy — great churches, Hospitals and culture centres; to ponder the characters which Orthodoxy has produced and built — men of conviction, of faith and liberty, such as Calvin and Luther. Orthodoxy also has promise concerning the future. Rest and peace can be found in the sure Word of the Lord. Dr. Kinney made a strong appeal for sinners to hear the message of the Book and to be at peace with God. One boy answered that call at the close of the service, giving his sweet testimony audibly before the whole congregation, saying, "I have trusted Christ all week." Dr. Kinney's gracious manner with the lad was most touching.

"The True Unity" (Eph. 4:4-6) was the theme of Dr. Kinney's masterly message at the evening service. A unity which is outward, visible and all-inclusive is sought by the sponsors of the Ecumenical Movement, as represented by the Federal Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches, but true unity must be a unity of corporation, a unity of spiritual life, a unity of hope in Christ, a unity of Headship, a unity of trust in Christ and in His Word, a unity of identification with Christ and a unity of worship as we all adore the One God, Three in One and One in Three. Dr. Kinney strongly urged all present to enter into this true unity and he faithfully warned those outside of the fatal consequences, if they continued in their present course.

All hearts were stirred to a deeper trust in the Lord and a stronger desire to serve Him faithfully, as Dr. Kinney expounded the Word with such power of the Spirit, and as he exhorted all to stand fearlessly for the Lord and for His Word. His optimistic spirit and delightful spontaneous humour added much to the power of his messages. The Jarvis Street family are grateful to the Lord and to His servant for the blessings of last week-end.

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Satan's Effort to Confuse

MANY and varied have been the attempts of the Devil through the years to confuse, confound, and thwart the programme and purpose of God for His people, His Church and the world. Most successful of all his deceptions has been that of perversion rather than outright denial, though the latter inevitably follows the acceptance of the former. To Eve in the garden, he first insinuated into her mind the thought that she might have possibly misinterpreted God's Word of prohibition. Then, as soon as she accepted the insinuation, Satanic denial followed, and the tragic record reports, "she did eat and gave to her husband also." With what result, observe society today, as well as in any day since the acceptance of the Satanic deceit.

Since the turn of the current century, we have, in the church, run the gauntlet of Unitarianism, Modernism, Liberalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, Middle-of-the-roadism, and Neo-Evangelicalism. Unitarianism, as such, has long since been discredited in the public mind, but has been successfully perpetuated, essentially, under the guise of modernism or liberalism, and, in effect, in the rest above named.

Now, another approach is being made in the age-old effort of the Devil to get men occupied with other than the truth of the Gospel. It is to get professing Christians to turn from a Biblical THEOLOGY to a humanistic SOCIOLOGY. Thus, the test of Christian Faith is now declared to rest, not in something one BELIEVES but in something one DOES. It all fits in, of course, with the mass indoctrination by the self-styled Liberals, of the totally UNBIBLICAL dream of "the universal brotherhood of man under the universal fatherhood of God." It is called "awareness" on the part of "Christians" to "social justice".

In order to beguile born-again believers in Jesus Christ, who, though they may not be able actually to put their finger on the error, but who "smell something rotten," such proponents of humanistic sociology make much of "the social implications of the gospel," as they put it, wresting from its context such a statement of Christ as "inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these ye did it unto me," as proof from the BIBLE, (the divine inspiration of which they deny though not hesitating to "use" the Bible wherever and whenever it suits their purpose,) that the whole approach is CHRISTIAN and BIBLICAL.

No one knows better than the Bible-believer that the faith of Jesus Christ has a definite ethic, and that "as far as you have opportunity do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." BUT HE also knows that there is a proper alignment of the cart and the horse, namely, "Seek ye FIRST the Kingdom of God and HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS." Matthew 6:33. This, the Liberal does not do. He pays lip service to "the FATHER," and "the MASTER", believing nothing Biblical about either. Since, therefore, he has nothing BIBLICAL to present to the people, he must have SOMETHING which he can pawn off as being Christian, so presenting a CARE package as a substitute for CHRIST.

This accounts for the so-called LIBERAL clergymen being in the forefront of such movements as CO-EXISTENCE with RED-Clergymen; so-called PROGRESSIVE education; total RACIAL integration; political SOCIAL-

ISM; and economic PATERNALISM. Being of the earth, earthy, their movements must of necessity be divorced from a "thus saith the Lord." But, to give them a heavenly aura, thus to deceive the unwary, they prate of "the Kingdom of God on earth," and, to give them a heavenly smell, for the benefit of those who consider perfume a substitute for cleanliness, they prate of all this being "in the spirit of the Master."

Then, in order to protect themselves from exposure by "truth squads" of Biblicists who get out the DDT of the Word of God for the purpose of "pest control", they set up a system of sneer and smear. In the public press they use the "sneer" approach, labelling Biblicists as "rightists" and "fascists", etc. In their religious periodicals they use the "smear" approach, labelling Biblicists as "apostles of discord", "protestant underworld," ignoramuses, etc.

So the battle continues. Nor will it abate or modify with the passing of time. It will worsen as the years go by, for each day brings us closer to the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, Himself, declared that the days preceding, will "wax worse and worse". In the meantime, reader, develop YOUR "awareness" to the hiss of the serpent. "Believe not every spirit (voice) but TRY the spirits whether they be of God for many FALSE PROPHETS have gone out into the world." 1st John 4:1. "Keep yourselves from IDOLS." 1st John 5:21.

—DR. KENNETH R. KINNEY, in *Counter Attack*,

CONFESSION A CONDITION OF BLESSING

When Job was confessing his sin, God turned his captivity and heard his prayer. God will hear our prayer and turn our captivity when we take our true place before Him, and confess and forsake our transgressions. It was when Isaiah cried out before the Lord, "I am undone," that the blessing came. It was when David said, "I have sinned!" that God dealt in mercy with him. Jonah was cast into the sea, and there was an ease in the ship; Achan was stoned and the plague was stayed. Out with Jonah, out with Achan; and there will follow ease and quiet in the soul presently.—MOODY.

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A SOUL'S CONFLICT

(Studies in Psalm LXXIII)

VII. SPIRITUAL ALLERGY

By Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

(Report of Sermon preached on Sunday morning, 22nd November, 1953, in Westminster Chapel, London)

Psalm lxxiii, 21 and 22

WE ARE considering this man's analysis of himself, after he had come to himself as the result of going to the sanctuary of God. You remember that this man had gone sadly astray in his thinking in three main respects. He had completely misunderstood the position of the ungodly. He had regarded them as objects of envy because he saw their prosperity; he had been contrasting their condition with his own and so he had been guilty of being "envious at the foolish". Likewise, and as the result of that, he had been guilty of thinking very wrongly about God and God's attitude towards him and God's promises to His people. And as the result of that, of course, he clearly had been guilty of thinking in a very wrong way about himself. In other words, this man having started with the simple observation of the apparent success of the ungodly had gone completely wrong in all his thinking, and he had been going round in that miserable circle where nothing seemed to be right. He was on the point of expressing himself about it, but he didn't for the reasons we have considered. But he still wasn't happy until he went to the House of God, where he began to think spiritually and to see that his thinking had been wrong, and especially in these three main respects. We have already considered the first, how his thinking about the ungodly was put right, how he saw that they were really objects of pity rather than of envy, because they were set in such slippery places and because their end was to be doom and disaster. So he ended by feeling sorry for them instead of envying them. At the same time he came to see the truth about God, about God's greatness and God's love, and about God's great power and what God is going to do.

Then here in these two verses he tells us how he came to see that he had been entirely wrong also in his thinking about himself. We began our consideration of that last time. The points we then made were these. The first big thing he discovered was that self after all is the real trouble, and it is because self tends to get into control that we have so many of our difficulties and problems and perplexities in this life. That is the key to everything. We emphasized that this man was very honest with himself, indeed he was quite brutal with himself. We are going to see that still more this time. He did not take a mere cursory glance at himself and then forget all about it and go on to something else; he just stood and looked at himself, he looked steadfastly into that mirror and faced himself down to the smallest detail. He flinched at nothing. That is absolutely essential. There is no possible growth in the Christian life unless we are ruthlessly honest with ourselves. Self-examination is, perhaps, of all the aspects of the Christian life the one most neglected today. This is partly because of erroneous teaching, but also because we do not like doing anything that is painful to ourselves. There is no question about this teaching. Nothing is so characteristic of

the true saint as the way in which he examines himself, faces himself, and deals ruthlessly with himself. This man did so, and he had to admit that self was really the source of his troubles. Then he discovered this other very interesting thing, that when self is in control in that way it generally happens that the heart takes control of the thinking. It is a very sad state of affairs when our minds are governed by our hearts. That was never meant to be the case. The mind, the understanding, is man's supreme gift; it is undoubtedly a part of the image of God in man. The power to reason and to understand and to think and to know why we do things, and whether or not we ought to be doing them, is one of the things that differentiates man from animals. So when we find ourselves, if I may use such a term, thinking emotionally we are in a very bad condition. This man had got into that condition when the heart came before the head. The Bible is very concerned about this, and its teaching everywhere is that we should always guard the heart, because "out of it are the issues of life". That means that it shall be under the control of truth, so we are urged to "seek wisdom" and to "get knowledge". We must never give the impression that people become Christian by ceasing to think and by just responding to their hearts. A Christian is one who believes and accepts and surrenders himself to the Truth. He sees it, is moved by it and acts upon it. The term "heart" in Scripture does not mean the emotions only, but includes the mind, and repentance means a change of mind.

I.

Let us now go on to consider WHAT THIS MAN DISCOVERED ABOUT HIMSELF in detail. He tells us in these two verses. The first thing he discovered when he really saw the position truly was that HE HAD VERY LARGELY BEEN PRODUCING HIS OWN TROUBLES, and his own misery and his own unhappiness. He found in the sanctuary of God that it was not really the ungodly at all, it was himself. He found that he had, to use our phrase, "worked himself up" into this condition. Now let me give you the evidence for that. Verse 21 reads in the authorized version — "thus my heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins". This translation rather suggests that something had happened to his heart, something had happened to his reins, his kidneys — another seat of the feelings and emotions according to ancient psychology. But actually what this man said was something slightly different. These words which are used in the 21st verse are reflexive. What he is saying is that he had done something to himself. He was saying: "I have soured my heart." He had done it himself, and as regards the reins you can translate like this: "I was preparing for myself a piercing pain." He had been doing it himself. He had been stimulating his own heart, he had been exacerbating his own trouble, he had been souring

his own feelings. He himself had really been producing his own troubles and giving rise to this piercing pain which he had been enduring until he went into the sanctuary of God. Now this is clearly a very important and vital principle. The fact is, and must we not all confess it in the presence of God at this moment, that we tend to produce and exacerbate our own troubles. We, of course, tend to say, as this man had been saying before he went to the sanctuary of God, that it is that thing outside us that produced all the trouble. But it is not that thing at all, it is us. I remember reading once a phrase which I think puts this point quite well: "It is not life that matters, but the courage that you bring to it." Now I do not accept that philosophy of courage, but I am quoting the phrase because, though it is wrongly stated, there is an essential of truth in it. "It is not life that matters" — well, what matters? It is you and I and the way we face it, the way we react, our behaviour with respect to it. I can prove that quite simply. You may see two persons living exactly the same sort of life, facing the same conditions precisely, and yet the two persons are very different, one is bitter and sour and grumbling and complaining, the other is calm and quiet and quite happy and composed. Where is the difference? It is not in the conditions, it is not in what is happening to them; it is something in them, the difference is in the two persons.

Now this can be proved abundantly. There is that couplet that puts it so well. "Two men looked out from prison bars. The one saw the mud, the other stars". Now the two persons were in the same cell looking out through the same bars, but one, you see, looked at the mud, the other saw the stars. It is not life, it is not the circumstances, it is not the ungodly, it is not these things, it is us. This man discovered all that, that he had been creating and exaggerating and exacerbating his own troubles. He had been soured in His own heart. God knows we all tend to be guilty of the same thing. It is not the thing itself that matters. The particular thing is there, of course, but it is very important that we should realize that it is the way in which we react to that thing that determines what is going to happen to us, not merely the thing itself. We have a phrase which I think puts this very well. We say of a certain type of person: "He is always making a mountain out of a molehill." Quite right. That is exactly what this man was doing — making a mountain out of a molehill. There was something there, of course; even a molehill is something. There must be something to work on, but the thing itself was very small, it really was just a molehill. But this man was making a mountain of it, he had worked it up into a mountain. He therefore thought that he was confronted by a mountain of trouble, but he wasn't really. He has turned the molehill into a mountain. So it is that we bother ourselves and agitate ourselves and get into this condition.

We have another phrase which describes it. We say that "We become worked up" about something. Now that is not quite accurate, it is not so much that we become worked up as that we work ourselves up. In other words, the reaction is too big for the stimulus. That is obviously the case because we are not properly balanced, we are not in a right condition, we are hyper-sensitive. I could illustrate this endlessly. Everybody today is talking about being allergic to things. That is one of the current phrases. Now what does that mean? It means that you are hyper-sensitive. There are some people for instance who cannot be in the same room as a cat without having

an attack of asthma; others cannot be near a field of hay without having an attack of hay fever, their eyes water, etc. You are familiar with all that. What is the matter? The authorities say it is the pollen in the air. But it is not simply the pollen of course, because other people can walk in the same field and nothing happens. The pollen is there, but the point is that these people suffer from hay fever not because of the pollen but because they are hyper-sensitive, they are allergic. Now that is the kind of thing this man discovered. But he goes beyond that, and rightly so. He says that he worked up the sensitivity, indeed hyper-sensitivity. It can be done quite easily. You can make your heart hyper-sensitive, you can tend it and fondle it, and the more you do so the more your heart will like it, and the more sensitive and sorry it will be for itself. You can so work it up into this condition that the slightest thing will cause trouble at once. If you strike a match — just one match — in a barrel of gunpowder there will be a terrible explosion. It is not the match that counts primarily, it is the barrel of gunpowder.

That is the kind of thing this man discovered. He had been totally wrong in his thinking about the ungodly. He thought that they alone were the cause of his problem. But he discovered that it was not anything of the kind. He had worked up his heart into this foolish condition, he was hyper-sensitive. And so he was in such a state and condition that when the slightest thing went wrong it would cause an explosion. I am sure we all realize the truth of what I am saying, but the question is, do you see yourself doing that? Every time you talk to yourself about yourself do you feel sorry for yourself? If so you are doing this thing that this man had been doing to himself; you are increasing this morbidity and hyper-sensitivity, and you are preparing yourself for a painful experience. This is what is called masochism. You are familiar with that kind of perversion of which we are all more or less guilty. It is a strange thing about human nature, it is one of the appalling consequences of the Fall, that we take this perverse delight, as it were, in hurting ourselves. It is a most peculiar thing, but we enjoy our own misery because, while we are enjoying it, we are also pitying ourselves at the same time. That is where the subtlety of it all comes in. While we are thoroughly miserable and unhappy there is a sense in which we hold on to it because it gives a kind of perverted enjoyment. We are still protecting self and magnifying self.

This man found all that in the sanctuary of God. He had been grieving himself; he had produced his own misery and he had kept it up. He had exaggerated the whole thing instead of facing it honestly. He was not in all this great trouble, he was not having a hard time; he was just looking at things in such a way as to give himself a hard time — foolish man that he was! Are we not all like him at times — foolish creatures that we are.

Now the opposite to all this is that blessed condition which is described by the Apostle Paul in the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, verses 11 to 13. He puts it like this: "For I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content; I know both how to be abased and I know how to abound; everywhere in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." In other words, he has arrived in a condition in which he is no longer hyper-

sensitive. He is in a condition in which it does not matter very much what happens to him; it is not going to disturb him. "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." That is the position in which all of us who are Christians should be. The man who is not a Christian cannot possibly be there and is not there. He is like a barrel of gunpowder; you never know when there is going to be an explosion. The slightest pin-prick causes all the trouble — hyper-sensitive because of self. But the Apostle Paul had remembered what our Lord puts first to His disciples, namely: "If any man would be My disciple, let him deny himself". Self must be put out first. Then "take up the cross and follow Me". Because self is dethroned and put into the background, the disciple is not hyper-sensitive and these things do not cause troubles and alarms and explosions. He is balanced because self is put out and he is living for Christ.

Let us examine ourselves in the light of this. Think of all your grievances, think of all your hardships and all the slights and insults and all the rest of the things we think have been heaped upon us, and all the misunderstandings. Let us face them in the light of all this and I think we shall see at a glance that it is rather a miserable and sorry business. It is all worked up. There is nothing there really; it is just making a mountain out of a molehill. If we could but make a list of the things that have upset us how ashamed we should be. How small, how petty we can be!

II.

Let us leave it at that, and let us go on to something else. For the next thing this man discovered was THAT HE HAD BECOME STUPID. The authorized version translates verse 22 as: "So foolish was I". Now that word really means "stupid". A much better word is it not? He was like a beast, utterly irrational, behaving in a stupid, absurd manner. But this is always true of this condition that we are describing and analyzing. What does it mean exactly? He says: "So stupid was I and ignorant." "I was" — he repeats the emphasis — "I was as a beast before Thee." Again let us note his honesty and truthful dealings with himself. He does not spare himself at all; he has seen the truth about himself and he states it — "I was as a beast before Thee."

What does it mean? Let us analyze it like this. It means first and foremost that *he was behaving instinctively*. What is the difference between a beast, an animal, and a man? I have already hinted at the answer, that surely God's supreme gift to man is understanding and reason and the power to think. The animal may be highly intelligent, but the animal lacks that true quality and faculty of reason, the power to stand outside itself, to consider itself and to consider what it is doing. It is man alone who can do that, and that is a part of the image of God in man. But the animal does not do that. The animals act instinctively. There is no question about that. I need not waste time in giving an illustration of what I mean, but take the question of the migration of the birds — swallows, etc. — that come to us in the spring and go to a warmer climate for the winter. There is very little doubt but that it has been proved quite scientifically that it is not so much intelligence as instinct that governs that. In other words, animal behaviour is a matter of instinctive response to a given stimulus. Well, this man tells us that he had been behaving like that. In other words, he did not stop to think, he did not stop to ponder and reason about it. To be

stupid means not to think logically and not to think clearly. You and I are meant to think logically, we are meant to think rationally, we are meant to think consecutively. But this man had not been thinking like that, he had been like the animal. The animal jumps to conclusions, he responds at once without any interval to the stimulus. The Psalmist had been doing that. And we all must see, when we begin to think about this, how subject we all are to this. It is very un-Christian, however.

One of the great differences between a Christian and a non-Christian should be that the Christian always puts in an interval between the stimulus and the response. The Christian should always put everything into another context. He should think about it, he should not jump to conclusions, he should work the thing out. In other words, and surely this is very vital and important, one of the hall-marks of the Christian should be the capacity to think and to think logically, to think clearly and to think spiritually. Now is not that the whole object of the New Testament Epistles? What do they say? They reason with us. These Epistles were given to Christian people like ourselves who had their problems and perplexities, and what they all say is just this: "Don't just react to these things; think about them, put them into the purposes of God; relate them to the whole view of salvation and the Christian life: and having done that you will find that you will think about them in a different way." The Christian is a man who thinks in a different manner from the non-Christian. His thinking is logical, it is clear, it is calm, it is controlled, it is balanced, and above everything else it is spiritual. He thinks everything out in terms of this great truth that he has here in the New Testament. But the animal cannot do that. "I was as a beast before Thee, I was stupid." That kind of behaviour is not only like an animal's, it is more or less like a child's also. A child behaves like that because its reasoning faculty has not sufficiently advanced and developed. It jumps to conclusions, it reacts to stimuli like the animal. It has to be trained to think and to reason, and not to be stupid.

Another way in which he found that he had been stupid was this. He found that he had obviously held an idea of the godly life which was quite false. He desired pleasure the whole time and thought that his life was to be one long round of sunshine and happiness. That was what had made him complain and say: "I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency" and "For all the day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning". Let me put this quite brutally and plainly. Is not this true of all of us? We tend to take all the gifts and the pleasures and the happiness and the joy without saying much to God about it, but the moment anything goes wrong we begin to grumble. We take our health and strength, our food and clothing and our loved ones, all for granted; but the moment anything goes wrong we start grumbling and complaining and we say: "Why should God do this to me, why should this happen to me?" How slow we are to thank, how swift to grumble. But that is like the animal, isn't it? The animal likes to be petted and patted, he eats and enjoys his food, but the moment you correct him he does not like it. That is typical of the animal, and it is typical of the child outlook. The child will take all you give it, but if you withhold something it wants it resents it. That is being stupid, that is the failure to think, that is the childish, stupid, beastly attitude. But how true it is; it was true of this man and it is true of us.

Let me put it like this. This man had been taking the blessings and the joys for granted. We all seem to assume that we have a right to these things and that we should have them always. Therefore the moment they are denied us we begin to question and to query. Now what the Psalmist should have done was this. He should have said: "I am a godly man, I believe in God. I am living this godly life and there are certain things I know about the character of God. There is no question about that. Now certain painful things are happening to me, and I see that the case of the ungodly is very different. But of course there must be some very good reason for this." Then he should begin to seek for reasons, and to look for an explanation. Had he done so he would undoubtedly have arrived at this conclusion, that God had some purpose in all this. We have already considered some of those reasons. He would have to come to the conclusion that even though he may not understand it, God must have a reason, because God never does anything in an irrational manner. He would have said: "I am certain of that, and, therefore, whatever the explanation is, it is not the thing I first thought of". He would have thought it out. But how slow we are to do that. We seem to think that as Christian people we should never have any trouble. Nothing should ever go wrong with us, we should never have anything untoward happening to us at all, and the sun should always be shining about us, and all who are not Christian should know constant trouble and difficulty. But the Bible has never promised us that. It has rather promised that "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God". It says also: "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for His sake." (Phil. 1, 29). So the moment we begin to think, we see that the idea that came to us instinctively is quite wrong and utterly false according to the Bible's teaching.

Let me sum it all up by putting it like this: "I was stupid, I was as a beast before Thee." It means this, that like beasts and animals, *we always dislike discipline*. We never see the need and necessity for it; and whenever we are disciplined by God we always tend to object and even to question and to query God's love and God's goodness. Now that is something which this man has described perfectly here when he says that that is to behave like a beast. No one by nature likes to be disciplined. He wants to go on responding to his instincts; he does not like to be controlled. Animals always object to discipline, and you have to train them and to be patient with them. Sometimes you have to be severe because they do not like discipline. Now this is characteristic of the immature Christian, the babe in Christ. Such a person resents discipline, and yet the answer to that is just this. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews does not hesitate to use a striking and almost surprising phrase. He says: "If you are not experiencing chastisement there is only one explanation for it and that is you are not children of God, you are bastards." That is what he says. (Heb. xii. 8.) If you are a child of God then you are certainly going to be disciplined, because God is preparing you for holiness. He is not an indulgent father who gives us sweets constantly and does not care what happens to us. God is holy, and He is preparing us for Himself and for glory: and because we are what we are, and because sin is in us, and because the world is what it is, we must needs be disciplined. So He sends us trials and tribulations in order to pull us up, to conform us to "the image of His dear Son". But we do not like it, and like the animal we squeal

because we dislike pain. But if we thought, if we were not stupid, we would even thank God for the pain. We would say with the man of the 119th Psalm: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." I sometimes think that there is no better test of the Christian position than just that, that we can even thank God for trials and troubles and for chastisement, because we see that they have been used of God to bring us nearer and closer to Himself.

III.

Let us hurry to the next thing this man found about himself. It is that HE WAS IGNORANT. That is not the same thing. To be stupid and ignorant is not the same thing, but stupidity usually leads to ignorance. This man was ignorant about the true position of the ungodly, he was ignorant about God, he was ignorant about himself, and was ignorant also about the very nature of the life he was living. He had become ignorant about the whole purpose of godly living. As I have just been saying, the trouble with us is that we do not see the whole purpose of the Christian life. Let me sum it up by putting it in this form. If you and I react as this man reacted to trials and troubles, in the last analysis there is only one thing to say about us, and that is that we are ignorant. What are we ignorant of? We are ignorant of everything the Bible says about the godly life, and we are especially ignorant about the New Testament Epistles, all of which have been written to enlighten this particular ignorance. So if we always grumble and complain about God's dealings with us and His chastisements we are simply making the confession either that we do not know our Scriptures at all, that we have never understood the New Testament, or else that we are wilfully ignorant, that we refuse to think and to apply what we know. We see these Books, but we refuse to listen to the arguments and we refuse to allow them to apply themselves to us. "Ignorant." This man says: "I was behaving as an ignoramus, I was behaving as if I knew nothing about Thy purposes, I was behaving as if I were a mere tyro in these matters, as if I had never read or heard the history of the past". And it is perfectly true. The moment you allow your heart and your feelings to get into control you become hyper-sensitive, allergic in this sense; and you just behave as if you knew nothing and become ignorant and as a beast in the presence of God.

IV.

That brings us to the final matter, which is the worst of all. Listen: "Thus I exacerbated my own heart and I pricked myself in my reins and gave myself pain. So stupid was I and so ignorant, like an ignoramus; indeed I was as a beast before Thee." I think that that was the thing that broke this man's heart, and it is the thing that ought to break all our hearts. You see, what this man realised in the sanctuary of God was this, that he had been thinking all these horrible, foul, foolish, stupid things actually IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD. "Before Thee." That is why he thought of himself as a beast. Fancy thinking these things, and being on the point of saying them, in the presence of God. What he had forgotten was this, that God is "the discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart", and "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do". (Heb. iv. 12 and 13.) If only we realized that, we should never behave again in the way this man had done and we, to our shame, have often done.

You and I are always in the presence of God. When therefore you are sitting in your corner and feeling sorry for yourself because you have been hurt, and because this or that has happened to you, just remember that all this is happening in the presence of God. And when you ask: "Is God fair to me, is it right that I should be suffering and the other person so prosperous?" remember you are doing that and thinking that thought about God in the very presence of God. "Before Thee." This man had forgotten the greatness of God. If you and I were only to remember the greatness of God always there are some things we should never do again. When you realize you are but a fly, or a grasshopper, or even less in the presence of the Almighty, and that He could remove you out of existence as if nothing had happened, you will no longer stand up and flout yourself in His presence and begin to question Him. We must realize, in the words of a wise man of the Old Testament, that "God is in heaven and you are on the earth". The greatness of God.

But, especially, we must remember the love of God. God is love. This man realized that he was a very stupid, foolish man questioning the love of God. He owed everything to the love and goodness and graciousness of God. So when you think these hard, unworthy thoughts of God, remember that you are thinking about the One who so loved you that He sent His Son into the world and even to the shame and agony of Calvary for you. Yet we think these thoughts of such a God even in His very holy presence. Just picture yourself sulking in the presence of God, sulking like a spoiled child. Look at the little child sulking, look at the animal. How ridiculous they look. Well, multiply that by infinity and think of yourself in the presence of this almighty, holy, loving God. Oh, no, there is nothing to be said for this condition. This man is right; he is not being unkind to himself, he is saying the simple truth — "I was as a beast, ignorant, utterly foolish".

What is the opposite of this? I can think of nothing better than the condition of the Prodigal Son after he came to himself. I have no doubt that up to a point that poor fellow thought he had been hardy dealt with. He left home in a huff. He was going to assert himself, but things went wrong and he thought he was being harshly dealt with. Then he came to himself and he went home and said: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee and I am not worthy any longer to be called thy son". That is it, that is just another way of saying exactly the same thing. Nothing to recommend us, no excuses, we have just been unutterably stupid like beasts. We have failed to think and to reason, we have failed to apply these Scriptures. It is this horrible self that has been in control, and we are so hyper-sensitive that nothing and no one is right but ourselves. Let us face it, let us unmask it, let us analyze it and put it in front of ourselves. Let us look at it honestly and then be heartily ashamed of ourselves. Then let us go to that gracious loving God and acknowledge that we are as worms and less before Him, that we have no claim upon Him at all, and no right to His forgiveness. Let us tell Him that we do not wish to be healed quickly, that we feel that we do not deserve to be healed at all. We began with that last time. I end with it now. The trouble with many of us is that we heal ourselves too quickly. We feel we have a right to be forgiven. But the teaching of the Scripture, and the teaching of the lives of the saints as they have faced life, is that like the Prodigal Son they have felt

that they are unworthy of forgiveness. They felt that they deserved nothing but damnation, that they had been like beasts in their stupidity, and that they had no claim at all on God. Indeed, they were filled with amazement that God could forgive them. Let us examine ourselves in the light of that. Do we rush back to God feeling we have a right to forgiveness? Or do we feel we have no right to ask for forgiveness? That is how this man felt, and I suggest that that is how the true Christian always feels at first. Paul after years of preaching looked back across the past and said: "I am the chief of sinners". He was still amazed that God could ever have forgiven him. Though he was an Apostle, he still felt as it were that he could receive something in an evangelistic service! He was still reacting as a sinner, he was still amazed at the wondrous Cross and the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. "So stupid was I, so foolish; I was as a beast before Thee."

—The Westminster Record

AN EXAMPLE OF FORGIVENESS

An old Christian black woman was going along the streets of New York with a basket of apples that she had for sale. A rough sailor ran against her and upset the basket, and stood back expecting to hear her scold frightfully; but she stooped down and picked up the apples, and said, "God forgive you, my son, as I do." The sailor saw the meanness of what he had done, felt in his pocket for his money, and insisted that she should take it all. Though she was black, he called her mother, and said, "Forgive me, mother; I will never do anything so mean again." Ah! there is a power in a forgiving spirit to overcome all hardness. There is no way of conquering men like that of bestowing upon them your pardon, whether they will accept it or not.—TALMAGE.

HEDGE-HOG FORGIVENESS

There is an ugly kind of forgiveness in this world—a kind of hedge-hog forgiveness, shot out like quills. Men take one who has offended, and set him down before the blowpipe of their indignation, and scorch him, and burn his fault into him; and when they have kneaded him sufficiently with their fiery fist, then they forgive him.—BEECHER.

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An Address to Open-Air Preachers by Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon

IT IS a great privilege to have to speak to so noble a band of preachers; I wish that I were more fit for the task. Silver of eloquent speech and gold of deep thought have I none; but such as I have, give I unto you.

Concerning the winning of souls. *What is it to win a soul?* I hope you believe in the old-fashioned way of saving souls. Everything appears to be shaken nowadays, and shifted from the old foundations. It seems that we are to evolve out of men the good that is already in them: much good may you get if you attempt the process! I am afraid that in the process of evolution you will develop devils. I do not know much else that will come out of human nature, for manhood is as full of sin as an egg is full of meat; and the evolution of sin must be everlasting mischief. We all believe that we must go to soul-winning, desiring in God's name to see all things made new. This old creature is dead and corrupt, and must be buried; and the sooner the better. Jesus has come that there may be a passing away of the old things, and a making of all things new. In the process of our work, we endeavour to bless men by trying to make them temperate; may God bless all work of that sort! But we should think ourselves to have failed if we had produced a world of total abstainers, and had left them all unbelievers. We drive at something more than temperance; for we believe that men must be born again. It is good that even a corpse should be clean, and therefore that the unregenerate should be moral. It would be a great blessing if they were cleansed of the vices which make this city to reek in the nostrils of God and good men. But that is not so much our work as this: that the dead in sin should live, that spiritual life should quicken them, and that Christ should reign where the prince of the power of the air now hath sway. You preach, brethren, with this object, that men may quit their sins, and fly to Christ for pardon, that by His blessed Spirit they may be renovated, and become as much in love with everything that is holy as they are now in love with everything that is sinful. You aim at a radical cure; the axe is laid at the root of the trees; the amendment of the old nature would not content you, but you seek for the imparting, by a divine power, of a new nature, that those who gather round you in the streets may live unto God.

Our object is to turn the world upside down; or, in other words, that where sin abounded, grace may much more abound. We are aiming at a miracle: it is well to settle that at the commencement. Some brethren think that they ought to lower their note to the spiritual ability of the hearer; but this is a mistake. According to these brethren, you ought not to exhort a man to repent and believe unless you believe that he can, of himself, repent and believe. My reply is a confession: I command men in the name of Jesus to repent and believe the gospel, though I know they can do nothing of the kind apart from the grace of God; for I am not sent to work according to what my private reason might suggest, but according to the orders of my Lord and Master. Ours is the miraculous method which comes of the endowment of the Spirit of God, who bids His ministers perform wonders in the name of the holy child Jesus. We are sent to say to blind

eyes, "See," to deaf ears, "Hear," to dead hearts, "Live," and even to Lazarus rotting in that grave, wherein by this time he stinketh; — "Lazarus, come forth." Dare we do this? We shall be wise to begin with the conviction that we are utterly powerless for this unless our Master has sent us, and is with us. But if He that sent us is with us, all things are possible to him that believeth. O preacher, if thou art about to stand up to see what *thou* canst do, it will be thy wisdom to sit down speedily; but if thou standest up to prove what *thine* almighty Lord and Master can do through thee, then infinite possibilities lie about thee! There is no bound to what God can accomplish if He works by thy heart and voice. The other Sabbath morning, before I entered the pulpit, when my dear brethren, the deacons and elders of this church, gathered about me for prayer, as they are wont to do, one of them said, "Lord, take him as a man takes a tool in his hand when he gets a firm hold of it, and then uses it to work his own will with it." That is what all workers need; that God may be the worker by them. You are to be instruments in the hands of God; yourselves, of course, actively putting forth all your faculties and forces which the Lord has lent to you; but still never depending upon your personal power, but resting alone upon that sacred, mysterious, divine energy which worketh in us, and by us, and with us, upon the hearts and minds of men.

Brethren, we have been greatly disappointed, have we not, with some of our converts? We shall always be disappointed with them so far as they are *our* converts. We shall greatly rejoice over them when they prove to be the Lord's work. When the power of grace works in thee, ("Glory!") then it will be, as my brother says, "Glory!" and nothing else but glory; for grace brings glory, but mere oratory will only create sham and shame in the long run. When we are preaching, and we think of a very pretty, flowery passage, a very neat, poetical paragraph, I wish we could be restrained by that fear which acted upon Paul when he said that he would not use the wisdom of word, "lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect." It is the duty of the gospel preacher, indoors or outdoors, to say, "I can say that very prettily, but then they might notice how I said it; I will, therefore, so say it that they will only observe the intrinsic value of the truth which I would teach them." It is not our way of putting the gospel, nor our method of illustrating it, which wins souls; but the gospel itself does the work in the hands of the Holy Ghost, and to Him we must look for the thorough conversion of men. A miracle is to be wrought by which our hearers shall become the products of that mighty power which God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly place far above all principality and power; and for this we must look out of ourselves to the living God. Must we not? We go in, then, for thorough downright conversion; and therefore we fall back upon the power of the Holy Spirit. If it be a miracle, God must work it, that is clear; it is not to be accomplished by our reasoning, or persuasion, or threatening, it can only come from the Lord.

In what way, since the winning of souls lies here, can we hopefully expect to be endowed with the Spirit of God, and to go forth in His power? I reply, that a great deal depends upon the condition of the man himself. I am persuaded we have never laid enough stress on the work of God within our own selves in its relation to our service of God. A consecrated man may be charged with the divine energy to the full, so that everybody round about him must perceive it. They cannot tell what it is, nor whence it comes, nor, perhaps, whither it goes; but there is something about that man which is far beyond the common order of things. At another time that same person may be feeble and dull, and be conscious to himself that he is so. See! he shakes himself as at other times, but he can do no mighty deed. It is clear that Samson himself must be in a right condition, or he can win no victories. If the champion's locks be shorn, the Philistines will laugh at him; if the Lord be gone from a man, he has no power left for useful service. Dear brethren, look carefully to your own condition before God. *Take care of the home farm;* look well to your own flocks and herds. Unless your walk be close with God, unless you dwell in that clear light which surrounds the throne of God, and which is only known to those who are in fellowship with the Eternal, you will go forth from your chamber, and hasten to your work, but nothing will come of it. The vessel, it is true, is but an earthen one; yet it has its place in the divine arrangement, but it will not be filled with the divine treasure unless it is a clean vessel, and unless in other respects it is a vessel fit for the Master's use. Let me show you some ways in which much must depend in soul-winning upon the man himself.

I.

We win some souls to Christ by acting as witnesses. We stand up and testify for the Lord Jesus Christ concerning certain truths. Now, I have never had the great privilege of being bamboozled by a barrister. I have sometimes wondered what I should do if I were put into the witness-box to be examined and cross-examined. I think I should simply stand up, and tell the truth as far as I knew it, and should not make an attempt to display my wit, or my language, or my judgment. If I simply gave straightforward answers to his questions, I should beat any lawyer under heaven. But the difficulty is, that so often when a witness is put into the box, he is more conscious of himself than of what he has to say; therefore, he is soon worried, teased, and bored, and, by losing his temper, he fails to be a good witness for the cause. Now, you men in the open-air are often bamboozled; the devil's barristers are sure to come to you, he has a great number of them constantly retained in his service. The one thing you have to do is to bear witness to the truth. If you enquire in your own mind, "How shall I answer this man cleverly, so as to get a victory over him?" you will not be wise. *A witty answer is often a very proper thing; at the same time, a gracious answer is better.* Try to say to yourself: "It does not, after all, matter whether that man proves me to be a fool or not, for I know that already. I am content to be thought a fool for Christ's sake, and not to care about my reputation. I have to bear witness to what I know, and by the help of God I will do so right boldly. If the interrupter questions me about other things, I shall tell him that I do not come to bear witness about other matters, but this one thing I do. To one point I will speak,

and to no other."

Brethren, the witnessing man, then, must himself be saved, and he should be sure of it. I do not know whether you doubt your own salvation. Perhaps I should recommend you to preach even when that is the case; since, if you are not saved yourself, you yet wish others to be. You do not doubt that you once enjoyed full assurance; and now, if you have sorrowfully to confess, "Alas! I do not feel the full power of the gospel on my heart," you can truly add, "Yet I know that it is true, for I have seen it save others, and I know that no other power can save me." Perhaps even that faltering testimony, so truly honest, might bring a tear into your opponent's eye, and make him feel sympathy for you. "I preached," said John Bunyan, "sometimes without hope, like a man in chains to men in chains, and when I heard my own fetters rattle, yet I told others that there was deliverance for them, and I bade them look to the great Deliverer." I would not have stopped Mr. Bunyan in preaching so. At the same time, it is a great thing to be able to declare from your own personal experience that the Lord hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder. Those who hear our witness say, "Are you sure of it?" Sure of it? I am as sure of it as I am sure that I am a living man. They call this *dogmatism*. Never mind about that. A man ought to know what he is preaching about, or else let him sit down. If I had any doubt about the matters I preach from this pulpit, I should be ashamed to remain the pastor of this church; but I preach what I do know, and testify what I have seen. If I am mistaken I am heartily and intensely mistaken; and I risk my soul and all its eternal interests upon the truth of what I preach. If the gospel of what I preach does not save me, I shall never be saved, for what I proclaim to others is my own personal ground of trust. I have no private lifeboat; the ark to which I invite others holds myself and all that I have.

A good witness ought himself to know all that he is going to say; he should feel himself at home in his subject. He is brought up as a witness, say, in a certain case of robbery; he knows what he saw, and has to make a declaration of that only. They begin to question him about a picture in the house, or the colour of a dress which was hanging in the wardrobe. He answers, "You are going beyond my record; I can only witness to that which I saw." What we do know, and what we do not know, would make two very large books, and we may safely ask to be let alone as to the second volume.

Brother, say what you know, and sit down. But be calm and composed while speaking of that with which you have personal acquaintance. You will never properly indulge your emotions in preaching, so as to feel at home with the people, until you are at home with your subject. When you know what you are at, you will have your mind free for earnestness. Unless you open-air preachers know the gospel from beginning to end, and know where you are in preaching it, you cannot preach with due emotion; but when you feel at home with your doctrine, stand up and be as bold, and earnest, and importunate as you please. Face the people feeling that you are going to tell them something worth hearing, about which you are quite sure, which to you is your very life. There are honest hearts in every outdoor assembly, and every indoor assembly, too, that only want to hear honest beliefs, and they will accept them and be led to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

II

But you are not only witnesses, you are pleaders for the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, in a pleader, much depends upon the man. It seems as if the sign and token of Christianity in some preachers was not a tongue of fire, but a block of ice. You would not like to have a barrister stand up and plead your cause in a cool, deliberate way, never showing the slightest care about whether you were found guilty of murder or acquitted. How could you endure his indifference when you yourself were likely to be hanged? Oh, no! you wish to silence such a false advocate. So, when a man has to speak for Christ, if he is not in earnest, let him go to bed. You smile; but is it not better that he should go to bed than send a whole congregation to sleep without their going to bed? Yes, we must be in downright earnest. If we are to prevail with men, we must love them. There is a genuine love to men that some have, and there is a genuine dislike to men that others have. I know gentlemen, whom I esteem in a way, who seem to think that the working classes are a shockingly bad lot, to be kept in check, and governed with vigour. With such views they will never convert workingmen. To win men, you must feel: "I am one of them. If they are a sad lot, I am one of them; if they are lost sinners, I am one of them; if they need a Saviour, I am one of them." To the very chief of sinners you should preach with this text before you, "Such were some of you." Grace alone makes us to differ, and that grace we preach. Genuine love to God and fervent love to man make up the great qualifications for a pleader.

I further believe, although certain persons deny it, that the influence of fear is to be exercised over the minds of men, and that it ought to operate upon the mind of the preacher himself. "Noah, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." There was salvation for this world from perishing in the flood in the fears of Noah; and when a man gets to fear for others, so that his heart cries out, "They will perish, they will perish, they will sink to hell, they will be forever banished from the presence of the Lord," and when this fear oppresses his soul; and weighs him down, and then drives him to go out and preach with tears, oh, then he will plead with men so as to prevail! Knowing the terror of the Lord, he will persuade men. To know the terror of the Lord is the means of teaching us to *persuade*, and not to speak harshly. Some have used the terrors of the Lord to terrify; but Paul used them to persuade. Let us copy him. Say, "We have come out to tell you, men and brethren, that the world is on fire, and you must flee for your lives, and escape to the mountain, lest ye be consumed." We must give this warning with the full conviction that it is true, or else we shall be but as the boy who in foolishness cried, "Wolf!" Something of the shadow of the last tremendous day must fall upon our spirit to give the accent of conviction to our message of mercy, or we shall miss the pleader's true power. Brethren, we must tell men that here is pressing need of a Saviour, and show them that we ourselves perceive their need and feel for them, or else we are not likely to turn them to the Saviour.

He that pleads for Christ should himself be moved with the prospect of the judgment day. When I come in at yonder door at the back of the pulpit, and the sight of that vast crowd bursts upon me, I frequently feel appalled. Think of these thousands of immortal souls

gazing through the windows of those wistful eyes, and I am to preach to them all, and be responsible for their blood if I be not faithful to them. I tell you, it makes me feel ready to start back. But then fear is not alone. I am borne up by the hope and belief that God intends to bless these people through the Word which He will enable me to deliver. I believe that everybody in that throng is sent there by God for some purpose, and that I am sent to effect that purpose. I often think to myself, when I am preaching, "Who is being converted now?" It never occurs to me that the Word of the Lord will fail. No, that can never be. I often feel sure that men are being converted, and at all times that God is glorified by the testimony of His truth. You may depend upon it that your hopeful conviction that God's Word cannot return to Him void is a great encouragement to your hearers as well as to yourself. Your enthusiastic confidence that they will be converted may be like the little finger of a mother held out to her babe, to help it to make its way to her. The fire within your hearts may dart a spark into their souls by which the flame of spiritual life shall be kindled in them. Do let us all learn the art of pleading with the souls of men.

III.

Still, dear open-air preachers, and all of you Christian people here, *we have not only to be witnesses and pleaders, but we have also to be examples.* One of the most successful ways of taking wild ducks is the use of the decoy bird. The decoy duck enters the net itself, and the others follow it. We need to use more, in the Christian Church, the holy art of decoy; that is to say, our example, in ourselves coming to Christ, in ourselves living godly lives in the midst of a perverse generation, our example of joy and sorrow, our example of holy submission to the divine will in the time of trouble, our example in all manner of gracious ways, will be the means of inducing others to enter the way of life. You cannot, of course, stand up in the street, and tell of your example; but there is no street-preacher who is not known better than he thinks. Some one in that crowd may be in the secret of the speaker's private life. I once heard of an out-of-doors preacher, to whom a hearer cried out, "Ah, Jack, you dare not preach like that at your own door!" It so happened, unfortunately, that Mr. John ——— had offered to fight one of his neighbours a little while before, and therefore it was not likely that he would have done much preaching very near home. This made the interruption an awkward one. If any man's life at home is unworthy, he should go several miles away before he stands up to preach, and then, when he stands up, he should say nothing. They know us, brethren; they know far more about us than we imagine, and what they do not know they make up. At the same time, our walk and conversation should be the most powerful part of our ministry. This is what is called being *consistent*, when lips and life agree.

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Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 21 First Quarter Lesson 8 February 24, 1957

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

THE BELIEVER'S PROGRAM IN FACING APOSTASY

Lesson Text: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:8.

Golden Text: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."—2 Timothy 4:3.

I. Continue in the Word of God: 3:14-17.

The key word in Second Timothy is "fidelity". In a time when evil men seem to prosper, when they go in their wickedness, apparently unchecked and unrestrained, godly men must expect to suffer persecution, as did the Apostle Paul (verses 10-13). But the Christian is advised to remain steadfast, to remain faithful (1 Tim. 4:18; 2 Tim. 1:13, 14; 2:2; Tit. 1:9). How is this possible? What is the source of strength? The Apostle declares that the things in the Word of God which the believer has known and has personally experienced will act as a protective armour, garrisoning him about so that he is unaffected by the current waves of cynicism and unbelief (1 Tim. 1:18).

Timothy had the advantage of being instructed in the truths of Scripture by the great Apostle Paul himself, and also by his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5). From his earliest years he had been taught the Word of God. What greater preparation for life could there be than such godly training in the home (Prov. 22:6)?

The Scriptures are described as holy (Psa. 12:6; 19:8; 119:140); their Author is holy (Psa. 71:22; Isa. 6:3), they lead to holiness (John 15:3; 17:17), and they are different in character from all other writings. They will make one wise, in contrast to the folly of this world (verse 9; Psa. 119:98), and their ultimate aim is to bring salvation or complete deliverance from all evil (Psa. 119:41). But only those who exercise faith in Christ and appropriate His truth will benefit from the Scriptures (Heb. 4:2; Jas. 1:21).

The Scriptures of both the Old Testament and the New Testament are inspired of God. They are God-breathed, inspired in every part, whether history, prophecy, teaching or exhortation. The authors wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:19-21). In the Bible, as originally given, we have the Divine record faithfully preserved.

Since all Scripture is inspired of God, it is profitable. It is useful for doctrine, to give authoritative teaching (Rom. 15:4). It is useful, also, for reproof, or refutation, to show wherein error lies (Gal. 3:6, 13, 16), and for correction, to enable one to put right that which is wrong (Psa. 119:9; 1 Cor. 10:1-10). It is profitable also for instruction, or discipline, as when a father trains his child in the way of righteousness.

When armed with the Word of God, the servant of God is perfectly equipped for his ministry; this panoply will effectively prepare him for defensive or offensive warfare against evil (Eph. 6:10-18; 2 Tim. 2:15).

II. Preach the Word of God: 4:1-8.

The aged Apostle lays a solemn charge upon young Timothy to be faithful, as the times of apostasy are already at hand. He is to perform his ministry, not only in the sight of men, but also before the eyes of his Master, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:13-15; Eph. 6:6-9; 1 Tim. 6:13-16), Who is to be his Judge (1 Cor. 4:1-5; 1 Pet. 4:5). The Lord Jesus Christ at His appearing will reward His servants (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:8; Rev. 22:12).

Timothy is to preach the Word of God, to proclaim it fearlessly, not substituting for it his own reasonings or the philosophies of men (1 Cor. 2:1-5; Phil. 2:16). He is to be earnest and diligent in his service at all times; he is never to be off duty, but must always be prepared to testify for his Lord and Master (Rom. 12:11; 1 Pet. 3:15). As the Scriptures are profitable for reproof, he is to use the Word of God to bring rebuke and conviction to those who stray from

the path of rectitude (Eph. 5:11; 1 Tim. 5:20; Tit. 1:13; 2:15). In his manner he is to be strong, yet patiently and kindly, as he teaches men the ways of the Lord.

The Word of God will perform its Divine function, even although men turn away from it in unbelief. It is the sword which effectively cuts, even when its owner has no faith in its power (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). So are we to use the Word of God in bringing conviction of sin even to those who will not acknowledge its Divine origin or authority.

In our time the prophecy is being fulfilled that there shall come a famine of the hearing of the Word of God; not a famine of the Word, but a famine of hearing it (Psa. 74:9; Isa. 29:10; Amos 8:11; Mic. 3:6, 7). Men do not wish to hear the truth of God, for in general people believe only what they wish to believe. They prefer to hear smooth things that correspond to their own desires and wishes (Hos. 4:9). They are described as having "itching ears", since they like to hear teachers who tickle their fancy, who speak that which gives pleasure to the flesh. They reject the truth, but they readily listen to that which is untrue, to religious fables, to that which is the product of the human imagination (1 Tim. 1:4-6; 4:7; 2 Pet. 1:16).

Timothy must be watchful and alert amid the dangers that surround him (1 Pet. 4:7). His fidelity may lead to persecution (2 Tim. 3:10-12), but, nevertheless, he is to fulfil without wavering his ministry as an evangelist, preacher and teacher (Col. 4:17; 2 Tim. 1:6). He is to carry on the mission of his teacher, the Apostle Paul, who has now come to the close of his active ministry. Very soon the aged Apostle will lay down his life for the Saviour (Phil 1:23), and he encourages young Timothy by his testimony. Throughout his long life he had striven well and faithfully (1 Tim. 6:12), he had successfully finished his course (Acts 20:24), and he had kept the faith committed to his charge (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14). He was assured of receiving his reward from the Lord's hand, the crown which was prepared for the righteous (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 2:5; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10). All those who know the Lord will desire His appearing, and they, too, will be rewarded.

The Apostle Paul requested Timothy to go to him for personal direction in the matter of carrying on the aged servant's ministry, and for their mutual comfort (verses 10-14, 21).

Daily Bible Readings

Feb. 18—Set Affections on Christ	Col. 2:20-3:4
Feb. 19—Heed the Word	Psalms 119:9-16
Feb. 20—Put on the Armour of God	Eph. 6:10-20
Feb. 21—Try the Spirits	1 John 4:1-6
Feb. 22—Be Steadfast in the Faith	Col. 1:9-23
Feb. 23—Prevail in Prayer	Luke 18:1-8
Feb. 24—Grow in Grace	2 Pet. 1:2-11

Suggested Hymns

Fight the good fight.
Sing them over again to me.
A glory gilds the sacred page.
The heavens declare Thy glory, Lord.
Lord, Thy word abideth.
Break Thou the Bread of life.

ONE AT A TIME

Now all men that angle, or catch fish by the hook and line, know that it is individual work. It is one at a time. And when men so work, they are the servants of the fish. No man can walk out in lordly boots, and with admirable fixtures, gold and silver on his line, and say to the trout, "Here I am, come up here." No man can take what bait he chooses, and throw it in, and then with reason damn the fish because they do not bite.

In the preaching of the Gospel it is the business of every preacher to preach to every man and to all men. There is no great and there is no small before the coming of the sun. To the sun all things are small and all things are great, and they all alike receive beneficent power from it.—BEECHER.

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