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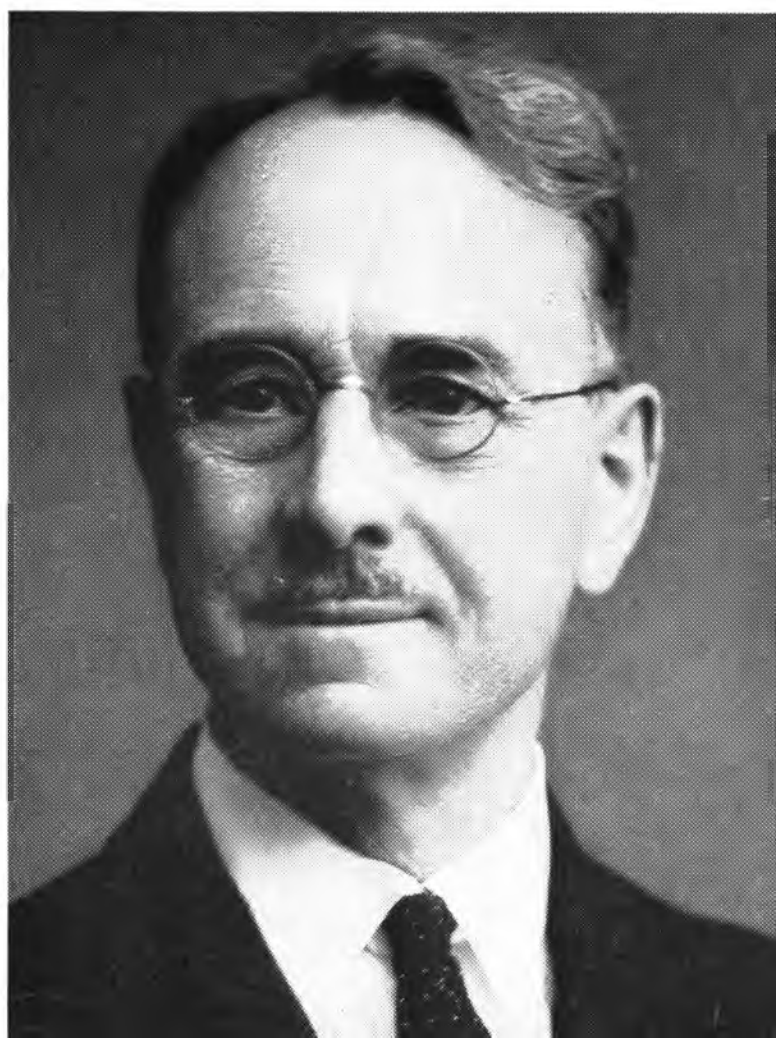
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# THE Preacher's Magazine

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# The Preacher's Magazine

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# Editorials

## The Preacher and His Bible

THE Christian minister is essentially a man of one Book. It is not meant to imply that he is not to read other literature, but it is important to stress that the Bible is the one Book to which he must give prime importance.

The preacher may learn much from the greater literature of the world. The writers of the world's classics often wrought better than many of them realized as they revealed the deep things of life. The human heart, its hopes and fears, its reach for goodness and the depths of evil which lurks within, its ideals and ambitions are set forth as well as its defeats. The best in literature is a help to the understanding of human nature and its needs, and as such it is of great value. But by far the greatest revelation of man, what he is, his struggles and defeats, as well as what he may become, is given in the Word of God. In the Bible also is found the greatest revelation of God and of His interest in human life. No literature, past or present, is of sufficient importance to a minister as to take the place of his study and knowledge of the Bible.

The early apostles stressed the importance of the Word of God in the life of the minister. They refused to "serve tables" when doing so would rob them of time to study God's Word. They pledged themselves thus: "We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

Every minister, sooner or later, comes face to face with this issue: "serving tables"—looking after the material welfare of the church, committees, keeping the machinery of organizations going, etc.—or the study and "ministry of the word" of God. A minister must *give* himself to the study and ministry of the Word. He

will never drift into it, nor will he find it forced upon him by circumstances. If he ever does this important work he must *give* himself deliberately and resolutely to it.

### I

How shall a preacher study the Bible? Certainly his primary interest should not be the seeking of texts or the findings of sermonic material. As a child of God his first interest in reading and studying the Bible is for his own soul's edification, to know and understand God's message to his own heart. Unless God speaks to the preacher out of His Word, unless that Word searches and inspires his own heart, he will never have an effective ministry of the Word for others.

He must study the Word to have a clear knowledge and understanding of its message. He must not be content to know the meaning of only a few verses of scripture; he must seek to have a general and expanding knowledge of the message of the whole Book. He will never outgrow the Bible, nor will he exhaust its truths. The great men of the Christian Church of all ages have been men of the Bible. John Wesley is as good an example as can be found in history. He was truly a man of one Book. Yet what an influence he had upon his own and later generations!

Men have distinguished themselves by becoming well acquainted with this Word. Could there be a better ambition than to desire to excel as a Bible student and preacher? The late Dr. G. Campbell Morgan was such a man. On one occasion when speaking of his book on the Book of Job, he said that he read the Book of Job over fifty times before he undertook to write one word of his message. He also implied that he followed this procedure with the other messages

he had written on books of the Bible. When he spoke there was never any question in the minds of his hearers about his knowledge of the Bible. One of the most inspiring messages this editor has ever heard was Dr. Morgan's sermon on "The Romance of the Bible." He knew the Bible so well that he inspired others to find romance and blessings in the study of it.

Read the Bible message itself until you know its teaching. Seek the aid of Bible teachers, compare the different versions, study the commentaries and other books of Biblical interpretation, but let them be only a help for the understanding of the message; do not permit them to do your studying for you. Many pastors would be better Bible preachers now had they bought more commentaries and Bible study books and fewer lightweight sermon books, or books from which they sought only outlines and illustrations.

The minister is primarily an interpreter of the Bible. At each service of his church the congregation looks to him asking, "What would God have you say to us from His Word today?" They look for prophetic preaching—not the foretelling of future events, nor the speculative interpretation of Biblical prophecy—but preaching that makes known God's Word and its meaning to present-day conditions and needs. God's Word is a timeless message. It is well to know its meaning to those to whom it was given originally; it is better to be able to interpret that message to the people of today.

There is a message in God's Word to meet any human need. The message of the preacher will be varied to meet the needs of his people. There will be needed a word of comfort, a message of hope and assurance, a word of inspiration and encouragement, a word of exhortation, of reproof, of rebuke. No more timely message could be given to preachers than that given by Paul to Timothy centuries ago: "I urge you, Timothy,

as we live in the sight of God and of Christ Jesus (whose coming in power will judge the living and the dead), to preach the word of God. Never lose your sense of urgency, in season or out of season. Prove, correct, and encourage, using utmost patience in your teaching" (II Tim. 4:1-5—Phillips' translation).

The minister who relies upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit and prayer will be blessed in his study and interpretation of the Bible.

## II

There is power in the Word of God. Jesus implied the thought of this power when He said, "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). That there is power in a seed is demonstrated by its ability to overcome obstacles and come forth into a plant. There is great power in words, in ideas, in truth. The spread of communism is an exhibition of the power of an idea. Wrong though it is, it is powerful in its influence upon people. There is power in truth. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Preachers need to realize that when they are presenting the Word of God they are dealing in a most powerful activity. Note the emphasis upon the power of the Word of God given in the Scriptures. Here are a few: "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:10, 11).

The Word is powerful because it is the word of God, a living word, a penetrating word, a revealing word, a saving word. It is powerful because it is inspired by the Holy Spirit, and when presented by a minister filled with the Spirit it becomes most effective. There have been times when God has honored His Word and its power has been manifested even when the messenger was himself not filled with the Spirit but was even sinful. Were preachers to be more aware of the power of the Word of God, their ministry would be more successful.

### III

Bible preaching is always appropriate. Really such preaching is expected by all Christian congregations. The people look for the message of authority that is present in Bible preaching, a "Thus saith the Lord" authority. Even sincere people will question at times the ideas of the preacher, but none will question the direct message from God's Word.

There is a freshness in Bible preaching that cannot be found from any other source. Although the preacher is dealing with the world's oldest Book, he may be anointed with the Spirit to bring fresh insights and inspiration from its message. It is God's eternal Word. It is the timeless message for all ages. When its message is blessed of God it will be as fresh and inspiring to the people as anything from the daily news.

This day calls for rugged living. Nowhere else is there to be found a more rugged message, a message which alone can meet the rugged demands of this day, than in the Scriptures. It may be that preachers have been too easy in their preaching, too soft in dealing with the problems of human life, have touched sin too lightly. No true preacher of the Word will be guilty of such discrepancies in his ministry. In the end people love and appreciate ministers who bring a rugged scriptural message more than those with an easy message.

The Bible must have a large place in the minister's life, study, and preaching. He should give it such a large place in the public services as to inspire his people to carry their Bibles to church; in fact, the Bible could be given such an important place in the services as to make people feel a loss sustained by not having Bibles with them. On the other hand, has it not often been the case that ministers have used so little Bible in the services that there was little reason for people to bring their Bibles with them?

We will have Bible-loving, Bible-carrying people in the pew when we have Bible-loving, Bible-preaching preachers in the pulpit.

### A New Editor

Beginning with the August issue Dr. Lauriston J. Du Bois will become the editor of this magazine. It became apparent last fall that the present editor could no longer carry the editorial responsibilities, so at that time he presented his resignation to the Board of General Superintendents, offering to continue to serve until a successor should be prepared to take over as editor. It is indeed a distinct pleasure and honor to pass on these responsibilities to such a well-qualified person as Dr. Du Bois.

He is well trained educationally, having received his college education in one of our own schools, afterward obtaining a master's degree from a state university. He knows editorial work, for he has served for years as the competent editor of our young people's periodicals. He has been a successful pastor and knows well the problems of a pastor. He has had wide contact with our church on the American continent; thus he knows the needs of the ministers of all sections. He is a fine Christian brother worthy of our confidence and co-operation.

It has been a great privilege to serve you as editor. Give your new editor the same co-operation and support that you have given us.

# The Preaching of Joseph Grant Morrison

By James McGraw

CAN'T YOU do a little bit more?" Nazarenes whose privilege it was to hear a man named Morrison preach can never forget the thrilling challenge in those words. There was something about the preaching of J. G. Morrison that called for action, and thousands who came to hear him feeling that they were doing their best to help send the gospel of full salvation to the ends of the earth left his meetings certain that they had done little indeed, and determined to carry a greater share of the burden for souls.

It was no accident that Joseph Grant Morrison became the preacher that he was, for his home background provided an environment which made it easy for children to learn piety and godliness. His parents were deeply spiritual people, and they had great trust in God. In Dr. Morrison's book *Other Days*, he tells of an incident that gives us an example of the faith his father had. His family was returning from a trip to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, with a supply of provisions, when a tragic stampede of the thirsty cattle resulted in the provisions being lost in the Big Sioux River. That evening at the family worship, the father prayed: "O Lord, we thank Thee for safety from the waters; but if Thou hadst not willed our rescue, we would have trusted in Thy goodness and wisdom just the same." One can imagine the effect such a prayer had upon the children, with no reference to and no whining over the lost provisions; just thanksgiving for their lives being spared! Not only that, but an affirmation of faith in God's goodness even had their lives been lost!

With such a family background as a foundation, J. G. Morrison was converted at the age of sixteen, and soon

answered the call to preach. His college education came only with the help of his increasing faith in God and as a result of great sacrifice. On one occasion he went for two and a half days without any food before work was found and he was enabled to continue his studies. Such experiences give evidence of the determination he had, and show something of his courage and stamina.

His first pastorate was a hard place for him to fill, and perhaps during this time he went through some of his most severe trials. At the age of twenty-four, however, he received the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and his life and ministry were immediately changed. He told of his experience later:

He transformed my life; He transformed my ministry. From that moment it was a joy to serve Him; a thrilling pleasure to preach His truth a glad privilege to suffer for Him; and a deep satisfaction to be in His wonderful service. I shall praise Him forever for His goodness to me.

Not many who heard Dr. Morrison preach knew of his experience as an army captain during the Spanish-American War. His service for his country proved to be another example of his fine character, for during those days of hardship and testing times he continued his influence for Christ and holiness. He was able to hold together the boys from his church and town, and nearly a hundred of them went through the war together without one of them ever taking up the habit of smoking or drinking.

Dr. Morrison's record of service in the kingdom of God is one of loyalty and enthusiasm. After his return from the war, he became the founder

of the Laymen's Holiness Association, and was president of that organization for ten years prior to his joining the Church of the Nazarene in 1921. At the time he joined our church, bringing about a thousand members of the Laymen's Holiness Association with him, he became district superintendent of the Central Northwest District and made a splendid record of service in that capacity. Afterwards, he was elected president of Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa, Idaho, and served as college president until he was chosen as Dr. H. F. Reynolds' assistant in the Department of Foreign Missions. A year later he became secretary of the department and editor of the *Other Sheep*. He served faithfully and loyally in this office until his election as general superintendent in 1939.

J. G. Morrison always preached on themes he believed to be of vital importance. His sermons were on such subjects as "The Boundaries of Regeneration," "Can Carnality Be Eradicated in This Life?" and "Is Holiness a Necessity or a Luxury?" His many messages on "Faith" were always forceful and effective. There was a peculiar driving power behind his sermons which brought results and action from his hearers.

Morrison will be best remembered for his sermons on holiness, faith, and stewardship. He preached a high ethical standard of conduct, and he often called his heart-searching messages "curry-comb" sermons. He prodded, probed, searched, and tested his hearers until they became fully aware of the importance of clean living. He always preached such sermons with a tender spirit, however, and never with anything approaching a spirit of harshness. He had a habit of punctuating his probing with a unique, high-pitched chuckle, and he could "pour it on" pretty heavy with the help of such good-natured humor interspersed frequently among his points. When he paused and grinned broadly at his audience, any possible

tension that may have existed was immediately gone, and J. G. Morrison was ready to probe some more. Even those who may not have agreed with him could hardly help appreciating his tender spirit and his enthusiastic delivery.

In preaching on "Faith," he once described his experience of praying through until he came to the place where he could believe God for anything. He grasped the promise that if his faith were as a grain of mustard-seed, he could say to yonder mountain, "Be thou removed into the sea," and it would be done. He went on to say that about that time he looked out through his window and saw Mount Baldy towering in the distance, and he exulted with characteristic enthusiasm, "It was a good thing for that mountain that I did not want it removed into the Pacific Ocean, for I believe at that moment I had faith enough to move it."

John Broadus, the saintly master of homiletic style, has said that sermon introductions may be taken from one of three possible sources: the text, the topic, or the occasion. Dr. J. G. Morrison's introductions would comply with the rules of good sermon construction, for they were taken from these sources. Most often his introductions were taken from the text itself, and were examples of excellent contextual types. They were both brief and clear. They contained something, as a rule, which aroused interest and captured attention. They had dignity without dullness, and they were as fresh as the morning news.

We have in his sermon "Is Holiness Obtainable in This Life?" an idea of Morrison's concept of the place of Biblical references in preaching. He quotes such authorities as Wesley, Fletcher, Watson, Clarke, and Fox; but he quotes scriptures more often and more freely than any other sources. For example, in one division of his message he quotes two Old Testament references and three from the New Testament. In another, he uses



one from the Old Testament and six from the New Testament. We find no less than five scripture quotations in any one of the divisions of this sermon.

His use of argumentative style is indicative of his orderly and disciplined mind, and reminds his listeners of the logic of St. Paul preaching to the Athenians. His sermon on "Is Holiness a Necessity or a Luxury?" contains this interesting bit of reasoning:

Let us reason on this important matter a bit. What keeps a human being from the sweet fellowship of God? Is it not his utter unlikeness to Him? In what does this unlikeness consist? Is it not in the Holiness of God, and the unholiness of man? What can possibly give one a sense of great comfort as he faces the Judgment bar? Will it not be the possibility of having a moral similarity with the Judge? What can give that similarity? Holiness!

This indicates not only the logic of Morrison's preaching, but also reveals a unique feature of his style, which is the use of questions and answers for emphasis. Here are six pertinent questions asked in such a manner as to leave the answers immediately clear to his listeners. He has also carried this method a step further by asking a series of questions which can all be answered by the same word or phrase, and then repeating that word or phrase forcefully after each question. He did this very effectively in the same sermon quoted above when he emphasized the need for holiness and described the uncleanness from which God has called us. He raised the question of one manifestation of carnal hearts after another, and after each asked the question, "*Is that clean?*" The use of questions and answers and the repetition of words and phrases for emphasis are notable and distinct characteristics of his unique style of preaching.

Ramon P. Vanderpool has pointed out in a paper for one of his classes in Nazarene Theological Seminary that Dr. Morrison had an uncanny

ability to detect and prevent any wrong tendencies that he thought existed in the church. He knew how to preach with the needs of his listeners in mind, and he possessed that unusual and rare capacity to resist common tendencies and at the same time prevent any tensions or conflicts from arising. His success along this line speaks very well for his humble and Christlike spirit, and also points out his fearlessness and boldness in delivering the messages he believed to be needed.

Dr. E. P. Ellyson has said of him that he always bore a burden for his audiences when he preached. His friends have known him for his life of devotion, and the courageous way in which he faced the many problems connected with his work. Dr. M. Lunn once said, "We were never with him for any great length of time before prayer was wont to be offered, which accounts, no doubt, for his great faith and vision." He was a man of prayer, a man of faith, and a man of vision. These characteristics behind his messages meant the bringing of divine truth from God to men through a man dedicated to his task of being a good messenger.

One of Dr. Morrison's characteristic gestures was his way of holding his Bible in one hand while he preached. This seemed to lend added force to his messages, for not only were his audiences *hearing* the scriptures quoted quite frequently but they were also *seeing* God's Word held there before them by this Biblical expositor, and there was awesome power in every reference to the Sacred Writ. He did not use very many gestures, but did use his arms and body quite effectively in delivering his sermons, and often walked about the platform while he preached. In camp meetings and revivals, he sometimes walked down in front of the pulpit so as to get nearer his audiences, where he could "see the whites of their eyes as he

fired his shots." Fire he did, and the centers of his targets were usually hit.

A practical preacher, a Bible preacher, and a zealous crusader, Dr. Morrison was nevertheless able to rise in moments of oratory. Some of his conclusions are masterpieces of rhetoric, and he knew how to clinch and close his sermons with fitting climaxes. He could use poetry and hymns in making his conclusions effective. Listen to one of his sermons as he brings it to a conclusion:

... Ten thousand laity, once beautifully sanctified, are now weltering among the damned. Why? They did not watch! Poor old fallen human nature pleaded for gratification of its desires. The devil artfully used his powers. Gold never had so beautiful a glitter. Business prosperity never seemed to allure with such a persuasive pull before. Infatuation actually, under Satan's hypnotic spell, seemed like love. The Holy Ghost through that Sanctified heart begged, pleaded, and threatened. But the guard was thrown down. The defense was abandoned. Carnality reasserted itself. The fatal step was taken. The same tragedy of Eden was re-enacted. The soul began to stiffen with the frosts of sin. The spiritual nature congealed. The mind lost its ability to grasp divine values. The man reeled, caught at vacancy, fell down, down, down! "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments."

*My soul, be on thy guard.  
Ten thousand foes arise,  
The hosts of hell are pressing hard  
To keep thee from the skies!*

One thing is certain: when J. G. Morrison preached, the people were moved to action. He carried a great burden for souls, and had a tremendous capacity for love. He was known as a great friend. His passion for souls was indicated by some of the titles for his articles in the *Herald of Holiness*. He wrote on "What Will the Church Do?" "Evangelism—Some Suggestions," "A Great Awakening Is Possible," "A Formula for a Passion for Souls," and many other topics of like nature. Were he alive today, he would be making use of every opportunity to challenge us to enter wholeheartedly into the *Crusade for*

*Souls Now*, and his faith and vision would be an inspiration.

Once while herding cattle in his youth, J. G. Morrison was frightened by a storm which threatened his life. He watched in terror while lightning killed four of the animals in his herd, and in his fear he began to pray. Peace came to him as he felt God's presence, and he thought God spoke to him in these words: "Don't be afraid. I want you to work for Me. Nothing can hurt you until I decide that your work is done." On Thanksgiving Day, 1939, his Lord decided his work was finished and called him to his reward. His enthusiasm, his optimism, his boundless energy, his loyal devotion to his church, and his radiant personality left an indelible impression upon the church he served, and the people called Nazarenes will, when they think of him, be heartened to try "to do a little bit more."

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#### DEPART TO SERVE (*Benediction*)

*This hour before thy Creator*

*Has been blessed for thee not alone,  
But to inspire your life for service.*

*Salvation to be lived must be shown.*

*Go forth from His courts with rejoicing*

*Into fields of service and love.*

*Let thy friends and thy neighbors be guided*

*By thy life which is ordered above.*

*For religion that is selfish is worthless.*

*The last shall be first we all know.*

*Then share thy great blessing with others;*

*God's will ordains it be so.*

*He that saveth his life shall lose it;*

*He that loseth his life, he shall find*

*That true blessings of grace and salvation*

*Have been there for the asking each time.*

EVERETT D. PENROD

# The Pastor with a Shepherd's Heart

General Superintendent D. I. Vanderpool

THE POSITION of the pastor is *authorized* in the church by the Spirit, for "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, *pastors* and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12). His position is highly *important* in that no other group of ministers gets into the homes and hearts of the people as do the pastors. Then opportunities are always present to give guidance and spiritual counsel to sincere souls. A member of the church will confide in his pastor about his problems when he will speak to no one else. The pastor's work may be abundantly *fruitful* in the salvation of souls. He can "hand-pick" many for Christ as they contact him in their times of sorrow, disappointment, and perplexities of life. The man troubled about his soul will seek out the pastor, who has visited in his home or who has shown a friendly attitude, when he would not raise his hand for prayer or go to a public altar. The careful pastor can lead him to Christ or to a public altar, where he may find Christ, and in due time the individual will become a staunch member of the church. Then again the pastor's work affords many *pleasant* events. The Christian fellowship and close friendships of the years will warm the heart with pleasant memories.

Seeing the young man converted and join the church pays high dividends to the weary pastor. Performing the marriage ceremony when the young man stands before the church altar with his lovely bride is a pleasant task indeed. The dedication of little babies and the participation in the anniversaries are pleasant events

which become a part of a pastor's work. It is no wonder that it is hard for the pastor who has served a church for years to sever connection, pull up roots, and move lock, stock, and barrel to another pastorate three hundred miles away. It is like tearing out heartstrings. But the wise pastor knows that he owes such a move to the church and to the pastor who follows him.

The relationship of the pastor to the church which he serves is pictured in the Scripture by the analogy, used by the Saviour when He said to Peter in His parting message, "Feed my lambs," "Feed my sheep." Peter emphasized the same analogy when he said to the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (I Pet. 5:2-4). The Apostle Paul continued the analogy in his parting address to the elders of Ephesus, when he said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). The church which the pastor serves is God's flock of sheep. That pastor is a shepherd of the flock. The flock does not belong to the pastor but to the Chief Shepherd, and to Him the pastor must give an account for the way he has cared for the flock. And from Him the pastor will receive the crown of glory which fadeth not away.

The work of a pastor is that of a shepherd. He must have the shepherd's heart if he properly cares for the flock and pleases the Chief Shepherd. The pastor with a shepherd heart will *love* the members of his flock, not for what they can pay or the position they hold, nor for the courtesies they can extend, but for what they are. A little lamb, a sick or crippled sheep, a stubborn sheep, an old sheep, or a prize winner—the Good Shepherd gave His life for that sheep. It has a place in His heart. The pastor with the shepherd's heart will lay himself out to bring that sheep safely into the fold. He will labor gently and carefully with the children in the Sunday school. They are the lambs of the flock. His vision tells him that in a short time they become strong, dependable members, bearing their share of the burden. Every church has some elderly people who have reached the zenith of their usefulness in active service. However, their achievements of the past and their daily prayer life make them a mighty force in any church. They deserve attention from the pastor, and his shepherd heart will not permit him to forget them.

There are not many of our churches which at some time have not had a member who insisted on being the "bell sheep" of the flock. He has wanted to set the pace and chart the course. He is a genius and a success in his field, but his field is farming, building, banking, doing construction work, overseeing groups of men, and not running a church. In his field he can build up or knock down; he can hire or he can fire. His plan is to transfer the same methods over into the church program. He is a good, useful man, but he has become a problem sheep.

The pastor must prove his love for the flock by clearly and kindly pointing the way and setting the pace that will be best for the flock, and at the same time by his kindly attitude re-

tain the "bell sheep" as part of the flock.

The pastor with a shepherd's heart cannot peacefully rest until he is assured that every member is safe and comfortable within the fold.

I stayed in the home of a young rancher who had changed from cattle to the sheep business. He purchased three thousand sheep his first year. He was inexperienced as a sheepman and had only meager equipment for caring for his sheep. While I was there, an early spring blizzard of fierce proportions came upon his unsheltered flock. For nearly sixty hours he fought with the falling and drifting snow. He came to the house only to eat a few, hasty meals; then back to his flock that needed him. He never took off his clothes nor slept on hour until the storm was over. Other sheepmen in the country lost hundreds and in a case or two over a thousand. My rancher friend lost only seven sheep, but the loss of these seven caused him great distress. He was more than a sheepman. He had a shepherd's heart. He loved his sheep. Two days after the storm I saw on old Mexican shepherd carrying a little lamb in his arms. As he stroked its fleece, I heard him say, "He is a s-e-e-k lamb." It was the shepherd's heart that made the old Mexican so concerned about the sick lamb.

No pastor with a shepherd's heart can sit unmoved while the names of people living in the community are removed from the member roll. The shepherd heart will drive him to don his greatcoat, go out into the storm, buck the blizzard, fight off the wolves, and bring the lost sheep back to the fold. These members who have backslidden are to be pitied; we must not let them go. A sincere Crusade for Souls among the thousands that church boards dropped from the rolls would have changed the picture this past year. Oh, for the shepherd's heart!

Another mark of a pastor with a shepherd's heart is that he is con-

cerned about every need of his flock. Jesus said to Peter, "Feed my sheep." Paul said, "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Proper pasture for the flock is imperative. David in the twenty-third psalm declared that his Shepherd led him beside *still waters* and made him to lie down in *green pastures*. Food and water for his trusting flock must ever be a chief concern of the pastor with a shepherd's heart. That pastor knows that drinking from stagnant pools or swift currents is dangerous business. He also knows that feeding upon short grass, weeds, and desert brush will leave a flock ragged and unprofitable. Preaching that majors on the speculative in prophecy, that deals with nonessentials as if they were fundamentals, or that reaches out into the spectacular to tickle or thrill an audience, is not a diet that is conducive to growth or good health. A measured portion of it might furnish spice for a message, but the measure should be small. Preaching that deals with dress and behavior, world relationship, and the standards of the church has its place and should not be omitted. But for a steady, balanced diet for the average flock, there is nothing like giving them "Obedience," "Brotherly Love," "Soul Winning," "Perseverance," "Faith," "Holiness," "Generosity," "Second Coming of Christ," and "The Perils of Blacksliding." An occasional message on "Death," "Hell," and "The Judgment" will help to keep our people alerted for any eventualities.

Another concern of the shepherd for the flock is its safety. Storms, flash floods, pitfalls, prowling wolves, and thoughtless wandering are perils that keep the true shepherd alert and watchful. Perils surround the church of God that call for alert pastors with watchful eyes. Strikes, business failures, or calamities from storms, flood, or fire may leave a church with little income. Here the pastor must be an ensample to the flock—sympathetic, courageous, hopeful, and ever present

to give comfort. I came into a town after disaster had struck. The members of the church were stunned by their losses. They shivered in the cold. I brought food, clothes, and blankets. The sad eyes of these people told me that they felt as if they were sheep without a shepherd. They were just that—their shepherd had fled to save his skin, which I felt was hardly worth saving. Other pastors were there; he should have been there.

Prowling wolves of false doctrines come in packs upon some flocks. Here the pastor with a shepherd's heart must stand up and fight out to the finish—to flee is proof of being a hireling—fighting it out until with David he can testify, "There came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him." When wolves begin to steal the sheep or tear the flock, tolerance ceases to be a virtue. Pastors must be alerted to the dangers of opening their pulpits to representatives of independent works who are constantly making appeals and sometimes misleading and untrue statements concerning what they are doing.

Founders of some independent works have held properties in their own names and have in this way built up an estate for themselves, and it may finally go to their ungodly relatives. They are a law unto themselves and give financial accounting to no one. Certainly courtesies should be extended to old, reliable, benevolent organizations which have a sky-blue record. The Departments of Foreign Missions and Home Missions have on a program that needs every dollar our people can raise. Pastors with the shepherd heart will try to protect their unsuspecting sheep from these subtle approaches.

There is a need for pastors to be constantly on the watch for attractions which may lure members into hidden

pitfalls. Worldly amusements and sinful pleasure have a powerful influence upon the youth of any generation. Demas forsook Paul because the amusements of Thessalonica and the love of this present world got hold of him.

The pastor with the shepherd heart will do everything within his power to give *guidance* to legitimate hungerers of his flock. Boys' camp, girls' camp, and young people's camp with carefully chosen and closely supervised programs will be a great blessing to the youth of our church. Youth Week and a young people's revival can bring blessing to all.

Two or three times a year a well-planned evening with singing, prayer, games, fun, and refreshments can add zest and enthusiasm to a group of sanctified young people. The pastor must set a wise example in all these activities.

Just as cool springs, green pastures, and a kind shepherd will assure a profitable flock of sheep and cut losses from sickness or wandering to a minimum, so the pastor with a shepherd's heart can love, feed, protect, and guide the church of God over what the Chief Shepherd has placed him until that church is happy, fruitful, and her victories brought to a maximum and her loss cut to a minimum.

I am thinking of a minister friend who assumed his full task as pastor of a small, struggling, county seat town and who in his desperation to have a revival in his church revealed that he was a pastor with a shepherd's heart. He wrote me a letter saying: "Please come and give me a revival. I am desperate. I shall have a *revival in the church or a funeral in the parsonage*." Knowing the character of my friend, I went to be with him. He had visited in every home for miles around—the mayor, the banker, the businessman, the railroad man, the retired farmer at the edge of town, the homesteader, and the dry land farmer miles away. He had knocked at their doors. He had inquired about their spiritual

welfare. He had assured them that they were no longer sheep without a shepherd. He had urged them to call on him when they were in trouble, need, or perplexity. He had driven hundreds of miles, made hundreds of calls, and spent many hours in prayer before I came.

The first night the crowds came, conviction settled down, sinners were converted, backsliders were reclaimed, believers were sanctified. His months of earnest efforts began to pay off the first night. The pastor with the shepherd's heart laughed, cried, and shouted as the wandering sheep came home. At the end of two weeks scores had been converted. The church was transformed; the impact of the revival was felt for miles. The influence of that revival lives on. Strong laymen holding important places in our church today came home in that revival. Pastors of some of our strong churches today found God in that revival. The pastor of that church had the shepherd's heart. The Chief Shepherd called him home several years ago and gave to him a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

My prayer: "Please, Thou Chief Shepherd of the sheep, give every pastor in the church the true shepherd's heart. Send him out to love, feed, protect, and guard Thy flock. Let him find no undisturbed peace until the last wandering sheep for which he is personally responsible is safely housed in the fold and sheltered from the storm. This I ask in Thy name and for Thy glory. Amen!"

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*He always wins who sides with God;  
To him no chance is lost.  
God's will is sweetest to him when  
It triumphs at his cost.*

*Ill that He blesses is our good,  
And unblessed good is ill;  
And all is right that seems most wrong  
If it be His sweet will.*

—Selected

# How to Be a Bible Preacher

By R. L. Lunsford\*

**T**HE BIBLE is the most important possession of the Christian Church, more important even than all its vast material resources combined—its funds, its endowments, its lands, its churches, its educational and philanthropic institutions, and its business enterprises. We make this high claim for the Bible on the ground that it is the original and supreme witness to that truth of God of which these material resources are but the instrumentalities. The Bible sets forth both the historical reasons for the Christian faith and the origin, growth, and clarification of those truths with which the Christian faith is primarily concerned."

Thus writes Edwin Lewis in his recent work, *The Biblical Faith and Christian Freedom* (Westminster, 1953). He goes ahead to say about the preacher:

The preacher, as the interpreter of the Bible, is the most important figure in the Christian church. We make that high claim for him on the ground that it is his specific responsibility to keep the Christian faith continually before the mind of the church in such wise as to move the heart of the church, inform its understanding, and motivate its will, and beyond that and through that to keep the Christian faith continually before the world.

Having established the centrality of the Bible as the most important possession of the Church and the preacher-interpreter as the most important figure of the Church, Lewis proceeds to point out the inseparability of the two as follows:

The preacher-interpreter and the Bible are therefore not to be separated. The most important possession of the church and the most important figure

in the church are mutualities. The human situation being what it is, the one calls for the other. The message implies the messenger, and the messenger implies the message. It is axiomatic that the preacher must be steeped in the Bible to be really a preacher.

If we accept these three concepts as fundamental (as I am sure each of us does) then we are faced with an exciting—and disturbing—conclusion: We are either Bible preachers or else we have no legitimate claim to the title of preacher! We are therefore constrained to apply the test immediately: Are we, after all, Bible preacher?

There is considerable evidence to the contrary. There is, first of all, the testimony of our laymen. "Can't Olivet do something more to produce Bible preachers?" is a question often proposed to the speaker. "We appreciated him; he preached the Bible to us," is also a sometimes-heard compliment. One of the most devastating criticisms I have recently heard was the comment of an intelligent—and very loyal—layman who remarked concerning the sermon of a guest preacher, "He spent all his time telling us what a 'good Nazarene' should be like but never got around to telling us how a Bible Christian should live."

There is also the testimony of the ministry. "How can I learn to be a Bible preacher?" is the preacher's echo of the layman's question.

Most telling of all is the preacher's performance. The thirty-three members of last year's Principles of Preaching class spent a considerable period of time discussing the relative value of the several sermon forms. At the conclusion it seemed unanimously agreed that the most profitable type of sermon was an expository mes-

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sage, with textual preaching in second place and topical preaching having no defenders at all. However, when it came time for the men to preach their oral sermons, and each man chose his own message, twenty-nine of the thirty-three preached topical sermons!

This is evidently somewhat typical, not only of the theological student, but of the active preachers as well. Ask a group of ministers their opinion concerning the most profitable type of sermon, then ask each the type of sermon he preached last Sunday, and I dare say the proportions will be about the same as with the homiletics class cited above.

Some clues to the anomaly were revealed in a later class discussion. When the professor called to the attention of the homiletics class the inconsistency between their profession and their performance, and asked for some suggested reasons for such, these were a few of the chief reasons offered. "Expository sermons are too hard to prepare." "They are too hard to deliver." "The subject I wanted to discuss wouldn't lend itself to expository treatment," and, most damaging to the dignity of us older preachers, "I haven't heard enough expository sermons to have a good idea of how to prepare and deliver one!"

Without pausing to analyze and criticize the objections of the young homileticians, it seems a safe conclusion that their first three objections were simply only echoing those of their older brethren, and their fourth an appraisal of the result.

This is not to suggest that only textual or expository sermons are Biblical in content nor that one cannot be a Bible preacher while delivering a topical sermon; it is only a broad hint that such is usually the case. It is further to suggest the possibility that while we have professed ourselves to be Bible lovers we may have been Bible neglecters. It is partially to admit that one of our critics may have had something when he said, "The

average Nazarene congregation is the most Bible-starved crowd in evangelical Christendom."

However, in the midst of our discouragement there is hope. Remember, please, that four of the homiletics students did attempt textual or expository sermons. Remind yourself also that our laymen in chorus are calling for more Bible-centered preaching. And consider it significant that you are among those gathered here for the First Annual Bible Conference. Seriously, there is quite evidently a widespread call from both the laity and the ministry for sermons rich in scriptural content. On the part of the laity the call is prefaced with "Give us" while from the ministry its preface is, "How can we?"

The burden of this paper is to attempt a partial answer to the latter question, i.e., "How can we be more effective Bible preachers?" One approach to the problem is posited on the traditional idea that the Bible is its own best interpreter. Accepting that dictum, we conclude that the best way to learn to be Bible preachers is to study the homiletic methodology of the preachers of the Bible.

#### EXAMPLES

Examining the methodology of the men whose sermons are recorded or reported in Holy Writ has proved to be a most refreshing and stimulating experience. The range of materials studied prevents an exhaustive treatment and calls for some highlighted examples followed by summarization and conclusions.

Might we not well begin with the oldest book of published sermons—the Book of Deuteronomy? The methods of Moses are implied in the very name which has been assigned this series of discussions, the word Deuteronomy meaning "second telling, or 'second law,'" thus indicating that Moses not only reiterated certain key portions of the law but also expounded them to the new generation in order that they more clearly understand their meaning. Having thus set



the example himself, Moses exhorts the Hebrews to use similar technique as they pass the law on to future generations. In chapter 6, verses 3-9 and 20-25 he urges:

Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: and the Lord shewed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: and he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.

The centrality of the Scriptures as the subject matter of Old Testament preachers is further illustrated in the story of the return from Captivity as recorded by Nehemiah. You recall how Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the congregation and read from morning until midday while, as Nehemiah reports, "the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." You further recall that, as Ezra read, six men stood on his right hand and seven on his left to explain the meaning of the law to those who

listened, with the result, as Nehemiah further reports, "They read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Neh. 8:8).

A similarly significant incident is recorded in II Kings 22 (also II Chronicles 34) when in the process of repairing the Temple the workmen discovered the long-forgotten book of the law. Disturbed by its message, Josiah, the king, inquired of Hilkiah, the priest, who in turn called for Huldah, the prophetess, to interpret its meaning. Under the constraint of the lady preacher's exhortation, we are told:

And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

The result was the expulsion of Baal worship from the Temple and the restoration of Jehovah worship.

We could tarry long in the Old Testament, reviewing the preaching of the prophets Amos, Jeremiah, and others. Let us, however, go on to the New Testament to pick up the pattern of preaching as revealed by some of its recorded sermons.

From the ministry of Jesus, we cite only two instances: His first and His last recorded sermons. From Luke 4:16-22 this significant statement:

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath sent me to heal the

brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

Thus in His first recorded sermon is seen the centrality of the Scriptures as He preached. While some time might be spent in attempting to make a distinction between the *preaching* and the *teaching* of Jesus, that would be outside the province of this paper. Let us rather pick up one other example of His preaching—the discourse during the walk to Emmaus, where, in Luke 24:25-27 He says:

O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

The Scriptures again are the framework of the message of the Master.

Peter followed his Lord's example in his celebrated Pentecostal sermon when, with Joel 2:27, 28 as his text and the psalms of David as his illustrations, he preached a Bible-centered sermon and had 3,000 converts! Again in his defense before the Sanhedrin for the healing of the lame man, Peter expands the Word of God, drawing now from Moses and the prophets, and it is alleged 5,000 found the Lord.

A bit later, Stephen, in what must have been an impromptu sermon, proved himself a master of the Scriptures as he stood before the council and from Abraham to the Exodus demonstrated the love of God and the unbelief of man.

For our final New Testament witness, let us call upon the master preacher, Paul, who went from synagogue to synagogue, from city to city, and from nation to nation, where as Luke tells us in Acts 17:2, 3, "Paul,

as his manner was, went in unto them, and . . . reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."

Again, as in our survey of the Old Testament preachers, we are forced to say that these New Testament messengers are simply typical of their kind; that while many others might be cited, the conclusion would be the same.

We are ready then to ask, What is the conclusion? It is simply, and I hope startlingly, this: *The preachers of the Bible were Bible preachers!*

If we agree that the above conclusion is a valid one, we are ready to ask, How did they do it? What was their methodology?

For one clue to the answer let us once more turn to Edwin Lewis. He says:

It is axiomatic that the preacher must be steeped in the Bible to be really a preacher. He must know what the Bible contains, but he must also know the meaning of what it contains. The first is a matter of the assiduous application of the learning process; the second is a matter of prolonged cogitation, of deep wrestlings of the spirit, of patient searching for the key to the treasures which the Book enshrines. Biblical preaching is Biblical knowledge set on fire.

That's it! Bible knowledge set on fire! They had so steeped themselves in the Bible that, as Jeremiah says, it was as a fire in their bones. Would the figure be too earthly if we suggested that they were so saturated with the Word of God that it flowed out of them under pressure?

#### TECHNIQUES

However, we are not concerned at the moment with their inspiration but with their technique. Leaping over the processes, let us come quickly to conclusions, and suggest that the Bible preachers had evidently developed four skills. Here they are: (1) the skill of selection, (2) the skill of analysis, (3) the skill of interpretation, and (4) the skill of syn-

thesis. Let us examine each one briefly.

1. They had developed the skill of selection. To be a Bible-centered preacher does not imply that one be ready to preach on any portion of Bible at random, or on the whole Bible. Rather, it suggests that one know his Bible well enough to recognize portions that are appropriate for such treatment. Thus, Jesus chose the Isaiah passage for his first Nazareth sermon, Peter chose Joel, and Stephen the Exodus story. They knew the Scriptures sufficiently well to know what passage was applicable.

2. They had developed the skill of analysis. That is, they possessed the skill to which Paul exhorted Timothy when he urged the young preacher, "Study to . . . rightly dividing the word of truth." I think it was T. Harwood Pattison who said: "The preacher should so understand the laws of analysis that he can take a text apart, not as a child breaks up a watch, with a club, but as the watchmaker does, with deft and well-trained fingers." Such was the skill of the preachers of the Bible that, for example, the oft-alleged mistakes of Stephen prove to be no mistakes after all, but rather to demonstrate that Stephen possessed a more intimate knowledge of the Scriptures on the spur of the moment than did his critics after careful study.

3. The third and quite likely the key skill of the Bible preachers was the skill of interpretation. Here again Edwin Lewis has some words of wisdom for us:

It is quite possible to "know the Bible," as the saying goes, and yet not to know it. It is quite possible to have the Bible at one's fingertips, and still miss the real meaning of what one can so glibly quote. A string of verses quoted from Ezekiel, Daniel, Matthew, chapter 24, and The Revelation of John may appear to be impressively Biblical, while actually being used to support a complete misrepresentation of what the Bible is fundamentally about. Through that living whole which is the Bible runs the deep integrating movement of

divine self-revelation, and it is possible to be familiar with the whole and still not detect the inner uniting movement. It is this inner movement that constitutes the ultimate reason for the existence of the Bible itself. All the parts of the Bible have their own necessity, but that necessity is relative to the purpose and meaning of the whole. He who would possess the true principle of interpretation must therefore possess the true principle of discrimination.

It is this skill which validates the work of the ministry. The Ethiopian eunuch could read Isaiah's magnificent prophecy but he needed Philip to interpret its meaning. The hearers at Pentecost well knew Joel's prophecy but needed Peter to interpret its relevance to their present situation. The rabbis and priests could probably quote from memory most of the Old Testament prophecy. Paul's interpretation was so conclusive that many of them turned to the Lord. And it was while Ezra read and his assistants explained that the law took on life to the Jews newly returned from captivity.

4. The fourth skill was that of synthesis, a bringing together. Referring again to Pattison's figure, who can tell time by the pieces of a watch? It requires the reassembled watch to declare the hour. It was so with the preachers of the Bible. They not only possessed the other three skills in abundance, but they could also bring together the truths of the Scripture with such beauty, force, and conviction that the multitude at Pentecost would receive the Word with gladness and Agrippa would cry out, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

There, then, must be the homiletical secrets of the effective preachers of the Bible. They had developed the skills of selection, of analysis, of interpretation, and of synthesis.

I would call to your attention, especially, one portion of my phraseology—they *developed* their skills, rather than received them as gifts. If, as James suggests, the men of the

(Continued on page 34)

# The Bible in the Church Service

By P. J. Bartram\*

THE CHURCH of the Nazarene has just concluded its "Bible-Emphasis Year." In it we have stressed not only the reading of the Bible, and the memorization of the Scriptures, but also the carrying of our Bibles to Sunday school, the midweek service, and the Sunday preaching services. I am wondering how deep an impression the campaign has made on either preachers or laymen. I have some doubts about the outcome; for, generally speaking, we are not a Bible-carrying people. I have continually urged my people to bring their Bibles, especially to Sunday school and to the midweek prayer meeting. I checked on Wednesday night and found about half of them had brought Bibles and others had availed themselves of Bibles from the rack used for that purpose in the back of the prayer meeting auditorium. Only a fair percentage of our people bring Bibles to Sunday school and morning worship service. On Sunday nights the percentage of Bibles in relation to the attendance is much less.

In contrast, I think of a young preacher friend of mine, recently graduated from college, and new to our city, who went "shopping" on a Sunday morning for Sunday school and church service at an aggressive, fundamentalist type of church of another denomination. He was deeply impressed with one aspect of the service: the people were a Bible-carrying group. Everywhere in that large congregation there were Bibles, open Bibles, and they were being used by the larger portion of the congregation. They not only listened to the reading of the Word; they fol-

lowed that reading reverently in their own Bibles. Then as the pastor developed his expository message, they kept their Bibles open for reference. I think it is commonly agreed among us that there are some church groups who do carry their Bibles to church more than our people do and, further, that these same groups, generally speaking, are more fully acquainted with their Bibles than many of our own people are.

This all raises some questions. I'm not so sure that we Nazarenes, ministers or laymen, on the whole, believe in the necessity or in the value of carrying Bibles to church. I know that some of our schools give points for bringing Bibles to Sunday school, but is our Sunday-school teaching so situation-centered that a Bible in one's hand would be superfluous for lack of us? And doesn't the lesson leaflet discourage the bringing of Bibles? And what would be the actual purpose of a child's carrying a Bible to a Sunday school if it is never used in class or assembly, except to obtain points? Do our pastors give proper attention and thought to the reading of the Bible in the worship services? Do we make a Bible in the layman's hand a necessary tool in study and worship? Would our ministers prefer for the people to just listen to the reading of the Bible, rather than to be occupied with finding the place and following the reading in their own Bibles? If so, is there some merit in that opinion? I'm only asking.

I am wondering if Bible-carrying to a revival meeting is not a superfluous gesture. I wonder if another stirring illustration, or a few more moments for the evangelistic sermon, is not more important to some evan-

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gelists than a brief but pungent portion from the Word. I have asked more than one evangelist to do my people the courtesy of at least telling them where his text of scripture was to be found. One visiting minister at each service read his scripture lesson or gave his text without so much as telling the people where to find the reference. I asked him afterward, while discussing together the merits of Bible reading from the pulpit, if he had a purpose in his procedure. He replied that he felt that it distracted the people for them to be looking up the reference. He further added that it was his practice generally to delete the scripture lesson because of the time element. I have sought in my own mind the reasons for the position we so generally take. I don't think it's just indifference, or the time element alone. I think it's a point of view, maybe not thought through, nor expressed, but a pattern nevertheless quite generally developed throughout the denomination, as it is in many another denominational group. Do these groups which so noticeably carry their Bibles to church have more reverence for the Word? Does their emphasis on a "verbal" inspiration as against our plenary emphasis make them in any sense guilty of bibliolatry? Are they sidetracked, while we are in the middle of the road? Or are we maybe sidetracked a little too much in the opposite direction? I'm still asking.

Whatever may be the correct answer to the questions I have asked, I do feel there is a need for increasing audience participation in the use of the Bible in our services. I mention particularly the midweek prayer meeting and the morning worship service.

There are varying opinions on how to conduct a midweek service, but of one thing I am sure: the Bible lesson, led by the pastor, is a "must." We rob our people of needed food and renewed spiritual vitality when we as pastors come up to the mid-

week service without a full and rich preparation in some portion of the Word. For a year and a half now we have been studying in the Gospel of St. John on Wednesday nights. We encourage participation, by urging the people to have their Bibles with them, by giving them clearly the location of the passage of scripture and waiting for them to find the place, by inviting them to follow the printed as well as the spoken Word, by sometimes having members of the audience read cross references, and sometimes by encouraging their questions and comments. At times it gets so interesting that we have to put the clamps on audience discussion because of the time element. I believe the study should be largely expository and should contain some devotional thought having present and personal spiritual lift for the people attending. Midweek prayer meeting is a people's meeting, but I believe that the twenty minutes spent with the Word can be of such a nature that the people will feel they have personally participated in interest, in thought, and in spiritual blessing.

What place should the Bible have in the Sunday morning worship service? Obviously there cannot be the same kind of audience participation as in a Bible discussion group in the Sunday-school hour, nor even as in the midweek service. But there can and must be lay participation of mind and heart if the service is to succeed. The focal point of participation must of necessity be in the pastor's reading of the scripture and in his message, centered in that scripture portion. Let us discuss first the reading of the scripture lesson.

When should the scripture portion be read? Many pastors use a short devotional lesson, or a responsive reading, prior to the pastoral prayer. But the scripture portion having to do with the sermon should be read either just prior to the sermon or with a vocal number between the two. The irrelevancy of the song to the scripture and sermon emphasis in question

may make the former suggestion preferable.

The audience posture is a matter of opinion. Some have their people remain seated in order that there shall be as little distraction as possible. Some have the audience stand for the prayer to follow, or out of respect for the Word, or, if read prior to the sermon itself, that the people may change their position before listening to the sermon. More personal value will probably be gained with the people seated for the reading.

As to the length of the lesson, too extended a portion will tend to lose the audience interest. A minister was telling me about a recent union Thanksgiving service in his part of the city. He spoke highly of the minister's message. It was both timely and thought-provoking. But, said my friend, the speaker lost his audience at the beginning by reading in a monotone a long chapter from the Bible, even though another minister had already read a Thanksgiving scripture lesson.

Very important is the way in which the scripture is read. The manner and the spirit of the reading are every bit as important as the preaching of the sermon. The minister can make it a matter of no consequence by reading in a monotone, by reading it hurriedly, by failing to pre-read and meditate on the portion to be read, by just thinking it doesn't matter anyway. Or he can make it a ministry of blessing. He can transmit to his audience his own feeling by sharing with them in the upward glance, by the warmth of his own spirit, and by transmitting that warmth of spirit in vocal expression, and even by an occasional gesture, by reading it as if he were living it, as if he were telling it. Much of our fumbling in the reading of the Word is a result of a lack of intelligent and spiritual preparation for this sacred ministry. There is real value in reading the Scriptures aloud in one's own study, and seeking to catch the spirit and message in our own minds. I read in Neh. 8:8, "So

they read in the book of the law distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." The book, chapter, and verse should be clearly announced, and time given for the people to find the place and follow the reading. I believe that the reading of the scripture lesson may become for many of us an experience of sharing to a fuller extent with our people the riches of the precious Word of God. The Revelator wrote (1:3): "Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear . . ." (R.S.V.).

Speaking now of the sermon itself, can we make our people more Bible-conscious in the way we use our Bibles during the sermon time? I believe we can. Paul said to Timothy, "Preach the word." The Bible should be the minister's most used Book in his own study and preparation. If he knows it he will use it in the pulpit in such a way as to make his people more Bible-conscious. Church members of another denomination, speaking of their pastor, said to me, "He's not what you'd call a great preacher, but he certainly knows and interprets the Bible to us." And because of that fact he has been widely used across the country in Bible conferences and revival meetings. Someone has said, "Preaching from the Bible saves one from the futile strain of trying to preach a great sermon every Sunday." In some types of preaching one can read his text, or even quote it, then close the Book and lay it aside, as if to say, "Well, that's that," and then get on with the sermon. But how much better to preach with an open Bible, making occasional reference to it, either to the context, to some good quotation from the Word to back up a point of emphasis, or to an apt Bible illustration which drives the truth home! The Bible itself is a great Source Book of illustrative material and it is the best.

In I Tim. 4:13 Paul urges Timothy to "give attendance to reading, to ex-

*(Continued on page 28)*

# Oral Reading of the Bible

By Mallallieu A. Wilson\*

**M**Y FATHER used to tell about a sermon he heard back in the last century on the text, "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet" (Ps. 18:33). The old preacher pronounced the last words "hens' feet" and then proceeded to preach on the impossibility of backsliding; for, said he, hens have toes on the backs of their feet and so can't slide back.

Of course, this misreading was more than a simple mispronunciation, but failure to pronounce words correctly and give the correct expression to the various parts of sentences not only reveals a lack of understanding of the meaning. It may actually create a misunderstanding of the thought.

Not many years ago I heard a young preacher with some college training expound the text, "The God of Israel your rereward" (Isa. 52:12). Not recognizing "rere" as an old spelling of "rear" and "ward" as another word for "guard," he pronounced the word "re-reward." Admitting that he did not know the meaning of such a word, he proceeded to reason that since a "reward" was something good, a "re-reward" must be even greater.

There is only one way to avoid such ludicrous errors. That way is always to read beforehand and in private every scripture that is later to be read in public, checking the pronunciation and meaning of any words about which you are in doubt. Oral practice is also necessary to learning to give the proper expressiveness to Bible reading. Elimination of gross errors of pronunciation and of oral interpretation is not an impossible task for any preacher, even though it is true that the peculiar phraseol-

ogy and wording of the Authorized Version does make the Bible harder to read well than other types of literature.

## PRONUNCIATION

The first problem, that of pronunciation, is not nearly so great as most readers fear. Aside from names of people and places there are not many commonly mispronounced words. Usually whenever any way of saying a word becomes common it is no longer a mispronunciation. The few mispronunciations that never are approved, such as pronouncing "shew him" as "shoo him" instead of "show him" should not be hard to correct. After all, no one has trouble learning that "sew on a button" is not "soo on a button."

The proper names in the Bible are not as hard to pronounce as they appear to be. If the names are familiar, it is safe to pronounce them as most other people do. Don't worry if the pronunciation as marked in your Bible seems to be different. For example, many Bibles indicate that the second syllable in the name "Isaiah" should be pronounced as "sigh," although most of us in America pronounce it "zay" and should continue to do so. The "sigh" pronunciation is found because so many editions of the Bible are copied from editions printed originally in England.

If a proper name is so rare that you have never heard it pronounced before, it probably makes no difference which way you pronounce it, provided you use one of the pronunciations that can be justified from the spelling. This means that you must not omit syllables or insert others not found in the word, or transpose the order of syllables and sounds.

\*Head of Speech Department, Northwest Nazarene College.

The unforgivable fault is to balk and not pronounce the name at all—just to say “what-you-may-call-him.”

When pronunciation of proper names is attempted but without success, the fault is usually failure to properly divide the word up into syllables. A five-syllable word cannot be pronounced in three syllables. Nor can two syllables be spoken at once. Yet I have seen students attempt each of these impossible feats repeatedly.

Suppose we study a jawbreaker like “Tiglath-pileser.” Broken into syllables it is no harder than a series of very simple words. “Tig” is as easy to say as “pig” would be. Then come “lath,” “pie,” “lee,” and “sir.” Now say the whole series, stressing the accented syllables. “*Tig-lath-pi-lee-sir.*” Not hard, is it?

Just be sure in all these names to keep the sounds and syllables in the order in which they are printed. Don’t say “Til-gath” for “Tig-lath.” Evidently this reversal of sounds was common even back in the days when the king with this outlandish name lived, for in some places in the Bible he is referred to as “Til-gath-pil-neser.” When it is given in this way, the word should be pronounced accordingly, but do not coin your own variations.

### EMPHASIS

When all the words have been pronounced acceptably, they give little meaning or none unless emphasis is properly distributed among the words and phrases. Even our most educated ministers too often run through passages that are rich in fine shades of meaning and make them almost meaningless by letting their emphasis fall wherever the natural rhythm of the sentence makes it easiest. This place is too often in the wrong place. Especially does this seem to be true with the Authorized Version.

For example, it is naturally easy to emphasize the last word in a sentence. Hence, most people will read, “Follow peace with all *men*” (Heb.

12:14). Paul never meant to excuse people from quarreling with the women and be peaceable only with males. Actually the word “men” is not even in the original Greek, but was put in the translation merely to make the English reading smooth.

Probably no fault does more damage to our reading than this of always emphasizing that word in a sentence which is placed last. The correct practice is to emphasize the last word that is important.

Which words are important? Probably this problem can be solved in most cases by finding and emphasizing the words that are in contrast or which represent things or ideas not mentioned previously.

So frequently does emphasis indicate a contrast that, even when no contrast is expressed, the incorrect stress gives the impression that a contrast is implied. The verse discussed above is an illustration of this. Another illustration is Paul’s statement invariably read, “. . . the dead in *Christ* shall rise *first*” (I Thess. 4:16-17). This emphasis gives the impression that there are those dead in *sin* who will rise *later*. As a matter of fact, this verse is frequently quoted to prove this very theory. But any thoughtful consideration of the whole passage will show that an entirely different contrast was in Paul’s mind: a contrast, not between Christians and sinners, but between Christians alive and Christians dead. Reading the passage with the emphasis on the correct words will make this very clear. “. . . and the *dead* in *Christ* shall rise *first*. Then we which are *alive* . . .”

St. Paul was especially given to using sharp contrasts. Only by locating all of these contrasts and making them stand out clearly can the truth become intelligible from our reading. More than forty years ago I heard a sermon by General Superintendent E. F. Walker based on the words in which Paul was commissioned by Christ. His reading with tremendous stress on the pairs of contrasting



words and expressions brought out the truth in a way I have never forgotten.

There are some words in this passage needing various degrees of emphasis besides those I have indicated below. But try reading the passage with strong emphasis on the pairs of contrasting expressions and notice what new angles of the thought become apparent.

"But *rise*, and *stand* upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a *minister* and a *witness* both of these things which thou *hast* seen, and of those things in the which I *will* appear unto thee; delivering thee from the *people*, and from the *Gentiles*, unto whom now I send thee, to *open their eyes*, and to *turn* them from *darkness* to *light*, and from the power of *Satan* unto *God*, that they may receive *forgiveness of sins*, and *inheritance among them which are sanctified* by faith that is in me."

Closely related to the principle of emphasizing words in contrast is the principle that words and expression that have already been mentioned should not be stressed when they occur again. If a word, idea, or expression is repeated, it should be soft-pedaled and the stress placed on the word or idea that is new. For example, after the words in Proverbs, "Wisdom is the *principal* thing," we should read the last phrase, not "therefore get *wisdom*," but "therefore get wisdom."

Again in the verse, "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels" (Rev. 12:7), "angels" should be one of the words stressed the first time it occurs, but not the second time. Such interpretation clouds up the thought. To give a clear interpretation read the second clause with the heavy stress on "his," thus: "and *Michael* fought and *his* angels."

There is a familiar verse in Isaiah whose force is usually lost in oral reading by emphasizing too many

words and not emphasizing one key word. Usually the reader emphasizes the words in this way "*No lion* shall be there, nor any *ravenous* beast shall go up thereon. (Isa. 35:9). This implies that a lion is not a ravenous beast, and that "going up" on a road is different from "being" on it. Notice the difference in thought when the last word heavily stressed is "any." "*No lion* shall be there, nor *any* ravenous beast shall go up thereon."

I have mentioned the danger of emphasizing the last word in a sentence when it is really not the most important. It is especially difficult to keep the emphasis off such a word when it is part of a word-phrase which demands emphasis. Even in such a case, less stress should be put on that part of the phrase which is least significant even though it does come last. Stress the first part of the phrase more heavily, as it is the part most important. What, for example, was most important about the prodigal leaving home—the fact that he left the city and went to a region more rural? Or that when he left home he went far away? My students, like most preachers I have listened to, invariably read that he "went to a far *country*." But a better interpretation is that he "went to a *far* country." The last word is not important. Perhaps my student was not so wrong, after all, who once read it "he went to a far *county*."

All this may seem very elementary. Perhaps it is and there are even some other elementary principles that need to be observed. Even after mastery has been achieved of reading to give the thought, there is still the problem of reading so as to properly convey the rich emotional meaning in much of the Bible. This is no easy art. But basic to all more advanced skills in reading are these simple principles of (1) pronouncing the words accurately, audibly, and clearly; and (2) stressing the words and phrases

(Continued on page 28)

# The Responsive Reading

By Eugene Stowe\*

PERHAPS the most telling criticism that can be made of our worship services is the small place given to the reading of God's Word. All too much of the time our preaching is of a topical nature from one verse or even a portion of a verse and that short text is all the scripture read during that service. Important as are the other components—the hymns, prayers, offering—are they of such priority as to outrank the public reading of the Bible?

Part of the time the reading of an extended passage of scripture as a background for the sermon will be in order. However, variety can be added to the worship program with the use of the responsive readings found in the last section of the hymnal. Several distinct advantages may be found in the frequent use of these readings.

## 1. Audience Participation

Old-line denominations are now awakening to the value of our evangelical practice of congregational "amens" and "hallelujahs," realizing that the more participation from the pew the more vital the service becomes. In the responsive reading we have an opportunity to get each worshiper into active participation in a most important worship practice.

## 2. Support of Theme

Particularly in the Sunday morning service it is common practice to give attention to the selection of hymns in keeping with the general theme of the sermon and service. From such titles as "Praise," "Prayer," "Stewardship," "Missions," and "Communion" the pastor may well find selected scriptures which will contribute to the theme of the service. Those who are

purchasing the new Nazarene hymnal, *Praise and Worship*, will be gratified to see the enlarged section of readings, which gives even greater choice.

Any form of worship tends to lose its effectiveness unless varied, and such is the case with the responsive reading. Several variations suggest themselves.

### 1. Unison

Occasionally read the entire lesson in unison. This is especially effective with such familiar readings as Psalms 1 and 23 and I Corinthians 13, which many have committed to memory.

### 2. Leaders

There is no law against having a layman lead the responsive reading on occasion. Choose a good reader with a voice strong enough to be heard all over the auditorium. If the congregation has trouble staying together in its reading, have your song leader or someone else on the platform act as leader of the response.

### 3. Groups

It may be interesting occasionally to vary the reading by dividing the congregation into two groups—women and men, or two sections of seats—and having one lead and the other respond.

Regardless of what methods may be used, the results of enlarged use of the Bible in our services are assured, for "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable . . ." (II Tim. 3:16).

---

To glorify God is to make Him visible, to make manifest the splendor of His loving-kindness, the majestic urgency of His passion for men.

—JOHN A. MACKAY

\*Pastor, College Church, Nampa, Idaho.



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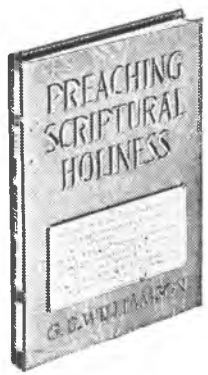
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# The Preacher's Responsibility

By V. H. Lewis\*

## *To Preach the Central Theme of the Bible*

### PART III

LET US advance into another view by saying that the responsibility of the preacher in the preservation and promotion of second-blessing holiness necessitates that he have a clear scriptural comprehension of it. The fact sometimes escapes our cognizance that the one who speaks continually to a crowd of people wields the tremendous power of being able to groove and channel their thinking, thus shaping their lives and deciding their destiny. Look, fellow preachers, at the grooved and darkened minds of the misled millions of Europe. Notice when you can the picture of Europe's children and see its effect in the set of their faces. What a task faces the world to try to remove the poison so deeply implanted in their thinking! As we teach people, so they will think; as they think, so will they live; as a man liveth, so will he die. What will the judgment day be for the preacher, the molder of human lives? We are deciding from week to week, with tremendous power of presenting thought, the destiny of those who are the recipient of those thoughts. That is why we must have a clear, scriptural comprehension of holiness, so that it can be preached scripturally.

Scripturally presented holiness is sane, logical, beautiful, and desirable to the hungry hearts of men. To harp

on self-conceived idiosyncrasies that in one's thinking seem to be important and criteria of degrees of spirituality is odious to man and obnoxious to God. To relegate holiness to a set of partly inane, freakish acts and looks is to discredit it. This is about as effective as to take a small bit of stone from a peak of the Rocky Mountains to the folks back home and, laying it before them, tell them that this is what the Rocky Mountains are like and cause them to believe that they can talk with authority on how the mountains appear. How foolish! There is much more to the Rocky Mountains than appears in that stone. There are gigantic peaks thrust like eternal pillars high into the sky. There are the clouds like lacy white collars around the glistening peaks. There are the song of the wind in the pines, the clear wild song of the mountain bird, the deep canyon with its dizzy depths, the brook down in the deep valley like a blue ribbon entwined in the green bosom of the earth. There is that feeling that comes only when you stand in the midst of the vastness of yon high wild peak and feel the magnificence of God. All these are a part of the mountains.

So it is with holiness. There is much in it. Only the student of the Word will be able to relate it properly to God and man. Only the student will see it in its beginning, in God's created holy man in the garden when

\*Superintendent, Houston District.

the dawn of time was just breaking across the hills of the centuries. To the student it will show its gleaming pure light down through the pages of Holy Writ. He will see it in the types and symbols of the Old Testament. He can catch its gleam in the giving of the law, and locate it in the Temple. He can hear it plainly in the cries of the great prophet Isaiah. The student can see its prophetic shining in the light of the inspired prophets of God who stood peering on down through the years to Pentecost. The man of the Book can trace it all the way until the appearance of the matchless Saviour. He will notice that all Christ's sayings and deeds were pointed to its realization in the world. The reader of the Bible will be able to prove it in the writings of the apostles and carry it on from Pentecost through to today. Only the student will be able to catch it again in Revelation and relate it to the standards of the judgment. Only the student will be able to preach it until tears of unutterable longing flow from the eyes of his listeners and cause them to pant with a great thirst for the water that springs from the fount of God's holiness. Only the man of much Bible study will be able to sound the clear, scriptural call until his voice becomes the echo of the call of the matchless Christ. He alone can point the way with assurance and with firm hand lead men into the indescribable peace of holiness.

Further still we pursue this thrilling theme as we call to mind that the responsibility of the preacher in the preservation and promotion of second-blessing holiness necessitates that he present it in power. We know that those who first carried the banner of holiness in the Early Church did so with great power. This power was with them, in them, convincing

all men in their living and in their dying. This is the power of the Holy Ghost. This power or unction upon the preacher that marks him as God's vessel of usefulness is the secret of success. Prayer, much prayer, is necessary for the preacher. The preacher who meets his God in the solitude of scriptural meditation and who keeps the great white vigil of prayer while the world sleeps is the one who today shall with power press on winning souls for the Master.

Still once more let us today accept the indisputable fact that the responsibility of the preacher in the preservation and promotion of second-blessing holiness necessitates that he preach it as an experience. Holiness is more than a doctrine. It must never become the particular shibboleth of a denomination but rather always be the glorious experience by which men are fitted to live and qualified for heaven.

Is it not a sad fact that other churches drifted into the deadly fallacy of being content only to mention holiness once in a while and from there content to leave it slumbering in their manuals and creedal beliefs while they drifted farther and farther from God and into worldliness? God forbid that we shall ever see that day and fall into that terrible cycle of death. Holiness is an experience! We have it; our people must have it. We must strive and pray and preach sanctification until more and more of our people possess it. Then our great church will march on meeting the challenge of today with the glorious real answer—the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost a second definite experience. Then revival fires will burn, the crowds of the hungry will come, the cause of missions will advance, church problems will be settled, and in the realm of heaven above God will be pleased.

Today is our day. Its duration is brief at the longest. Tomorrow, fellow ministers, we will be marching down the last stretch of the trail, the sky red with the last glow of our setting sun, and the evening air will be resounding to the faint tolling of the bells. We will be relinquishing from tired hands the banner, beautiful banner of holiness unto the Lord. We will be giving it to those who come after us. We can hand them a heritage as pure as our predecessors gave to us. We can give them a church that is built solidly upon the foundation that shall not fail, steeped in the faith of our fathers.

We shall then take the last few faltering steps and with no regrets over lost opportunities, battle-scarred, knees calloused, heart aflame, courage high, knowing in our hearts that we have not failed our generation, we shall then with a mighty leap land in the presence of our King and hear Him make heaven, heaven forever for us as He says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant of the great message and experience of holiness." And that will be reward sufficient!

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### The Bible in the Church Service

(Continued from page 19)

hortation, to doctrine." Weymouth in his footnote adds, "I.e., public reading, public exhortation, public teaching." I am sure of this, that if Nazarenes in general are to become increasingly Bible-reading and Bible-loving Christians it will be because we who are called to preach the Word, who are called to give attention to public reading and public exhortation and teaching, have a deepening sense of our own responsibility as pastors and evangelists in this holy matter. If there is any just criticism of our church in the matter of Bible

knowledge, the fault must of necessity lie with our ministerial leadership. We must re-evaluate our position. We must build our people on a more solid foundation of Bible truth. We must make more room for Bible teaching. We must prepare our people to meet the pressures of our modern world, not alone upon the fact of an inward assurance of divine acceptance, but also upon the authority of the Bible's "Thus saith the Lord."

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### Oral Reading of the Bible

(Continued from page 22)

that should be emphasized because they are significant, they are new, or they are in contrast.

Even without the help of a teacher, a preacher may learn to observe these basic things. Did you read that last sentence as "these basic things"? Oh, well, now you *know* better. Just practice them, and you may be amazed at how your oral reading of the Bible is improved.

---

### I Know He Hears

*I may not always know the way  
Wherein God leads my feet;  
But this I know, that round my path  
His love and wisdom meet.  
And so I rest content to know  
He guides my feet where'er I go.*

*Sometimes above the path I tread  
The clouds hang dark and low;  
But thro' the gloom or thro' the night  
My heart no fear can know,  
For close beside me walks a Friend  
Who whispers low, "Until the end."*

*I may not always understand  
Just why He sends to me  
Some bitter grief, some bitter loss;  
But though I cannot see—  
I kneel and whisper thro' my tears  
A prayer for help, and know He hears.*

—Selected

# Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle

## GALATIANS 3:1-9

The Epistle to the Galatians has three clear divisions. The first two chapters are autobiographical. Chapters 3 and 4 are doctrinal. Chapters 5 and 6 are practical. At least, these are the dominant elements in these three divisions.

We come now to the second part of the Epistle, in which Paul develops the main thesis of this letter, namely, that men are justified by faith in Jesus Christ apart from works of law.

### THOUGHTLESS OR SENSELESS?

Paul's strong emotions while writing this letter are revealed in the opening words of chapter 3: "O foolish Galatians." The word "foolish" is *anoetos*, which Young, Ballantine, and Verkuyl render "thoughtless." Moffatt, Goodspeed, and Williams translate it "senseless." It is a combination of *nous* (mind) and "alpha privative," which negates the meaning of a word to which it is attached (e.g., amoral means non-moral). So the fundamental meaning of this adjective is "not thinking."

But the translation "thoughtless" seems too weak to convey the force of the expression here. Vincent notes that "*nous* is used by Paul mainly with an ethical reference, as *the faculty of moral judgment*." Hence his deduction: "*Anoetos* therefore indicates a folly which is the outgrowth of a moral defect." If we take "foolish," not as a half-playful expression, but as a serious, earnest accusation of moral and mental failure, then perhaps it is a better rendering than either "thoughtless" or "senseless," both of which may seem to stress the mental aspect more than the moral.

## BEWITCHED?

Yes, that is what the word means. *Baskaino* (only here in the N.T.) originally meant "slander, speak ill of one." Then it came to have the meaning "blight by the evil eye, fascinate, bewitch." Vincent says: "Paul's metaphor here is: *who hath cast an evil spell upon you?*" Concerning the use of this word in the papyri, Moulton and Milligan write: "The popular belief in the power of the evil eye, underlying the Pauline metaphor in Gal. 3:1, is well illustrated by the common formulas in closing greetings." As an example they cite these words from a papyrus letter of about A.D. 25, or about the time Jesus was beginning His public ministry: "But above all I pray that you may be in health unharmed by the evil eye and faring prosperously." The entire phrase "unharmed by the evil eye" is one word in Greek, *abaskantos*.

This does not mean, of course, that Paul believed in magic, although the masses of his contemporaries apparently did. When we use the word bewitch we are not thereby subscribing to a belief in witchcraft. Paul is simply saying: "You folk are acting as though someone has bewitched you. You seem charmed by these false teachers who are leading you astray."

How often we feel that way today about vacillating Christians or prospects who suddenly turn away! The only adequate explanation seems to be the influence of some satanic power that diverts them from God.

### PLACARDED OR PORTRAYED?

Paul declares that, before the very eyes of the Galatians, Jesus Christ had been "evidently set forth." The



phrase is one word in the Greek, *proegraphie*. The American Standard Version translates it "openly set forth." Moffatt renders it "placarded" and the bulk of the best commentators favor this translation. Weymouth has "portrayed" and the Revised Standard Version "publicly portrayed."

The verb *prographo* literally means "write beforehand," and that is its use in Rom. 15:4. But it very early took on the meaning, "write up in public, placard." Lightfoot says: "It is the common word to describe all public notices or proclamations." And he makes the pertinent observation: "This placard ought to have kept their eyes from wandering, and so to have acted as a charm against all Judaic sorceries." Vincent puts it well: "Who could have succeeded in bringing you under the spell of an evil eye, when directly before your own eyes stood revealed the crucified Christ?"

The homiletical hint here is obvious. We need to warn people to keep their eyes on Jesus in order that they may not become "fascinated" (Latin for casting a spell) by the worldly allurements around. When our eyes are filled with the bright shining of the Light of the World, we shall not be captivated by the dazzling neon signs of the world's pleasures. The glitter and glamour of this world's brightly lighted Broadway—how significant the name (cf. Matt. 7:13)—holds no fascination for the heart that is centered on Jesus. When we are following *the* Light, other little flashes may annoy us, but they will not divert us from the narrow way that leads to life and light eternal. The crying, crowning need of Christians everywhere, and especially our young people, is for them to fall in love with Jesus until they are so entranced by His beauty that all else seems pale in comparison. If I may be allowed to testify, I should like to say that that is what happened to me thirty-one years ago, and it still holds me.

In verse three Paul writes: "Having begun in Spirit, are you now finishing in flesh?" The perplexing question confronts the translator: Should "spirit" be spelled with a capital or a small s? It makes very good sense either way. Of course the Greek manuscripts give us no help here, since the oldest copies have large, square "uncial" letters and the later copies have a running ("cursive") scrip. In each case the letters are all the same.

The Greek word is *pneuma*, from which we get "pneumonia," "pneumatic," etc. It originally meant "a movement of air, wind, breath." But when a person's breath leaves his body, he is dead; that is, his spirit is gone. So the word for "breath" was also used for "spirit."

But is the reference here to the human spirit or the Holy Spirit? Almost all English translators have taken it in the latter sense and so have written "Spirit." One exception is Ballantine (*Riverside New Testament*), who uses a small s. Weymouth paraphrases the question: "Having begun by the spiritual, are you now going to reach perfection by the external?" That wording is true to the Greek, and gives clear meaning to the passage.

Vine (*Expository Dictionary*) writes: "In Gal. 3:3, in the phrase 'having begun in the Spirit,' it is difficult to say whether the reference is to the Holy Spirit or to the quickened spirit of the believer; that it possibly refers to the latter is not to be determined by the absence of the article, but by the contrast with 'the flesh;'" on the other hand, the contrast may be between the Holy Spirit who in the believer sets His seal on the perfect work of Christ, and the flesh which seeks to better itself by works of its own."

Obviously, this is an open question, where dogmatism is out of place. But the meaning is much the same whichever way we take it. It is the Holy

Spirit who gives us spiritual life. The main emphasis is on keeping the spiritual supreme, rather than the material. Probably we should follow the majority of translators in capitalizing "Spirit" here.

### MINISTER OR SUPPLY?

No, we are not talking about whether you are the regular or supply pastor! What I have in mind is a Greek word in the fifth verse, *epichoregon*. In the King James it is translated "ministereth." In the Revised Standard Version we find "supplies."

The simple verb *choregeo* comes from *choros* (chorus, choir) and *hegeomai* (lead). So the word originally meant "lead a chorus"; then, "supply a chorus"; that is, defray the expense of providing a chorus at a public feast. In later Greek it means simply "furnish, supply." But it also carries the added idea of supplying lavishly or abundantly. Probably the prepositional prefix *epi* in the compound verb here emphasizes still further the idea of abundance (so Lightfoot, Burton).

The form here is the present participle, which would suggest continuous action—"the one supplying to you the Spirit." While there is a crisis moment in which the Holy Spirit comes into the believer's heart, yet there is also a sense in which the Spirit is being supplied richly to us as we walk in the light.

### ACCOUNTED OR RECKONED?

In verse 6 we read that Abraham's believing "was accounted to him for righteousness." The Revised Standard Version reads "was reckoned to him as righteousness." As is very frequently the case, both translations are entirely correct.

The verb is *logizomai*. It is a favorite word with Paul, "being used (exclusive of quotations) some 27 times in his Epp., and only four times in

the rest of the N.T." (Thayer). Its original usage was mathematical: "reckon, count, compute, calculate." There is probably an example of this in Luke 22:37, in a quotation from the Septuagint: "He was reckoned among the transgressors." Then it came to be used metaphorically in the sense "reckon, take into account." That is the meaning here in the sixth verse, where the statement is quoted from the Septuagint of Gen. 15:6. In the papyri it is commonly used with the meanings "put down to one's account", "place on deposit for someone." It is clearly a bookkeeping term primarily.

Cremer exhibits a strange and strong Calvinistic bias in his treatment of *logizomai* in relation to this verse and similar passages in Romans. He stresses the ideas of imputation and substitution. For instance, we find this statement, all in italics: "That is transferred to the subject in question, and imputed to him, which in and for itself does not belong to him" (p. 399). Again he says: "But faith is now put in the place of righteousness" (*ibid.*). He seems to imply that though a man is not actually righteous he is reckoned so in God's sight. We hold that God could not "reckon" a man as righteous unless and until He had made him righteous. Faith is put to one's account as the grounds of making righteous, not as a substitute for righteousness.

### FAITHFUL OR BELIEVING?

In verse 9 we read that those who come to God by the faith route are blessed with "faithful" Abraham. The Greek word has two distinct meanings: (1) "faithful, trustworthy"; (2) "believing, trusting." That the second is the proper meaning here is clear from the context. It does not mean here "faithful," but "full of faith." The King James, though wrong here, translates it correctly in John 20:27—"Be not faithless, but *believing*." It should be so translated here, "believing Abraham."

# Let's Stay in Our Field

*By Milton Harrington*

A SHORT TIME AGO I was given an invitation to speak to a Rotary Club in another community than my own. The problem immediately faced me of what should be the contents of my talk. Many pleasant and possibly entertaining subjects presented themselves to me but I was not quite satisfied in my heart with any of them. Then swiftly making its way through the gathering thoughts an illustration came to me from past usage. The young man in the pastorate of a college town wrote his aged father of his problem. In his sermons, if he should quote from Greek mythology, the professor of that field would be sitting there noting his mistakes. If he should turn to psychology, the professor of that subject would know his mistakes. On and on he named the various ones. The wise father wrote him, saying, "Preach the gospel; I doubt but what they know very little of that." My searching for a field of thought was done.

Paul might have been answering a query from Timothy in this regard when he said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season," in the pulpit and out of the pulpit. Politicians in their addresses will often turn to the Bible for an apt quotation. Ministers must turn to that Bible, not just for an apt quotation, but for that privilege of sowing beside all waters. We propose that the religion of our Lord is adaptable and must be taken into every portion of living. Then we must listen to that preaching of ours and take with us that religion

into our talks before social and service clubs. Should Paul have stood in my place, or yours, that evening his introduction would have probably been like this, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Sitting before the minister of God in a service club or organization are men and women who know nothing of the gospel of Christ. That that has been presented by other ministers is a sort of good-fellow, service-to-humanity proposition that has left them dry and uninterested. If they wanted to hear about banking, or communism, or the conditions of the world they would have invited someone who knows those fields. They need not our brilliance nor entertainment in these subjects. Brethren, they invite us to have us stay in our field when we address them. You will never preach to some of them in your church, where you will feel at home and have the prayers of the saints backing you. I know it is a new environment for most of us, but talk to them heart to heart of spiritual things—maybe we can snatch one of them from the burning and reward enough will be ours.

Lovington, New Mexico

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There are two things you never want to pay any attention to—abuse and flattery. The first can't harm you and the second can't help you.—*Selected.*

# The Preacher's Standard of Living

*By Evangelist P. P. Belew*

ACCORDING TO the old story, the preacher prayed, "Lord, keep me poor and humble," and a church member responded, "Amen! Lord, You keep him humble, and we'll keep him poor." The incident is of doubtful authority, but the story suggests some thoughts concerning the preacher's standard of living. Whence its source? and what is its proper level? Such questions, like many others, are more easily asked than answered. But in the light of the Bible and history, these should not be too difficult.

In regard to the first question, the Scriptures are abundantly clear that God intended for the church to support the ministry. This is the sense of both the Old and the New Testaments. Therefore in the division of Palestine, the priestly tribe of Levi was given "no part nor inheritance with Israel." Said Jehovah, "The Lord is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them" (Deut. 18:1, 2). But God also said, "I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Num. 18:21). In addition, the priests were given portions of the sacrifice offered to Jehovah, and certain monetary offerings.

Likewise, speaking of the same principle, Paul says: "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? . . . it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muz-

zle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" (I Cor. 9:7, 9). His conclusion is, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (I Cor. 9:14).

It is not possible to answer the second question with complete finality. No hard and fast rule can be given to cover all the circumstances. The preacher's standard of living changes from generation to generation, and varies with circumstances in the same generation. Some preachers are now finding it difficult to get by on salaries that some former generation would have considered fabulous. It should be evident to everyone that one cannot serve effectively in this atomic age and live on the economic level that was considered standard in the days of the horse and buggy. On the other hand, one can increase his standard of living with—or in advance of—his income, until any reasonable remuneration is inadequate. Yesterday's luxuries become today's necessities. And one may soon feel that he needs the summer months for rest and a yacht for relaxation.

Although the preacher's standard of living must be considered flexible, it should have a guiding principle. I venture the assertion that, by and large, the preacher's standard of living should approximate that of those among whom he labors. If it is too far below this, he is handicapped in approaching the people; and if it is too far above this, the people are handicapped in approaching him. Neither is desirable. The church is

most effective when preacher and people are close in spirit. Such practice may sometimes "put a crimp" in the preacher's aspirations, but rising above disappointments is a part of his calling. The Spirit-filled preacher is motivated by the desire to save souls and do good, not by a purpose to "keep up with the Joneses."

For the most part, it seems providential that so many preachers live on an economic level which makes it necessary to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." This both helps to keep us in touch with God ourselves, and enables us to sympathize with and comfort others who are fighting life's fierce battles. Paul says, "Having food and raiment let us be there-with content" (I Tim. 6:8). This is sufficient to live in comfort, which is about all that one can justly claim in a world so filled with spiritual and physical need. Before George Muller married the second time, he required his fiancée to dispose of her earthly possessions. He feared that

they would hinder his life of faith. Does this reflect the thinking of Jesus when He said to His first preachers, "Sell that ye have, and give alms" (Luke 12:33)?

John Wesley, who said, "By riches, I mean not thousands of pounds; but any more than will procure the conveniences of life," made fortunes. But he lived economically himself, gave all that he made to the work of God and the poor, and died with little or nothing to call his own. This is as it should be. Jesus, our Lord, "had not where to lay his head." And it is certainly unseemly for one to get rich while posing as His representative and preaching sacrifice to others. And what shall be said of preachers who, while drawing large salaries from the church, engage in secular enterprises? Perhaps Paul had such things in mind when he wrote, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (II Tim. 2:4).

## How to Be a Bible Preacher

*(Continued from page 16)*

Bible were men of like passions as we, does it not follow that they must have shared with us the difficulties of developing finished skills and style of preaching? And does not their success encourage us also to seek to develop such abilities and gifts as we have as nearly to perfection as possible?

F. W. Robertson began his ministry as a rather mediocre preacher. The major portion if not all of his ministerial career was spent at Brighton, a parish totaling less than 300 souls. He died at the age of thirty-seven. And yet Robertson developed such a mastery of the Scriptures and such a style of delivery that I dare say few if any of you do not

have his sermons in your library. It is quite likely that no man in modern times has so profoundly influenced the English and American pulpits. His sermons are almost exclusively textual or expository in form. Every one of them is steeped in scripture. Dr. W. R. Matthews, dean of St. Paul's in London, said of him recently, "We need preachers who could do for this generation what Robertson of Brighton did for his."

That, my brethren, is the cry of our day, "Give us Bible-centered preachers." It is sincerely hoped that out from this First Annual Bible Conference will go several of you back to your pulpits with the high resolve, "I will be a Bible preacher!"

## Illustrating the Sermon

THE USE OF illustrations in the development of the message is so axiomatic that to write about it ought not to be necessary. Nevertheless, some of the most thought-provoking messages one will come to hear in a lifetime could be increased in their effectiveness with the use of pertinent illustration. The use of such a tool does not come easily, nor naturally. For some it will always be easy to pick something specifically apt out of the air, but for most of us it means calculated hard work. The telling of a story is not an automatic assurance of illustration. Too often the illustration tempts us in its use beyond the point where it serves . . . it seeks to become an end in itself. That there are some definite limitations to their use should be self-evident, even though all of us have been guilty of giving it too full a rein.

An illustration, the books on homiletics tell us, should turn on a light in some shady area of thought. It should illumine the subject in hand . . . and *only* that. When an illustration becomes the one thing the folk remember after they have forgotten the message, one may know the message was a failure. I was chagrined one Monday afternoon when a daughter of one of the members told of how she had been unable to sleep all the previous night because of her concern about the outcome of a half-told story, used for illustrative purpose. Quite evidently, the message had not reached her because of a poorly used story. If an illustration does not illustrate the particular thought being developed, it is better left out, no

matter how tempting the morsel. Wait until a better time and a message in which it will fit.

Some masters of the pulpit have built sermons about a story or poem they discovered, just so as to have a perfect setting for a perfect illustration. While not classifying myself in that illustrious group, I've nevertheless been guilty. The wonderful story about the organ that would not play in the music room of a famous castle . . . of how the master had sent far and wide for those reputed to be able to fix it, but without avail . . . of how a wandering stranger came to his door for lodging on a dark night . . . of his subsequent curiosity about the organ that no longer played, and the peasants who were no longer thrilled by its evening music . . . and then the climactic statement, "Let me try" . . . and the stranger repaired the long lost instrument. When asked how it was possible for him to repair an instrument the greatest musicians in the land had been unable to repair, came the simple reply, "I made the instrument." A story like that to climax a message on the One and Only who can repair the human soul from its malady was inevitable . . . and blessed of God!

Normally, an illustration should be briefly told. Perhaps Scherer is our best example of this. His illustrations are usually but a few lines, but they accomplish their mission. The actual tool itself can be a brief story, a poem, a quotation, a parallelism, a word itself--anything that creates a picture within the minds of the hearers and makes more personal the mes-

sage in hand. How many of us there are who have not heard, and perhaps been guilty ourselves, of overtelling a story or overdrawing the illustration! Brevity will tend to discourage this. As soon as the purpose has been accomplished, it should be dropped. Simplicity is another aspect not to be overlooked. For the actual purpose of illustration is to make clear and to simplify what might otherwise be too profound. Jesus, the Master Preacher, used the simplest and most pointed illustrations. He picked them up from the laborer about Him, the birds flying around Him, the grass at His feet.

Pertinency to the subject in hand is where we too often stumble. It must have more than remote relationship to what we are talking about, or one may be tempted to go on to illustrate the illustration! Whenever these "windows" are used, they must be placed in the proper places, or else his structure will become unbalanced. While none of us are likely to be tempted to illustrate the passage about "divers diseases" with bends and cramps and cold, yet too often (especially when we are listening to the *other fellow preach!*) we discover illustrations almost as farfetched. Forbid yourself the luxury of telling a story or quoting a poem just for the sake of impressing your audience. If it does not illustrate the message and make it more lucid, then forget it.

That they should be used sparingly should not be necessary to mention. But alas, how wonderful it is to string along a half dozen stories, tie a moral around them, and call it a message! God help us! Our first business is to make Christ real to men and women who make up our congregations. They are not in the mood to be entertained; they need the vital bread of the Living Word. Only to the extent that this primary purpose is served is their use justified. Remember, to quote Luc- cock again, our business is to present a Personality, not suggest an idea. And to the extent our messages reveal the Living Christ, who alone can

bring comfort to the bruised and hurt, to that extent are we the true ministers of the gospel.

The biggest problem I find in the matter of illustrations, is *finding* them! It becomes a more and more insistent task to collect and collate them as one grows older. Every preacher wants to keep fresh in his thought and the content of his message, lest he be guilty of what Dr. J. B. Chapman used to say was the middle-aged preacher's biggest danger . . . dying like a tree, beginning at the top! Therefore, to use illustrations that illustrate, and not be guilty of using them more than once, he must do something about getting them. Some turn to the volumes on illustrations that you can buy in most secondhand bookstores for a quarter. The trouble with these is that they sound as secondhanded as they are. The best source is one's own observations and experiences. These could and should be collected and filed. With wide reading one comes across many good stories, poems, quotes, figures of speech that can be used. Making one's own index in the back of the book he reads, or clipping and attaching to a card for filing, is about as good a way as I've found . . . and this isn't too good! The best source many preachers have been discovering more and more, myself included, is the Bible itself. Clovis Chappell uses such and so does Billy Graham. There is hardly a subject one cares to develop but he will find apt and pertinent material illustrating it in the Bible. One's first reaction to this may be similar to my own . . . not as interesting or attention-arresting as something more spectacular or current. However, it does accomplish something else that other illustrative material cannot count on as surely. God's blessing in the use of His Word. The more one uses Biblical illustrations, the more one will continue to be amazed at the effectiveness of them.

The one greatest danger in the use of illustrations is the probability of

using a good one more than once to the same crowd. And don't think the folk don't remember it! I had the "good" fortune of having an elderly lady in one of my congregations who had a photographic memory . . . at least, she never seemed to forget anything! After having spent six years in a certain pastorate, I stated I was going to preach the same message I had preached the first Sunday I was there. After the message this saint of God reproached me for having told an untruth. She said she remembered the message as thus and so, and gave several illustrations and thoughts I had given. In checking again the records of that first sermon, I found she *was* right, and I *had* erred by one year—of which she also reminded me! So don't count on getting by with the recurrent use of any illustrations. The best way to prevent this is to put them in a separate file, or to mark them accordingly if in the index of a book you have read.

Personally, I keep a file on illustrations, putting them in a separate file after they have been used. I clip pertinent materials, quotes, figures of speech, stories, poems, on a three-by-five card, and place under both subject and scripture reference. This simplifies their use a great deal. If I find something good in a book I cannot clip, I put the general thought on the card, with the reference, and file under the two headings. While this is a bother at the time, it has paid dividends many a time over. To find an apt illustration at the right time for the right spot is greatly facilitated by this method for me. The observations and personal experiences that make good illustrative material are likewise filed, for memory is not too trustworthy!

After all has been said, every preacher will still hark back to his own methods. This is all right, as long as there is a consistent method, so use of materials on hand is forthcoming. What good to have a huge

library of books if little of their content is available for help! They may make good background to impress the laymen . . . but that won't help much if somehow their help is unavailable. This is especially true of the illustrative materials.

While illustrations must always be in the background of the message, and never have the pre-eminence, they must nevertheless be there. Closets may be a small part of a house, but if they are absent the house isn't much good. It may be that, with the unusual mind, memory will be the best means of retaining the illustration, or a reference to its source. More could and should be made of this, according to Luccock, by simply exercising the powers of alertness and retention in reading . . . a sort of "sitting on the edge of the chair" attitude in reading. But for most of us, this isn't done, whether from lack of capacity or lack of time for the reading itself. Attendant with danger as is the "file-complex" mind, still most of the outstanding preachers of previous days had some system whereby they could lay their hands on materials as needed for the message. Even though one may never use some of the material collected, it will keep his mind alert to be on the lookout for them. The average preacher who keeps such a notebook or file will confess to the fact that there are many illustrations in his possession he has never used. Nevertheless, it is also true that there *are* many which he *has* used.

The glorious task of bringing the message of a wonderful Redeemer to a needy congregation will always be the preacher's biggest and most challenging task. Whatever investment he makes to this end is justified in time, money, effort. Mere collection for collection sake is unworthy; but to collect, file, assimilate, and utilize to the one end of seeing another darkened and destitute heart enlightened by the grace of God makes all of it worth-while.



# SERMON OUTLINES

## DON'T FRAME YOUR FAILURES

Raymond C. Kratzer, Nampa, Idaho

SCRIPTURE: I Kings 19:1-7

TEXT: *He . . . went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die (I Kings 19:4).*

### INTRODUCTION:

This episode in the life of Elijah has its humorous points as well as its serious and pathetic angles. You will remember the story of Elijah's great victory at Mt. Carmel, when he challenged the prophets of Baal to prove who was the real God, and told the people that they had halted long enough between two opinions, and that now was the time to decide who really was God. Elijah's God had answered by fire and the prophets of Baal had been slain by the sword.

When Queen Jezebel heard about it, she sent forth a threat against Elijah that by tomorrow he would be as dead as the prophets of Baal. Elijah saw his life in danger and, since he knew the terror of the old queen, he ran for his life. Now such strenuous activity was not easy for a man of his age, but fear goaded him on. He went south to the land of Judah and then to Beer-sheba, where he left his servant and hastened alone to the desert, where the children of Israel had wandered four hundred years before. After he had walked all day in the burning sand, he sat down to rest under a juniper tree, tired, discouraged, and disconsolate, and said the words of the text: "O Lord . . . take away my life . . . I have lived long enough."

This experience symbolizes the attitude of many people today when things are going against them. Note three things Elijah did under that juniper tree in his hour of need. And I often wonder what consolation an old juniper tree could give anyone! Almost devoid of foliage, smelly, unattractive, and yet here was a man who fled many miles and sought comfort from such a miserable comforter.

### I. HE FEARED THE FUTURE.

#### A. He had just cause to fear from the human standpoint.

1. Jezebel and "terror" are almost synonymous. This is adequately illustrated by the episode of Naboth's vineyard. When her anger was aroused she could twist her weak husband around her finger and do almost anything she wanted. She was truly the "queen behind the drone." Ahab was a weakling in any man's language.
2. But let us look at the past few weeks of Elijah's life. God had worked mighty miracles through him and climaxed them all when he prayed fire down from heaven to consume the sacrifice on Mt. Carmel.
3. But then he allowed fear to fill his heart until the future looked dark and foreboding and he wanted to die and be done with it all.

#### B. People today are much like Elijah in this respect—out on a desert sitting under a juniper tree, saying, "Take me, Lord; I can't stand it!"

1. Fear is one of the most demoralizing influences of life. The truth of the matter is that most of our fears do not materialize. We just waste our time and energy. Many fears that haunt humanity are imaginary. Some men live in constant fear that their home will burn, or that they will have a terrible accident, or that death will be a long-drawn-out affair. They suffer anticipating disaster.
  2. Many people fear to go God's way. They shrink from solving their problems by returning good for evil, or losing their life in order to save it, and thus suffer spiritual defeat most of the time.
  3. Some think that if they obey God they will starve to death. I am sure that will not be the case. However, what if they did! It would only be a short cut to the glory world.
  4. Fear leads to discouragement and that is bad.
- C. We cannot expect to always be on the mountaintop. We cannot always see our efforts crowned with success. But let's not let Satan get us discouraged!
- Not only did Elijah *fear the future* as he sat under the juniper tree, but

## II. HE FRAMED HIS FAILURES.

- A. In spite of his great victory on Mt. Carmel, he recognized that he had not convinced old Queen Jezebel of the priority of the eternal God, and that Baal was a false God.
1. In the midst of framing this failure, he looked at his whole life, and decided that it was worthless. He said: "I am just like my fathers. I am worthless. Let me die . . . there is no one else serving Thee in spite of all of my efforts. Let me die! I am alone, alone, alone!"
  2. What a tragedy to see a great Christian soldier so overcome by a "seeming defeat" that he was about to go down in Biblical history as a failure instead of winning the race and standing out as an example of courage!
- B. Many times Christians give up within sight of the goal of the salvation of their loved ones and friends. They frame their failures and allow their energies to be dissipated under the juniper tree of failure.
- C. Let us not frame our failures, but let us forget them, and press on to achieve success in the kingdom of God.
- In the last place, Elijah—

## III. HE FORGOT HIS FAITH.

- A. He prayed: "O Lord, I have lived long enough, take away my life. It's no use trying any more; people are against me and Thee." He was blue, discouraged, and pessimistic. Three times he utters the pathetic "alone, alone, alone."
1. He saw his adversary and he forgot his God. He saw himself and did not see the forces of God awaiting his faith. A moment of reflection would have changed the whole aspect.
  2. Right here we should think of the words of Jesus: "Be not afraid, only believe." What if Jezebel does rage? Jehovah still lives.

## CONCLUSION:

As we read the account we discover that God finally got through to him. He gave food for his fear, sustenance for his failures, and a look at the future for his lack of faith. He saw 7,000 people who had not as yet bowed to Baal. He also saw that in Elisha he had a close friend who had been powerfully influenced by his life and who would continue to carry the torch of righteousness after he was gone. God is always faithful.

## ANSWERED PRAYER

SCRIPTURE: Dan. 10:1-13

TEXT: II Chron. 7:14

INTRODUCTION: This is the day of greatest opportunities that we as a church ever faced. The world seems to be going lower in sin. Old-fashioned honesty, high standard of morals, desire for deep spirituality seems to have taken a drop in the thinking of people. The church faces a challenge as we have never before faced. We can disregard our challenge and fail our Lord or accept the challenge and win for our Lord, make this world a better place to live in, and win souls to God and the church. We should be and *can* be a mighty marching army against the enemy. Daniel was a man of prayer and risked his life to get an answer.

### I. HE PRAYED (9:4).

We face a spirit of prayerlessness.

*Ill.* I overheard a member of a Sunday-school class say that the evangelists and pastors had time to pray but church members were too busy.

### II. HE PRAYED AGONIZINGLY. "I Daniel was mourning" (10:2).

A. Over the sins of the people (9:5, 6, 10)

B. Prayed till he was weakened physically (10:8)

When we get concerned over the lost, there will be praying that will be answered. We need to see lost souls in hell without God.

*Ill.* Moses wanted his name blotted from the book of life or his people saved.

*Ill.* Paul in Rom. 9:3, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren . . ."

### III. HE FASTED (10:3).

A. The disciples failed and Jesus told them the power of fasting (Matt. 17:19-21).

B. Esther, after fasting three days and nights, went into the presence of the king and was granted her request.

### IV. DANIEL HAD OPPOSITION (v. 13).

A. The devil will fight every inch of the way to answered prayer.

1. By telling you that you don't have time.

2. By telling you that you are not physically able.

### V. DANIEL FASTED AND PRAYED TILL VICTORY CAME (vv. 10-12).

A. Personal victory (v. 7)

B. Collective victory (v. 14)

CONCLUSION. We can have spiritual victory. The power of fasting and praying is still what it was in yesteryear. We must put it into practice. I have known sinful men go to bed thinking they were sick because someone was praying for them.

God's Word tells us that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against" His Church. That doesn't mean the Church is in safety behind a divine wall to sit idly by, but that the Church is a conquering, mighty army advancing against the devil, who cannot withstand the pressure of a praying, fasting, trusting church.

—L. I. WEAVER

## THE SECRET OF GREAT LIVING

TEXT: Heb. 12:1-2

The picture behind this text is that of a great arena. It is crowded with spectators. At one end is the emperor with his royal attendants. They are looking on as others run or compete in the games.

### I. *The Cloud of Witnesses*

The author thinks of the great worthies of faith, those who were examples of great living, mentioned in the preceding chapter, as the spectators to our race. Jesus, the great Lord, is also there.

A. God had witnessed to their faith.

They had "obtained a good report" (vv. 2, 39) or "had witness borne to them" (A.R.V.). Abel "obtained witness" (v. 4). Enoch "had this testimony." All those mentioned had witness borne to them (v. 39).

B. They were witnesses or examples of the power of faith.

1. In life and service

2. In suffering and toil

3. In victory in conquest

C. They were witnesses to the faithfulness of God.

### II. *The Race*

The race does not mean heaven primarily—ultimately it does; but our progress toward the full realization of God's purpose in our lives—great living, holy living.

Success in this race, or great living, requires:

A. Self discipline—a denial of all that hinders

1. Without—"lay aside every weight."

2. Within—"the sin which doth so easily beset us"—carnal dispositions and affections. Discipline here means a dying indeed unto sin that we may be alive unto God. Christ makes real this death through His work of sanctification.

B. Decision—"Run . . . the race"

Put your whole heart into this race—have a strenuous and determined effort. As the author says, "follow [pursue as a hound pursues in the hunt] peace with all men, and holiness" (v. 14).

C. Patience—endurance. A persistence that day by day inspires us to continue the race with renewed faith and courage. Something that brings a freshness of life and blessing as we determinedly pursue the race.

### III. *The Supreme Inspiration for Great Living*

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith"

A. In this race Jesus, like the emperor of old in the arena, is set in a place by himself. Others are witnesses to faith; He is the "author and finisher," our perfect Example of faith, the perfect Example of great living.

B. *To Him we must look.*

1. Not only as an Example, though He is that (I Pet. 2:21). He is the perfect revelation of what man was intended to be, our Pattern.

2. He is the Object and the Giver of faith. It is through faith in Him, through His grace and power that we may be able to follow His pattern. In Him we find the secret of "great living."

—Selected

## LIVING WITH CLOSED HEARTS

TEXT: *No man cared for my soul* (Ps. 142:4).

This is a cry from the lips of David, when in fleeing from King Saul he found refuge in a cave. From a human standpoint, it is a cry of despair—no man would know him, refuge failed him, no man cared for his soul. He found no one with an open heart. David, however, did find help in God. So many end in despair because no one cares.

### I. *Why do we not care for souls?*

A. Generally we are so engrossed with our own cares, troubles, and experiences—we are so self-centered we do not see the helplessness of others.

B. So often we lose the individual soul among the crowd; we think in terms of people and do not care for individual souls. The absent pupil is lost among the total attendance record of Sunday school.

The backsliding church member is lost among the statistics of church membership.

The individual sinner, the lost soul, is lost to us in the crowd.

C. We do not possess enough of the compassion and love of Christ to care. Often our love for souls is lost in our being busy about the affairs of the church, in our interest in keeping rules and holding up the standards of Christian life. We, like the church at Ephesus, lose our first love—a love for souls.

### II. *What does it mean to care?*

A. A strong conviction of the value or worth of a soul

B. A realization of the danger to which lost souls are exposed

C. To have a deep concern and a sincere love for lost souls which will inspire us actively to seek their salvation

### III. *Who should be concerned?*

There are many who are caring for other needs of people: their homes, food, clothing, education, and other matters of temporal welfare—but who cares for their souls?

A. All Christians should care for the souls of others. It is the Christian thing to care, for in this Jesus is our great Example. He cared and He gave His life, His all to save.

B. People in particular places of responsibility should care.

1. Christian ministers should care.

2. Sunday-school teachers should care.

3. Christian parents should care.

4. All church members should care.

### IV. *Consider the awful consequences of not caring.*

A. Think of the blighting effects of indifference, carelessness, and unconcern upon individual Christians—upon the church; the tragedy of living with closed hearts.

B. Think of the many about us who will be lost, lost eternally, if we do not care. It is well for all of us to remember that there is someone within the circle of our acquaintance who will never be saved unless we win them to Christ.

APPEAL—Let us repent of our carelessness, our unconcern. Let us get so close to Christ as to have some of His compassion and love, to care as He cared for others.

—Adapted

## IN MEMORY OF CHRIST

### (Communion Sermon)

#### SCRIPTURE LESSON—I Cor. 11: 23-26

The Apostle Paul received a special revelation of the institution of the Lord's Supper in this scripture: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15). There He blended the fulfillment of the old covenant into the presentation of the new covenant.

I. In the old covenant Israel was saved by blood, and in the wild lands of the desert to which they had escaped from their bondage God fed them with manna, the bread which came down from heaven.

In this new covenant, we are saved by the blood of Jesus, and He is that Bread which came down from heaven, the Bread of Life, upon which our souls feed. Hence in this first Lord's Supper, He said: "Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you."

Since Jesus was then sensibly present among His disciples, His literal body could not have been meant; thus they could only understand His statement symbolically: "As this bread is to your physical health, so My body is to the spiritual health of those who believe and partake."

II. After eating the Passover supper, Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood" (Luke 22:20). They knew that the old covenant had been sealed with the blood of animals (Heb. 9:18-20). But the blood of Jesus is the seal of the new covenant (Heb. 9:12). This cup, His blood, is the deed by which His new will or covenant is sealed (Heb. 10:16-18). It is the covenant of life through Christ, forgiveness through His blood, fellowship through His abiding presence, keeping or preservation through His power, the inner enjoyment of spiritual relation with Him toward which the old covenant could but point.

III. It is a perpetual memorial.

Some leaders of men have built their monuments of stone. The deeds of the mighty men stand engraved in bronze and stone to remind future generations of their accomplishments. But Jesus cared not for physical monuments; His is an inner Kingdom, the Kingdom of love. His covenant is a spiritual renewal, with His laws put into the hearts and written in the minds of those who accept Him as Saviour and Lord. His great victory came, not by valor on battlefields, but by humble obedience to death, even the death of the cross. Here He conquered sin and hell and the devil. Here through the shedding of His blood He provided eternal salvation for all who will accept Him. Here He became the living Conqueror through His resurrection.

This ordinance, the Lord's Supper, is a memorial of His passion. As we partake of the bread and wine, we do so as a memorial of our Saviour, in remembrance of Him.

This sacrament also points forward. It is as a lighthouse which heralds the fact of Jesus' coming again. We announce by taking of this Lord's Supper that Jesus died for us, that He is now a living Christ, and though bodily absent He is spiritually present, that He is now our glorious Saviour, and that we will continue to do this until He comes again, when there will be no need for these or any other symbols.

—J. PAUL DOWNEY, *Pastor, Yakima, Washington, First Church*

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN

SCRIPTURE: Gal. 5:13-26

TEXTS: Rom. 5:1; Eph. 1:4

### INTRODUCTION:

Christian religion founded upon the truth that man who was afar off now brought nigh by the blood of Jesus Christ. Wonderful fact of personal communion and relationship with God a reality. God in human experience, God in everyday living, Jesus Christ our Friend and Elder Brother, the Holy Spirit as our constant and abiding Comforter: this is the meaning of vital Christianity! A mere professional Christianity little better than other religions. World dying for lack of real and vital Christianity.

### I. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN

#### A. Inwardness of Christian life.

Power through Christ to "remake" the individual. Sinner remade into Christian; drunkard, into sober man; person of impurity and lust, into one of pure heart and spiritual mind. Two ways to be justified. One is never to have done anything wrong, to have been perfect from infancy. In this sense "there is none righteous, no, not one"; other way is the *way of repentance and faith*. In vital Christianity the *heart* is changed.

#### B. Outwardness of the Christian life.

Christian experience affects the outward. Life is all of one piece. We live not only unto God but also before men. Both are important. Jesus said, "Ye are my witnesses." In other words He says, "People will know of Me as I am represented to them by you." We must not overlook the fact that the power of Christianity is somewhat determined to the extent in which Christianity is practiced by Christians. Christian experience begins within, but cannot remain there solely. Christian not only is one who holds inner fellowship with his Lord in depths of his soul, but one who shows the reality and power of that fellowship in all attitudes of life. The Christian must *live* Christ to experience Him!

#### C. Norm of Christian experience is holiness.

This should always be considered in connection with Christian life. Unfortunately, term sometimes in bad repute. Some erroneous ideas of holiness.

1. Retirement from world, refusal to participate in normal activities of life. Old monks and monasteries example of this.
2. Complete obedience to requirements of church. Example: Roman Catholicism.
3. Only highly emotional state. Example: fanaticism.

Right Idea of Holiness:

- a. Cleansing—negative
- b. Purity—positive
- c. Power—positive
- d. Christlikeness—positive.

### CONCLUSION:

Many things of beauty in world, etc. Greatest beauty is beauty of the Lord seen in lives of His children.

—C. E. SHUMAKE

## THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN

TEXT: *And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again . . .* (Jer. 18:4).

### INTRODUCTIONS:

A few years ago, while listening to Ted Malone's radio program of poetry and music, I was fascinated by a bit of poetry which he quoted.

*I wish that there was some wonderful place  
Called the land of beginning again,  
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches  
And all our poor selfish griefs  
Might be dropped like a shabby old coat at the door  
And never put on again.*

Surely, this is the heart cry of millions on earth: to find a place where they could drop off their sins, their griefs, their selfishness, their carnal dispositions, and their heartaches, like a shabby old coat at the door, and never put them on again. The voice of the preacher is raised to say, "Thank God, we've found such a place." The pen of Jeremiah, the prophet, tells us that the marred vessel *can* be repaired. The experience of millions through the centuries emphatically declares "the shabby old coat" of sin can be dropped off at the door.

In an hour of personal discouragement, God showed Jeremiah that the marred vessel could be repaired, "so he made it again."

There are three fundamental aspects of our text:

1. *There is a divine blueprint for every human vessel.*

Just as the mind of the potter carried a design before shaping the vessel on the wheel, so God blueprints our lives. We are stamped with an infinite design. We are called to fulfill a divine plan, a holy purpose. Such was the case of Moses, Paul, Luther, Livingstone, and such is true of the countless "little" people who have served the Lord faithfully. Such is true of you! The plan may be broad in scope, as it was with Saul of Tarsus. It may be confined to the small task in a small place. However, the plan is blueprinted just the same.

2. *We have the power to destroy the divine blueprint.*

We may choose to fulfill the plan of God or we may refuse God's will and mar the vessel.

A. Israel marred the plan of God.

B. Churches can destroy the divine blueprint.

C. Individuals can refuse God's will and mar their lives. So it was with David, who said, in Ps. 31:12, "I am like a broken vessel."

3. *There is a land of beginning again.*

The marred life can be shaped again. The marred vessel can be remade. The shabby old coat can be dropped at the door and *never be put on again!* Christ's gospel is for the unfit, the marred, the stained. The vessel that he made was marred, "so he made it again." Christ went to lonely Calvary and gave himself to make men over—to make them new—to make us "new creatures" in Him.

### Conclusion:

Thank God, through Christ, there is a land of beginning again!

—DUANE E. MUTH



## THE RECORDER OF SECRETS

*(A parable-like sermon illustrated by using a wire or tape recorder)*

SCRIPTURE: Ps. 139:1-14

TEXT: Luke 8:17

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is too bad a preacher's wife cannot turn him off (or ....).
  2. It is humiliating to let him hear himself.
  3. It is hard to believe our own record on a wire recorder.
- God records everything concerning our conduct.*

A wire (or tape) recorder resembles God's record in three respects.

I. *It makes a true record.*

1. It records every word. Illustration: My wife hears some things; a secretary may miss some words.
2. It shows all the errors: the slip-of-the-tongue, gossip, oaths.
3. It reflects the personality—things friends won't tell us.
4. It cannot be edited by another as a written article.

II. *The record may be repeated.*

1. We like to play back some things that we are proud of. Illustration: Jack Shuler made a record of his wedding.
2. Some records are played over and over again. We wish that memories of some sins could be forgotten.
3. The record may be used as evidence against us. It makes a lot of difference who possesses the record.
4. The judgment from the record will be just.

III. *Part or all of the record may be erased.*

1. God can speak pardon and obliterate a sinful record. (Effective to illustrate with a machine during the sermon.)
2. The old record cannot be restored.
3. A new life may be recorded over the old life.

CONCLUSION:

1. It is best to know the worst about ourselves.
2. There is chance for improvement if we face our sins.
3. All unworthy records must be forgiven.

—JAMES H. WHITWORTH

## THE SATISFYING CHRIST

TEXT: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink* (John 7:37).

1. "If"—the one condition to which the Saviour's invitation is addressed. Souls are dying everywhere, not because there is no water, but because they do not thirst.

2. "Any man"—the universal invitation.

3. "Thirst"—soul thirst, the need which Christ alone is able to supply.

4. "Let him come unto me"—Christ is the Gate to the fountain; He is the One who supplies the need, who satisfies the soul.

5. "Drink"—find satisfaction. Not only to come, but also to "drink."

—J. R. MILLER

## LOOKING FOR CHRIST'S RETURN

SCRIPTURE READING: II Pet. 3:1-18

TEXT: *Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless (v. 14).*  
Give brief summary of chapter as introduction.

### I. The Hope the Promise Inspires

"We . . . look for" (as a result of Christ's coming):

1. "New heavens and a new earth" (v. 13).
2. The nature of these: "Wherein dwelleth righteousness." Quite a contrast to this present world.
3. Hope's inspiration—we "look"—habitual and continuous looking. (See v. 12; also Tit. 2:13.)

### II. The Preparation Necessary to Realize This Hope

1. "That ye may be found of him" implies an investigation of our preparation. Much as the virgins—wise and foolish—in the parable of Jesus (Matt. 25:1-13). Some (the wise) were "found of him" prepared; the foolish were found unprepared.
2. "In peace"
  - a. With God
  - b. With others
  - c. With ourselves
3. "Without spot, and blameless"—inner purity
  - a. Undeified by sinful activities or impure hearts
  - b. Blameless by giving full devotion and obedience to God
  - c. How made and kept thus? (See Eph. 5:25-27; I Thess. 5:23.)

### III. Our Attitude Toward His Coming. "Be diligent."

Be alert, careful, watchful, obedient, giving wholehearted devotion to God.

## GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

TEXT: John 3:16

1. The source of man's redemption  
"God's love"
2. The measure of God's love  
"He gave his only begotten Son"
3. How redemption is provided  
By the sacrifice of Christ
4. How man is to be saved  
"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"
5. Who will be saved?  
"Whosoever believeth in him"
6. What salvation is  
Deliverance from sin and perishing  
The gift of eternal life

—J. R. MILLER

## THE WELL OF SALVATION

John 4:1-42

There are many Biblical scenes that have their setting at a well curb:

- A. Well in Haran where Jacob and Rachel met.
- B. Well in Bethlehem from which David desired water.
- C. Well in our text, called the well of salvation.

Jesus sat on this well curb one hot, Oriental noonday. A woman came to draw water, perhaps coming at this time of day to escape the side glances and sneers of the respectable women of the community. The Master took advantage of this opportunity to give one of His greatest messages.

### I. *Revealing interrogation*—v. 10, "If thou knewest"

- A. Gift of God. His salvation is a gift. We can never deserve it. A man recently built and equipped a church valued at \$1,500,000.00 and gave it to his congregation. This was a wonderful expression of benevolence, but cannot merit one sin forgiven or one moment of spiritual peace.
- B. Who is it? She saw Him as a poor, tired, wayworn Jewish traveler. But He was the Saviour of the world. Men see Him today as a teacher, historical character, religious leader. He is the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, the coming Judge.

### II. *Gospel declaration*—v. 13

- A. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." Things of the world fail to give permanent peace and joy. Sinclair Lewis died a miserable man. His secretary and companion wrote as follows: "As I knew him during his last year Sinclair Lewis was a restless, lonely man constantly looking for something he could not find or if he found it no longer wanted it. At the moment of his death he seemed to be continually hounded by visions and deliriums. His last words were, 'Alec, help me. I am going to die.'"
- B. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Christ completely satisfies the soul. It is not just one drink that satisfies for life, but we have a well of water springing up into everlasting life, an ever-present source of spiritual blessing and help.

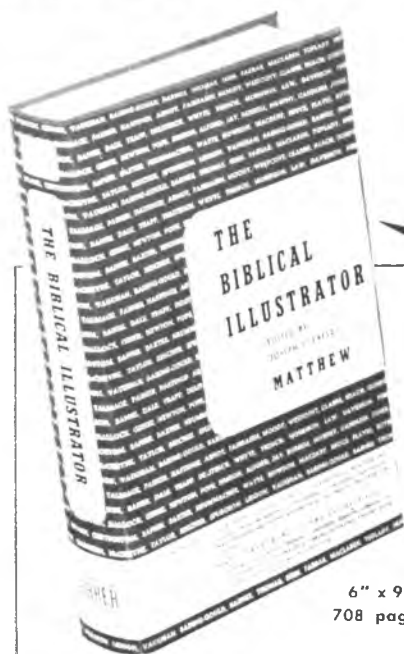
### III. *Searching examination*—v. 16, "Go, call thy husband"

Jesus always probes into our hearts. One reason why many people do not go to church is that they would refrain from being reminded of their sins. Perhaps to me He would not say, "Go, call thy husband"; but He might say, "Go, call thy sister, child, grocer, employee, employer." Every type of spiritual maladjustment must be brought into proper relationship in order to receive Christ's blessing.

### IV. *Glorious affirmation*, v. 29, "Is not this the Christ?"

The most glorious moment in anyone's life is when he fully recognizes the presence of God in his life. This woman went testifying and bringing others to him.

—L. GUY NEES



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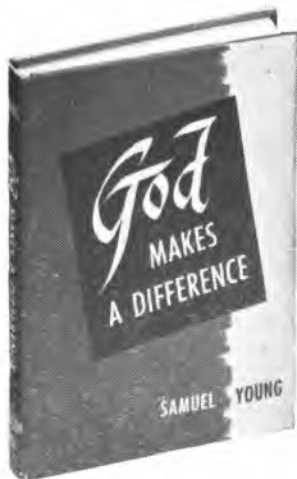
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