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# THE *Preacher's* *Magazine*

Oliver Wendell Holmes  
Katherine Tegen



DECEMBER  
1959

# *The Preacher's Magazine*

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## What Darkness Cannot Dim\*\*

By Joseph R. Sizoo\*

THIS TITLE strikes a thoroughly harmonious note with the sixteenth annual World-wide Bible Reading theme, which portrays the Bible as *The Everlasting Light*. This Bible Reading program, sponsored by the American Bible Society, was sparked by the request of a marine on Guadalcanal who asked his family to join with him in reading certain verses from the Bible each day. It has now become world-wide, and the theme this year, "The Everlasting Light," reminds us that the divine light of the knowledge of the glory of God, through Jesus Christ, shining in the minds and hearts of all men can yet make this a different world.

There are two things the Bible never takes into consideration. The Bible never takes geography into consideration. It leaps across the barriers of the nations and disregards the frontiers of peoples. It is at home in every land and language. Then too, it never takes time into consideration. Written thousands of years ago, it is as relevant today as when the words were first recorded. It is meant for all lands, all languages, and all times. The Bible belongs to the ages.

The Bible lights up the road to significance. Almost every page is aflame with the story of what man can do when he is willing to let God take possession of him. It is always

saying, "Look what you can do with life when it is God-guided." Moses may think himself inadequate for the responsibilities which confront him, but when he places his hands in the hands of God he becomes one of the five great men of history and the founder of a great nation. A supplanter becomes a prince of God; a plowman in Tekoa becomes a prophet of social justice; a man of unclean lips becomes a herald of righteous Redeemer; a tax collector, never a popular man, becomes the writer of the first Gospel; a fallen girl by the well becomes a city missionary. A slave girl becomes the instrument through which a generation is cleansed of leprosy; a boy's noonday lunch becomes a feast for thousands; an intolerant bigot becomes a preacher of the universal gospel of love. The Stone which the builders reject becomes the Headstone of the corner. Beneath the thin surface of the humblest are inestimable values. Deep in the human heart are talents which grace can transform and glorify. In spite of what you say, man is made a little lower than the angels, capable of thinking God's thoughts after Him. "What will a man give in exchange for his soul?" If you ever doubt the worth of life, go to Calvary and read the story of Christ dying for you. To an age overwhelmed with frustration and insignificance the Bible calls out, "Put yourself in the hands of God and leave yourself there." There are

\*Professor of Religion, George Washington University.

\*\*Courtesy, American Bible Society.

no iron curtains to keep the power of God from lifting the humblest and weakest to places of influence and power.

When Evangeline Booth returned from a world tour for the Salvation Army, she told me of a little village in India where lived the families and members of the robber caste. The village was full of robbers, thieves, and thugs. Every attempt by the government to stamp out the wrong failed. Then the government resolved to destroy the village entirely and scatter the people. The Salvation Army asked if it could have a chance to do something to save the village before the decree was carried out; so a little band of "Salvationists" preached on the street corners and in the rice fields. The redeeming grace of Christ began to work in the village. The chief of the robber caste was converted, and the entire village population was baptized. Strangely enough, stealing stopped; not a complaint was made against the people. The village had been made over. The government police thought this was too good to last and, sure enough, robbers broke out in the next village. The police sent a secret agent to shadow the leader. They saw him late one evening, slinking down a narrow trail with a bundle under his arm, wrapped up in a newspaper. They were sure he was at it again. They followed him to his home, and then they watched through the window as he entered his house, closed the door, gathered his family about him, and unwrapped the bundle. They expected to see loot tumble out of the package. To their surprise they saw that the bundle was a Bible

which he had borrowed from a neighbor in another village. The children gathered about him near the light, and through the open window they heard a clear voice reading: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This is the Book which pierces the darkness of sin and offers redemption.

Some years ago, early in my ministry, I came to know and to befriend a man who was later convicted of murder. I stayed with him through his long trial and his imprisonment in Sing Sing. I visited him often in the death house. One day I asked the guard who was always with me when I talked with him if I could give him a copy of the New Testament. The guard looked the Book over very carefully and handed this New Testament to this condemned man through the steel screen which separated us. I remember well the last visit I had with him a week later. It was his last night on earth; the following morning he paid the penalty. As I walked through the corridor with the guard, he heard me come, and walked to the door of his steel cage and said to me, "That man Luke wrote a great story." His face was lit up with a light and a peace that I have never seen before. It would be Luke—the Gospel of redemption for all those who have lost their way, for sheep that are lost, for lilies that fade, and of prodigals who step across the pathway of indiscretion. "Be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." This is the Book which sheds a light which no darkness can dim.

## Just How Much Do We Give?

ONE OF THE FINEST Christmas passages in the Bible, yet one which is not too frequently referred to at this season of the year, is Philippians 2:5-11. Here are the verses which the theologians refer to as the "kenosis," which describes the "emptying" of the eternal Son of God as He took on the redemptive task. He left the glories and the riches of heaven to enter the world by the way of a stable and to leave it again by way of the Cross. As an introduction to the passage Paul exhorts, "Let this mind be in you . . ." Here is the transfer of this exalted concept from God to man.

One of the most vivid of all of the revelations of the love of God is in His willingness to give. One of the deepest insights into the mind of Christ comes when we see His living demonstration of giving. It is the wonder of divine love that it gives and gives and gives again without thought that it should be returned or repaid.

Most of us get a slight glimpse of this sort of spirit on the human level during the Christmas season. The Scrouges are all out of tune; the spirit of generosity and of giving is the spirit of the season. We see this displayed in the personal feelings within the family. Sometimes it reflects itself as we reach out to include friends and acquaintances. On rare occasions it might even reach out to the "needy" or the underprivileged. Most of us, at one time or another, have felt the warmth that comes from giving—giving which stands bleak and bare with only slight chance that

it will ever be repaid. It is at these times that we get a peek into the divine mind.

It is this sort of concept, placed in its spiritual setting and extended to include every season of the year, which lies at the heart of the purpose of the Christian ministry. The self-emptying of the Saviour, His utter poverty of this world's goods as represented by His humble birth, the simplicity of His entrance upon the world scene as has been described again and again—all of this stands in bold relief as the pattern by which the follower of Jesus Christ should live. In particular it applies to those of us who have been called in Christ's stead to proclaim to others the message of redemption.

But the question keeps raising its bold head, "Just how much do we give?" That is, just how completely are we as ministers captivated by the spirit of self-outpouring, giving without thought of return to us? To certain Christian leaders of the past this question was settled once and for all by affiliation with monastic orders or by taking "vows of poverty." Such examples as St. Francis of Assisi or even John Wesley and their renunciation of the things of this life in their dedication to the cause of God arise ever and again to condemn even the poorest and most frugal and conscientious minister.

And probably the most persistent phase of the problem is not that we do not *want* to find this high level of devotion and detachment from the "curse of mammon," but it is rather

in the practical application of the principle. Perhaps, indeed, it would be far easier for us to make one decision to join an "order" or take a "vow of poverty" and from that point on have no income, no property, no "things" which we could properly call our own, no monetary responsibilities to plague us, with some impersonal organization handling for us all affairs which would be of any nature secular. In essence the prayer of consecration and the acceptance of the call of God to the ministry are the same sort of vows that others have taken in their particular setting. But the trouble, so far as we are concerned, is that no sooner have we made our pledges of "renunciation" than we find ourselves right back in the secular frame of operation. We receive salaries, we own furniture, we register our automobiles in our very own names, and we continue to live in the "ownership" world. Spiritually we call ourselves stewards but in a very realistic sense we are owners—some of us more or less than others, but still we are owners.

The very real issue which every Christian faces throughout his life is to keep the spiritual facts of dedication and stewardship stronger in his consciousness than the realistic facts of economic responsibility, and to keep the latter thoroughly and consistently subservient to the former. This issue, amplified one hundred fold, is one of the greatest problems faced by the minister of Jesus Christ. It reflects in his ability to maintain the mind of Jesus Christ and keep in sharp focus his purpose to live by giving and to keep this purpose dissociated from the material subsistence by which he feeds, clothes, and shelters himself and his family.

The trouble is that, regardless of how soundly we establish our dedication and regardless of how sincerely

we might long for the perfect situation in which to work out that dedication, we are still faced with the mundane problems of the cost of shoes for Junior and the need for a new dress for Susie, the amount of groceries which can be bought with the week's food allowance, of insurance premiums, of music lessons, of the future education of the children, and above all, right at this season of the year, with the necessity of giving our loved ones the kind of Christmas to which they are entitled.

The minister must meet the demands of the secular world around him, of the general rise in the cost of living, just as any sinner must do. He receives a salary, must budget his expenses, must see to it that his bills are paid. He must handle money and use it as a medium of exchange in everyday transactions. And when his income fails to meet his obligations and the immediate needs of his family, he faces the temptation to anxiety over these temporal matters. Hence the minister's dedication faces a test, not just once, but daily—or weekly—or whenever emergencies arise and unusual demands are put on the family income.

And in the face of all of this as one looks out into the ecclesiastical world it becomes quite apparent that the harder one works for the kingdom of God (success in which is measured by increases in Sunday school, church membership, church finance, etc.), the more one gets in return for it (measured in terms of increases in salary, calls to better paying churches, opportunities to serve groups beyond one's local situation for substantial honoraria, and the like). This vicious circle can quickly spin one so dizzy that he can see little but the relationship between his work for the cause of God and the material return which he receives for that work. The

next whirl takes one to the place where he works alone for the reward and does little or nothing if there is no visible return.

It becomes obvious that the minister who has reached this place has lost his sense of giving and has lost the prime motivating force which launched him on his way as a servant of the homeless Son of Man.

Brethren, let's face it. Right here is one of the very grave perils which all of us face today. It is more of a problem in a time of increasing inflation than in a time of depression, since the problems of stretching the few dollars we do get are constantly before us. While it is true that we shall have to meet these increased demands some way—work on the side, help our wives find employment, or by whatever method we can find—it is still true that we must ever and again review our basic reason for being in the ministry. This reason must always be that we shall be servants, that we shall be givers—givers in the sense that God is a Giver, without thought of the return.

It is probably true that we as Protestant ministers must find a moral and spiritual equivalent to the monastery. We are convinced that our concept of the spiritual ministry to which Christ commissioned us is the right one. We believe that the man of God living in a home with his

own family, following the normal pattern of life, is better able to minister to the real problems of others who live in similar situations. We are sure that for a minister to carry responsibilities in financial matters and still maintain a strong Christian concept of stewardship makes for the strongest Christian. And yet we must ever find the inner, spiritual fortification which keeps us from the evil of the world in which we live, or rather which keeps the philosophy of the world around us from becoming a part of our personal scheme of operation.

We are ready to prove that we can, by the help of God, find this spiritual equivalent to mechanical and legalistic dedication. This has been the optimism to faith of the Protestant church from its beginning. It remains, however, for each of us as individuals to prove this anew to himself, to his church, and to the people to whom he ministers. There certainly is sufficient proof around us as we see the dedicated lives of others in action that this spiritual grace can be found and can be sustained throughout one's ministry. Let each of us be one who does find it, so that he can be a living object lesson to the laymen whom we serve that the Christian concept of dedicated living and of living by giving is workable in our day and generation.

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#### LADDERS TO HEAVEN

The Bible is written about you and me. Every scene is a pointed finger. It isn't just a lad named Jacob who cheats his brother and runs away. We do that in a thousand ways, and so much of our life is a flight. And yet, for us too, if we're ever alerted to it, above our uneasy beds there always opens the ladder, that mysterious channel of give and take between us and a watching God.

—FREDERICK B. SPEAKMAN in *"Love Is Something You Do"* (Fleming H. Revell Company)



# The Preaching of Frederick W. Robertson

By James McGraw\*

**Y**OU PREACH positively instead of negatively, you state truths which they cannot deny; . . . you set up your truth and they are dismayed to find, if that be true, their view is knocked down, but you did not knock it down."

This was the tribute F. W. Robertson's physician paid him when in the course of the conversation the subject of his attitude toward those who disagreed with his preaching came into discussion. The good doctor described his pastor better than he realized. Gentle but firm, kind but unswerving, independent and nonconforming, yet keenly aware of others and their feelings, Frederick W. Robertson was a brilliant Bible expositor and outstanding example of pastoral preaching.

Born in London on February 3, 1816, he lived only thirty-seven years before his death at Brighton in August, 1853. The intensity of his spirit, the burning passion of his heart, the driving pace he demanded of himself, and the overwhelming burden he carried for his work all took their toll in a life that blazed brilliantly and burned out in so few years, yet left an example of courage and eloquence for every minister to follow.

A high-spirited boy, young Frederick wanted more than anything else to be a soldier. James R. Blackwood, in *The Soul of Frederick W. Robertson*, writes of his dream of military life, with its heroic glory and world travel: "He loved the rattle of offi-

cers' swords and the clink of spurs, but more than these, the table talk of soldiers, barracks incidents, campaigns fought again on winter evenings before the fire, and rumors that traveled fast when soldiers met. His ears were tuned to martial strains."

It was in his twentieth year that he yielded to his father's wish, abandoned the idea of a military career, and entered Oxford University to prepare himself for the ministry. None of his biographers have much to say about his call to preach. It would seem that he accepted the idea of devoting his life to preaching primarily because of the need as he saw it, in the logical and analytical way he approached all of life's decisions. It seemed the right thing to do, and he did it. It was as simple as that.

He was graduated at the top of his class at Oxford, and ordained a minister in the Anglican church in 1840. After seven years of pastoral service in Oxford and Cheltenham, he began his ministry in Trinity Chapel in Brighton, where he won acclaim for "his earnestness, his eloquence, and his lucid explanation of the reasonableness of spiritual truth."

Lewis O. Brastow, in *Representative Modern Preachers*, observes that it will always be an honor to the Anglican church "that it was the spiritual home of Frederick Robertson." He immediately points out, however, that the Anglicans cannot claim him in the broader sense, for Robertson "is the product of a broader world than that in which his

\*Professor, Nazarene Theological Seminary.

church moves." He was loyal yet independent, if one can imagine such a paradoxical situation. He was never bound by conventionalism nor a slave to institutionalism, yet none could accuse him of being heretical nor disloyal. Perhaps his early life had its effect on his ministry. Stopford A. Brooke writes, in *The Life and Letters of F. W. Robertson*, that the Brightonians of his day had a distinctive flair for argument, and "were always sniffing the air to catch the scent of the heretic." Such an atmosphere would stimulate independent thinking in a brilliant young mind.

Robertson's method of dealing with argumentative fellow ministers is described by Brooke, who quotes him as having remarked, "It is an endless task to be refuting error. Plant truth, and the errors will pine away." Thus his preaching had a distinctive tone of authority. He prepared carefully and thoroughly, until he knew he was correct in his understanding of his scripture; then he spoke decisively. Blackwood says concerning this quality in his preaching: "Each sermon he began, not as a traveler asking for the safe route, or inquiring after the opinions held by 'respectable men,' but as a pioneer who thrusts out to find his own way alone." This observation is faulty only in that it implies he went his way "alone," which he did not—for if any preacher ever relied upon the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit in his preparation to preach, F. W. Robertson did. Alone humanly speaking, but not alone was he when the Lord's anointing was upon him, as it usually was.

Richard May, as a result of a study of Robertson's preaching ministry, sees two very distinct characteristics in his style. He points out in a paper written while a student in Nazarene

Theological Seminary that F. W. Robertson combines the qualities of Biblical expository method with contemporary, practical, present-day life problems. He seemed to have the rare ability to expound the Scriptures in terms that made them mean something real as they relate to the present, with its present needs. Robertson expressed this goal in a letter to a friend, quoted in Brooke's work, in which he explained that "the great office of the expounder is to adapt old principles to new circumstances and to read the present through the past."

In preaching with the needs of his hearers in view, Robertson chose to preach suggestively rather than dogmatically. His critics came to hear whether or not he repeated the proper words concerning doctrine, but his method was to make religion practical, and he "put doctrine to work" in the lives of those who heard him preach. This of course means that his preaching would best be described as "positive." It was a positive ministry in the sense that he never preached his doubts, but always his convictions. His words were logical, factual, conclusive, and decisive.

He prepared his sermons believing that any passage of scripture must be studied with ourselves in possession of the circumstances under which the words were spoken, and with an understanding of how the passage corresponds to our circumstances. He prepared intensively. He was a specific rather than a general reader. His reading was deep rather than wide. In his early ministry he read hundreds of books, which he says "evaporated from" his mind; in his later ministry he read fewer books, read them more slowly and carefully, and made the habit of writing down the abstract of the book's thesis, which

he retained in his memory for years.

It was his practice to seek complete seclusion in the preparation of his sermons. His plan, step by step, began with the making of full notes as he proceeded with his research. Then he made an outline as a guide to the development of whatever single purpose he had in mind. His next step was to write his thoughts freely, often making as many as three full manuscripts before he was satisfied he had expressed himself adequately and clearly. His last step was to make a skeleton outline, which he sometimes carried with him into the pulpit. Usually, however, he did not take any notes or manuscript with him into the pulpit when he preached.

His delivery was made effective by the intense feeling behind his words, by his impressive voice, and by a unique phenomenon of "audience rapport" which he seemed to have with his hearers which made them feel that he was talking with each of them individually. Blackwood quotes one of his listeners as saying, "I cannot describe to you in words the strange sensation during his sermon, of union with him and communion with one another which filled us as he spoke."

He seemed to plead with men when he preached. His deepset blue eyes had an earnest look. One who heard him said of his eyes, "They left their light with you when he had gone." He used few gestures, occasionally lifting a hand or shifting his feet. His posture in the pulpit was flawless. He stood erect, giving the impression of dignity without cold formality. Blackwood writes of his deliv-

ery that the "most impressive thing about him was his voice, low and musical, full of restrained feeling, in its varied tones and cadences like the voice of the sea."

After a study of five of Robertson's books and three of his biographies, May decides that the secret of his success must be attributed at least to some extent to the intensity with which he preached. There was an undescrivable attraction which was beyond his outline, his spoken word, his prepared sermon, his skill of communication. This intensity, it must be concluded, is the result of the anointing and unction of the Holy Spirit.

The intense pace he kept for himself brought about a break in his health in 1852, making him what his friends called "an old man at thirty-six." Each sermon he preached—the majority of them were constructed with two main divisions, it is interesting to note—took something from his strength. He drove himself relentlessly on, in the many hours of study, the emotionally intense preaching, the conscientious and taxing pastoral care of his flock, and his life burned out on August 16, 1853. The family wanted a private funeral, but the citizens of Brighton claimed Frederick W. Robertson belonged to them also. High and Low Church Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Non-conformists, Jews, Quakers, and Unitarians; rich and poor alike, liberals and conservatives alike; all paid homage to the passing of the beloved pastor of Brighton, whose monument stands as a symbol of faithful pastor, Bible expositor, and brilliant preacher of the Word of Truth.

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#### LIVE WIRE

If you show people you're a live wire, people won't step on you.

—*Sunshine*

# The Bible—the Word of God

*Sermon preached at College Church of the Nazarene, Nampa, Idaho  
Sunday evening—May 18, 1958*

**By D. Shelby Corlett\***

**F**OR MY own profit and I trust also for yours, I will follow what seems to be the leading of the Spirit for this service and speak to you on the Bible. Usually our studies are fragmentary. In our private devotions, in college, in high school and Sunday school, we explore only certain portions of the Bible; and often we study about the Bible, but not always do we keep a general view of the whole Book in mind. This Book is called the Holy Bible, the sacred Book of the Christian. It is also called the Word of God. Really it is a library of sixty-six books divided into two divisions. The Old Testament of thirty-nine books is largely a record of God's dealings with and His message to the people of Israel, His own chosen people. The New Testament of twenty-seven books is largely the record of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, of His teachings, His life, His death, His resurrection, and the interpretation and teachings which center around these events.

### AN ANCIENT BOOK

It is a foreign Book to us. It was written in two or three languages which are foreign to us, the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. It was present-

ed to people of customs, culture, and ideas differing to ours. It has a distinct Oriental expression which was well known to those to whom it was given originally. Our English Bible is a translation of this foreign Book, transplanted into our Western or Oxidental setting or culture, and yet we have not lost anything that is essential in the translating or in the transplanting. It is still the Word through which God speaks to us.

It is a Book of antiquity. The last of the sixty-six books of this Bible were written about nineteen hundred years ago. The first of these was written perhaps fifteen hundred years earlier. This first book breathes with the atmosphere of beginnings, the beginnings of history. It states that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, but it does not tell us by what means God created, what methods He used, nor the length of time He used in these creative acts. It tells us of the beginnings of man, that man is the creation of God consisting of a physical body and a living soul inbreathed by the Creator. He is thus made in the image of God. It tells of God's early fellowship with man, of man's fall into sin, and of God's work in providing redemption for man.

The period of writing these books covered about fifteen hundred years.

\*Pasadena, California.

Around forty different men contributed to the message. These men came from all walks of life. Some were kings; others were peasants. And there were freemen and prisoners, exiles and princes and seers among the writers of this Book. They wrote on different subjects. Some wrote history; others, of sanitary science and hygiene; some, about theology, poetry, prophecy, philosophy, and law. Within the Book also are stories of travel and adventure. Interesting love stories are found here as well as a number of choice proverbs to guide the youth and their feet in the paths of righteousness. But whatever was the position or the abilities of the age of the men who wrote portions of this Book, their message has come to us as a message from God. They believed they were giving God's word. Five hundred times in the Pentateuch statements like these appeared, "The Lord said," or "The Lord spake." Three hundred times in the historical books similar statements are made, and twelve hundred times in the prophetic books words such as "Hear ye the word of the Lord" or "Thus saith the Lord" are spoken.

It is an intensely human Book. It was written by men; it deals with man, his origin, his history, his sin, rebellions, sorrows, selfishness, wars—the total human experience of man as found in those days. Also it deals with man's aspirations, his high moments of inspiration, his seeking after God, his salvation from sin, his conduct, and his eternal homeland with Christ. Especially does it speak of man's relation to God. There is more in the Bible that finds man, that searches out the depths of his nature, than in any other book. It is like a good portrait. The eyes in a good portrait always follow the spectator wherever he stands to view it; they

look him straight in the face. God does that in this Book. It is the Book that finds man.

### A UNIQUE BOOK

It is a unique Book. It professes the divine inspiration. When Paul wrote the young preacher Timothy concerning the Scriptures, he said: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:15-17). The writer to the Hebrews says: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things" (Hebrews 1:1-2). And it was the Apostle Peter in writing about prophecy who said: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21).

God made himself known to the holy men of old. He moved them by His Holy Spirit; He spoke to them; He revealed himself to them. These were men whose hearts were receptive to God and His message. They had ears to hear. This revelation made them wise beyond what naturally they would have been. Dr. Wiley says that revelation made men wiser and inspiration enabled them to communicate revelation without mistake. But it was God meeting with men receptive to Him, holy men of old. He met with them at sundry times, and in divers or various ways He

spoke to them. They were inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is well to note that the Scriptures stress that it was holy men, not the words, which were inspired.

What do we mean by the thought of the inspiration of the Scriptures? Dr. Wiley describes this inspiration as "the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the writers of the books of the Bible in such a manner that their productions became the expression of God's will." He lists three factors in inspiration.

First, there is that of superintendence whereby the Holy Spirit gives such guidance that the writings of chosen men are kept free from error. This type of inspiration may be seen in the historical books of the Old Testament, where it is said that they used at least fourteen different sources from which information was gathered. It also may be seen in the compilation of the Book of Psalms, for this hymnbook of the Temple was much like our hymnbooks today. It was a compilation of the hymns from many authors covering a period of many years. The Book of Proverbs is another example. This is a composition of the sayings of the wise men. In the New Testament the superintendence is seen particularly in the Book of Luke, for Luke says that he wrote in order what was delivered to him by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word.

The second factor in inspiration is that of elevation in which enlargement of understanding and refinement of thought are given the human minds to whom the revelation is made. Such is found in much of the prophecy, in most of the psalms, and in places within the historic books.

The third factor is that of suggestion, under which a direct communication of thoughts and even words is

received from the divine Spirit, as indicated in such passages where the actual communication of God is given. Of this, the Ten Commandments is a notable example.

There are also within the Bible notable degrees of revelation, corresponding at times to the ability of the people to receive and understand God's truth. The contrast between the earlier Old Testament writings of the period of the patriarchs and times of the judges with the writings of the prophets of a later date, such as the time of Isaiah and those contemporary with him, will reveal that these later writers had a clearer understanding and a higher standard of God's revelation. This may be seen also in the Book of Psalms. Certainly no one would claim the inspiration for the imprecatory psalms, those which pray for judgment on their enemies, as they would for the psalms of high spiritual and inspirational value. In the New Testament this progressiveness is seen particularly in the words of Jesus. He says, "It has been said by them of old," and contrasts that by "I say unto you." The old Word said, "Thou shalt not murder." Jesus said, "Thou shalt not hate." The old Word said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Jesus said that we should have love and respect for others that there will not even be an adulterous desire. The old Word said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you."

Some books bring greater inspiration than others. We do not get much inspiration from the reading of the records of the genealogy tables of the Old Testament, where it tells of men who lived so many years, begat children, and died; nor do we get much uplift from the statements which the Negro preacher misquoted when he

said, "Abraham forgot Isaac, and Isaac forgot Jacob, and Jacob forgot the twelve patriarchs." Yet in all these factors God is speaking to us. The historic books give valuable inspiration; not always do we feel deeply moved when we read them, but they are God's message.

God accommodated himself to the limitations of man and revealed His truth within the framework of man's knowledge at a given time, that is, man's understanding of nature or his scientific understanding. Had God revealed truth to men on the basis of our understanding of the world today or of our scientific knowledge, they would not have understood it. Rather, He revealed himself in terms that they understood and which by the aid of the Holy Spirit we can interpret to our day, for God's message is a timeless message.

At times within the Bible, false teachings are given—as we find in the message of the comforters of Job, whose words God later condemned when He said to Eliphaz, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath." Their words of controversy with Job show the false theology of their day. This theology related suffering with sin. People were assured that all who were prosperous were righteous and hence were blessed of God. On the other hand, all who suffered were sinners; and the more one suffered, the greater sinner he was. Such teachings were false. Yet they were used to point up the truth of God. God was seeing in Job the truth that man would serve Him, not for possessions or material blessings, nor for health or physical well-being, but that he would serve Him from pure, disinterested love.

The melancholy chant of the Book

of Ecclesiastes, "vanity of vanities; all is vanity," is life as it is found under the sun, but it points up the life above the sun. The writer tried wisdom and pleasure, works and possessions, business and other secular pursuits. All of these, he says, were under the sun, but in them all he found that all was vanity. But he points up the value of religion by saying that man should remember his Creator in the days of his youth, and that to fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man.

Even in the Song of Solomon with its seemingly indelicate statements, especially to our Western mind, is found the priceless value of true love. Many waters cannot quench love nor can floods drown it nor can it be bought with great riches. Love like that can be lifted to any level. True love, even when found between people, is like that. Lift it to one's love for his family, for his nation, and it is still true. It is true of the devotion of the Christian to Christ, of the Church to Christ, or of Christ to the Church.

Who has not been inspired by the readings of the Psalms? Such statements as these challenge us greatly: "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him." "He that abideth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." Or, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

#### THE UNITY OF THE BIBLE

Despite its variety in teachings, and that it was written by different writ-

ers, there is a wonderful unity in the Bible. This unity is expressed well in our Nazarene doctrinal statement in our Nazarene *Manual*. It says: "We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by which we understand the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith." This statement stresses the unity of the Bible in its revelation of redemption or salvation; that is, "inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation." Even if there are found some seeming contradictory statements within our Bible, such as in one place it said that the companions of Paul on the road to Damascus heard the voice which spoke to Paul and in another place it states that they didn't hear it (Acts 9:7; 22:9), or the seeming difference in the report of the census taken in Israel (I Kings 24:1-9; I Chronicles 21:1-6), that does not break the unity of the Bible nor does it in any way limit its message of salvation. We are saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and that alone.

There is a crimson thread of redemption that runs through the whole Bible from the Book of Genesis on through to Revelation. It is intimated in God's promise to Adam after his fall into sin that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Every patriarchal altar with its bleeding victim pointed forward to a time when some offering and sacrifice would be made to complete what those altars were typifying. And every sin offering of the more elaborate ritualistic system of the Tabernacle and Temple pointed forward to the time when Jesus Christ, the great

Lamb of God, would suffer for the redemption of the world. This redemption was fully revealed and provided in Christ. He is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Calvary becomes the center of God's moral universe. There sin was judged; there Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. There He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.

The last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation, tells of the ultimate triumph of Jesus Christ. In this book we are told of a great multitude which no man can number of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, who stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. They were crying with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb." The ultimate triumph of this great Saviour is seen in the fact that "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Yes, this crimson thread runs through the Bible from beginning to end, and in the Word of God we have inerrantly revealed God's will concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation.

### God's FINAL WORD

The Bible is God's final word to man on all matters relating to Christian faith and practice. We need no further revelation. Such revelation has been professed by some and there are groups that follow these so-called revelations. But we find no need for the revelations of Joseph Smith and his *Book of Mormon*; nor of Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy and her "inspired" interpretations in *Science*



*and Health with Key to the Scriptures*; nor those so-called inspired interpretations of Mrs. White of the Seventh-day Adventist group. To us the Bible is sufficient for all doctrine and faith.

The Bible is our moral Guide. It points the way of righteousness, of light and redemption—the way to heaven. If we destroy it, everything remains the same—only we have lost our Guide. There is nothing to help us and guide us through the pitfalls of life.

### THE TEST OF THE BIBLE

The test of the Bible is to prove its teaching in life. Jesus said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." So really the test of the Bible is to do what the Bible says. It is the same as the test of a prescription. The other day I received a prescription from a doctor and, contrary to most prescriptions, I was able to read this prescription, for he'd written in a very fine hand. I might have been tempted to say, "This is the only prescription I have received that I'm able to read; therefore I'm going to keep it, for I know just exactly what he said." But would it have done me any good had I kept it? No! The test of the prescription was to have it filled and to take the medicine. If the medicine kills, it's no good; if it cures, it's a wonderful prescription. So the Bible is our Prescription to holy living. Fulfill it and its provisions and it will prove itself true. It is the same as following a recipe. The proof of the recipe is not the beautiful pictures that appear in the book or the magazine. So seldom do the actual products appear as beautiful as the pictures! But the test is to follow the instructions, put the ingredients together exactly as stated, cook them the proper amount of time with

the proper amount of heat—then the test of the pudding is in the eating.

This Bible has stood the test of time. Everywhere it has been taken it has brought the same wonderful results. It is today the world's Best Seller. It has been translated in whole or in part into over eleven hundred different languages and dialects. Wherever it has gone it has brought uplift and blessing, life, liberty, and deliverance to people. It is the medium of making known God's salvation to all men. In one of our missionary reading books last year, an interesting incident was told of a community on the island of Okinawa. When the United States Army men were retaking that island, they came upon a particular village which was so different from all the other villages they had found. This village was a clean village. The homes were clean; the people had ideas of sanitation; there was a tone of moral living about the people that was not found in other places. It was so unusual that men asked the reason for such improvements and the people brought to them an old, frayed Bible. Many years before, some missionaries had passed that way and had left a Bible in that village. Only one Bible, but the people had read it, they had accepted its truth, they had followed its teachings—and it had brought them cleanliness and blessing and liberty. This has been the truth wherever the Bible has been taken.

What is the test of the Bible? It is the test to which an old saint put it many years ago. Some of her grandchildren were looking through her old Bible and along the margin of her Bible they saw these letters, *T* and *P*. They said "Grandma, what do you mean by these letters, *T* and *P*?" The old saint of God said, "Oh, bless your hearts, honey! That means tested and proved. I've tested and proved those promises of God." What

is the test of the Bible? It is not the test of the unenlightened minds of nonspiritual men. It is not the test of reason alone. It is not the test of scientific discoveries alone. What is the test of the Bible? The test of the Bible is to accept its teachings, obey its precepts, and follow its Lord.

The Bible is God's Word to us.

Down through the centuries it has been the support and comfort to the people of God. They have lived by its precepts, have proved its promises, have trusted its Saviour and found salvation, and have died in the triumphs of its offered faith. Take it as your Guide, as the Man of Your Counsel, as God's Message to you.

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## Freedom in Arminian-Wesleyan Theology

By J. Kenneth Grider\*

FOR HEGEL and his sort, freedom refers to a capacity in man to order his life according to reason. To Kierkegaard, it is many strange things. Mostly it is possibility. In Kierkegaard's *Concept of Dread*, freedom is the possibility of the God relation or the sin-fall. In his *Stages on Life's Way*, it is the possibility of transition from the aesthetic to the ethical to the two religious levels of living. In his *Fear of Trembling*, built around the Abraham-Isaac story, freedom is the opposite of what it is for Hegel and Schelling; it is the possibility of transcending one's reason and obeying God, regardless.

For Luther, who wrote of it considerably, as against the humanistic Erasmus, freedom is the power in the unsaved to expand in sinfulness, the power in the saved to be enslaved to Jesus Christ. In the sense of freedom as the power of alternative choice, Luther did admit, as did Augustine earlier, that man is free on amoral matters, such as the way in which he might lay out his vegetable garden.

Calvin, of course, was of a rather similar opinion on man's freedom. It

is true that Luther, like Augustine, believed that Adam was free to do his first sin with alternative choice, while Calvin was convinced that even Adam's first sin was decreed by God in a causal sense. So Calvin's is a more extreme emphasis upon God's absolute sovereignty. But for them both, Luther and Calvin, each person's eternal destiny is irrevocably decided long before he is ever born.

We Arminian-Wesleyans react heartily against that kind of theological necessitarianism. Of course we know that many factors not of a given man's choosing incline him in one direction or another: the land he is born in, the kind of parents he has, the genes that get to be his. He cannot ever be the center on the basketball team nor the tackle in football if he got markedly the wrong genes. It is rather impossible to change one's ancestors in order to keep from going bald. The mathematical odds are against one's becoming a Christian if he is born a Buddhist. In a certain myth about Er of Pamphylia at the end of the *Republic*, Plato tells of a soldier, Er, who had been killed and who returns to this life to say that while departed he had seen a process

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at work before one is born—a spindle of necessity—which conditions human destiny. That philosopher was wrong about many things. But he was surely right in saying that none of us begins at zero, that underneath our freedom there lies an absolutism.

But with all that admitted, we Arminian-Wesleyans have been wont to agree with Browning that “man is the grand perhaps.” He is a consequent, we have granted; but he is also an emergent. With him, two plus two can easily equal five or six or more, and not just four. Even if Matthew Arnold is right, that “every man strikes his roots in a far fore time,” we are sure that the wonder about a man is what he may become. What capacity he has to become a saint like Fletcher, or a sinner like Voltaire or Rousseau! The brute may do neither—only man, the amphibian, who dwells in this world but who may at the same time dwell in the heaven of heavens. Who ever saw a cow stop chewing her cud in order to meditate a moment upon a loving, holy God?

Admitting, then, that we men are limited at times by conditions we do not and would not set, we in this theological orientation want nothing of that determination which is Augustinianism and Lutheranism and Calvinism. What has sometimes happened, though, is that, in order to have no truck with unconditional predestination, we have sometimes voiced a view that savors of Pelagianism or Semi-Pelagianism. Because man’s own choice is what finally determines whether he is made righteous or not, we have tended to talk about his making that choice. And of course we should speak of that destiny-determining response, which is his to make. But we need to be clear that he never makes it of himself, that he never even wants to

make it until first God has awakened in him the yearning for new birth.

Pelagius and his kind, with their opposition to original sin, taught that men need only proper instruction in order that the goodness latent in the soul be brought to full expression. Semi-Pelagianism taught that no prevenient grace is needed in order to initiate, but only to further, the soul’s progress in grace. Both views incline toward humanism; both open the way for at least a degree of human merit in salvation.

Arminianism has often been accused of being Pelagian, but it has ever guarded against that error. A few years after James Arminius’ death, his followers remonstrated against their Calvinistic opponents with five important “points,” the fourth of which reads:

“That this divine grace or energy of the Holy Ghost, which heals the disorders of a corrupt nature, begins, advances, and brings to perfection everything that can be called good in man; and that, consequently, all good works, without exception, are to be attributed to God alone, and to the operation of His grace; that, nevertheless, this grace does not force the man to act against his inclination, but may be resisted and rendered ineffectual by the perverse will of the impenitent sinner.”

For Arminius, the capacity to will was not lost in the Fall. But the capacity to will any good thing, of one’s self, was lost. Of fallen natural man, Arminius asserts: “In this state, the free will of man towards the true good is not only wounded, maimed, infirm, bent, and weakened; but it is also imprisoned, destroyed, and lost. And its powers are not only debilitated and useless unless they be assisted by grace, but it has no powers whatever except such as are excited by divine grace. For Christ has said,

'Without me ye can do nothing'" (*The Writings of Arminius*, ed. Nichols, I, 526). He also writes: "The mind, in this state, is dark, destitute of the saving knowledge of God, and, according to the Apostle, incapable of those things which belong to the Spirit of God. For 'the animal man has no perception of the things of the Spirit of God' (I Corinthians 2:14)" (*Ibid.*). Hear him also say: "Exactly correspondent to this darkness of the mind, and perverseness of the heart, is the utter weakness of all the powers to perform that which is truly good, and to omit the perpetration of that which is evil" (*Ibid.*, p. 527). In support, he gives Christ's "A corrupt tree [cannot] bring forth good fruit" (Matthew 7:18), and "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" (Matthew 12:34) Among other supports, he also mentions John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father . . . draw him." After quoting John 8:36, that only those are free "whom the Son hath made free," he says: "It follows, that our will is not free from the first fall; that is, it is not free to good, unless it be made free by the Son through his Spirit" (*Ibid.*, p. 528).

Arminius was no Calvinist. He believed that, with the aid of prevenient grace, fallen natural man can perform a good act, such as that of believing on Christ for pardon. Indeed, man must believe for himself, else he will be eternally lost. But the believing is always through God's assistance, and is even initiated at the outset by the Father's drawing. This is one reason why Arminius ever denied the accusation that he was teaching a Pelagian meritoriousness.

Whatever Professor Cell's most scholarly conclusions might have been, John Wesley was surely no Calvinist—although, like Calvin, Wesley was a Protestant; i.e., an opposer

of the merit view in popery.

Like Arminius, after whom Wesley named his official magazine, the Oxford "methodist" taught that man casts the deciding vote, whether he will be saved or damned. But for Wesley, as for the earlier "freedomist," man does not, cannot, of himself, cast an assenting vote. Speaking of John Fletcher and himself Wesley says that they " . . . absolutely deny natural free will." (See Burtner and Chiles's *Compend of Wesley's Theology*, pp. 132-33.) Wesley continues, "We both steadily assert that the will of fallen man is by nature free only to evil" (*Ibid.*).

Believing that to deny original sin is to be a heathen, Wesley had a view of the racial fall which is a bit extreme for many of us. We can agree that all men are "'conceived in sin,' that hence there is in every man a 'carnal mind,' which is enmity against God; which is not, cannot be, 'subject to' his 'law'; and which so infects the whole soul, that 'there dwelleth in' Him, 'in his flesh,' in his natural state, 'no good thing'; but 'every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is evil,' only evil, and that 'continually'" (*Standard Sermons*, II, 223). That is an awful picture. but most of us would agree that the top-most of God's creation is fallen in that way. That is Bible, surely. One is not as quick to say with Wesley, however, that the image of God is lost entirely. Mr. Wesley figures that every descendant of Adam is " . . . dead to God, wholly dead in sin; entirely void of life of God; void of the image of God" (*Works*, ed. Emory, 401). Somewhere he says that we have "the image of the devil."

If man is not "void" of the image of God, the image is at least utterly defaced. This is why we Arminian-Wesleyans agree with Wesley that "salvation begins with what is termed

(and very properly) preventing grace; including the first wish to please God, the first dawn of light concerning his will, the first slight transient conviction of having sinned against him" (*Works*, ed. Nichols, VI, 509). And we agree with him that prevenient grace is "not natural, but a supernatural gift of God, above all his natural endowments" (Burtner and Chiles, *op. cit.*, p. 151).

Due to man's fallenness, and God's prevenient grace, Wesley could say: "Of yourselves cometh neither your faith nor your salvation: 'It is the gift of God'; the free, undeserved gift; the faith through which ye are saved, as well as the salvation which he of his own good pleasure, his mere favour, annexes thereto. That ye believe, is one instance of his grace; that believing, ye are saved, another. 'Not of works, lest any man should boast'" (said on Ephesians 2:4). We might quibble with him over whether one ought to call believing faith itself a gift. But if he only means that without God's help we cannot believe, we would surely agree heartily. That the gift of faith, for Wesley, does not mean a gift to men whether they will have it so or not is shown by many passages in his writings, such as in that one where he explains: "I am persuaded every child of God has had at some time 'life and death set before him,' . . . and has in himself the casting voice" (*Works*, ed. Nichols, VI, 281).

Articles VII and V in the Church of the Nazarene's official creed are in substantial agreement with Arminius and Wesley on the natural man's inability to do good of himself. Article VII refers to man's ". . . ability to choose between right and wrong." Lift that from the creed and you have the so-called classic understanding of freedom, such as that found in A. C. Knudson, that it is the power of

"contrary choice" (*The Principles of Christian Ethics*, p. 82).

But read Knudson a little further. Note in the next chapter that he does not believe in the inherent sinfulness of man (*Ibid.* pp. 86 ff.). Note that the Fall in Genesis 3 is interpreted as "legendary" (*Ibid.*, p. 94). Read E. S. Brightman and a host of others who talk about "freedom" and "moral responsibility" in the same terms and you find man depicted as inherently good.

Lift the above-quoted phrase from our creed and it sounds quite like the view of the modernistic A. C. Knudson. But in context, what is expressed is much different from the view of that liberal. Prior to those quoted words the creed states that such ability obtained at "man's creation." And right after the quoted phrase about man's "ability to choose between right and wrong," the creed states why it is that what obtained at man's creation does not obtain now. It says that "through the fall of Adam he [man] became depraved so that he cannot now turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God."

Then the creed goes on to state that, while we cannot now choose "right" nor "God" in our "natural strength," we do all have, through Christ, God's grace to enable us to "turn from sin" and "believe on Jesus Christ for pardon and cleansing."

There is another article in our creed, No. V, which states that, due to original sin, the natural man is inclined to evil continually. It talks of "that corruption of the nature of all the offspring of Adam by reason of which every one is far gone from original righteousness or the pure state of our first parents at the time of their creation, is averse to God, is without spiritual life, and inclined to evil, and that continually." This

is why man is unable, of himself, to choose Christ and righteousness.

So the Nazarene creed, John Wesley, James Arminius, and many authorities not mentioned, understand that fallen man is free. As different from the Hegelians, we do not think it is simply the power to live according to reason (Romans 1:16-17). We like a lot of what Kierkegaard says, but we do not beg the question by calling it possibility and thereby vaguely encompassing most views; we really do believe that men cast destiny-deciding votes. And yet we are not Pelagians nor Semi-Pelagians, for we see that a fallen man cannot

even yearn for pardon without prevenient grace. "We love him, because he first loved us" (I John 4:19). We like a hearty emphasis on indwelling sin (Romans 7:17, 20), as Calvinists do, and upon the grace of God. Yet the "inhabiting sin" (Arminius) only *inclines* us away from God, and grace only *inclines* us toward God. Neither indwelling sin nor prevenient grace is sovereign. We are the sovereign ones, we men—we fallen men. To us, to us free moral agents, it belongs to say which way our souls will go. Hallelujah! men may choose this day, any day, to accept the proffered grace and go with God—and go and go and go!

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#### WHAT DO MINISTERS TALK ABOUT?

Results of a novel study of the topics of conversation of fifty Protestant ministers in a New England city were reported by a prominent minister and educator. Covering one weekday and one Sunday in the life of each minister, the content of his conversation was systematically collected by researches, transferred to IBM cards, and processed.

In his report of the study, Dr. David B. Chamberlain of Boston University Graduate School explained that, from the basic vocational information obtained, five major problems confronting today's ministers could be formulated.

First of these, he said, is the problem of specialization arising from a desire for vocational fulfillment, largely frustrated by the "overwhelming need" for his nonprofessional services. Second is the church's failure to provide facilities and man power to meet rising demands on the ministry. Third is the minister's own selectivity or bias which interferes with establishing a truly cosmopolitan and inclusive Christian community. The fourth problem is the heavy predominance of brief contacts and impersonal means of communication, while fifth is the minister's frustration in his mission through preoccupation with parish detail.

"Judging from their conversations," Dr. Chamberlain remarked, "ministers shun administrative functions while parishioners and others call on them more often for those than for pastoral services." The study indicated that a few risk "the hazards of the Messiah complex," and that a large proportion of the fifty ministers are dissatisfied with their present vocational role. Dr. Chamberlain presented his report at the recent semiannual meeting of the National Council of Churches' Department of Pastoral Services.

—*The Religious Newsweekly*

# As Others See Us

By W. S. Muir\*

**T**O THE SCOTS there never was or never will be any greater than the immortal Robert Burns. Burns was a common, ordinary man who rose to the heights and is recognized today as one of the greatest of poets.

One will have to admit that the life which Burns led was far from the standards for membership in the church. However, he was a man who left to his country of Scotland and to the world numerous heart-searching thoughts.

One day while in church his mind was wandering (perhaps the preacher's sermon was uninteresting) to the presence of a dignified lady seated in front of him. She was the picture of refinery, poise, dignity, and elegance. However, Burns's attention was attracted to the presence of a louse crawling on her lovely clothes. There amidst the silk and lace was a wretched, miserable louse! His active mind prompted him to write a poem about the incident, which he entitled "To a Louse."

His poem relates the unwanted presence of this louse on such a fine lady, urging it to go find a home on some more vile, more wretched creature. He closes his poem with these immortal words, as we would read them:

*Oh, would some power the gift give  
us  
To see ourselves as others see us!*

*It would from many a blunder free  
us,  
And foolish notion.*

Many times my mind has turned to these words, not only in regard to my own life, but in relationship to the church. How do other people see us? What do they think of us?

Does our church building look shabby, run-down, as though neglected? In this new car, new home, new supermarket age are we expecting people to worship in a church of opposite qualities? Or perhaps our church building is just the opposite, ranging to the spectacular, where the man from "across the tracks" wouldn't feel welcome to enter. It does make a difference how "others see us" if we expect them to be interested in our message.

Does our worship service run in an unorganized manner, with no form or semblance of organization or preparation? Or perhaps it is just the opposite, so formal and so outlined that it is an impossibility for God to break through to bless our hearts.

Does our church in the eyes of others serve as a "social function" or is it a church with a passion for the lost in this dying age?

Yes, to "Rabbie," as he is known to the Scots, we are indebted for these lines. May we ever keep them in mind in regard to the salvation of souls! How do others see us?

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# Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle\*

Romans 8:12-17

## DEBTORS

**I**N THE TWELFTH VERSE Paul says that we are debtors, but not to the flesh. In other words we owe the flesh nothing. The word for debtor, *opheiletes*, means "one who owes another." A secondary definition is "one held by some obligation, bound to some duty."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps that is the sense here. Sanday and Headlam paraphrase the verse thus: "Such a destiny has its obligations. To the flesh you owe nothing."<sup>2</sup> Godet has: "We are under obligation."<sup>3</sup>

## ABOUT TO DIE

The first part of verse thirteen reads: "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." The literal Greek is: "ye are about to die." Godet paraphrases the meaning thus: "There is nothing for you but to die; such is the only future which awaits you."<sup>4</sup>

## MORTIFY

The last part of the verse says: "but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

That the real meaning of "mortify" is not commonly understood is shown by the popular expression, "I was mortified to death." Translated into correct English that simply means, "I was greatly embarrassed."

In contrast is an account written by a missionary. One day after a tiresome journey in the jungle he was resting on a camp cot, relaxing by reading his Greek New Testament! He happened to lower the book for a moment and found himself confronted by a very deadly snake, whose head was less than two feet from his face. (Please don't draw the conclusion that it is dangerous to concentrate on your Greek Testament.) He said he performed the gymnastic miracle of leaping from that cot without raising himself, found an iron poker by the fire, and "mortified" the snake.

That missionary knew his Greek. for the verb *thanatoo* does not mean "embarrass" but "put to death, destroy, render extinct."<sup>5</sup> That is what we are to do with "the deeds of the body" (*soma*).

Paul is not here pleading for a rigorous asceticism. He is not advocating the suppression of all physical desires and the denial of any enjoyment of physical pleasure. What he is saying is that all the bodily activities carried on independently of the Spirit and in defiance of His dominion should be put to death. The previous clause clearly indicates this.

## SONS OF GOD

Literally the fourteenth verse reads: "or as many as are led by God's Spirit, these are God's sons." In the Greek there is no definite arti-

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<sup>1</sup>Trayer, *Lexicon*, p. 469.

<sup>2</sup>Romans, p. 201.

<sup>3</sup>Romans, II. 78.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>5</sup>Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 283.



cle with "sons." This makes it more emphatic. The anarthrous construction (without the article) indicates *character* or *kind*. The statement means, then, that those who are led by God's Spirit have (perhaps also display) the character or nature of God's sons. They not only belong to the family but act like it!

#### BONDAGE

In the fifteenth verse the word *douleia* occurs for the first of five times in the New Testament. It is found again in verse twenty-one, in Galatians 4:24; 5:1; and Hebrews 2:15. Its simple meaning is "slavery." So the phrase here, "the spirit of bondage . . . to fear" means a slavish spirit of being afraid. That is what the Jews under the law had—a constant fear of breaking one of the multitude of rules and regulations of the Mosaic law or the tradition of the elders. But Christianity brings a spirit of freedom, the Holy Spirit in our hearts guiding and enabling us in doing God's will.

#### ADOPTION

The word *whiothesia* likewise occurs here for the first of five times in the New Testament. It is used only by Paul (Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5). It means literally "a placing as son" (from *whios*, "son"; and *tithemi*, "set, put, place"). Though rare in the New Testament it is very common in the Greek inscriptions of the Hellenistic period (ca. 300 B.C.—A.D. 300). The Jews did not practice adoption. So Paul evidently derived the idea and this legal, technical term from Greek sources.

#### ABBA, FATHER

The Greek has *abba pater*. The first word is Aramaic, the second Greek. Both mean "father."

This same combination is found

elsewhere in the New Testament only twice. In Mark 14:36 Jesus prays in Gethsemane: "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee." In Galatians 4:6 we have almost exactly the same statement as here. Sanday and Headlam comment: "It gives a greater intensity of expression, but would only be natural where the speaker was using in both cases his familiar tongue."<sup>6</sup>

#### ITSELF OR HIMSELF?

The King James Version renders the sixteenth verse thus: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The Revised Standard Version changes "itself" to "himself."

Orthodox Christianity has always held to the deity of Jesus Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit. Modern liberalism has frequently denied both.

It is often affirmed that the Revised Standard Version denies the deity of Jesus and deletes some of our most important doctrines from the New Testament. The charge is, of course, completely unfounded and false. The facts are that in some passages the Revised Standard Version states the deity of Jesus where the King James Version does not (see, for example, Titus 2:13). Of two possible translations of the Greek the Revised Standard Version adopts the stronger one, the King James Version the weaker. Would that be the case if the revision committee were seeking to deny the deity of Jesus?

A similar thing is true with regard to the personality of the Holy Spirit. All preachers and laymen who quote or read the King James Version of Romans 8:16 are thereby tacitly denying the personality of the Holy

<sup>6</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 203.

Spirit, calling Him an "it." Even if one is reading the King James Version in the pulpit he should always change "itself" to "himself." By doing so we affirm our faith in the Holy Spirit, not as an impersonal influence, but as a living Person who dwells in our hearts. Of all Bible lovers the holiness people should be the most eager to protect the precious doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit. For without *Him* in our hearts there is no such experience as holiness and no possibility of living the sanctified life. Let us never be guilty of referring to the Holy Spirit as "it"!

The question may well be raised: Why does the King James Version use "it" in referring to the Spirit? The simple answer is that the Greek word for "spirit," *pneuma*, is neuter. Hence it is necessary for grammatical reasons that the pronoun referring back to a neuter noun as its antecedent should also be neuter in form. But not in meaning! This is just one

of many examples of an accidental disharmony in the grammatical usages of two different languages. As every student of foreign languages knows, the precise distinction between masculine, feminine, and neuter to which we are accustomed in English is little known outside our language. We have to translate the thought, not just the mechanical form of the word. Paul believed in the personality of the Holy Spirit! This very verse is the declaration of a personal function: the Spirit witnesses.

#### FELLOW HEIRS

In the seventeenth verse the word *synkleronomos* occurs for the first of four times in the New Testament (cf. Ephesians 3:6; Hebrews 11:9; I Peter 3:7). As children of God we are His heirs. But since Jesus is the Son of God we are fellow heirs with Him. How cheaply some people forfeit this priceless privilege!

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#### MODERN MARTYRS

John Huss, an early Reformer, died at a stake in Constance because he held to the truth of God's Word. William Tyndale was burned to death with his own translation of the Bible hanging around his neck. He died for the cause of putting the Bible into the language of the people.

A man need not die as a martyr to die for something. He can do it over a period of years by giving himself totally to his cause. Peter Marshall burned himself out by preaching the gospel. A consecrated doctor may die for his patients by working day and night.

Which shall it be for you? Will you die of something or for something? To die for something tomorrow means to live for something today.

—JOHN R. BROKHOFF in "*This Is Life*" (Fleming H. Revell Company)

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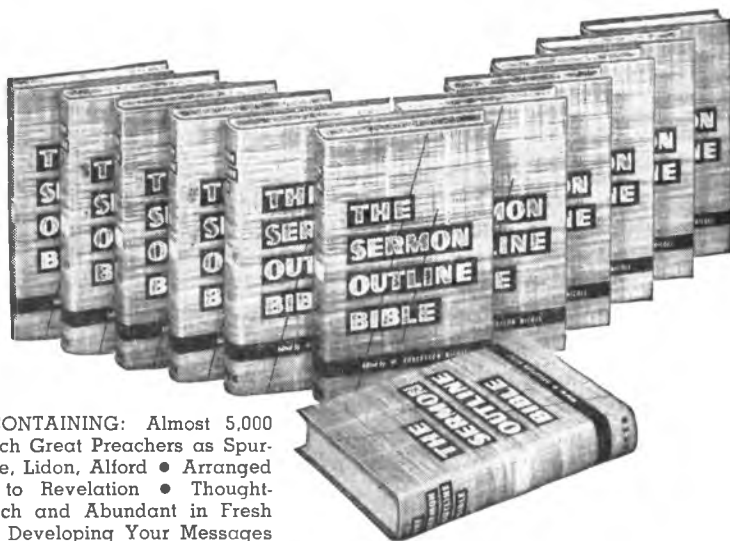


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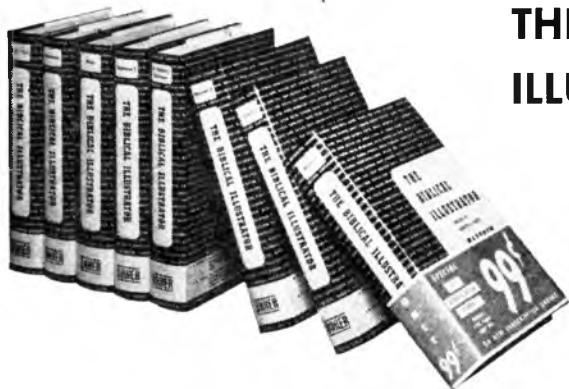
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# "QUEEN of the PARSONAGE"

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

**Supplied by Ruth Vaughn\***

## PORTRAIT OF A QUEEN

Mrs. E. S. Phillips, pastor's wife, First Church, Bethany, Oklahoma, is small, attractive, poised, and charming. To three girls she is "the best mother in the world"; to Dr. E. S. Phillips, she is "my lifetime sweetheart"; to the townspeople of Bethany and the hundreds of students enrolled in Bethany Nazarene College, she is "our pastor's wife." To these three important tasks she has given of herself unstintingly. To the molding of her children, the encouraging of her husband, and the aiding of those in need she has given her life.

As a mother, she has exemplified Christ. Her oldest daughter wrote of her: "Although she is active in the church, Mother never neglects her family. Never once have any of us needed her that she wasn't there to help. When we need guidance, she is ready to counsel. When we are sick, she is always there to comfort, and her very presence makes us feel better.

"Mother never neglects her daily devotions. No matter how hard the day has been, you can depend on it that she has prayed and talked to the Lord. Many times we children have had problems that seemed too big to handle, but if Mother knew about them, we didn't worry because we knew she would pray about them, and somehow her prayers always get through."

\*Pastor's wife, Amarillo, Texas.

As a wife, she has stood by her husband in every decision he has had to make. Her faith in him has never faltered; her love has steadied him through dark times of crisis. The greatest joy of her life in the parsonage comes because twenty-five years ago she fell in love with a fellow who was called to the ministry. Through the years her love has grown stronger for him—and the work of his calling.

As a minister's wife, she is always understanding, ready to give aid to anyone in need. She takes a personal interest in every member of the church and is always ready to listen to his problems. Throughout her life she has had a desire to help people in a spiritual way, and in the capacity of a minister's wife she has found that rich opportunity and has exploited it to its greatest extents.

In each phase of her life Mrs. E. S. Phillips measures up to royal standards. Truly this is a "portrait of a queen."

## ROYAL COOKBOOK

With the coming Christmas season our minds turn to candies. Parsonage Queen Mrs. D. D. Elliott serves delectable homemade chocolates. Could anything be more tasty at this time of the year? Here's how she does it!

- 1 cube oleomargarine
- 1 can coconut
- 1 can Eagle Brand Milk
- 2 boxes powdered sugar
- Nuts

Form into balls the size of a pecan and chill overnight.

Melt 1 package chocolate bits in ½ package paraffin in double boiler. Coat candy balls with chocolate.

#### OVER TEACUPS

*Question:* "I have heard for years that the attitudes of the minister's wife determine her husband's destiny. It's hard for me to understand why *my* attitudes are so important to my husband's success or failure. Do you really believe that this old cliché is true? If so, why?"

*Answer:* To the minister, his wife's attitudes are one of the greatest factors of assistance or detriment to his calling. Mrs. James Tucker, pastor's wife of Butler, Indiana, wrote a paper dealing with this problem which she presented at a ministers' wives' retreat. I believe that the answer to this question will be of value to all "parsonage queens."

For the next four issues we will be featuring this paper written by Mrs. James Tucker. It is entitled "How My Attitudes Affect My Husband's Ministry."

"We have all heard the expression that the minister's wife either makes or breaks the minister. All of us, I am sure, would far rather have our husbands be a success than a failure. I believe our attitudes are one of the main factors of this saying.

"Let us take a look at the meaning of the word attitude. Webster defines it as position or bearing as indicating action, feeling, or mood.

"There are times when each individual detects in another a good or unpleasant personality. Back of that feeling, action, or mood that springs from a personality is an attitude that is right or wrong.

"The very heart of the teaching of Christ deals with men's nature and disposition. His constant plea is that we develop such personalities that

we spontaneously seek to do by others as we would like them to do by us.

"Right attitudes denote man's desire for God. They help man to forget himself and in return think of God and others.

"A right attitude pulls upward; a wrong attitude pulls downward. A right attitude leads to life, but a wrong attitude leads to death.

"Mrs. Maud Chapman, wife of Dr. Chapman, said to her husband: 'I cannot be happy if I seem to hinder you in the work of the Lord. I promised God when I married you that I would never stand in your way as a preacher.' We must never lose that spirit!

"Our attitudes not only affect our husbands' ministry, but they affect us as Christians. If we aren't in the place spiritually that we should be, we cannot accomplish anything for God. If our husbands have to encourage us all the time, they are losing time and effort that they should spend on the flock."

(To be continued)

#### BOOKSHELF WITH LACE

For a Christmas gift which will be treasured by the whole family, you can't find an equal to *Christ and the Fine Arts* or *The Old Testament and the Fine Arts*, both compiled by Cynthia Pearl Maus. These books are treasuries of the finest in picture, poetry, story, and song dealing with the Old Testament and the life of Christ. (Nazarene Publishing House, \$5.95.)

#### THE KING'S HOUSE

Have more love than money for Christmas presents? Make your own. For a desk blotter, secure a length of cardboard and cover with gay or se-

date self-adhesive plastic. A small fruit-juice can covered with same plastic makes an ideal pencil holder. An orange crate covered with the same plastic makes an ideal place for miniature doll furniture. You'll be amazed at the creations you can make with this lovely stuff to disguise your gifts' humble origins. Do have a merry Christmas!

### HEART TALK

The burden of the church was heavy. It seemed our ceaseless efforts were without fruit or gain. And it seemed—that dark, starless, winter night—that my husband and I alone carried the weight of the burden for the church God had sent us to serve.

I knelt in the church alone. My heart ached and broke over the indifference of those whom we tried to help. Desperately I began to pray.

"O Lord, it seems too much! We give our hearts, our lives, our very selves—and then these men and women turn away and leave us alone. We try to warn and shield them from pitfalls and so often we see them trapped in their sin."

The room was filled with my sobbing and then a voice spoke. "My child, I understand! They also turned away from Me and left Me alone. My message of salvation and escape from sin's snares was unheeded by many."

"But, Lord," I cried, "they're so indifferent, thoughtless, so unconcerned, and yet they pull at our heartstrings and we groan and intercede and cry for their souls. Why, Lord?"

The voice was filled with sorrow. "My child, I sat and looked over Jerusalem and My heart broke as I said, 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you to Me but you would not!'"

My tears came fast. "Lord, I've given my ceaseless efforts. I've prayed and cried. And now, Lord, I'm so tired. Please, Lord, release the burden! Let me rest!"

The voice spoke through the stillness. "For them I gave My life, dear child. Can you do less?"

Understanding filled my heart. The tired, hopeless ache slipped away. "Lord, forgive me! I will continue to do my best and to love in spite of unloveliness, love in spite of indifference, love even Thy frailest children who can't seem to stand alone. I'll continue to pray, to give of myself, to travail for the birth of souls."

I could hear the smile in His voice as He spoke. "Inasmuch as ye do it to the least of these, My child, you do it unto Me!"

Can we offer to Him a better Christmas present?

---

### DEFENDING WEAKNESS

A friend of mine, who was a British staff officer in the last war, told me that one of the axioms by which they operated was: "Do not defend weakness—exploit success!"

The meaning is obvious. Do not tie up your resources in defending your weak spots, but rather use your resources to exploit more fully the successes already gained. This policy keeps the initiative in one's own hands instead of the enemy's. It is a positive, rather than a negative, position. It is to substitute attack for defense.

—DR. EVERETT L. CATTELL,  
*General Superintendent, Ohio  
Yearly Meeting of Friends*

## I Saw a Man Come to Jesus

Contributed by V. H. Lewis\*

VACATION had come to a close. The Men's Fellowship had agreed to have everything in readiness upon my return and the revival would begin. But such was not the case. All plans had collapsed in only one week.

After nine property owners had been contacted for lots that might be used for a two weeks' revival, one lady agreed to permit the use of her land, the first sermon delivered in her living room. Of course it was not premeditated, but in this case the Lord had prepared the way. As soon as the commitment was made, the men of the church began cutting fence, undergrowth, and the two acres were put in shape in one day.

This is a new community joining our city, having no church and showing little interest in attending any type of church services. However, it is amazing how the sinners will take notice when God's people go into action.

It was mid-August and really no need for a tent, so the furniture consisted of platform, piano, folding chairs for a youth choir, and a public-address system with recorded music. The records were used while the people were assembling each evening. Lighting consisted of yellow bulbs forming a square over the congregation and choir. The seats were made of two-by-twelve boards resting on concrete blocks. They served two purposes: the first, for sitting; and

the second, they were not conducive for sleeping.

Each night the crowd was most encouraging, with sinners always present to hear the message. There were twenty-eight seekers and nine were received into membership.

The man who came to Jesus we will call Art. For two evenings a new car parked at the road, but the people did not come into the service. An invitation was given them to drive in, and the next night they were parked in a good location, but continued to remain in the car.

After most of the revival was over and Art had had to stay in the car because strong drink had rendered him helpless each evening, on Saturday night, at last he was sober and sitting in the audience. During the invitation he invited the personal workers to look elsewhere for seekers.

Sunday night came and again Art was there and sober. This was the last night. Some of the men went to him and he came to the altar at once and found God. Then came the test. His life had been built around smoking and hard liquor, but now he stood stripped of his world. For over a week one of the men stayed close by or made daily calls at his home. Then the first Sunday service came after his conversion and Art was there and his fine wife seated beside him. When the altar call was made, he arose and came. As he stood up he was shaking from head to foot; the pair of crutches

\*Executive Secretary, Department of Evangelism.



was gone (tobacco and liquor); and now he wanted something to take their place. As he knelt at the altar I reminded the Lord we would have to have a miracle. The Lord came and set him free, and as he arose his body was calm and he looked peaceful. No, he was not sanctified, but his body was healed.

The following Sunday, Art and his wife came to the altar to be sanctified wholly. Our Lord did not disappoint them, and they received the blessing and were two of those received into membership. It is truly no secret what God can do! Now after almost two years this man is still enjoying the grace of God.

Before his conversion, Art was fire chief for a major aircraft company, but drink was his downfall and had caused his dismissal. His wife was and still is a department head for a large department store. Now Art has gone into business for himself and has a bright future before him. He has made the statement, "God will surely have His part of all the money that comes into my hands!"

God didn't send a "tailored couple" to carry the burdens of the church, but he laid the material before us and we have had a part in seeing the vessels reshaped which are now serving in official positions for the Kingdom.

## ONE MAN'S METHOD

### The Church Captures the Mobile Homes

By Eugene A. Conklin\*

**A**CCORDING to a recent survey, mobile home owners are increasing in number. In five years it is estimated that one out of every twenty families will dwell in a "home on wheels."

One church feels that the "trailerite" has been largely bypassed insofar as church interest manifested in him is concerned.

With this thought in mind the church in question has prepared posters urging mobile home dwellers to "come and worship with us." These are distributed to all managers of trailer courts for posting in their offices. In addition, a number of church members are assigned to pay personal visits to all dwellers in trailers and personally urge them to attend church.

This church has formed an unusual

organization, "The Trailer-Dwellers," made up entirely of those who live in mobile homes. They meet once weekly and have special church projects having to do with mobile home centers.

#### THOSE IN MILITARY SERVICE

One church feels that the armed forces are still a powerful force to be reckoned with. The draft is still continuing and there are many young men in the service, either in domestic or overseas areas.

This church asks all who have relatives, friends, or acquaintances in any branch of the service, to furnish their names and current military addresses. The pastor then writes a personal letter once monthly to each serviceman expressing the church's desire to be of service in any way possible on the home front while the serviceman is away in the service of his country.

\*Pastor, Elgin, Illinois.

The church also prepares a mimeographed "Armed Forces Newsletter" of four pages, which is mailed once a month to all servicemen. This contains news items relating to church activities as well as condensations of recent sermons. The newsletter is prepared by an editorial staff of church members, while the actual typing and mimeographing is handled by the teen-ager contingent.

The pastor of this church also sends personally signed cards at Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and other religious occasions, to all servicemen.

In addition the church has an armed forces "News Board" in the outer corridors. This contains letters written by servicemen to the pastor, snapshots and photos taken by servicemen at their base or overseas, newspaper clippings, anything brought in by friend, relatives, or acquaintances.

Once every ninety days the church has an Armed Forces Sunday. Special prayers are offered for those in the service, together with a special sermon touching upon the contribution these servicemen are making.

In addition any young man about to enter the service is invited to have a farewell dinner at the parsonage a few days before he leaves. The purpose is to make it possible for the pastor to personally wish him well. Where servicemen advise their relatives or wives that they are returning home on leave, the pastor announces from his pulpit that he would be very happy to talk with the serviceman while he is home on leave or furlough.

### SENIOR CITIZENS

"Senior citizens" are men and women between fifty-five and the century mark. Many church members are within these age brackets.

One church takes special interest in its "senior citizenry" group. It

holds a special banquet at least twice yearly for all church members over fifty-five, at which awards are presented for twenty-five years or more of church membership. Special awards are presented at the banquet to older men and women who are still active in church and Sunday school circles.

This church has a special group known as the "Church Senior Citizens," who meet periodically and embark upon special church projects. Members of the group act as ushers at weekly church services.

A "Senior Citizens' Sunday" is scheduled at least once every six months of the church year. At such a service, prayer, scripture reading, benediction, and other phases of the church service are participated in by the senior citizenry.

Once every month this church holds a birthday party for "Senior Citizens" who have grown one year older during the past month. This is usually held on the thirtieth or thirty-first of the month, and special entertainment is arranged for the older church folk.

Another church handles the pastor's vacation in a little different fashion! During the month the pastor is "on siesta," the teen-agers take over. Each week a teen-ager offers the sermon, while others present the scripture reading, prayer, benediction, and other aspects of the service. It is the teen-agers' own "show" and they make every effort to provide stimulating services. During this month every teen-ager is provided with a quota of new teen-age members to garner into the fold of church membership. This has proved a satisfactory stimulant when it comes to making this month well worthwhile from the standpoint of keeping attendance—and interest—up to snuff!

Contributed by Nelson G. Mink\*

Sam Jones once said: "If you will let me, I will cut the last ligament that blinds you to a life of sin, and let you swim out into the boundless ocean of God's saving love.

"Some of you are so tangled up in this meeting you feel like a fellow with the measles before they break out. A few cups of hot Gospel tea will make religion break out all over you. Then keep it out and you are all right, but like the measles, if it goes in on you it will kill you sure."

## HOW THE NATIONS SAY,

### "MERRY CHRISTMAS!"

Brazil: "*Boas Festas!*"

Denmark: "*Glaedelig Jul!*"

Holland: "*Hartelijke Kerstgroeten!*"

Finland: "*Hauskaa Joulua!*"

France: "*Joyeux Noel!*"

Germany: "*Froehliche Weihnachten!*"

Italy: "*Bono Natale!*"

Spain: "*Felices Pascuas!*"

Sweden: "*God Jul!*"

Portugal: "*Boas Festas!*"

—SELECTED

## PEARLS GATHERED BY THE WAY

"We expect that the 'Well done' will at last be spoken, not only to those who had much to give and gave it, but to those who had little and gave it.

"The great task of the church is not only to get sinners into heaven, but to get the saints out of bed.

"The critic who begins with himself will be too busy to take on outside contracts."

—SELECTED

\*Pastor, Connell, Washington.

## GOD KNOWS BEST

A man sat under a walnut tree wondering why God made such a tiny thing as a walnut to hang upon a limb strong enough to hold the weight of a man. Then at the same time He made a pumpkin so large the vine could not lift it off the ground. Just then a walnut fell, striking the thinking man on the head. He rubbed the bump and decided God knew best. What if it had been a pumpkin that had fallen on his head?

—*Corpus Christi First Bulletin*

## "REACTIONS TO CHRIST'S BIRTH"—Matthew 2:2

1. Christ's coming brought confusion and trouble to Herod.

2. Christ's coming upset the cold, formal Jerusalem.

3. His coming brought the answer to the query of the Magi.

4. His coming brought good news to the faithful.

5. His coming has ever since gladdened the hearts of many.

N. G. M.

## LIKE HIS FATHER

A small boy was being reproved by his mother. "Why can't you be good?" she asked.

"I'll be good for a nickel," he said.

"Ah, responded his mother, "you want to be paid for being good. You should copy your father and be good for nothing."

—ANONYMOUS

## JOHN WESLEY'S TWO RULES:

"Never be unemployed," and, "Never be unemployed."

## SERMON STARTERS

### FIRE FROM HEAVEN

TEXT: *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire . . .* (Acts 2:3).

- I. Fire is a mysterious force.
- II. Fire is cleansing, purifying, and refining in its process.
- III. Fire is metamorphic—changes things.
- IV. Fire is self-evident. Needs no arguments.

—NELSON G. MINK

### WHITER THAN SNOW

TEXT: *Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow* (Psalms 51:7).

- I. What God sees under His microscope. He sees germs of selfishness, pride, desire, anger, revenge, and evil passions.
- II. The whitening process. This cost Christ His atoning death on the Cross.
- III. The cleansing Blood.
- IV. The refining. Old Spanish coin, worn smooth, neither image nor letters visible, but put in the fire as it began to melt, picture of the king and all letters stamped 200 years before came out.
- V. He makes me clean. Purity, joy, divine image, fitness for heaven, and that which was "lost" restored.

—NELSON G. MINK

### WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS MEAN TO YOU?

TEXT: Luke 2:20

1. Christmas speaks of the fleetness of time. Each Christmas is the passing of a milestone in life.
2. Christmas tells of new gifts God still wishes to give us.
3. Christmas brings us a message of the intertwining between earth and heaven.
4. Christmas makes us think of the way Christ would have it observed.
5. Christmas brings with it a hope for the future.

—NELSON G. MINK

### THREE WHEREFORES

1. The "wherefore" of a great saving power: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).
2. The "wherefore" of a full salvation: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12).
3. The "wherefore" of the second coming: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (II Peter 3:14).

—NELSON G. MINK

### THE MIRACLE OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

1. A spiritual miracle. Angel announced it.
2. A biological miracle.
3. An astronomical miracle. The star.
4. A celestial miracle. "The heavenly host," etc.
5. A providential miracle. Saved from wrath of Herod, etc.
6. A divine miracle. The Incarnation.

—NELSON G. MINK

### CHRISTMAS, 1959

TEXT: *And his name shall be called Wonderful* (Isaiah 9:6).

1. Wonderful in His birth
2. Wonderful in the lifting power of His salvation
3. Wonderful in His Spirit
4. Wonderful in His manifestations to us
5. Wonderful in individual care for us all
6. Wonderful in His future plans for our lives

—NELSON G. MINK

## Expository Sermon Outline

(Based upon *Philippians*, chapter 4)

INTRODUCTION: In the main this Epistle of Paul is a letter of thanksgiving for a gift which he had received from the church at Philippi. According to J. B. Phillips, Paul "expresses his high hopes for their unity, faithfulness, and progress in the faith." Chapter four proves this to be true. To encompass this message within a reasonable time we do not have time to examine every verse.

- I. "stand fast in the Lord" (v. 1b)—the only safe place for a believer.  
v. 2b—"be of the same mind" (mind the same things) "in the Lord."  
v. 4—"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice."  
v. 5—"Let your moderation" (gentleness and forbearance) be known unto all men" ("by your behaviour"—John Wesley\*). "The Lord is at hand."  
v. 6—"Be careful" (anxious) "for nothing;" ("don't worry over anything whatever."—J. B. P.) "but in every thing" (circumstances—"great or small"—John Wesley) "by prayer and supplication" "with thanksgiving" "let your requests be made known unto God." ("A sure sign of a soul free from care."—John Wesley.)  
v. 9—"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received," (by Paul's voice) "and heard, and seen in me" (by Paul's life) "do." Practice—"Take them for the rule of your faith."—Adam Clarke)
- II. Think right in the Lord. "Think on these things" (v. 8b).

v. 8a—"whatsoever things are"  
"true" "Fix your minds on  
"honest" the things which  
"just" are holy and right  
"pure" and pure and beautiful and good."—  
"lovely" J. B. P.  
"of good report"

v. 8—"if there be any virtue," (excellence) "and if there be any praise," ("approval of God"—J. B. P.)  
"think on" (consider—practice)  
"these things" (See also II Corinthians 10.)

- III. Get reward in the Lord. (This automatically should follow standing fast and thinking right "in the Lord.")

v. 7—"and the peace of God" ("Praising from a sense of pardon and the favour of God."—Adam Clarke.)  
"which passeth" (surpasses)  
"all understanding" ("save to he that receive it"—John Wesley).  
"shall keep" (guard—garrison)  
"your hearts" (your affections"—John Wesley)  
"and minds" (thoughts—"understanding"—John Wesley)  
"through Christ Jesus"  
v. 9b—"and the God of peace" (Not just the peace of God but the God of peace himself.)  
"shall be with you"

- IV. Be content in the Lord (a logical outcome of the previous three points).

v. 11—"for I have learned" ("from God"—John Wesley)  
"in whatsoever" "state" (circumstance—"whatever my outward circumstance"—Weymouth), "I am"  
"therewith to be content"  
v. 13—"I can do all things" ("in the will of God"—John Wesley)  
"through" (by) "Christ which (who) strengtheneth" (empowers) "me."

v. 19—"But my God shall supply" ("will fully supply"—Weymouth)  
"all your need" (here Paul particularly remembering their gift to him)

\*All abbreviations and references will refer to the following works:

John Wesley—*Notes on the New Testament*  
J. B. P.—J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches*  
Adam Clarke—*Commentary*  
Weymouth—*Weymouth's Modern Translation*

"according to his riches" (wealth)  
"in glory"  
"by" (in) "Christ Jesus"

CONCLUSION: Paul from his prison cell could exhort these things because he knew that the Philippians were (4:1) his "brethren"—"dearly beloved"—"longed for"—"joy," and "crown."

They were fellow believers.

We today need to:

stand fast

think right

get reward

and be content "in the Lord."

And then we too will be "united, faithful, and progressive."—J. B. P.

Both "in the faith" and "in the Lord."

—ROBERT EMSLFY

*Kansas City, Missouri*

## From the Greetings of the Angels to the Scorns of a Howling Mob

TEXT: Luke 2:5-18

INTRODUCTION: This is the time of the year that everyone should rejoice—Jesus, the Saviour, was born. History and climate verify that this was the season of the year Christ was born. The town Bethlehem existed as early as Jacob. It was looked to as the place where the Messiah should be born (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:5).

### I. THE WELCOMING COMMITTEE:

- A. Not the high priest—he was too busy with his duties. And besides, Jesus was to be the eternal High Priest—so he would lose his job.
- B. Not the proud, because they had too much pride to go to a manger. This would not draw much attention, and what they did must be noticed.
- C. Not the rich, because Jesus was too poor.
- D. Not the rulers, because He had no political power.
- E. Yes, the committee was the angels of the Lord. They gladly came to welcome Jesus in the manger.
  1. Their welcome address was,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

2. How beautiful this message must have been to go down the valleys from Bethlehem to the ears of the people whose country was torn with strife and was under the heels of oppression from the Romans!
3. Yes, the shepherds heard as they warmed by their fires, but the rulers and priest did not want to hear.
4. The humble can always hear, but not the proud and haughty.

### II. THE ANSWER FOR SIN:

- A. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save this people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).
- B. No wonder there was joy to the world—the sin problem could be solved now.
- C. Sin brings grief and heartache.
  1. Herod brought pain and grief by killing all the male babies.
  2. Liquor will bring pain and grief by murdering many mothers and dads this Christmas.

### III. HE WENT TO THE CROSS AS THE HOWLING MOB SCORNE:

- A. That you might be delivered from your sins.
- B. That you might be sanctified.
- C. The angels greeted Him; the mob scorned Him. What will you do with Him?

—C. M. ROBY

*Clarksdale, Mississippi*

## The Excluded Christ Child

TEXT: *Because there was no room for them in the inn* (Luke 2:7).

INTRODUCTION: The simple story of incidents surrounding the birth of Christ — angels — shepherds — Simeon — Joseph and Mary.

### I. CHRIST CAME TO DWELL AMONG US IN MORTAL FLESH.

- A. Virgin-born.
- B. The human Jesus.
- C. The divine Jesus.

## II. GREATNESS IS OFTEN OF LOWLY BIRTH.

- A. Note the humiliation of Jesus.
  - 1. Stable
  - 2. Manger
  - 3. Beasts
  - 4. Poverty
- B. Examples in our day: Lincoln, Coolidge, Booker T. Washington, and Bud Robinson.

## III. WHY CHRIST WAS INCARCERATED.

- A. To declare and reveal God to man (Matthew 16:16; John 14:9).
- B. To become the Saviour of the world (Matthew 1:21; John 3:16)
- C. To make us holy (Hebrews 13:12)

## IV. NOTE CHRIST EXCLUDED—"No Room."

- A. Excluded in favor of others.
- B. Because no one seemed to realize who He was and what was His mission.
- C. The loss sustained.

## V. WHY IS CHRIST CROWDED OUT TODAY?

- A. The perversion of our wills.
- B. Depravity of our hearts.
- C. Ignorance of His person and grace (John 4:10; Revelation 3:17).

## VI. MAKING ROOM FOR JESUS.

- A. We should make room for Jesus.
  - 1. In our hearts
  - 2. In our homes
  - 3. In our everyday lives
- B. We must make room for Jesus here and now or suffer exclusion tomorrow.
  - 1. At the hour and article of death
  - 2. On the judgment day
  - 3. Throughout eternity

CONCLUSION: "No room, no room for Jesus" (poem). Select a good soloist, duet, trio, or quartet to sing above song very effectively.

—E. E. WORDSWORTH  
*Redmond, Washington*

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## Christmas Message

TEXT: Luke 2:1-20

INTRODUCTION: Miracle of the angels witnessing to the humble shepherds. These angels brought good tidings. These tidings mean much to us at this season.

## I. TIDINGS OF JOY

- A. The looked-for One has come.
- B. The King has been born.
- C. The Saviour is here.

## II. TIDINGS OF SALVATION

- A. A time of living above sin.
- B. A time of forgiveness of sin.
- C. A time of peace of mind and of men.

## III. TIDINGS OF VICTORY

- A. Satan won the first battle in the Garden of Eden.
- B. Jesus now is to win the war; God is supreme; the Kingdom is established.
- C. This Kingdom is victorious over all.

CONCLUSION: President Wilson sent a good-will fleet of ships around the world. God here sent a squadron of angels to earth to bring tidings and peace. It is ours at this season to carry onward the message of the angels.

—PAUL F. WANKEL  
*Dupo, Illinois*

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## The True Martyr Spirit

SCRIPTURE: I Peter 4:12-13

INTRODUCTION: Peter urges a true Christian attitude in the time of affliction. And again he opens this further exhortation with that endearing characterization, "beloved" (cf. 2:11).

Note the contrasts in these verses:

## I. UNDAUNTED BY FIERY TRIAL (v. 12).

- A. Knowing God's love still rests upon them. "Beloved." Since His love continues, we can endure.
- B. Unsurprised by persecution. Sinners "... think it strange ..." (I Peter 4:4) that Christians care not for their excesses. But Christians "think it not strange" that sinners torment them by fire.
- C. Sure that "smelting" means refining. Fiery trial—fiery ordeal—a smelting furnace, all various translations. The French says: "Furnace." Fire not only tests, but

demonstrates pure metals.

- D. Sure that nothing strange is happening. The French New Testament says: "extraordinary." God's order does not come to us in the haphazard. So things do not just happen; they take place.

## II. REJOICING IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF SUFFERING (v. 13a).

- A. Not questioning, but rejoicing.
1. Making rejoicing your habitual response to persecutions.
  2. Do not be tempted to think God does not care.
- B. Sharing in Christ's own sufferings.
1. The Greek is *koinoheite*, "ye have a share in."
  2. God thus honors you along with His Son.
  3. To the extent that you suffer with Him, to that same extent rejoice! The French says: "In that same measure" (cf. II Corinthians 4:17).
  4. Willingly for His sake, suffering as He suffered.

## III. ASSURED OF THE GLORY TO BE REVEALED (v. 13b).

- A. Our trials spell out our triumph (II Timothy 2:12).  
Since we bear Christ's sufferings now, we may share His glory then.
- B. Rejoicing amid persecutions insures gladness at the revelation of His glory.
1. "Ye may be glad"—"ye may rejoice exceedingly and exultingly."
  2. Be cheerful in life's crucibles that you may be exultant at Christ's coming.

CONCLUSION: "Peter fervently exhorted the saints of all ages to rejoice in all their persecutions, in order that they may shout victory when the Lord is revealed from heaven."—GODBEY.

—ROSS E. PRICE  
Pasadena, California

### FOR YOU

If your life is a grind, use it to sharpen your wits.

—Sunshine

## The Ninth Beatitude

SCRIPTURE: I Peter 4:14

INTRODUCTION: Peter had listened intently, it seems, to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Its system of values and ethical principles all seemed so revolutionary to him then.

But for his persecuted converts he can think of nothing more comforting now than the words of Jesus. "Blessed are ye" (compare Matthew 5:11, where Jesus' word "blessed" is identical in the Greek with Peter's term "happy" in this verse. Note also that Jesus' term "revile" is identical with Peter's term "reproach.")

### I. WHAT IS THE GLORY OF A CHRISTIAN?

- A. To be identified with Christ.
1. To receive from the world the same kind of treatment Jesus did (v. 14a).
  2. As the world reviled and ridiculed Jesus; so does it His true disciples (cf. Mark 15:29-32).
  3. "If ye be reproached . . ." "Reviled."
  - a. But really there is no "if" about it.
  - b. Real identification with Christ is bound to beget the world's antagonism. (So note the grammatical structure of Peter's statement in the Greek assumes this to be the case.)
- B. To be denounced for the sake of Christ.
1. Literally, in the name of Christ (cf. Acts 5:41).
  2. This is a blessed thing.
  3. This is a sure sign of the presence of God's Spirit upon you (v. 14b).
  4. ". . . the spirit of glory and of God . . ." is resting upon you (cf. Isaiah 11:2).

### II. HOW DO THE PRAISES OF A CHRISTIAN DIFFER FROM THOSE OF A SINNER?

- A. The sinner blasphemes Christ.
1. The Greek word so indicates.
  2. The sinner spits in the Saviour's face.
  3. The sinner praises what God despises.
- B. The Christian magnifies Christ.



1. The Christian makes glorious the name of Christ.
2. The Greek *doxadze* means "to speak or sing a doxology in honor of."
3. Life and lip give glory to the Saviour.

CONCLUSION: You can judge your identity by the treatment the world affords you. Be happy, therefore, if it treats you just as it did Christ (cf. John 15:20).

—ROSS E. PRICE  
Pasadena, California

## What's There to Be Ashamed of?

SCRIPTURE: I Peter 4:15-16

INTRODUCTION: Our title is a modern slang phrase (with incorrect English), often spoken by careless souls.

Here Peter tells what really brings one shame.

"It is not the suffering, but the cause, that makes a martyr."—MATTHEW HENRY.

### I. SHAMEFUL SUFFERING (v. 15)

#### A. Let not one of you suffer thus.

1. "The best of men need still to be warned against the worst of sins."—MATTHEW HENRY.
2. Since the enemies of the Christians charged them unjustly with these foul crimes, Peter urged special care that they be guilty of none of these things.
3. If men speak evil of you, let your life be such that none will believe it.

#### B. Not all suffering is blessed.

1. Murder (Matthew 5:21).
  - a. Murderers must be sentenced.
  - b. Murder first starts with anger.
2. Thief. Peter never forgot what theft did to Judas (John 12:6).
3. Evil-doer. A bad actor (Psalms 34:16).
4. Busybody. The Greek means "to play the bishop" in another man's affairs. Meddling in private affairs, inspecting matters not one's own, perhaps with a view to character assass-

ination. We should distinguish concern for public good from mere officious interference in private life. Moffatt calls him a "revolutionary."

### II. SUFFERING UNASHAMED (v. 16)

#### A. As a Christian.

1. The term Christian is used here and in Acts 11:26 and 26:28 only in the entire New Testament.
2. For being a Christian one must often suffer, but for this suffering one need never be ashamed.

#### B. Do not be ashamed if:

1. You suffer innocently
2. In a good cause
3. From pure motives
4. For the sake of Christ
5. As an imitator of Christ

#### C. Glorify God in this matter. God has a divine chemistry that turns our shame into glory.

CONCLUSION: Suffering may become a sacrament of praise. Radiant suffering often becomes redemptive.

—ROSS E. PRICE  
Pasadena, California

## The Epistle to the Hebrews Chapter III

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 3:1-19

INTRODUCTION: The Epistle to the Hebrews is peculiarly the book of the exaltation of Jesus. In chapter one He is portrayed as superior to angels, while in the second chapter our attention is called to His exalted message (or proclamation) and priesthood. The author in this chapter continues his development of Christ's superiority by bidding us to further consider His exalted Person.

### I. THE CONSIDERATION (v. 1)

- A. Consider Him as Prophet (v. 1).
- B. Consider Him as Priest (v. 1).
- C. Consider Him as Pattern.
- D. Consider Him as Paraclete (John 14:18).

### II. THE COMPARISON (vv. 2-6)

- A. In reliability (v. 2).
  1. As a servant (v. 5).
  2. As a Son (v. 6).
- B. In renown (v. 3).

1. Moses.
2. Messiah—Christ is worthy of being glorified in the Church, for He has builded the "house" or church.

### III. THE CAUTION (vv. 7-12, 15-19)

- A. Against impenitence (vv. 7-8).
- B. Against infidelity (v. 12).
- C. Against (spiritual) insensibility.

### IV. THE CHARGE (vv. 13-14)

- A. To persuasion (v. 13).
- B. To perseverance (v. 14).

—M. G. BASSETT

Yuma, Colorado

## The Javelin of Faith

TEXT: *And the Lord said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand toward the city (Joshua 8:18).*

1. Power over invisible forces of evil lies in the attitude of faith.
2. The defeated church at Ai. Money, clothes, worldly goods got in the way.
3. Retaken ground. God answers fasting and prayer. God has a plan. He always does, and it is not one of defeat.
4. The outstretched spear. God works in mysterious ways, but He works!
  - a. Moses with a rod.
  - b. Elisha with a scarf.
  - c. Shamgar and an ox goad.
  - d. We have something in our hands too.
5. "He drew not his hand back until . . ." (Joshua 8:26). Hold out the spear until something gives way.

—NELSON G. MINK

Uncle Bud Robinson once said: "When our blessed Saviour was on earth, He worked a miracle to raise money to pay His taxes. Well, bless His dear name, He's been working miracles to pay mine for the last twenty years. Don't you know I love Him? Of course I do!"

## Successful Christian Living

SCRIPTURE: Romans 14:8

INTRODUCTION: Successful Christian living is the result of:

- I. VITAL RELATIONSHIP (I John 3:2)
- II. ESSENTIAL CONDUCT (I John 2:6; James 2:12; Colossians 4:4; I Thessalonians 1:7)
- III. DIRECTIONAL TENDENCIES (Proverbs 3:6; Psalms 91:1; Luke 1:79; Psalms 119:10; Job 22:29)
- IV. GOVERNING PRINCIPLES (Romans 14:8; I Corinthians 10:31)

—J. W. PETERS

Viriden, Illinois

## Sermon Subjects

(Emphasizing Music Year)

1. Songs for the sanctuary, using Psalms 84:1-4 and Psalms 95:1-7
2. The song of trust, using Psalms 34:3-8
3. The song of confession, using Psalms 51:1-3
4. The shepherd song, using Psalm 23

—KENNETH H. PEARSALL

Yakima, Washington

## Hitherto

(New Year's)

- I. Praise for the past. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" (I Samuel 7:7-12).
- II. Motivation for the present. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:10-17).
- III. Promise and hope for the future. "Who am I, Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" (II Samuel 7:18-21)

—VERNON WILCOX

Portland, Oregon

A baby may not be able to lift much, but it can hold a marriage together.—O. A. BATTISTA, *Everybody's Weekly*.

### Book of the Month Selection, October, 1959

#### SERMONS ON SIMON PETER

*Clovis G. Chappell* (Abingdon, \$2.00)

This, the latest book to come from the prolific pen of Clovis G. Chappell, is by every measurement a worthy successor to his other books that you have known so intimately across the years gone by. In fact, it seems that this has a mellowness and maturity that some of his earlier books, by the very nature of the case, could not have had.

It seems fitting that Clovis Chappell, now in the later years of life, should write with such understanding about the life of Simon Peter. For Simon Peter's contribution of Christianity can be measured only by a close study of his later years, for his early years were tainted with vacillation and unkept promises.

In a dozen delightful sermons Peter is put on parade with all of his foibles and heroics, his impulsiveness and his persistence.

One thing you would admire: Clovis Chappell at no point attempts to cover up the sins of Peter's life. The denial and the backsliding are pictured in true perspective. But the recovery is also there with a delightful sense of understanding. Throughout the book there are many, many homely, personal, warm illustrations that you will enjoy.

I think if I were to choose one of the most enjoyable chapters of this delightful book it would be chapter ten: "Simon Peter's Beauty Secret." To be utterly frank, I believe this sermon could be preached at this particular juncture in the life of any holiness church, when there are inroads of worldliness which reveal themselves in worldly adornment. Here is a kind, but frank, facing of that peculiar and ever-pressing problem.

#### PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN ETHICS

*C. B. Eavey* (Zondervan, \$3.95)

It would not be fair to say that there has been a scarcity of good books in the field of Christian ethics. However some books have been written presupposing that the reader has a broad background in philosophy. In *Practical Christian Ethics* the author brings a presentation that is both adequate and simplified that "he who runs may read." As one would expect to find in a book on ethics, duty is a major word. In fact the chapters are devoted to such studies as "Duties to God," "Duties to Others," "Duties to Self," "Duties to Nature," "Duties of Sex Life," "Duties to the Church," "Duties of Married and of Family Life," "Duties in the Community," "Duties of Economic and Industrial Life," "Duties of Political Life," "Duties of Leisure Time."

Throughout the book the author is clearly evangelical, although not Wesleyan; his discussion of sanctification is based on a theology of gradualism. This is the kind of book that the pastor can take and from it develop good studies for his people in the area of Christian duty on a broad front. At the close of each chapter there is to be found a splendid list of questions; this is one of the real values in the book.

## **YOUTH WANTS TO KNOW**

*Compiled by C. Mervin Russell* (Christian Youth Supplies, Winona Lake, Indiana, \$1.00)

This is a straightforward, fair, spiritually-minded discussion of a variety of problems that are facing the teen-agers of this day. Each problem is faced with a wholesome Biblical approach. Here are some of the chapter discussions: "Is Going Steady Right"—"What's Wrong With Rock 'n Roll"—"Wanted, a Conscience About TV"—"Mixed Marriages"—"Your College and God's Will."

No teen-ager can read this without realizing that the Christian Church is friendly to his temptations and that the Bible is still the best Guidebook for the feet of youth.

## **A HOLINESS MANIFESTO**

*C. W. Butler* (Herald Press, paper, \$1.00; hard cover, \$1.75)

This book is prepared in the evening time of the life ministry of C. W. Butler, nationally known holiness writer, preacher, educator.

He has been referred to as "The Martin Luther of the Holiness Movement." He has maintained an unceasing passion for the distribution of holiness literature and the preaching of the holiness message in inter-denominational camps and wherever his voice could be lifted up.

In twenty-one chapters, each one of which is an independent discussion of some facet of holiness, he concludes his long and fruitful ministry with this "Holiness Manifesto." People who like and enjoy thoughtful, loyal, scriptural discussions of holiness will appreciate this book throughout.

## **ALL THE PRAYERS OF THE BIBLE**

*Herbert Lockyer* (Zondervan, \$3.95)

In an earlier publication, *All the Men of the Bible*, the author gave us a very splendid Biblical study. Now in this new book, *All the Prayers of the Bible*, we have an example again of the same exhaustive carefulness and the same loyalty to Biblical accuracy.

This is the type of a book that would be found very helpful if a pastor were giving a midweek series on prayer, for here are prayers classified: prayers that were not answered, prayers that were postponed, ejaculatory prayers, prayers of agony and petition.

The author in many cases gives splendid working outlines of these prayers with brief comments, and throughout the entire volume there are a warmth and a spiritual flavor to it that will make the reader want to become a better man of prayer.

## **FUNDAMENTALISM AND EVANGELISM**

*John R. W. Stott* (Eerdmans, \$1.50)

The foreword to this book has been provided by Billy Graham. The world-famous evangelist highly recommends the book as being a current, thoughtful study of the real meanings of both Fundamentalism and Evangelism.

It will be well worth the time of any minister to read this through. However, he will not agree with all of the positions taken by the author. The author is clearly a crisis man relative to the new birth, but he just as firmly believes that sanctification is a matter of growth, rather than crisis. At this point his logic breaks down. This material was published some four years ago in Great Britain as a series of studies, but now is released for the first time in the U.S.A., and with the qualifications already mentioned, it is a rewarding study.

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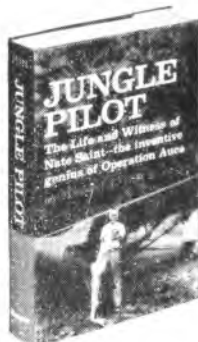
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