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CONTENTS

COVER—CLOVIS G. CHAPPELL (*See page 10*)

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A Notable Decade in Commentaries, <i>Ralph Earle</i>	1
The Scriptural Pattern of Worship (IV), <i>Editorial</i>	6
The Preaching of Clovis G. Chappell, <i>James McGraw</i>	10
The Enrichment of Jesus, <i>J. Melton Thomas</i>	13
The Word of "Authority," <i>R. E. Bebout</i>	15
Why Did Jesus Die? <i>J. Kenneth Grider</i>	17
Gleanings from the Greek New Testament, <i>Ralph Earle</i>	19
My God—Why? <i>G. H. Boffey</i>	21
Benefits from the Evangelistic Campaign (II), <i>Mel-Thomas Rothwell</i>	26
"I Like You!" <i>Hugh Dean</i>	29
Queen of the Parsonage, <i>Supplied by Ruth Vaughn</i>	30
A Good Sermon (I), <i>W. E. McCumber</i>	33
Sermon Workshop. <i>Contributed by Nelson G. Mink</i>	37
Sermon Starters	38
Preaching Program	39
Book Briefs	47

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A Notable Decade in Commentaries

By Ralph Earle*

TEN NEW SETS or series of English commentaries on the Bible or New Testament have begun their appearance in the last ten years. As far as this writer can discover, the previous fifty years, 1900-1949, saw the beginning of only six or seven such works—the *Clarendon Bible* (not yet complete), Charles R. Erdman's *Exposition of the New Testament* in seventeen small volumes, Carroll's *An Interpretation of the English Bible* (thirteen volumes), Lenski's *Interpretation of the New Testament* in twelve fairly bulky volumes, Moffatt's *New Testament Commentary* in seventeen smaller volumes, and the *Westminster Commentaries* (not complete). In view of this striking contrast it would seem justifiable to label the years 1950-59 a notable decade in the history of Biblical commentaries.

Why this bountiful crop, more in the last ten years than in the previous fifty years? There is only one answer—the increased interest in Bible study and Biblical theology that has been evident for the last dozen or score of years. This has produced both the incentive and the market.

Briefly we shall note three things: (1) a quick survey of these ten sets or series; (2) the marked emphasis on Biblical theology exhibited in them; (3) the relatively conservative or liberal tone of these recent works.

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SURVEY

The upsurge of new commentaries began with "The New International Commentary on the New Testament." Announced in 1946 as a seventeen-volume project, the series began in 1951 with the publication of the *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, by Norval Geldenhuys. This excellent work is unquestionably the best English volume on Luke to appear in this century. Written by a Dutch scholar of South Africa, it has as one of its valuable features the frequent quotations from important Dutch and German works which have not been translated into English. The most valuable of these is Strack and Billerbeck's monumental *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*. The relevant rabbinical material is gathered here helpfully.

Another volume in this series is on Acts by F. F. Bruce, lately of Sheffield, now at the University of Manchester. He is probably the leading conservative New Testament scholar in the British Isles. In this volume, and his earlier one on the Greek text of Acts, Bruce has done a superb job.

In the other five volumes that have appeared to date the exegetical and critical notes are not as full and satisfying as in the two volumes mentioned above. The one exception is Ephesians and Colossians, by E. K. Simpson and F. F. Bruce. Here one

finds again the abundance of footnotes that one expects in a scholarly piece of work

The second set begun—and in this case completed—in the present decade is *The Interpreter's Bible*, in twelve massive volumes. The first of these appeared in 1951 and the last in 1956. Somewhat over-advertised as "Christendom's Most Comprehensive Commentary," the treatment is marked by a meagerness of exegetical notes and a generally liberal point of view. However, the Expositions are often rich and rewarding. Especially recommended are those on Matthew by George Buttrick, on Mark by Halford Luccock, and on John by Arthur John Gossip.

The third set is entitled *New Testament Commentary*, by William Hendriksen. This former professor and present pastor has undertaken the very ambitious task of writing a commentary on the entire New Testament in fourteen volumes. So far he has made good progress, with two volumes on John (1953, 1954), I and II Thessalonians (1955), and the Pastoral Epistles (1957). Hendriksen is to be commended highly for his thorough, scholarly exposition of the text.

Beginning with the volume on Acts in 1953, *The Daily Study Bible*, by William Barclay, has proved to be one of the best popular commentaries available. We had the privilege of a very pleasant conversation with Dr. Barclay at Trinity College, Glasgow, when he was working on the final volume, Revelation.

The fifth series is called *Epworth Preacher's Commentaries*. It is of a popular type, prepared as a sort of first commentary for local preachers in the Methodist Church in the British Isles. The first volume, on Romans, by Vincent Taylor, appeared in 1955.

"The Tyndale New Testament Com-

mentaries" began with the publication in 1956 of *The Epistle of James*, by R. V. G. Tasker. Some half dozen volumes have appeared to date.

The fact that commentaries written before 1900 are inevitably outdated in some respects is highlighted by the inauguration of a new series called *The Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary*, which is intended to take the place of *The Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges*. The general editor, C. F. D. Moule, prepared the first volume, on Colossians and Philemon.

Feeling the need for an up-to-date, scholarly, Arminian commentary on the Bible—something which had not been done since Adam Clarke published his great work in eight volumes (1810-26)—a group of Wesleyan scholars projected a forty-volume series to be called "The Evangelical Commentary on the Bible." Two volumes have appeared so far—*Mark*, by Earle (1957); and *Acts*, by Carter and Earle (1959).

The ninth series is appearing simultaneously in Great Britain and the United States. Across the water it is called *Black's New Testament Commentaries*; on this side, *Harper's New Testament Commentaries*. Four volumes have appeared to date, those on Acts and Romans (both 1957), Luke (1958), and Philippians (1959).

The tenth series began with the appearance just this month (October, 1959) of the first five volumes. Called *The Layman's Bible Commentary*, it is published by John Knox Press. As the name would suggest, it is prepared in a nontechnical style for lay readers. One suspects the editors and publishers hope it may have somewhat the same reception and usefulness as Barclay's similar-sized volumes are having in the British Isles.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

We now wish to note the new emphasis on Biblical theology which is apparent in most of these recent commentaries. Perhaps the most striking statement of this change of direction occurs as the first paragraph of the preface by the general editor of *The Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary*, by C. F. D. Moule. He writes:

"The last fifty years have seen a considerable shift in emphasis within New Testament scholarship. When the primary task was to establish the text and to discuss the authenticity of the documents, linguistic and historical considerations were foremost. But gradually, as these foundation-tasks were done, it became possible to devote increasing attention to the elucidation of the theological and religious contents of the New Testament, and to see it in the setting of the life and worship of Christian communities."

R. V. G. Tasker, general editor of *The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, writes in his preface: "All who are interested in the teaching and the study of the New Testament today cannot fail to be concerned with the lack of commentaries, written by scholars who are convinced Christians, which avoid the extremes of being unduly technical or unhelpfully brief." He further states that this series will be written by scholars who are "united in a common desire to promote a truly biblical theology."

Of all these series, the one that reflects most strongly a central emphasis on Biblical theology is *The Layman's Bible Commentary*. The first volume is given over entirely to "Introduction to the Bible." Here are essays on "What is the Bible?" "The History of the People of God," "The Message of the Bible," "How We Got

Our Bible," and "How to Study the Bible." With the exception of the fourth, these all have a strongly theological flavor.

THEOLOGICAL SLANT

There is no doubt but that the dearth of new commentaries in the first half of the twentieth century was due mainly to the dominance of liberalism during that period. Only when two world wars had broken this death grip could the surge of new life show itself.

Of course there were many in those days who were true to the faith. But Fundamentalists were too busy on the battlefields fighting modernists to engage in producing a permanent literature in the field of commentaries. The work that was done consisted largely of polemical theological essays.

Now that that controversy has quieted somewhat and the academic world shows a much healthier respect for the Bible, opportunity is given for a positive interpretation of the Scriptures. The results are encouraging.

The striking fact is that almost all of these ten new series show a definitely conservative slant. Probably the dominant theological position exhibited is a neo-orthodoxy leaning toward the right.

"The New International Commentary on the New Testament" is, of course, solidly Calvinistic. The general editor, Ned Stonehouse, writes in the foreword: "We believe that we can contribute to the need of the Christian Church most significantly if the Commentary possesses the specific character and integration provided by the Reformed Faith." In the special foreword by F. F. Bruce occurs the declaration that "Reformed theology is Biblical theology." The Dutch background of several of the contributors makes this Calvinistic emphasis outspoken.

As already noted, *The Interpreter's Bible* is marked by a strongly liberal slant. That appears in a number of the general articles; for example, "The Growth of the Hexateuch." That the majority of the contributors are unreconstructed, if not indeed unrepentant, liberals could hardly be questioned. Yet the list does include some men who are basically constructive and conservative—such scholars as John Bright, Floyd Filson, A. M. Hunter, Bruce Metzger, and G. Ernest Wright. But admittedly they are few and far between.

Hendriksen is another thoroughgoing Calvinist. Yet his scholarly work can be used very helpfully by the discriminating student.

Barclay's *Daily Study Bible* is marked by a warm, reverential attitude toward the Word of God. The spiritual insights of the author, as well as his forceful, fascinating way of expressing himself, are most impressive. One would not dare to give the work a blanket endorsement. But almost any student of the Bible would find the New Testament coming alive for him by the reading of these meaty volumes. Barclay shows a broad background of knowledge of literature and life, as well as Biblical scholarship.

Barclay's spirit is reflected well in these closing words of his General Introduction:

"The whole aim of these books is summed up in Richard of Chichester's famous prayer; they are meant to enable men and women to know Jesus Christ more clearly, to love Him more dearly, and to follow Him more nearly. It is my prayer that they may do something to make that possible."

It was probably not expected, or intended, that the *Epworth Preacher's Commentaries* should be fully conservative. But Mitton on Mark has this to say about Satan: ". . . in

practice we are aware of evil as something possessing malicious purpose and crafty intelligence; and purpose and intelligence normally presuppose what we mean by 'personality.'" The theological climate has undergone a radical change when one in the supposedly liberal camp can defend the idea of a personal devil!

The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries are being written by men of unquestioned orthodoxy, such as Ned Stonehouse, Norval Geldenhuys, and Alan Stibbs. The general editor, R. V. G. Tasker, has already become well known for his emphasis on the unity of the Bible. Among the briefer, nontechnical commentaries the Tyndale series will prove to be one of the best.

The editor of *The Layman's Bible Commentary* is also coeditor of *Interpretation*. Readers of that valuable journal will not be surprised at the constructive approach of the commentary.

The preface starts out with the statement: "The *Layman's Bible Commentary* is based on the conviction that the Bible has the Word of good news for the whole world." It adds: "The faith is that in the Bible there is essentially one Word, one message of salvation, one gospel." And it concludes: "It is in the happy confidence that the great hunger for the Word is a sign of God's grace already operating within men, and that the Spirit works most wonderfully where the Word is familiarly known, that this commentary has been written and published."

In regard to the much-discussed question as to whether the Bible is the Word of God, or contains the Word, Forman says that it is both, and it also conveys the Word and becomes the Word. The Bible is always the divine Word, just as Beethoven's music is always music. But it

is not known as such until accepted and received.

With regard to the authority of the Bible we find these words: "The Bible is its own authority" (I, 30); and again: "The final witness to the truth and authority of the Bible is the same Holy Spirit under whose inspiration it was written." That seems to be the only way to avoid the Roman Catholic alternative that it is the Church which witnesses to the truth and authority of the Bible.

The essay on "How to Study the Bible" is basically sound. The author says that the Bible must be studied "as a book about God, particularly about God made known in Jesus Christ . . . as God's word to us in our lives now . . . in faith . . . in prayer . . . in the fellowship of the church . . . in obedience" This helpful suggestion is made: "The surrender of the will to God is the best avenue to hearing God's word in the Bible" (I, 150).

Donald Miller's volume on Luke provides an acid test for the theological slant of this associate editor, namely, his treatment of the Virgin Birth. Here the author's point of view expresses very well our own. He writes: "There is no reason, intellectual or religious, historical or theo-

logical, why faith cannot accept Luke's story reverently and gladly as fact." Yet the Virgin Birth is not the basis of our belief in the deity of Jesus nor in His sinlessness. If it were, it would bulk larger in the New Testament, and particularly in the writings of Paul.

Miller goes on to say: "One must believe that in the Virgin Birth God entered human life redemptively, and that he did so for me!"

His conclusion is well expressed in these words:

"We may sum it all up by saying that in Jesus' birth by a Virgin there is something inherently right, something wholly congruous with all that Jesus was, and is, and shall forever be. . . . The surest path to the acceptance of the mystery of his birth is to believe the mystery of his Person."

CONCLUSION

The theological climate of Biblical studies is not marked by a cloudless sky. But one can certainly assert that the sun of the Spirit's illumination is shining much more brightly than it was a score or even a dozen years ago. For that we should be profoundly grateful, and hope for even better days.

HYPO OR VITAMIN?

Too often, people have felt Christianity was a miracle drug to miraculously make life easy without suffering and pain. The purpose of Christianity is not to avoid difficulty, but to produce a character adequate to meet it when it comes. It does not make life easy; rather it tries to make us great enough for life. It does not give us escape from life's burdens, but strength for meeting them when they come.

—JAMES L. CHRISTENSEN in *"Funeral Services"* (Fleming H. Revell Company)

IV. The Scriptural Pattern of Worship

WE SHOULD TURN, of course, in any consideration of worship to the teachings of the Scriptures. More important than any pattern of worship in a particular period of the history of the Church, more important than any one person's concept of worship or any group's philosophy of worship, are the teaching of God's Word and the patterns of worship which men and women of God followed when they sincerely worshiped Him.

To trace the worship of the Scriptures is not the easiest or simplest thing to do. We have the problem of discovering what is the essence of worship from the examples of unprecedented worship such as was the case with Abraham, the complicated worship of Judaism, the mixture of the true worship of God with pagan ideas of worship, and the idol worship of the heathen. Furthermore, it is not always possible to agree with the interpretation of the meaning of a given worship experience or to even ascertain the exact pattern which was followed at a given time. Then, also, there are so many examples of worship given in the Scriptures that it is impossible to consider all of them in any short study.

But we shall do our best to pick up some of the principal teachings of the Scriptures with respect to worship, thinking primarily of those which are the most relevant to our day and to our particular consideration of the problems of worship.

ABRAHAM

One of the first appearances of a specific call to worship is that recorded in the twenty-first chapter of Genesis, when God called Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, the son of promise. While somewhat confusing in the light of the concepts of our day and out of the frame of reference of our knowledge of God through the more complete revelation which is ours, two elements of worship stand out beyond the details of the exact procedures: faith and obedience.

Without these, of course, there is no basis for worship, ever. Worship is based on faith. It is an axiom repeated in one form or another again and again throughout the Word of God. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Faith is the foundation of our worship. We do not "see" God in the same sense that we see other factors of life. Worship deals in the world of the unseen, the world of the spirit, the world of interchange of forces and powers, invisible to the unbeliever. Without this faith, worship in any age becomes a senseless and meaningless procedure mixed with a Babel-like jargon.

But worship must also be tied with obedience. Abraham forever set the pace, picked up again and again by the prophets, that the true worship of God cannot divorce an expression of worship from obedience in living. We

cannot worship God with a form and then reject Him in life. We cannot burn incense with one hand and serve ourselves with the other. Obedience to God's commands, to His will, to His method and a willingness to comply with the implications of devotion must always be a part of our worship.

THE SONG OF MIRIAM

Following the victory of the children of Israel as they crossed the Red Sea while the horses and armies of Pharaoh perished, there issued a song of praise and thanksgiving from the lips and throats of the Israelites, led by Miriam, the sister of Moses. The song of praise and victory is recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus.

Here we find a characteristic of worship which appears on numerous occasions, that of spontaneous praise to God. While expressed at this time because of a military victory, we find it as an element present in all kinds of worship. In a sense every act of worship is a celebration, an expression of praise for the spiritual victories which we have experienced in the past, the chief of which are those which defeat the powers of sin in the life.

Here also we find the birth of the idea of worship as coming from the heart without the forms and ceremonies which later attached themselves to worship. True worship issues spontaneously from a heart that loves God and experiences God as constant and abiding. True, there are times when we are prompted to worship by outside suggestions. True, there are accompaniments to worship and symbols of worship which turn our minds to God and make it easier for us to worship. However, that worship is the most pure and most effective which arises from within the heart because there is within a

delight to express to God our love for Him.

THE PSALMS

The psalms, since they are the songs and hymns of the Hebrew people, are filled with expressions of worship. To pick two of them as representative of the content of worship might suffice here. The ninety-fifth and the ninety-sixth psalms are calls to worship. In them we find many suggestions of what worship should be, all of which apply to our worship today.

We find here the basic idea of worship (95:3-5; 96:2-8), where honor and glory were directed toward God, and His virtues and powers were extolled. At the heart of this worship was the joyful expression of praise to God in songs. In fact both psalms begin with the phrase "O sing unto the Lord." Music is an expression of the mood of the heart. There cannot be Christian worship without the songs of the major key sung as a "joyful noise" unto the Lord.

There is also here (95:6) mentioned the method of bowing down, kneeling before the Lord. Here we see that humility and recognition of the Creator as One who is great and mighty must be a part of worship. There is also the idea (95:7) that God is our Father and we are His children.

The Psalmist also calls the believer to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (96:9), which brings to light the whole matter of righteousness and ethics. The worship must be in tune with the God whom He worships. He must have of the nature of the God whom he would serve. We see this outlined heavily in the New Testament when Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Again James lifted up the truth, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16b).

Beyond this we see that worship must take into account the eternal lordship of God. The godly must recognize that they will stand before God as the Judge of all peoples (96: 11), but also worship must inspire the righteous to proclaim this truth to the heathen around (96:10). That is, worship is edifying. It does something to those who take part in it. It has in it that strengthening, evangelical force which changes the lives of those who participate in it.

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

One of the great New Testament teachings regarding worship is found in John 4:1-24. This is the record of Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well in Sychar of Samaria. The woman raised the question as to whether it was more proper and more valid to worship God in Jerusalem, as the Jews did, or on Mount Gerizim, as the Samaritans did. Jesus pointed out to her, "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: . . . God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Here is the great truth, above all others, which has distinguished Christian worship through the centuries. True worship is the communion of one spirit with another Spirit. There is fellowship, there is a transmission of mood and thought, of ideas and truth, between God and man. Christian worship, in essence, is this mystical relationship between the worshipping believer and the eternal God.

Jesus revealed this truth and through His atonement made this sort of worship possible. Through the provisions of this plan and the outpour-

ing of the Holy Spirit, this sort of worship became the norm and the pattern which has characterized true Christian worship from that time to this.

ISAIAH IN THE TEMPLE

Most students of worship turn at one time or another to the Book of Isaiah and lift up from the first part of the sixth chapter the full pattern of what the true worship of God should contain. While analyzed in different ways, it is generally agreed that this experience of Isaiah's contains seven elements, all of which should be a part, to one degree or another, of every Christian worship experience. They are as follows:

1. *A sense of need* (v. 1), "In the year that King Uzziah died . . ."
2. *A vision of God* (vv. 1-4), "I saw . . ."
3. *A humility of self, an acknowledgment of sin* (v. 5) "Woe is me . . ."
4. *A vitality, pardon, cleansing* (v. 6), coal "hath touched . . . lips . . ."
5. *Illumination* (v. 8), "Who will go for us?"
6. *Dedication* (v. 8), "Here am I; send me."
7. *Peace.*

It is not difficult to trace this pattern in the average worship experience, whether it be private or public. Certainly there is no approach to God unless there is a need felt and expressed. Certainly there is no true worship unless the worshiper sees God in one manner or another. This vision of God, this grasp of the holiness of God (v. 3) will immediately uncover every need of the worshiper's life. If there are sins, they will be uncovered; if there is inner sin, it will be revealed; where there are failures, they will become apparent. Even the most mature Christian in

this time of worship senses his limitations, his weaknesses, his failures. Moving from this sense of God's greatness and our smallness, there is a cry from the heart of the worshiper for God, insofar as possible to bridge the gap and provide help for the particular needs of the soul. This God always does, if the worship is relevant. With this comes the outreach, the commission, the command to "go and tell . . ." But worship does not stop here. There must also be the dedication, the purpose on the part of the worshiper to do the will of God. Once this dedication has become a

part of the worship, the man of God can go in peace. Worship has been valid. It has accomplished its full purpose.

Again we must say that our pattern for worship today must not alone follow some historical pattern of worship. It must be tempered to the scriptural demands of worship. It becomes the great task of every minister to review his worship services from week to week, asking himself if he consistently leads his people into this sort of scriptural worship experience.

(To be continued)

HOW I USE WESLEY'S "WORKS"

I HAVE FOUND *The Works of John Wesley* a prolific source of useful sermon material. From his *Journal* especially I have found quotable material. When I come across something in my reading that I think I can use, I write the subject with which he is dealing in the margin of the page and then I write the reference down on a 3 x 5 card and file it under a similar subject. For example, if the subject Mr. Wesley is dealing with has to do with conversion, I mark the passage in the book, then write on a 3 x 5 card labeled "conversion," "John Wesley, Volume I, p. 132," and file it for later reference.

I have also found some powerful sermon outlines in this set. One of the best evangelistic sermons entitled "How I Can Know I Am a Christian" has been constructed from John Wesley's evaluation of his own experience as found in Volume I, pages 161 and 162. He says: ". . . the surest test whereby we can examine ourselves whether we be indeed in the faith is that given by St. Paul: 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.'" Then Wesley suggests this outline taken from this text:

- I. HIS JUDGMENTS ARE NEW.
- II. HIS DESIGNS (purposes) ARE NEW.
- III. HIS DESIRES ARE NEW.
- IV. HIS CONVERSATION IS NEW.
- V. HIS ACTIONS ARE NEW.

From Volume I, pages 387-88, are found rules for training children by Susanna Wesley, mother of John Wesley. From these rules I have constructed a helpful sermon for parents in the rearing of their children. The sermon deals with:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| I. DISCIPLINE | IV. BIBLE TEACHING |
| II. COURTESY | V. SABBATH OBSERVANCE |
| III. FAMILY PRAYER | |

—ROBERT SPORLEDER
WENATCHEE, WASHINGTON

The Preaching of Clovis G. Chappell

By James McGraw*

AS PASTOR OF FIRST CHURCH, Death Valley, what was Ezekiel commanded of God to do? There was at least one thing he did that is thoroughly modern. He made a survey."

Who but Clovis Chappell would clothe a centuries-old story in such vivid, down-to-earth language as to make it sound as real as though it might have happened just last week in a neighboring city?

If there should be one word that would best characterize the preaching of this southern-born Methodist pulpiteer, it would be "interesting." Whatever else can be said of this man—and there is much to be said—it must be asserted that he makes the gospel real. People have always enjoyed listening, and they have come away from his sermons feeling they have heard something worthwhile.

Born in Flatwoods, Tennessee, on January 8, 1882, he grew up in the home of a Methodist minister whose influence upon his son was deep and enduring. The lives of William B. and Mary (Gillham) Chappell provided Clovis with a heritage of holiness which helped to mold him into one of Methodism's great preachers.

Graduated from Duke in 1903 and Harvard in 1905, Clovis Chappell served several large and interesting pastorates until the time of his retirement in September of 1949. Among these were churches in Washington, D.C.; Birmingham, Alabama; Memphis, Tennessee; Houston, Texas;

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Jackson, Mississippi. He has written thirty-two books, among the most popular of which are *Faces About the Cross*, *Sermons from the Psalms*, *The Sermon on the Mount*, *Sermons on Bible Characters*, and *The Village Tragedy*. His latest book is entitled *Sermons from Simon Peter*, published recently by Abingdon.

Ralph Raughley, editor, writes in *Pulpit Digest*, that "Dr. Chappell is a very effective stylist and clear thinker and excels in bringing home his points by being always concerned with the practical, everyday problems that are so real to his listeners." Perhaps this practical, effective, vivid style is one of the major reasons his sermons are interesting. They seem genuinely relevant, and somehow very important. And always they seem to encourage, to lift, to inspire. They never depress or discourage.

Ford Miller observes in analyzing Chappell's preaching that he does not give the impression he is eloquent, or that he is trying at all to be eloquent. "It seems he would rather use simple language and have a child understand his sermon, than have someone thank him for having a great vocabulary," Miller writes in an unpublished paper written in Nazarene Theological Seminary in 1959.

Chappell himself has this to say about the effectiveness of simplicity and clarity in preaching. In *Anointed to Preach* he writes: "The older I grow the more impatient I become with the preacher who is deliberately

*Professor, Nazarene Theological Seminary.

obscure. Remember that anybody can muddy the water, but it takes real thought and study to speak of the deep things of God with simplicity." Here it would seem he is in agreement with one of the world's great speakers of all time, Winston Churchill. Sir Winston is quoted in a recent magazine article as saying: "I have been a journalist, and half my lifetime I have earned my living selling words, and I hope thoughts . . . broadly speaking, the short words are the best, and the old words when short are the best of all."

Chappell tells of a friend who took a preacher to task for his seeming delight in unusual words and scientific terms few if any of his listeners could understand. "Why," questioned this gentleman, "don't you stop using that pseudo-scientific jargon and speak to your people in English?" The minister was offended. He turned upon his questioner and asserted, "I am not going to compromise my literary style." At this point Chappell asks, "But in the name of sense why not? Just what was he in the ministry to accomplish? Surely not the salvation of a literary style, the worth of whose saving was highly questionable. He was in the ministry to help people. If the minister is to be helpful, then those whom he is seeking to help must understand what he has to say." The preaching of Clovis Chappell follows this philosophy, and does so with a distinct degree of effectiveness.

Dr. Chappell has made it his habit to spend an average of eight to ten hours in the preparation of a sermon. He prefers to spread this time out over four or five mornings, rather than concentrating it within a shorter period of time. He writes: "I have made it a rule to give myself plenty of time. I begin early. If there is any resting to be done, I do it at the

end of the week rather than at the beginning."

Although every sermon is written out in complete manuscript form, Chappell does not read his sermons when he delivers them. Neither does he memorize them. Neither, for that matter, does he use notes. He shuns manuscript delivery for the lack of audience communication it affords, and he fears memorization because it may either result in a mechanical sort of "declamation," or may fail when memory fails, or for that matter for the reason that it just isn't practical. Few if any ministers have the time this type of delivery would require of them. He estimates that many of the words he uses are those he used in writing his sermon, yet the extemporaneous style of delivery is used. "With my outline well in mind I speak such words as are given," he says.

Chappell's illustrations are an important part of his sermon material. In his sermon "The Overconfident Friend" (from the text, "Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended," Matthew 26:33) he uses twelve illustrations. Four of them find their source in the Bible, one is drawn from history, one from science, and the others are all taken from personal experience and life situations. It is in these latter types that he is a master. He speaks of a football coach who tries to prepare his team for the big game. He speaks of a student who is concerned about a coming examination. He tells of a conversation he had with an alcoholic, whose love for liquor was robbing him of his health and destroying his chances for happiness. He relates how he and his brother spent hours catching an ugly and unpromising calf, and how they dared a playmate to ride him. The wretched-looking creature quickly

threw the lad to the ground, and as he picked himself up he said, "If I had known he had that much strength in him, I would have stuck a little tighter!"

Clovis Chappell's outlines are always easy to follow, and easy to remember. He says, "In my opinion, an outline is more than a luxury; it is an absolute necessity. It is possible to have a jellyfish without any skeleton, but we cannot have a man without a skeleton." He recognizes a difference of opinion on this matter, and mentions no less an authority than the gifted Arthur John Gossip, who takes opposition to the use of an outline. But Chappell wryly comments, "Naturally he uses an outline in arguing against an outline."

As an example of the clarity and simplicity of Chappell's outlines, consider this one. He takes the text, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Three simple steps to religious certainty are:

I. I BELIEVED.

II. I COMMITTED.

III. I KNOW.

Chappell prefers to begin with his text, and proceed then to his idea. He believes those who begin with the idea, developing the sermon, then finding a text to fit it, all are "doing it the hard way." He likes the use of sermon series. He seldom planned a whole year ahead at a time, but he often in his pastoral ministry used series. He recommends that they not be too long, but that they be kept fresh and vital so they can be related to the needs of the hearers. He has a conviction that Bible-centered preaching is the most helpful and the least taxing.

Clovis G. Chappell preaches with earnestness and zeal. He likes the

story of the man who asked his friend how his minister preached. The reply, which referred to one of Scotland's great saints and pulpiteers, was, "My minister preaches as if he were dying to see you saved!" Chappell observes that evidently this preacher did not go into the pulpit for target practice, but he shot to kill. "A house on fire is interesting," he declares, "but a man on fire is the most interesting thing in the world."

All of which brings us back to the starting point—this thing called "interest." This is the outstanding factor in the preaching of Clovis G. Chappell, and it has not come about by accident. He has believed from the beginning of his ministry that if one cannot win and hold the attention of his audience he is wasting his own time and the time of those who hear him. He doubts that there has ever been a really good sermon preached that was not interesting. "What we say may be as fundamental as the Decalogue and as true as the Sermon on the Mount," he writes in *Anointed to Preach*, "but if nobody is listening, we might as well be making mud pies."

Interesting? Who in an audience would not be captivated by such a lowed by a whale, but to be nibbled statement as, "It is bad to be swallowed by minnows is more painful still"? What mind and soul would not be held in the spell of a sermon which made its point for love by quoting Booker T. Washington as he said, "I resolved that I would permit no man to narrow and degrade my soul by making me hate him"? Or by reminding him of Lincoln, who possessed this quality of spirit to a superlative degree, as shown by responding to Stanton, who called him "the original gorilla," by putting him in his cabinet? Who would not sense the charm in the warm language in

such of Chappell's phrases as "under the kiss of the gentle sunrise Simon's frozen heart became a landscape of flowers"?

When asked if he had any favorite slogan, or outstanding factor in his philosophy of preaching, Clovis G. Chappell replied to his questioner: "Gain and hold attention." Now at

seventy-seven, in retirement near Nashville, he still does it, preaching approximately two hundred and fifty times each year, and is much in demand. He has lived up to his ideal of a good sermon, which he says should be interesting, should be positive and constructive, should be encouraging, and should call for a definite conclusion.

SERMON of the MONTH

The Enrichment of Jesus

By J. Melton Thomas*

TEXT: I Corinthians 1:5 . . . *in every thing ye are enriched by him.*

There is an unspoken feeling in some quarters that the Christian way is an inferior sort of life. This, it may be, is especially true among the young; but among all ages there seems sometimes an admission that to become a Christian is to impoverish oneself. How far from the truth this is! How poor a Christian is one who allows such a feeling to engulf him! Materially one may have less as a Christian, but even that is open to debate. Yet if one be poorer economically, that fact is surely offset by the richness of spirit, of life, of endeavor, of fellowship with God and man, that comes as a result of being a Christian. So Paul declares, "That in every thing ye are enriched by him." It is to this, to the enrichment of Jesus, that we direct our thoughts, and especially to how the Lord enriches human life.

I

There is, to begin with, the enrichment of change—the change, initially, of subtraction. In I Corinthians six, Paul has been describing the unregenerate condition of mankind—thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, to mention that condition in part—when suddenly he exclaims at verse eleven, "And such were some of you, but . . ." It is that glorious conjunction that makes the difference. Ye were, but ye are! Christ has subtracted all those things from life, like a decaying tooth, like an inflamed appendix, like infected tonsils! The glorious change of subtraction!

There is further the change of addition, the difference which Christ makes by adding to what we already have. Human life has vast potential for good, but it is as sterile soil unless there is added the grace of Jesus. The desert has the potential of the rose, but there must be added the life-giving substance of water. The flower has the potential of beauty and fruitfulness, but there must be

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added the pollen that the bee carries. In interior Alaska we found that the soil was capable of producing enormous crops of vegetables, but first there must be added certain chemicals which, added to the native elements, made the productivity possible. Thus the Lord changes human personality by adding His love, His power, His grace.

There is yet further the change of multiplication, the change that comes from continued Christian growth. It is this type of change which Paul had in mind when he asserted in II Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." This is the change that emerges from a successful facing of life's many trials, of carrying life's many burdens. Christ uses our reaction to these many difficulties, opportunities, victories to change us, even as we grow!

II

Consider, secondly, the enrichment of challenge, beginning with the challenge of Christ's sinless life. He who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, has, as Peter advises us, left us an example that we should follow in His steps. There before us is the flaming example of Him who was tempted in all points like as are we, but who came through with such valor that He is able to help us who know the same temptations. He has gone before, turned aside every thrust, warded off every blow, resisted every allurement. What a challenge there is to us, and how changed we are by following that challenge of Him who has blazed a trail of victory all across human life!

There is also the challenge of Christ's shining ideals. He said that God was as the best of human fathers. He said that all men were potentially

brothers. He gave us a great charter of action in the Beatitudes of Matthew five, six, and seven. He gave us a Great Commission of service in Matthew 28:19-20. He said that we were to disciple the world, to make witness as broad as experience might bring us in contact with others. What a challenging star is the high idealism of Jesus!

Add to that the challenge of Christ's selfless service and we have, if we will but follow it, a thrust that cannot help but turn us from weaklings into warriors, from cowards into conquerors. More truly than they knew did they speak who taunted Him: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." It is this sacrificial surrender of himself that we may accept for our own, and hence by faith make actual the poet's declaration: "His power can make you what you ought to be!"

III

Challenge is not enough, however. Challenge may dissipate like a mist or a mirage. It needs the body which is implied in the third assertion of Christ's change—the change wrought by Christ's charge. So we are enriched by Christ's charge.

It is a charge to save our own souls.

A charge to keep I have,

A God to glorify,

A never-dying soul to save

And fit it for the sky.

It is a charge to serve our day.

To serve the present age,

My calling to fulfill;

Oh, may it all my powers engage

To do my Master's will!

It is a charge to watch our path.

Help me to watch and pray,

And on thyself rely,

Assured if I my trust betray

I shall forever die.

Thus Charles Wesley propounded the change that is wrought in us, the

enrichment which may be ours by the charge of Christ.

There remains one last glorious fact, the enrichment of His championing us. We need this so much. Our own spiritual coin expended, our own resources exhausted, we need another to champion our cause. The Goliaths of Gath who stalk through our battlefields of our lives need, not David, but the Son of David! And He will be all we need. To the weary warrior, He is Fortress. To the stopped student, He is Solution. To the sick soul, He is Physician. To the tired traveler, He is Home!

So we conclude, life was poor till Jesus came. It was so with me, and though you may not know it, sinner friend, it is so with you. You may feast, but you will never be filled. You may search, but you will never find. You may try, but you will always fail. Poor, naked, hungry is the soul without Christ. But, oh, the unsearchable riches there are in Him! Come to the Bank of Heaven—it has more, vastly more, than the Bank of America, vastly more than the Bank of the Universe. “In every thing ye are enriched by him.”

The Word of “Authority”

By R. E. Bebout*

TEXT: *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise* (Luke 23:43).

We are all aware that God's ordinary method for the conversion of sinners is the preaching of His Word. Paul said, “It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” Lifted on the Cross, between the two thieves, Christ used it not only as an altar but as a pulpit from which to deliver the most touching of sermons. We may consider the prayer which Christ uttered for His murderers as most strictly the sermon which the malefactor heard, and which wrought in him the change so quickly and strikingly developed.

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do,” evidently were the words which penetrated the conscience of the thief and assured

him that the one who hung at his side was none other than the promised Saviour of the world. If there were pardon for those who crucified Christ, there must be also for every offender; hence the thief was led to utter his petition—“Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”

Our Lord's promise is sealed with His own sign-manual, “Verily, I say.” It claims to have not only the clear vision of, but the authority to determine, the future. It graciously accepts the penitent's petition, and assures him that the companionship, begun on the Cross, will be continued with Him in paradise.

We shall consider three things from the words of our text.

I. THERE IS A REFERENCE TO PLACE.

“Thou shalt be in paradise.” Paradise is a word of Persian origin, meaning a garden, orchard, or other enclosed place filled with beauty and

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delight. The royal garden of an Oriental palace was called a paradise. The word suggests the ideas of abundance, security, beauty, and delight.

Paradise was lost through the disobedience and sin of our first parents in the Garden of Eden, but paradise has been regained by Christ—a better paradise than our first parents ever knew; for the serpent shall never creep into it, and Satan shall not approach it nor taint its purity by his poisonous breath.

There flows the river of the water of life, issuing clear as crystal from the throne of God and of the Lamb. There grows the tree which bears twelve manner of fruits, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. There the rose is without a thorn; the leaves never fade; the day never dies. "Thou shalt be . . . in paradise"—a place.

II. THERE IS A REFERENCE TO COMPANY.

"Thou shalt be with me." The dying thief might have had doubts as to the meaning of the word "paradise." Where is it? What are its occupations and its joys? Who will be my companions? But to prevent all painful perplexity our Lord, in addition to the promise of paradise, added that of himself—"Thou shalt be with me."

To be with Christ is represented throughout the New Testament as the climax of the believer's hope. Jesus said, as the greatest reward He could offer—"Where I am, there shall also my servants be." He consoled His sorrowing disciples with the assurance, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Paul said that he was in a strait betwixt two, "having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better." The poet said, "Where Jesus is, 'tis heaven there."

What will be the main attraction of heaven? Will it be streets of gold? Gates of Pearl? Jasper walls? Sea of glass? No! The main attraction of heaven will be to see Jesus and be with Him. "When by His grace I shall look on His face, that will be glory, be glory for me." Jesus promised the dying thief, "Thou shalt be with me"—a reference to company.

III. THERE IS A REFERENCE TO TIME.

"To day," this proves the continued conscious existence of the soul after death. Surely if the dying thief had been about to fall into a deep sleep for thousands of years, the promise of being that day in paradise with Jesus would have been inappropriate and delusive. Therefore we believe that the soul of a believer is at death fitted to be at once with Jesus.

A crucified Christ solves the mystery. Because His perfect obedience and atoning death satisfied the claims of the law, those who trust in Him are delivered from the condemnation of that law. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

How glorious the hope that there may be but a step between me and paradise! Are we complaining and repining because of trials, murmuring at difficult duty, when angels and departed friends may now be weaving our garlands of victory, tuning our golden harps of praise, and gathering around the threshold to bid us welcome? Shall we give up the battle when on the point of winning the victory? Shall we turn back in the journey when round the bend just before us we may be within sight of home?

"Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Why Did Jesus Die?

By J. Kenneth Grider*

THREE CROSSES are there, on a jagged hill, silhouetted against a darkened afternoon sky. On each cross hangs a man: beaten, bloody, brought down low. Death is king—death the Roman way.

But look! On that middle cross hangs the Christ. No malefactor, He. No thief, this man. History's most selfless Giver, He is—numbered there with the transgressors.

Why is He there, this plain Man, the best the world has seen? Why have they jugged a cross into a rocky hilltop with Him on it? Theologians have tried in numerous ways to tell us. Evangelists have singled out this or that answer and have told us with urgency. The Bible writers, of course, have a few things to say on the *raison d'être* of the death.

Christ died, for one thing, because God was too holy to take a long look at our sin and laugh it off like a doting granddad (Romans 3:25-26). The holy Father's wrath, directed toward the rebel as sinner, needed to be assuaged. The wrath propitiated (I John 2:2), God was able to pardon every penitent, maintain His own moral integrity, and still keep men aware of the utter, sinfulness of sin.

The dying Heinrich Heine said, "God will forgive me: that is His business." Cocksure fellows like Heine tarry longer with Abelard than with Anselm, with Faustus Socinus than with Forsyth, with Bushnell than with Barth—longer, that is, with superficial sentimentalists than with

scripture. For in the Bible, God is not portrayed as running a free forgiveness clinic, doling out pardons willy-nilly, setting sinners scot-free just because it tickles His jolly fancy to wave a wand and let it be so. Sure . . . forgiveness is granted by the Holy One of the Bible, but it is a costly commodity, given on conditions, and in each instance out of unfathomable mercy; and given ultimately because Christ died on our behalf, instead of us, becoming a once-for-all Sin Offering, "the just for the unjust."

Love, too, put Jesus on the *Via Dolorosa*. It motivated the Father, controlled the Son—admittedly. James Denney, who was as "objective" as you can get in atonement theory, saw that, and upbraided Anselm for slighting it. John 3:16 is not shelved when you follow the insights of men like Forsyth. Instead it is seen in a deep-down meaning that is impossible with the love-devoid-of holiness notion.

John Miley, following Grotius, had hold of something which is Biblical too. Miley might have needed to stress God's holiness a bit more, but who can say it is not important according to scripture that God forgive only if He can avoid anarchy and maintain a moral governance over His creatures?

Take the ransom idea. We can rightly quibble over who the recipient of ransom was supposed to be. There are some crudities along that ransom road too—like Gregory of Nyssa's

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idea that God went fishing with Jesus as the bait and tricked the tempter because the hook had a barb on it—the Resurrection possibility, which would loose Jesus from the death to which Satan would bring Him. Yet with all the classical theory's primitiveness, none of us can say that the Bible knows nothing of Jesus' giving" . . . his life (την ψυχην) a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Presently retired Bishop Aulen, after all, is no back-number theologian altogether out of accord with Biblical truth and out of step with the twentieth century.

It is true that some ideas about the atonement are rather mutually exclusive; for example, the Abelardian notion that man only thinks he is wrong with God, and Calvin's view that he really is; or Anselm's idea that a full payment was made to God by the willing death of the God-Man, and Scotus' voluntaristic view that it was only a partial payment and that God could will to accept that kind as sufficient. Anselm's feudal idea that God's honor was at stake, too, is different from the view of the reformers that it was more His justice. There is also the difference between Anselm's view that a debt owed by man is paid to God and the view of Calvin (and later Denney) that Christ

took man's punishment. The central idea of Miley, that guilt cannot be transferred to the guiltless, so that only vicarious suffering and not punishment was borne by Christ, is opposed to the heart of Denney's view (and Barth's) that the full punishment is precisely what Christ did take for us. This makes Miley say that it is "punishment in hell or forgiveness," but never both—and that due to Christ's death it can be the latter; whereas Denney says it is "punishment of Christ and forgiveness," that although the punishment has been met—and indeed because it has been—the Father can forgive the penitent.

Not many of us would say that mutually exclusive atonement ideas are actually taught in scripture. But must we not all admit that in general the theorists have meant simply to explicate Holy Writ? And must we not be gloriously aware that here, at the Cross, we are in the presence of an event too meaningful to be precisely delineated, boundaries and all, in language—even the language of inspired prophets and apostles?

Why did Jesus die? Perhaps a pat answer is not possible. That might be just why we Christians, the whole lot of us, delight to survey the Cross with Watts in worshipful wonder.

Elton Trueblood says in *Alternative to Futility*, "If you want a vital church constituency, "Make all within your society members of the crew, and permit no passengers."

"New converts who are not enlisted and who do not become active in organizations of a church during the first few weeks of their church life are most likely to become liabilities rather than assets."

—Charles L. McKay, *The Call of the Harvest*.

Gleanings from the Greek New Testament

By Ralph Earle*

Romans 8:32

THE GREATEST SACRIFICE

THE GREATEST sacrifice on record" is that of Abraham offering his son Isaac.¹ When God saw that Abraham was willing to do what He commanded, even to the sacrificing of his beloved son, He said: "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son . . ." (Genesis 22:16). In the Septuagint the Greek word for "withheld" is *epheiso*. In Romans 8:32 "spared" is *epheisato*, the same verb. Perhaps Paul had this Old Testament passage in mind. At any rate it serves to underscore the sacrifice on God's part when He spared not His own Son, but gave Him (John 3:16) as the Sacrifice for our sins. This was no impersonal business transaction or legal case. God's love flowed freely at Calvary.

FREE GIVING

Verse thirty-two asks a question to which there is only one answer—He will! Will do what? "Freely give us all things."

"Freely give" is *charisetai*, from *charis*, "grace." The verb *charizomai* means "give freely or graciously as a favor."² It is used this way again in I Corinthians 2:12—"that we might know the things that are freely given us of God."

But a dozen times in the New Testament *charizomai* means "forgive" (e.g., Luke 7:42-43; II Corinthians 2:7, 10; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13). Bengel, in his *Gnomon*, translates it that way in this passage—"forgive us all things."³ But a check of a dozen translations of the New Testament failed to discover one that adopted this.

Since *charis* means grace, one is tempted to favor the rendering given by Ballentine in the *Riverside New Testament*—graciously give." The *Amplified New Testament* has "freely and graciously give."

AFFIRMATION OR QUESTION?

The latter part of verses thirty-three and thirty-four is treated as declarative in the King James Version and in the English and American revised versions. But in the Revised Standard Version the second one is translated as a question.

Which is correct? The answer is that we do not know. In the early Greek text, the manuscripts, there are no punctuation marks such as are constantly used today. Hence the same Greek sentence may be rendered as declarative or interrogative.

Sanday and Headlam prefer to take both of these as affirmations. In this they agree with Origen and Chrysos-

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¹Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 220.

²Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, p. 884.

³John Albert Bengel, *Gnomon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1860), III, 111.

tom in the Early Church and with the commentators Ellicott and Denney.

But Alford prefers to treat these clauses as questions, partly because this is rather clearly the correct form in verse thirty-five.⁴ Olshausen writes: "I prefer, with Augustine, the interrogative form throughout; the vividness of the language is greatly enhanced by it."⁵

Meyer thinks that the last sentence of verse thirty-three should be linked with the first sentence of verse thirty-four. The two verses would then read: "Who shall raise accusation against the elect of God? God is the justifier, who the condemner? Christ is He that has died. . . ."⁶

There is a difference of opinion among translators. Weymouth prefers all as questions: "Who shall impeach those whom God has chosen? Will God, who acquits them? Will Christ, who died . . . ?" Moffatt has a similar rendering: "Who is to accuse the elect of God? When God acquits, who shall condemn? Will Christ?—the Christ who died, yes and rose from the dead! the Christ who is at God's right hand, who actually pleads for us!"

Goodspeed follows Meyer's interpretation, which is that of Origen, Chrysostom, and later of Erasmus. He translates the passage: "Who can bring any accusation against those whom God has chosen? God pronouncing them upright; who can condemn them? Christ who died, or rather who was raised from the dead, is at God's right hand, and actually pleads for us." *The Twentieth Century New Testament* also adopts this handling of these verses. It reads: "Who will bring a charge against any of God's Chosen People? *God acquits*

them; so *who is there to condemn them*? Christ Jesus died for us—or rather, he was raised from the dead, and he is now *at God's right hand* and is also pleading on our behalf." Verkuyl renders it similarly in the Berkeley Version: "Who will enter a charge against God's chosen? God is the Acquitter; who is the condemner? Christ Jesus is He who died. . . ."

It should be noted that this is the punctuation in Westcott and Hort's great edition of the Greek New Testament, as also in Nestle's text. As already stated, the earliest Greek manuscripts have no signs of punctuation at the end of the sentences. In fact, there is no separation between sentences, or even between words. But the editors of the Greek text have concluded that this is the best way to punctuate here. Westcott and Hort, as well as Nestle, have at the close of verse thirty-three a raised period, which is equivalent to the modern semicolon. The same thing is found in Weymouth's *Resultant Greek Testament*, which claims to exhibit "the text in which the majority of modern editors are agreed."⁷

The Revised Standard Version follows the American Standard Version in the first instance, putting a semicolon at the end of verse thirty-three. But it changes the last part of verse thirty-four—after "who is to condemn?"—making it a question.

As indicated at the beginning of this discussion, there is no way of being sure which is the best punctuation to adopt. But the meaning of the passage is clear, whatever way it is punctuated.

One word in these two verses calls for special notice. It is *egkalesei*, translated in the King James Version

⁴Greek Testament, II, 400.

⁵Hermann Olshausen, *Biblical Commentary on the New Testament* (New York: Sheldon and Co., 1860), IV, 68.

⁶Romans, 339.

⁷Richard F. Weymouth, *The Resultant Greek Testament* (3rd edition; London: James Clarke and Company, 1905), title page.

"shall lay to the charge of." The verb means literally "call in" (*en, kaleo*), so it signifies "bring a charge against," "accuse." In some of the translations quoted above it is vividly rendered

"impeach." Fortunately we have Christ as our Lawyer to plead our case. And the Judge is our Heavenly Father. So as long as our hearts are right with God we know we are safe.

My God—Why?

By G. H. Boffey*

TEXT: Matthew 27:26

God gave life a halo, but sin has ringed it with a question mark.

It may be an economic question mark, the elementary (and for some, lifelong) problem of making ends meet. It may be a gray circle of suffering surrounding the drawn face of a loved one. To our generation it has been a blood-red question mark.

Why all this suffering, sorrow, and woe?

Why a world held by chains from below?

Has no one the answer? Knows no one the way?

God give us a light and send us the day.

Every time tragedy really hits an individual or a nation they are driven to cry, "My God, why?"

Suffering is a mystery to which we have no full answer. No one has the answer. Even the Bible does not give us the answer. But perhaps it gives us something better.

If the Bible gave us a full explanation of human sufferings, answered the heart cry, "My God, why?" every time it has been wrung from human lips, it would be a volume of vast dimensions.

Men in torment of soul or body do not want explanations; they want

help and hope. That is just what God gives us in His world.

A heart bowed with grief is a world on its own. The chill mists of loneliness descend. Through the halls of the heart there remorselessly sounds the bitter, plaintive note, *Nobody knows and nobody cares*.

Peter sought to deliver afflicted members of the Early Church from this defeated state of questioning introspection. He reminded them "that the same afflictions were accomplished in their brethren that are in the world" (I Peter 5:9).

The questioning cry upon our lips has been upon the lips of others. Hear it echoing down the corridor of time. See Adam standing by the still form of his son Abel. See the agony on his face and the unspoken question framed upon his quivering lips, that same question and agony which have been known to the bereaved down the years. Exiled, defamed, and forgotten, Joseph lifted his face to God in prison and in the darkness whispered the question. Daniel prepared to enter the lions' den, and the grim gateway became a question mark which encircled the very throne of God.

As these great men of God step from the sacred page and bare their hearts, show us the wounds gained

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in the battle, we know that we are not alone in the struggle.

WE ARE NOT ALONE

That is our first encouragement. We are not alone. The thought is as the touch of a cool and sympathetic hand upon a fevered brow. Not alone! Bless God for that!

If we have borrowed the plaintiveness of the Psalmist and the prophets in their afflictions, well may we look forward to sharing in their song of triumph in the latter end.

Hark! What is that? From the parched lips of a blood-soaked figure upon a rugged Cross, surrounded by darkness from above and hatred from below, there comes a startling cry,

What tremendous thing is this? Is the Son of God himself confused by His Father's dealings with Him? Has the mystery of suffering perplexed Deity? Has it brought confusion to the throne of God?

The majestic truth is that the throne of God has touched a world confused and diseased by sin, and where it touched it became a Cross, a blood-red Cross, red with the blood of God.

The pathetic cry which fell from the lips of Jesus on Calvary constitutes a mighty revelation. It reveals the means by which God has come to rescue a ruined world, and more particularly the extent of His strivings.

We have visualized God seated in heaven, vested with infinite might and majesty, supreme in His ability to do what He will. That conception of God is not wrong. But it is not complete. With this picture in our minds we have been perplexed why God Almighty has been so silent in the moment of distress and in the hour of world calamity. That cry explains it.

God has moved to the redemption of the race, not by interventions of

indisputable power, but by self-sacrifice. He has identified himself with us. So fully has He identified himself with sinners that He has gathered to His own heart the pains known to our hearts. The tide of human and divine sorrow rose within His bosom until it found expression in the grievous cry, "My God, why?" Jesus, the Son of Man, cried that cry. And Christ Jesus, the Son of God, added the triumphant words, "It is finished."

God has limited himself to His creation. He has come to us in the limitations of a human body and in the pain and shame of the Cross. The day when the world will sway to the dictates of His power is yet future.

This then is our strength: God is with us in our afflictions. The cry upon our lips has been taken up by His lips. Our sorrows are His sorrows. His victory is to be our victory.

WE HAVE A FUTURE

If time could stand still and there would be no future then the present would have no explanation. The great cry of the human heart would remain unanswered. The inheritance of humanity would only be the sad question of its self-made miseries.

But the future will explain the present. When Christ rose from the dead and ascended on high, He guaranteed a glorious future to the redeemed souls of men.

Life at last had a meaning. It had a goal, an end which was not an end but a wonderful prospect. The end will not be the end, for life in the presence of God has no end.

To men divorced from God, suffering is just grim suffering and perplexity—dark perplexity. It issues in despair.

But to the saved soul, life's question marks became exclamation marks as the grace of God is revealed in us and

the glory of the hope set before appears to us.

WE HAVE A TRANSFORMING GRACE

Because we have the transforming grace of God we are able to say: *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* (II Corinthians 4:17).

The basis of life is tragic. There is a sob at the heart of creation, but Christ supplants it with a song, and hope that maketh not ashamed.

Satan's slimy trail has ringed the whole universe with a question mark. He has slandered the spotless character of God, so that deluded men have blamed God for the consequences of their own sins.

As thoughtful minds have contemplated the blood-red course of history and the pending tragedies men so ardently labor to bring upon the world, they are forced to ask, "My God, why?"

When the grimness of life gets home to the individual and pain and suffering become bitterly personal, then the cry breaks out again.

What is the answer? God has made himself the Answer.

By His blood-stained cross He has transformed that cry into a shout of triumph.

He has broken the chains of sin. Out of the darkness and bondage of sin the redeemed souls can step forth into the most glorious liberty of being sons of God.

He has brought into existence a heavenly community: the Church of redeemed men and women, whose hope, whose joy, whose inheritance are in heaven, and whose triumph is that they live for God on earth amidst the antagonism of Satan and the indifference of rebellious men.

Christ is coming again. He comes to usher in a new order. Earth shall know the rule of authority of an all-wise God, and heaven will be packed with the redeemed.

Out of the shambles of sin will arise a great and an eternal memorial to the goodness and mercy of God. The dark question mark will have been transformed into a rainbow of everlasting deliverance—and in it will be set the very throne of God.

THE CHURCH'S DEFENDERS

The story is told of how two grimy, hollow-eyed tommies had remained under fire for days in a lonely outpost during a heavy German counterattack in 1917. One turned to the other and wearily remarked, "I wonder why the jerries haven't taken the sector." The other straightened up, looked him in the eye, and answered, "The answer is us. We's the answer!"

We sometimes wonder why the church has not collapsed altogether and why the forces of evil have not completely taken over. We—the Eunices and all the other saints in aprons and overalls—are the answer. The answer is us!

—WILLIAM P. BARKER in "*Saints in Aprons and Overalls*" (Fleming H. Revell Company)

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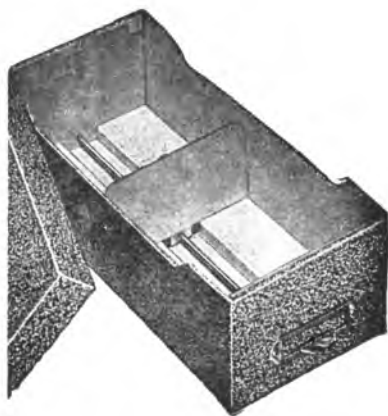
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II. Benefits from the Evangelistic Campaign

By Mel-Thomas Rothwell*

LAST MONTH we laid some groundwork for the consideration of our subject, "Serving the Local Church Through the Evangelistic Campaign." Let us proceed now to answer the question, more specifically, as to what are some of the benefits a church can, and should, derive from an evangelistic campaign. Four come to mind, offhand, and it seems best to discuss them under the following divisions:

A. The church should by all odds be revived spiritually. Its sense of leadership and stewardship should be greatly enhanced, so that the entire church, but especially the leaders, will be alerted to the need of greater achievements.

B. The church's vision should be enlarged and its need of personal evangelism should be emphasized.

C. The numerical strength of the church should be increased.

D. The church should experience a genuine uplift which will be reflected in every phase of its life and activities.

A. REVIVAL AND CHURCH CONDITIONS

The immediate purpose of the revival is to revitalize, invigorate, and restore the spiritual losses of the church. Revival should be a prelude to better things, and not a postlude. It should be a starting point for uplook and uplift, not a terminus, or as the French would say, *C'en est fait*,

It is finished, The game is played, The jig is up. True revival will give new impetus, life, and enthusiasm to the church. Revival is not a luxury, a calendar-filling event for the church; it is rather its lifeline. Either a church revives or it dies ultimately. Revival is a part of any living process; it is not necessarily peculiar to religion. It is a counter to the drag, or death, of anything. Even a political party must have revival. In religion it is not something added to embellish or entertain. It is the *sine qua non* of spiritual life, without which life fades and encroaching death takes over. Hence revival of the spiritual forces of the church, which is possible only through personal revival, must be primary among revival objectives, else all other apparent gains will be ultimate losses. When revival is conceived of as a superficial rallying of church interests, no matter how enthusiastically and artfully planned, the true mark of revival will be missed and actual, vital church losses will not be regained.

The deepened spiritual insight and reality will awaken a greater sense of the obligations of stewardship among local church leaders and members. Leaders and members need instruction, new ideas, and suggestion. But to whip up a state of human enthusiasm without the underlying spiritual reality is to create an evanescent froth which will dissipate quickly after the human stimulus is removed, when the

*Professor, Bethany Nazarene College.

evangelist packs his bags again and moves on to his next engagement.

It is possible within the scope of revival preaching to provide church leaders and members with many helpful ideas. Leaders rarely carry out to the fullest the duties and obligations of their offices. Many of them are sitting ducks instead of working beavers. The evangelist should consult good pastors regarding the problem and ponder it well, for in this way he can find helpful clues and come up with stimulating ideas. Member loyalty, including leaders, needs intelligent treatment in every church I visit. Neglect of prayer meetings, Sunday night services, Sunday school, and other church responsibilities can be treated with Christian candor. If properly ministered, such truth will reach and stir to action scores who are not numbered among the seekers at the revival altars. If done properly, and in love, the whole tone and temper of a church can be affected for good, with a lasting uplift which will outlast the campaign itself.

B. REVIVAL AND CHURCH VISION

A second benefit a church should derive from revival is an enlarged vision and an enhanced program of personal evangelism.

Many, if not most, holiness church members are dying for want of activity. Theologically we regard backsliding as a process which starts at the heart; for most of our people I believe it starts at their feet. Thousands of sincere, conscientious, saved and sanctified church members have become spiritual introverts, holding their pulses and holding the line. Until recent years we did not incorporate in our evangelistic program any aspect of personal evangelism, and the evangelist and pastor worked and sweat it out while the people sat back and withered and died for need of

activity in soul winning. We have started to correct this unfortunate oversight, but it is a slow, discouraging undertaking. Yet it can, and must, be done.

The evangelist can facilitate this program of personal evangelism by presenting means and ways of promoting such effort within the church. He can encourage personal effort in behalf of the revival. For instance, the use of telephone, ringing doorbells, picking up friends and bringing them to church, and a personal resolution to put forth all effort to try to win at least one soul during the revival period. Nightly checks to instill enthusiasm and direct the effort being put forth will tend to enlarge the vision and encourage personal effort. If one effective soul winner could be discovered and established in a revival, it would prove to be a highly profitable and rewarding campaign.

Fields and doors open to personal evangelism include hospital calling; looking after the widow and orphans, also the widower; the backslider, the milkman, butcher, mailman, and paper boy; and scores of business people and professional people with whom our members come in contact almost daily. The gutter bum needs God, but so do the physician, lawyer, merchant, and banker.

C. REVIVAL AND CHURCH EXTENSION

Thirdly, the revival campaign should involve as a part of its objectives the numerical increase of the church.

The mortality rate among converts and seekers at our altars is appalling. If the total number of seekers in revivals for a year over any district is compared with the total membership increase, the disparity is alarming. Even if one makes all the logical and explainable deductions, and there are

many, the loss still is far too great. Among the total numbers of seekers reported is included a high percentage who are already members of the church. This number would have to be subtracted from the total number of seekers if we were measuring our potential for possible church membership. Then there are those from other churches who are already members of a church and not a fair potential. And there are some who dawdle about joining a church until they cool off or possibly backslide. Still with all of these deductions I believe we are losing many by lack of inventive skill in getting people into our churches and also lack of an effective follow-up program.

The evangelist is in a favorable position to encourage and inspire church membership. The advantages of belonging to a church should be carefully thought out by the evangelist and presented in the campaign at some critical point. A few of the ideas I have used are:

1. You need the church and the church needs you in a vital, close, and workable fellowship.

2. The historical Christian Church has believed in and encouraged church membership.

3. It is the most effective way to tie your family to the church, the best and most likely medium of their salvation.

4. It is the best channel for personal effort; it provides the ways and means by which every Christian can effectively serve Christ and the Kingdom.

D. REVIVAL AND GENERAL UPLIFT

Finally, a revival should be a prelude, and not a postlude, to church vigor, acting as a starting point for uplift and uplook for the entire program.

The idea here is to avoid hurtful

revival aftermath. Again it must be remembered that the evangelist may not be to blame for an ensuing let-down. Harmful effects could result from extensive rejection of light, which always brings a rebound. When a church fails to walk in the light it sacrifices its soul, just as does an individual. And breaching of God's will when a church is confronted with truth will very likely add a detrimental postscript to the evangelistic campaign. The evangelist cannot be charged with this pernicious revival sequel.

However, it is likewise true that a noxious aftermath to revival may be the evangelist's fault. Among the causes which tend to precipitate post-revival decline are the following:

1. Excessive emotional pitches created by human devices, or carrying the revival emotional tide to a crest not warranted by the spiritual tone which characterizes it. To talk about a revival without emotional elevation is to talk nonsense; any surge forward for a goal always engages and employs the emotional potential. The minister who does not understand this natural phenomenon is going to suffer a major reduction in his effectiveness. But there is a vast inequality between normal emotional build-up which accompanies reaction to God's truth and a superficial, professionally imposed, stirred-up state which impairs rather than implements the work of the Holy Spirit. The emotional level of the revival should be consistent with the activity of the Spirit of God in His yearning, wooing pressure and toil among men.

2. The second point to note is an elaboration of the first: Evangelistic methods should conduce to a perpetuation of the revival interest and effect after the meeting has closed. No method should be employed which is too temporal in its outlook. All

methods used in a revival should be related to the total effect of the revival, during and after the scheduled services are finished. Hence it is not revival now at any cost.

3. Rapid decline follows revivals based largely on program and sensationalism. A live, wide-awake, and effective revival program is essential in these days of television competition and social pressures, and this is especially true in large cities. But unless the program is founded on prayer and the Scriptures, when the foam has vanished, so has the revival.

4. Perhaps the most advantageous means to avoid revival letdown is to initiate stronger personal effort in soul winning, to lengthen the personal evangelism arm of the church and enhance the prospect of extending the work of evangelism through members

of the church. This is the most revitalizing follow-up to revival, and its function will do more to perpetuate the good of the revival than any other single factor.

CONCLUSION

After the assignment was given to me by our capable executive secretary, Dr. Lewis, these are some of the thoughts which crossed my mind. They are not too logically connected, but the seedbed I trust is fairly evident. May God bless and direct our wonderful evangelists who are pouring out their lives without stint and often without the appreciation due them. The muscles of this arm of the church must be flexed and strengthened or the body itself will wither for want of enrichment, and ultimately perish.

"I Like You!"

By Hugh Dean*

IT HAPPENED one morning in vacation Bible school! I had been speaking to the Primary Department in their evangelistic service. I had told them that, even though they were very young, still those little things they had stolen, the lies they had told, the times they had "thrown a fit" when Mother had asked them to do something for her when they had wanted to go out and play ball with the other children—I had tried to explain to them that all these things were sins and were not what God wanted them to do. I was doing this not only because the supervisor had asked me to, but also because I loved these boys and girls and knew that many of them were old enough to have a conscientious experience of salvation. When I finished my little talk I gave them the opportunity to come to the altar and kneel and ask God to forgive them of

their sins and help them to live from then on without doing those things that were wrong in His sight. One after the other they began to come. They kept coming until there were seventeen of them kneeling at the altar, some sobbing softly just like older people do when God has spoken to their hearts. After we had prayed together I asked each of them if he had asked God to forgive him his sins and save him, and everyone of them said he had and that God had saved him. The children began to go back to their seats and then it happened! One little fellow from an unchurched home pulled me down close to him, and with eyes that were nearly dancing, said, "Brother Dean, I like you!"

As the children marched quietly out of the sanctuary and back to their classrooms I breathed this prayer, "Lord, help me to remember always that if I would win people to Thee, I must also win them to myself!"

*Pastor, Houston, Texas.

"QUEEN of the PARSONAGE"

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

Supplied by Ruth Vaughn*

Portrait of a Queen

THE NEIGHBORS all stood agog at their windows—staring at the small building across the street. They had never had reason to become interested in the building before—or the small group of people who met there to pray. But on this windy morning they were witnessing a most unusual sight.

The newly appointed pastor of the church was attempting to erect a new front on the building. His tiny wife (scarcely five feet tall), dressed in an old coat, hair tied in a bandanna, was holding the uprights in place while he nailed them down.

Soon the party lines were buzzing. There was some life over at that little Church of the Nazarene—after all!

Attractive and energetic, Kathryn Dayton was helping literally to build the church—while becoming adjusted to the glamorous privacy of her first parsonage, which was a tiny three-room apartment on the third floor of the home of a church member who had ten children. But with a dauntless sense of humor, a will to grapple obstacles, and a heart brimming with loving compassion, Mrs. Dayton proved—not only to the gossipy, astounded neighbors—but to everyone with whom she came in contact, the joy of living for Christ.

From that first maladjusted parsonage into other fields of labor, Kathryn Dayton has continually made "her"

parish a better place because of her glowing personality. She has taught primaries, juniors, and the missionary ladies. She has papered parsonages, painted parsonages, and rebuilt parsonages; she has made new skirts from old ones, little jackets from big ones, and happiness in every room. She has mended old sheets, old rosebushes, and hurt feelings; she has radiated joy in spite of frayed rugs, rainy days, and erratic church members.

Mrs. Dayton, now pastor's wife in Knox, Pennsylvania, shows forth gaiety and uncompromising strength, indomitable courage and fiery, strong quality of life. There have been dark hours of illness, broken dreams, excruciating trials—but through the black of midnight she could see God working "all things . . . together for good." She has found supreme happiness in a Nazarene parsonage—in the center of the will of God. Truly this is a portrait of a queen!

ROYAL COOKBOOK

A very pleasant surprise came to me this month when I received a letter from Mrs. Mary Frame of Glasgow, Scotland. Let me share a portion of her lovely letter with you.

"May I speak for the Scottish queen? What are Fritos? How much is in a package? How much is a stick of butter? How much is in a packet of yeast?

"Perhaps your interesting page is most avidly devoured by those far-

*Amarillo, Texas.

thrust away and strange to your country and ways.

"I tried the Fritos recipe on my husband substituting corn flakes for Fritos (whatever that is). It worked.

"On the following evening we had a 'queen' and her husband to tea, so we repeated the dose and it was much appreciated. We had to substitute dried mushrooms for the mushroom soup as our soup was too dilute. The recipe is now proving very popular."

This recipe was "Swedish Meatballs" (July issue), in which a fifteen-cent package of Fritos is used. It is hard for us to realize that our commodities generally known in one country are quite foreign to those of other lands. This also gives us a sense of awe as we realize the magnitude of our international church. We are a part of a great thing! The greatest thing on earth!!!

In the March issue the recipe of "Chicken Shortcake" was given. The instructions merely stated: "Serve over hot corn bread. But now I realize that not everyone is familiar with that delightful old southern recipe on which I grew up. It is given below. Incidentally, this is the greatest with red beans!

In mixing bowl, beat one egg with fork; add two cups milk. In sifter, place two cups corn meal (yellow), one cup flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon soda, pinch of salt. Add to liquid. Stir and place in piping-hot, greased pans. Bake at 375 degrees until golden brown.

OVER TEACUPS

In the July issue we presented a question common to all parsonage families: "How can we give proper attention to church duties and still have time for our children?" Mrs. Howard Lester, parsonage queen from Stephenville, Texas, has written in

her views on this all-important question.

"We have sought and discovered some ways whereby we can lead our children closer to God because of parsonage life. I believe a lot depends upon our attitudes. If we love the church and our duties and the people, our children will love them too. But if we criticize and resent people and things, we will lose our children. Here are some of our methods.

"Because each night is usually taken up with some activity, we set aside a family night: Monday. Each member of the family agrees to keep this open for the family. Our children look forward to this very much. Sometimes we drive out to the lake and cook our supper out and fish a little, then have family worship under the stars. Sometimes we just want to stay at home for a change and play games. On that night 'Daddy' and 'Mommy' devote full attention to the children.

"We try to work with our children and make it fun. They love to call. This is good training for them—and also gives us a bond of doing something together and sharing our work. "We share church services, for we sit together. In this manner they have learned to be reverent and pay attention.

"We attempt to give at least ten minutes a day to each child, individually. This gives each one a chance to confide any problems or joys and makes him feel definitely that he has a peculiar and individual place in the parents' hearts.

"We share our family worship periods. We read a chapter from a missionary book or character-building story, then a chapter from the Bible. We commit scripture to memory during our family devotions and we go over the portion we are learning together. Then we all pray. Then we

gather about the piano and sing a hymn together before going to bed.

"We share all of the church week-day activities: Caravans, PAL's, etc. Our children look forward to these activities and do not feel they are being neglected but rather that it is something we can share and enjoy together. They love to clean the church—for we do it together and we have fun while we do it."

Through sharing responsibilities and activities of the church in such great measure, our children can more easily be led to Christ if we will work consistently at our greatest task. We must not become so taken up with saving others that we forget to save our own.

BOOKSHELF WITH LACE

For those times when you are called upon to give a devotional in Junior Society or any children's group, Jacob J. Sessler's *Junior Magic Sermon-Talks* can't be beat. It presents great truths in a novel, enter-

taining way. (Nazarene Publishing House, \$2.00.)

THE KING'S HOUSE

For attractive, unusual, economical place mats obtain some clear plastic ones (available in all sizes and shapes). Paint these with felt-tipped markers (available in all colors) in the design of your choice. You can make delightful ones freehand—even if your paintings don't resemble Rembrandt's! A folder for your place mats can be made easily with cardboard covered with self-sticking plastic.

HEART TALK

The scripture which has held Kathryn Dayton steady through all storms is Joshua 1:9. No greater promise is given.

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

MY BEST FROM JOHN WESLEY

Christian Perfection

"By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God, and our neighbour, ruling our tempers, words and actions.

"I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. Therefore, I retract several expressions in our hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility.

"And I do not contend for the term sinless, though I do not object against it.

"As to the manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by the simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant.

"But I believe in a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant."

John Wesley, *Works*, (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1958), Vol. XI, *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, "Christian Perfection," p. 446.

—Contributed by PAUL W. URSCHEL
Hemet, California

I A Good Sermon

By W. E. McCumber*

INTRODUCTION

GOOD PREACHING is never accidental. It results from sermons carefully prepared in strict adherence to well-known and time-honored principles of homiletics. That means hard work, but a man truly called of God to preach the Word will find the task as joyous as it is arduous.

Sloppy sermons are inexcusable. Any man guilty of preaching them should seriously question his right to occupy the time and accept the support of a congregation. He should either sweat over his sermons or vacate the pulpit.

The brief discussion of a good sermon in the issues which follows were shared with fellow ministers. The chapters have three values. They may encourage the novice to a persistent effort to preach the Word with growing ability and authority. They may also challenge the experienced minister who is tempted to skimp his sermon preparation. The third value is subjective and proven. The author's own attempts to preach good sermons have been renewed with added vigor.

I am indebted to every book that wide reading in the field of homiletics has brought within the compass of my study. Since these simple chapters were prepared at a time when I was isolated from my library, no attempt has been made at direct quotations.

However the influence of many writers and preachers will be obvious.

One final word before you begin reading. These pages are not penned by one who regards himself as a superior preacher. They are written by a fellow who has learned to preach a few good sermons by struggling through many poor ones! Therefore a debt of gratitude is herewith acknowledged to all the congregations who have patiently borne with my trial-and-error method of learning to preach.

1. THE PREACHER MUST SPEAK WITH AUTHORITY.

What is essential to a good sermon must depend upon the purpose of preaching. That purpose is not difficult to define. The minister speaks for God and to the people. The whole purpose of that speaking is to declare the will of God, that men might do the will of God. Human life is constantly mocked by changing fortunes and inevitable death. To become significant, life must be invested with a permanency that cannot go broke in a depression or rot in a grave. Since "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17), the preacher must thrust upon alterable and decaying lives the redeeming will of God.

To declare the will of God that men might do it requires a sermon with authority. There must be in his ser-

*Pastor, Thomasville, Georgia.

mon an arresting and convicting force that seizes the minds, hearts, and consciences of the congregation and binds them, like Luther of old, to the Word of God. What can give to a sermon this compelling note of authority?

A primary source of authority for the preacher is the Bible, the written Word of God. For the Word of God is the revelation of the will of God, and it carries within it a self-evidencing power to convict. The Psalmist declared, "The entrance of thy words giveth light" (Psalms 119: 130); the Bible discloses the will of God. But the author of Hebrews affirmed, "The word of God is quick [living], and powerful [operative], and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing . . ." (Hebrews 4:12). When Peter delivered his Pentecostal sermon, shot throughout with scripture, we read that his auditors were "pricked in their hearts." When the sword struck home they became immediately concerned about the will of God, crying out, "What shall we do?" If the minister would be effective in getting people to do the will of God, let him preach with authority, steeping his sermon and his very language in the Word of God. The sword of human enthusiasm and eloquence will do nicely for slicing off Malchus' ear; but only the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17), will stab deeply the sin-toughened hearts of this generation!

In a Tampa, Florida, church a heavily drinking, deeply sinning friend of mine heard a preacher challenge anyone to read the Gospel of John through seven times without yielding his heart to Christ. He accepted the challenge in the bravado spirit of a confirmed skeptic. During the fourth reading, having been inwardly shaken by the first three, he

got to chapter nine, the glorious record of the healing and saving of a man born blind. Suddenly he was smitten to his knees, poured out a black torrent of confession, avowed his determination to forsake his sins, and touched by faith the redeeming blood of Christ. Today he is a highly respected Christian gentleman, and a very ardent personal witness to the power of the gospel. The Word of God speaks with an irresistible authority to the listening heart of man! The touchstone of sermonic preparation is Paul's charge to Timothy, "Preach the word" (II Timothy 4:2).

Another primary source of authority for the preacher is Christ, the living Word of God. It is not enough to have the written Word upon our lips; we must have the living Word shining forth from our lives. Otherwise the force of the truth we proclaim will be short-circuited by the insincerity of the example we show. I will admit that in the history of the Church there are instances where God honored the Word and used its message to reach and save penitent sinners even though the vehicle of transmission was "a man of unclean lips" and life. But that is the exception that establishes the rule. Once let it become known, or even strongly suspected, that the minister does not sincerely follow Jesus, and his sermons will be "sounding brass, or a tinkling c y m b a l" (I Corinthians 13:1), rejected in justifiable contempt by a people who demand of their preacher, as did Carlyle, that he know God "otherwise than by hearsay."

One Sunday night I heard a man preach for fifty minutes on perfect love, testifying that for over twenty years he had not felt any stirring of carnal anger in his heart. And then he got into an argument in the church aisle with a teen-age girl, becoming

so enraged that his face was red and his knuckles were white! From that moment on you may be sure that I took everything he said *cum grano salis*. The preacher is a physician of souls, and in this practice the doctor must take first the medicine he prescribes to his patients!

If we would say of our churches what Paul said of the Thessalonians, "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven" (I Thessalonians 1:9-10), we must be able to say of ourselves what Paul did of himself, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (I Thessalonians 2:10). Authority in preaching demands that we know the Bible, and that we know and exemplify Jesus Christ. Elijah could preface his message with the customary prophetic formula, "Thus saith the Lord," and cause the knees of royalty to rap each other black and blue. But his power came not alone by voicing the Word of God. His daring and devotion were possible because he could say, "The Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand" (I Kings 18:15). Our times demand added power, and that calls for a deepening acquaintance with Christ and the Bible.

2. THE PREACHER MUST SPEAK WITH CLARITY AND URGENCY.

Authoritative truth, even the Bible, will not exert a transforming influence upon those who cannot understand it. To the question of Philip, "Understandest what thou readest?" the scripture-reading eunuch replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" (Acts 8:30-31) But the issue is compounded confusion if the preacher attempts to explain the Book men do not understand in words they do not understand either. We must

not only acquaint ourselves thoroughly with the Word of God; we must become adept in presenting that truth in the words of men.

Clarity calls for the patient explanation of technical terms. If your people read their Bibles they will bump into such words as "justification," "sanctification," "redemption," "propitiation"—all of which are practically an "unknown tongue" to the average, modern churchgoer. Even the simpler words, "grace," "faith," and "life," are invested with definite theological meaning in the Bible and cannot be understood there in the light of common usage elsewhere. The great truths represented by these words must be preached, and since these are Bible terms, the words themselves must be preserved. Our task is to define and explain them in language and ideas readily understandable to our local congregations.

There are missionaries in west Africa who boast of the power of Christ to take a man's head out. That is completely mystifying to us. But those people have a long and tragic history of slavery, where lines of men and women, linked together by iron chains running to iron collars around their necks, were marched to the coast by Arab slave traders. If a man of wealth saw a friend in the line and wished to redeem him, upon a satisfactory payment of gold or ivory, he literally could take his friend's head out of the collar. By resorting to this phrase "take our heads out," the missionaries can get the truth of Christ's redemption across to their listeners. In just such manner we must adapt the truth to the thought-forms of our people.

Clarity calls, therefore, for the translation of Bible doctrines into vernacular speech. Observe keenly your congregation's manner of speak-

ing, get acquainted with their everyday language, and then press those words and idioms into the service of preaching. Remember, even the New Testament was originally penned, not in the undisputed elegance of classical Greek, but in the *koine*, the “vulgar” Greek, the language of the man on the street.

If the expansion of your vocabulary to include the language of your people means the constriction of your pulpit vocabulary, don’t fret about it. Your business is not to demonstrate how adept you could be at working crossword puzzles, but to set the gospel squarely and plainly before the needy-hearted group who look to you for guidance. An English clergyman, given a rural parish, determined to exclude from his sermons all words that the parishioners did not use. His habit was to converse with them and later write down the words and expressions they had employed. Finally he compiled a vocabulary of three hundred words, and deliberately imposing this limitation upon himself, he presented the gospel in their language. The result was something thousands of American preachers devoutly wish for—even the front pews were filled and some stood in the church yard to hear a man they could understand.

Of course, if you must protect a reputation for erudition, you might pass on Compté’s definition of God to your audience. “God is the continuous resultant of all forces capable of voluntarily concurring in the universal perfectionings of the world.” Just don’t grow discouraged and resign if they fail to stand before that “lost in wonder, love, and praise.”

Strive to make your preaching truly Pentecostal. For it was said of the listening throngs on that day that they heard “every man in his own tongue” (Acts 2:8).

But furthermore, if the will of God

is all that gives validity and significance to human life, the minister dare not proclaim that will in a feeble or dispirited manner. His words and tones and gestures must all transmit an appeal to holy action. For it is he that doeth the will of God who abideth forever, not simply he that knoweth the will of God. Our task does not end with informing people; we are to inspire them. The sermon must be a summons to action. It must force men to shake themselves from moral lethargy and come to terms with the claims of Jesus Christ. The reaction of the congregation at the close of the sermon should not be a grateful yawn but an echo of the jailer’s cry, “What must I do?” (Acts 16:30)

The Word and will of God will never assume a greater urgency for the people than they have for the preacher. Stephen Neill is right in the insistence that a young man has no business entering the ministry unless the gospel is “a matter of life and death” in his thinking. The man who succeeds in the true purpose of preaching must bring his message in a spirit of holy concern that will prove contagious, infecting the congregation and compelling them to traffic in eternal principles! The biographer of Roy T. Williams explains his tremendous power as a preacher in terms of his lofty conception of preaching as the mediation of eternal truth and his dead-earnestness in preaching for a verdict.

As ministers we should find ourselves mirrored in the portrait that John Bunyan sketched of the man in Interpreter’s House. “And whereas thou seest him with his eyes lift up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, and the law of truth writ on his lips; it is to show thee that his work is to know and unfold dark things to sinners; even as also thou

seest him stand as if he pleaded with men."

A good sermon requires authority, the power of "the best of books." It needs clarity, in order to "unfold dark

things to sinners." It must have urgency, the constraining passion of one who "pleaded with men." Marked by these essentials it can hardly fail to be a good sermon!

SERMON WORKSHOP

Contributed by Nelson G. Mink*

GENERAL BOOTH'S SECRET

"When I was in London," said Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, "I received word that if I were at the Salvation Army Headquarters at ten o'clock sharp, I might meet General Booth. I hurriedly made my way there, for he was to leave for the continent in a very few minutes.

"When I looked into his face and saw him brush back his hair from his brow, and heard him speak of the trials and conflicts and victories, I said: General Booth, tell me what has been the secret of your success all the way through.

"He hesitated a second; and I saw the tears come into his eyes and steal down his cheeks, and then he said: 'I will tell you the secret. God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities; but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ could do with them, I made up my mind that God would have all of William Booth there was. . . .'

"Then he looked at me a minute and said, 'When do you go?' I said, 'In five minutes.' He said, 'Pray!' We dropped to our knees and I prayed a stammering stuttering prayer. Then he talked with God about the outcast of London, the poor of New York, and the lost in China, and the great world lying in wickedness. With his eyes still overflowing with tears, he bade me good-bye and started

away, past eighty years of age, to preach on the continent.

"And I learned from William Booth that the greatness of a man's power is the measure of surrender. It is not a question of who you are or of what you are, but of whether God controls you."

—*Exchange*

SENTENCE SERMONS

"The man who is self-centered, is off-centered.

"Some people talk so fast they say things they have not thought yet.

"Some men rise to the occasion, while others merely go up in the air.

"No man ever hurt his eyesight by looking on the bright side of things.

"If you worked for your employer like you serve your God, how long would you hold your job?"

—*Selected*

THOUGHTS ON LOVE

Note the strength of love. It has power. It is energetic. Hate gets exhausted. Selfishness becomes surfeited. But love works on and on. Note the service of love. It does good. But it goes further. It works no ill. Note the scope of love. It outspreads over every duty and privilege.

—*Bunola, Pennsylvania, Nazarene Bulletin*

*Pastor, Connell, Washington.

Seven Things You Cannot Do

1. You cannot escape responsibility for your own condition.
2. You cannot evade sin.
3. You cannot escape the consequences of your choices.
4. You cannot escape the responsibility to love God totally and your neighbor as yourself.
5. You cannot escape meeting your Maker.
6. You cannot serve God and mammon.
7. You cannot escape the cross.

—LEONARD J. DEAKINS

The Voice of Jesus

TEXT: John 3:29

- I. AN AUTHORITATIVE VOICE
 - A. Authority over gainsaying hearers (Matthew 7:28-29)
 - B. Authority over demons (Mark 1:27)
 - C. Authority over the storms of life (Matthew 8:26)
 - D. Authority over all things (Matthew 28:18)
- II. THE VOICE OF THE THOUGHTFUL
 - A. Thoughtful of the discouraged disciples (John 21:12)
 - B. Thoughtful of the twelve-year-old girl (Mark 5:43)
 - C. Thoughtful of your need and mine
- III. THE VOICE OF THE PATIENT SUFFERER
 - A. When He went a "little farther, and fell on his face" (Matthew 26:39)
 - B. Marginal readings: "On the face before God—Christ's prayers—cup of suffering—God's will—submission"—"I will's" of Christ.
- IV. AN UNDERSTANDABLE VOICE (Revelation 1:10, 12)
- V. THE VOICE OF THE VICTOR (Revelation 1:18)

—NELSON G. MINK

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 27:19-26

TEXT: Matthew 27:22

The greatest question facing the people of the world is, "What shall I do then with Jesus?" It is easy for us to note that many are rejecting Him who has left us the highway of life plainly marked. The rejected teachings may be these: "Take up thy cross, and follow me"; "I am the way, the truth, and the life"; and, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Many about us are ignoring Him. It is a tragedy to ignore a Saviour who "is come to seek and to save that which was lost," "to heal the broken hearted," and who says, "I am the good shepherd." It is good to note that some are accepting Him. We may recognize Him as Saviour and as the One that went away so that the Comforter might come. He is "a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

—PAUL F. WANKEL

E. Carondelet, Illinois

Safety First—or Last

SCRIPTURE: Mark 14:53-54

The translation by J. B. Phillips causes this verse to sparkle with the words, "Peter followed him at a safe distance." All of our lives we are conditioned to think of our safety first. Then when we meet Christ the world goes topsy-turvy and the new concept is "safety last."

Many are the applications of this truth. There can be no safety belt about us that would keep us from going to our knees in prayer. There is no place for safety goggles upon our eyes that might hinder us in the reading of the Scriptures. Safety gloves on the hands would be in the way when engaged in the Lord's work. A safety latch on the pocketbook would place a lien on our tithes and offerings.

Here again is a face-to-face encounter with the paradox of the Christian life stated explicitly in Luke 9:24.

—C. F. CHAMPION

Perry, Michigan

Sermon Outlines on the Epistle to the Hebrews

Chapter 10

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 10:1-39

INTRODUCTION: The apostle, in the tenth chapter, turns his attention more specifically to a discussion of the perfect sacrifice offered by our High Priest of the heavenly tabernacle. Thank God, this man has "somewhat to offer."

- I. WEAKNESS OF THE ANCIENT SACRIFICES (vv. 1-4)
 - A. There was no substance (v. 1). Only a "shadow of good things to come."
 - B. There could be no stopping of them (vv. 1-3). There was never a cessation of the unbroken succession of Old Testament sacrifices.
 - C. No salvation ever attained through these sacrifices (vv. 3-4).
- II. WILLINGNESS OF THE ONE ATONING SACRIFICE (vv. 5-9)
 - A. The preparation (v. 5). Let us meditate upon the marvel of the preparation for the fleshly incarnation of Jesus.
 - B. The pleasurelessness (vv. 6-8). God took no pleasure in all of the numberless sacrifices and burnt offerings for sin offered under the Old Testament regime.
 - C. The perfect performance (vv. 7-9). This was the perfect performance of the Father's will.
- III. WORTHINESS OF THE ALL-SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE (vv. 10-18)
 - A. The sanctification (v. 10).
 - B. The supreme satisfaction (vv. 11-14).
 - C. The sufficient sign (vv. 15-18). The witness of the Spirit is the sign of ratification of the new covenant.
- IV. WONDER OF THE ACCESS THEREBY SUPPLIED (vv. 19-22)
 - A. The privilege (vv. 19-20).

- B. The Priest (v. 21).
- C. The portal (v. 22).

- V. WARNING AGAINST THE APOSTASY THAT SEVERS (vv. 23-39)
 - A. The perseverance (v. 23).
 - B. The provoking (v. 24).
 - C. The precaution (v. 25).
 - D. The punishment (vv. 26-31).
 - E. The prompting (vv. 32-34)—to memory.
 - F. The patient prosecution (vv. 35-39).

—MERRILL G. BASSETT
Yuma, Colorado

Chapter 11

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 11:1-40

INTRODUCTION: In the closing verses of the tenth chapter the apostle has urged upon his readers the importance of faith to patient perseverance in living the Christian life. In this eleventh chapter he proposes to conduct us on a tour of the "Hall of the Immortals of Faith." He will now show us what can be accomplished through faith.

- I. EXEGESIS OF "FAITH" (vv. 1-3)
 - A. Reality through faith (v. 1).
 - B. Report through faith (v. 2).
 - C. Revelation through faith (v. 3).
- II. EXAMPLES OF FAITH (vv. 4-32)
 - A. Confession of faith (v. 4).
 - B. Confirmation of faith (vv. 5-6).
 - C. Concern of faith (v. 7).
 - D. Call of faith (v. 8).
 - E. Camping by faith (v. 9).
 - F. City and country of faith (vv. 10, 14-16).
 - G. Conception of faith (vv. 11-12).
 - H. Confidence of faith (v. 13).
 - I. Consecration of faith (vv. 17-19).
 - J. Claim of faith (vv. 20-21).
 - K. Cemetery of faith (v. 22). Joseph did not even want his bones to lie permanently outside the land of promise that faith claimed.
 - L. Courage and calmness of faith (v. 23).
 - M. Choice of faith (vv. 24-25).
 - N. Compensation of faith (v. 26).

- O. Composure and constancy of faith (v. 27).
- P. Conviction and covenant of faith. (v. 28).
- Q. Challenge of faith (v. 29). To put their feet down where, a moment before, the waters of the Red Sea had rolled.
- R. Conquest of faith (v. 30).
- S. Compliance (perished not with them that were disobedient) and credibility of faith (v. 31).
- T. Census of champions of faith (vv. 32-35a).

III. EXPLOITS OF FAITH (vv. 33-40)

- A. The triumphant (vv. 33-35a).
- B. The tested and tortured (vv. 35b-38).
- C. The testimony (vv. 39-40). All of these "witnesses" of the faith chapter have left their testimony and have "obtained a good report," on record for the ages.

—MERRILL G. BASSETT

The Christian's Secret of Happiness

SCRIPTURE: I Peter 5:6-7

INTRODUCTION: (The Greek New Testament begins a new paragraph at verse 6.)

As Peter begins to draw his exhortations to a conclusion he sets the Christian philosophy of happiness in bold letters, for it is so very different from that of the world.

Man says, "Climb," but God says, "Humble yourselves."

In God's program of success the way up is down.

This is a bold imperative, but Peter knows well that it is through humiliation that the Christian moves to exaltation and consolation.

I. HUMILIATION (v. 6a)

- A. Self-renunciation.
 - 1. The so-called "humiliation of Christ" was self-chosen. So the Christian must be willing to make himself of no reputation. If we humble not ourselves under God's grace, He

will humble us under His judgments.

- 2. This is an Old Testament truth which Peter heard Jesus frequently emphasize. (Cf. Psalms 18:27; Proverbs 29:23; Matthew 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14.) We should not forget that this exhortation was made to Christians already under severe trials and suffering.
- 3. Join your Saviour in patient cross-bearing if you want Him to join you to Him in glorious crown-wearing.
- B. Under the strong hand of God.
 - 1. The Hebrews referred often to God's hand as the symbol of His strength and dominion.
 - 2. God's mighty hand loses its terror to those who do not fight against it. For though His hand is strong to smite, 'tis also strong to save, and mightier than any hand or weapon that may be raised against you.
 - 3. For the humble believer God's hand is a refuge of strength and comfort, rather than a judgment fist.
 - 4. Our God is no man-made idol (or rabbit's paw-charm) against our fears. He is the great Shepherd, who carries His trembling sheep in His arms.

II. EXALTATION (v. 6b)

- A. God has a plan for your exaltation (cf. Psalms 91:14).
 - 1. So wait for God's promotions; for when God sets a man up, he's up. Divine exaltations are not dependent upon fickle human whims. They are precious and not precarious.
 - 2. God alone is most high and the Sovereign in charge of highest honors.
 - 3. The hand that brings down the proud will eventually exalt all who walk under its direction, correction, and protection.

B. God has a time for your exaltation.

1. The Greek word for time here is *kairos*, not *chronos*; hence not duration or quantity of time, but that qualitative timeliness of appropriate opportunity, a decisive crisis event. So the K.J.V. reads, "due time." We can be assured that God's time clock is never a second late.
2. He who believes that God's ways are best knows that God's time is always best.

III. CONSOLATION (v. 7)

A. Cast time's anxieties upon the eternal God.

1. Christian humility discards all trust in self and casts all anxieties about life and destiny upon the gracious God.

Alford declares the aorist tense used here means "once for all, by an act which includes the life." Moreover, he regards anxiety to be a contradiction of humility.

2. Thus by an act of full, permanent surrender to God you may henceforth and forever let Him carry any concern that involves you. This makes for permanent inner peace.

B. He cares for you.

1. God cares!
 - a. The final ground of existence is benevolent.
 - b. The universe is transfigured by love.
 - c. We may read all of life's catastrophes in a new light.
2. He who knows God cares for him need have no anxious care for himself.
 - a. Let not any problem of life fill you with terror, for God has both a concern for you and resources to fulfill it.
 - b. Be done, then, with the plague of distraction and worry. God's shoulders are

broad, His back is strong, and His great heart yearns for your well-being.

3. Godbey translates verse seven: "Casting all your care upon Him, because there is a care to Him for you." (Compare the translations by Phillips, Moffatt, and Weymouth.)

CONCLUSION:

A. Peter's exhortation sets before us the Christian's secret of a happy life.

1. Live submissively under God's humiliations.
2. Live thankfully for God's exaltations.
3. Live trustfully in God's solicitations.

B. Or as the song writer has put it: "Then let Him bear your burden; He understands and cares."

—ROSS E. PRICE

Pasadena, California

The Spiritual Meaning of Easter

SCRIPTURE: I Corinthians 15:12-22

TEXT: John 14:17

INTRODUCTION: The week before Easter is usually one of worship. Comparatively few know the true meaning of Easter. Many give little or no attention to the Cross.

I. THE STORY OF EASTER IS A LOVE STORY.

- A. "For God so loved the world" (John 3:16).
- B. He came to deliver us from the bondage of sin.
- C. Calvary was a public demonstration of God's love for lost humanity.

II. EASTER WAS A TIME OF SUBSTITUTION.

- A. Jesus gave himself for me.
- B. Example of substitution on Mount Moriah when Abraham offered Isaac.
 1. On Mount Moriah, the ram died in the place of the lad.
 2. On Mount Calvary, Christ died in the place of the sinner.

C. Men give their lives today in the place of others.

III. THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF EASTER IS ONE OF IDENTIFICATION.

A. Identification means to treat or make the same.

B. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (II Corinthians 5:14).

C. The practical outcome of our union with Christ is that the flesh has been crucified with the affections and the lusts.

IV. THE TRAGEDY OF EASTER IS ONE OF DEATH AND THE GRAVE.

A. Nothing attractive about death.

B. Jesus nailed to the Cross. Thieves on either side; pierced by the Roman spear; saying, "It is finished," and "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." Bowed his head and died.

C. Laid in a new tomb and sealed with a large stone.

V. THE GLORY OF EASTER IS ONE OF RESURRECTION.

A. "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ" lives in and throughout my life.

B. We are made one in the resurrection (Colossians 2:12).

C. The death of Christ alone would not have saved us.

—O. D. CURBOW
Springfield, Mo.

Facing Toward the Morning

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28:1-10

TEXT: . . . as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week . . . (Matthew 28:1).

My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning (Psalms 130:6).

INTRODUCTION: Bible directions speak of "before your face," "behind your back," "on your left hand," "on your right hand." Dr. Chapman says that it is understood that the person is facing the east in these cases, so direction can easily be determined.

The Bible is a spiritual Book and man is a spiritual being. The child of God is the normal and ideal man. So we may spiritualize these directions to say that the true saint of God is always facing the east.

He is looking to the land where the day breaks, to the land where the sun rises, to the land of life and light and hope and bliss. Our directional bearing will do much to help us through the night of this world, for if we face toward Christ, the Morning Star, we will be able to come through successfully.

Easter is a time when we are especially conscious of the joyful hope made possible by Christ's resurrection. It is then we see anew the importance of every person's facing toward the morning, where brightness, newness of life, and eternal hope abide. Let us notice the contrasting darkness first.

I. THE WORLD IS DARK.

A. The long night of life's mystery.

1. Much that cannot be understood by mere human understanding.

a. Irregularities in the social world.

b. Irreconcilable circumstances in natural world.

c. Mystifying experiences on every hand.

2. The presence of sin in the human family.

3. When Jesus comes, He explains and clears up life's mystery.

B. The long night of life's uncertainty.

1. Men seek for security in the midst of uncertainty.

a. There is none. What shall we do?

b. What of the future? is the age-old question.

2. Out of clouds we must hear God's reassurance.

a. "This is my beloved Son . . . hear him."

- b. His voice puts security in our hearts.
- C. The long night of life's finality.
 - 1. The presence of death in the land (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7).
 - 2. Finality of Jesus' life.
 - 3. Answer seen in the shining words—"as it began to dawn."

II. THE CHRISTIAN IS FACING THE MORNING.

- A. The Christian is facing (or has faced) salvation's morning.
 - 1. A time when he looked out of the darkness of sin toward the morning of initial salvation.
 - 2. A time when forgiveness flooded his soul like the thrill of early streaks of light to one who has waited.
 - a. Paul saw light on the road to Damascus. At high noon the "day star" arose in his heart.
 - b. We can sing, "It is morning in my heart."
 - 3. We have the privilege and duty of looking away from the darkness of a carnal heart to the morning of entire sanctification.
 - 4. As we continue our growth in the Christian graces, we look forward to the morning of eternal salvation.
- B. We are facing life's morning also.
 - 1. Our attitude toward life should carry morning's brightness.
 - a. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."
 - b. "Singing I go along life's way."
 - 2. Hopefulness in our hearts that we may accomplish the things that are God's will.
 - a. Christ's kingdom can be built up.
 - b. Things that ought to be done can be done.
 - c. Gone are old uncertainties and futilities.

- C. The Christian faces the resurrection morning.
 - 1. When our loved ones die.
 - a. "Good-by, I'll see you in the morning."
 - b. Hope to see them that morning.
 - 2. Paul said, "Behold, I shew you a mystery."

- D. The morning of eternity is also before our faces.
 - 1. Time when we shall live with Jesus in our eternal home.
 - 2. The light shines "more and more unto the perfect day."

III. THE CONTRAST OF CHRISTIAN'S OUTLOOK WITH THE WORLD.

- A. There may be sunset (west) and night and damp and darkness somewhere, but that is behind the saint's back. He faces the east.
- B. There may be frost (north) and snow and ice and frigidity, but that is on the saint's left hand, for he faces the east.
- C. There may be heat (south) and drought and sunstroke, but that is on the saint's right hand. He faces the east.
- D. There may be darkness all about. It may have been dark now for some time and the present hour may be the darkest of all. But in the night of sorrow and disappointment and trial the saint retains his sense of direction and keeps his face toward the east.
- E. Every promise of the Bible is designed to give the Christian comfort and encouragement. He has every assurance for his present needs and future requirements.

CONCLUSION: Are you facing the morning? Keep your face in that direction. The best is yet ahead. "Dawn" is before you.

—CHARLES JENNINGS
*Red Deer, Alberta
 Canada*

"Woman, Why Weepest Thou? Whom Seekest Thou?"

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:1-12

TEXT: John 20:15

INTRODUCTION: Give the story of Mary in the garden.

I. "WHY WEEPEST THOU?"

A. Mary, why are you weeping?

1. I had my heart set on anointing the body of Jesus, but I have not found Him.
2. I'm very disappointed.
3. Things have not turned out as I planned them.

B. Individual today, why are you weeping?

1. Parents: "We are broken-hearted over our children."
2. Children: "We are broken-hearted over our parents."
3. Young people: "We have broken our lives on the altars of sin. We find no satisfaction, pleasure, fame, money, or honor that takes away the weeping of the soul."

C. Church, why are you weeping?

1. So many absentees.
2. So few at the altar.
3. So few who carry a burden for souls.
4. So many who are unfaithful to the vows they made.
5. We need a revival.

D. Nation, why are you weeping?

1. National debt.
2. Political troubles.
3. Tragedies, accidents, and disasters.
4. Crimes, drunkenness, murders, etc.

E. World, why are you weeping?

1. Political disturbances.
2. The atom bomb and its problems.
3. Hatred, greed, wars, and sin.

II. "WHOM SEEKEST THOU?"

A. Mary, whom seekest thou?

1. She sought earnestly with tears—but sought in the wrong place (among the dead).
2. She sought diligently—but with the wrong attitude (wanted to anoint the dead).

3. She sought faithfully—but under wrong conditions (Jesus was alive).

4. "I'm looking for Jesus but I cannot find Him." (Her eyes were blurred so that her vision was imperfect, and she was mistaken as to His identity when she did find her Lord.)

B. Individual of today, what seekest thou?

1. Pleasure, success, fame, honor, prosperity, peace of mind, and Jesus.
2. But men look for Him with wrong attitudes and under wrong conditions, or even in wrong places.

C. Church, what are you seeking?

1. Numbers, popularity, and financial ease.
2. Beautiful buildings, beautiful forms of worship, and revivals.

D. Nation, what are you seeking?

1. A leader to settle strikes and balance the budget.
2. First place in world power.
3. The solution to problems of housing, race supremacy, etc.

E. World, what are you seeking?

1. To find peace through the United Nations.
2. To aid millions through the Marshal Plan.
3. To stop the advance of communism someway.

III. HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD FOR EACH OF THESE WHO WEEP AND SEEK.

A. Mary—Jesus spoke your name to let you know He was there.

B. Individual—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

C. Church—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

D. Nation—"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

E. World—"Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the

Lord of hosts" (Malachi 3:7).

CONCLUSION: Come now, for He calls for you!

—W. M. FRANKLIN
Deceased

Effectual Living

SCRIPTURE: Romans 14:1-13

TEXT: Romans 14:7

INTRODUCTION: What is the guiding principle of your life? Concerning each action, decision, and plan for life you should ask yourself:

I. WHAT EFFECT WILL THIS HAVE ON ME?

A. Every man has to live with himself.

B. Every man has to answer for himself. Your salvation is your responsibility, not the preacher's nor the church's. They may help you (or hinder you) but the final result is up to you.

II. WHAT EFFECT WILL THIS HAVE ON OTHERS?

A. Every man has an influence. Some men have greater than others, but every man has some influence.

B. Every man must judge himself by the life of Christ, not by the lives of men around him.

III. WHAT EFFECT WILL THIS HAVE ON GOD?

A. My actions affect the kingdom of God. I can be a help or a hindrance.

B. God knows every action and the motive that prompts it. I must ask myself before each action, "Is it consistent with the testimony I profess?"

—KENNETH L. DODGE
Toronto, Ontario
Canada

The Power of an Influence (Good)

And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel (Joshua 24:31).

—NELSON G. MINK

Life Through Death

TEXT: John 12:24

INTRODUCTION: Begin with poem "A Man Must Live" (*Christ and the Fine Arts*). Jesus' teaching was often phrased in paradox: gaining by giving—knowing by doing—saving by losing—living by dying. "Never man spake like this man." The life philosophy of Jesus is wrapped in this verse. Life is gained only through death.

I. IN NATURAL LIFE

A. Jesus uses example of grain of wheat.

1. Seed must actually rot and die to bear fruit.

2. The death produces the nutriment for fuller life.

B. Salmon gives life to produce new generation.

1. Makes arduous journey upstream to spawn and die.

2. Is not deterred because faced with prospect of death.

II. IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE

A. Radium discovered because some were ready to die to discover.

1. Pierre and Marie Curie wanted to advance science more than they wanted an easy life.

2. Because they were willing to die, many now have life.

B. Slavery was abolished because people were ready to give their lives.

1. Out of the death and shame of the Civil War came liberty.

2. It took death to arouse the conscience of the nation.

III. IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

A. Jesus' death made spiritual life possible for us.

1. Because He despised death, we have escaped death.

2. Out of His death, the Church was born.

B. The cause of Christ has advanced when men were ready to die.

1. John, Paul, Peter, Polycarp, Huss, Luther, Wesley, Livingstone, Schmelzenbach, Paton, and Bresee.

2. They accounted the souls of men more than their own.
3. They saved their own lives by losing them for others.
- C. The local church is advanced by people laying down their lives.
 1. The tendency is to let the preacher do it all and laymen pay bills, whereas the Bible teaches that the pastor is to lead, and members to bring forth fruit in daily life.
 2. Losing this vision of commitment, the church becomes sick.
 3. Lack of purpose to give life for Christ produces sick church.
- D. Attain spiritual life by dying.
 1. What does it mean? Dying unto self and living unto God.
 2. Death came because man interposed his will against God.
 3. Life comes by saying, "Not my will, but thine, be done."
 4. Only by the way of the cross can life be made over and we become new creatures in Christ.

CONCLUSION: Refusal to die to self incurs Christ's worst denunciations. Unproductive vines taken away. Productive vines are purged. The fearful steward hid his talent in fear of losing it. The bane of the Church is unwillingness to lose life in order to save it and to save the world.

—W. SHELBOURNE BROWN
Pasadena, California

MIDWEEK

What Peter and John Had

SCRIPTURE: Acts 3:1-11

- I. A LIFE OF PRAYER—accepted time and place (v. 1)
- II. FAITH, NOT PRESUMPTION (v. 4)
- III. WILLINGNESS TO SHARE WHAT THEY HAD (v. 6)
- IV. THE PERSONAL TOUCH (v. 7)
- V. THE LIFTING POWER OF THE GOSPEL (v. 7)
- VI. THE RESOURCES OF JESUS CHRIST (v. 6)

—VERNON L. WILCOX

Joy in the Book of Philippians

- I. PRAYER INFUSED WITH JOY (1:4).
- II. REJOICING WHEN RIVALS SUCCEED, IF THE GOSPEL PROSPERS (1:18).
- III. JOY BASED ON FAITH (1:25, 26).
- IV. REJOICING WITH OTHERS, AND CONGRATULATING ONE ANOTHER; using Moffatt's translation: "I congratulate you all, and you in turn must rejoice and congratulate me" (2:17-18).
- V. JOY IS NEITHER TIRING NOR DANGEROUS (3:1).
- VI. REJOICING ALWAYS—IN ALL SITUATIONS (4:4).
- VII. JOY IN THE FAITHFULNESS AND LOVE OF GOD'S PEOPLE (4:10).

—VERNON L. WILCOX

Some Things Christ Prays for in John Seventeen

1. He prays for a "know-so" salvation (v. 3).
2. He prays a general prayer for the Church (v. 9).
3. He prays that they may be kept safe (v. 11).
4. He prays for their sanctification (v. 17).
5. He prays for their mission in the world (vv. 21, 23).
6. He prays for their glory (vv. 22, 24).

—NELSON G. MINK

1. MAN'S CONDITION (Psalms 38:3; 51:5)
2. MAN'S CONVICTION (Romans 7:24; Acts 16:30)
3. MAN'S CONFESSION (Psalms 51:4)
4. MAN'S CONVERSION (John 3:3; Psalms 51:10)
5. MAN'S CONSECRATION (I Corinthians 7:1)
6. MAN'S COMMUNION (I John 1:7)
7. MAN'S COMPLETENESS (Colossians 2:10)
8. MAN'S CLEANSING (Matthew 3:11, 12)
9. MAN'S CALL TO GLORY (Revelation 22:14; I Peter 1:4)

—HENRY T. BEYER, JR.
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Book Club Selection for February, 1960

THE MASTER'S MEN

William Barclay (Abingdon, \$2.00)

I suppose the most famous and most controversial dozen men in two thousand years have been the twelve apostles. The questions have been asked innumerable times, Why did Jesus select these men? What was there about them that would cause Him to appoint them to the high and holy office of apostleship? While we in our church do not take the position of apostolic succession in the ordination of our ministry, nevertheless every minister feels that he has some of the trembling urgency that must have characterized the Lord Jesus when He set aside these twelve men and said, "I have chosen you."

William Barclay, with whom you became acquainted a couple of years ago with his very splendid *Letters to the Seven Churches*, has become not only a highly accepted author, but an exceptionally readable man as well. In *The Master's Men* this Scottish author and scholar gives in brief treatment a wealth of research material that I think you will not ever have read before about these twelve apostles. I think his writing will clear up some of the problems you had in your mind relative to them; and while they will still be decidedly human persons, I think after a thorough reading of this book you will discover that Jesus had not only a delightful company with whom to fellowship—He also had a team of twelve men on whom He must keep a tight rein. Men who were chosen not so much for their polish as for their potential!

A FAITH TO LIVE BY

Harry Hutchison (W. A. Wilde, \$2.00)

This is a stimulating and spiritually provocative study. It is quite decidedly a preacher's book, but that may be in its favor. It speaks with utter candor on such themes as: Enemies of the Soul, Diseases of the Soul, Caricatures of the Gospel, and many other equally provocative themes.

There are some very fine insights in the book. It is not heavily laden with illustrative material, but what there is, is excellent.

MARCH OF THE YEAR

G. Curtis Jones (Bethany Press, \$3.50)

There have been a number who have requested a book of sermons for special occasions. To you who have made that request, here is an answer.

This is certainly one of the better books in this classification that has come under our scrutiny in quite some time. It merits wide reading; the illustrations are gripping and the sermons in this volume belong to the finest tradition of scholarly and intensely practical public ministry. These are not prosaic, but throbbing with life, felicity of expression, religious challenge, and high ideals.

—E. E. WORDSWORTH

SAINTS IN APRONS AND OVERALLS

William P. Barker (Revell, \$2.00)

When I first saw this book, the very title suggested to me the possibility of a sermon series. I can see five or six Sunday night messages built around this theme with tremendous pulling power and appeal.

In this volume the author gives biographical studies of the men and women who surrounded the ministry of St. Paul.

Priscilla and Aquila, Barnabas, Silas, Lydia, Tychicus, and others have their biographical stories outlined with humor, insight, and some very telling illustrations.

We wish that the book had not used the R.S.V. throughout and we could well wish that the author had put a more striking and telling spiritual application with each of these biographies, but that's left up to you. He has not done much in the way of depth treatment, but the basic ideas are here, and the book gives you the makings for a splendid series built around a striking theme.

FIVE GREAT AFFIRMATIONS OF THE BIBLE

W. A. Criswell (Zondervan, \$1.25)

The author of this book is the pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. He was known for some time as the successor to the famous Dr. Truett, but because of his preaching and writing, he is now becoming world-known in his own right as a great speaker and a true evangelical. In the five messages in this book he takes five great statements from the Bible: "In the beginning God," "Thou art the Christ," "Christ died for our sins," "He rose again," "Behold, he cometh with clouds."

Each discussion is thoroughly evangelical and is fairly packed with scriptures. The arguments are woven together with a strong strain of southern fluency that we who are northern by birth always envy and can never imitate.

This could not be said to be a book with profoundly new insights but it is decidedly readable and helpful.

THE DARK ROAD TO TRIUMPH

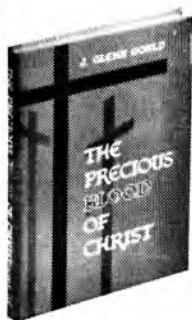
Clayton E. Williams (Thomas Y. Crowell Company, \$2.75)

Dr. Ralph Sockman says of this book, "It is high time that the reading public should have the benefit of a book by Clayton Williams. Now we have a full-bodied volume. . . . I know of no other book in this field which quite so effectively combines poignant feeling with penetrating thought."

Your Book Editor may not be quite as extravagant as that in his estimation of the book, but most certainly it is a superior book in quality of writing, in sheer intellectual insight, and in warmth of illustration. It is a book that will do more for you than does the average book written around even such an inspiring theme as Easter.

The one sermon entitled "Were You There?" is well worth the price of the book. It is one of the most penetrating, original, and provocative studies of Calvary that could be found between the covers of any book.

Important contributions to your Easter ministry



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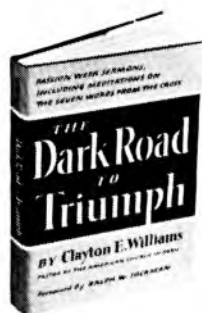
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