

# ABILENE1939 LECTURES

by Abilene Christian College

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*The annual Abilene Christian College Lectureship for 1939, featuring a series of sermons, lectures, and addresses by prominent preachers and teachers in the Churches of Christ on themes of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.*

23 Chapters

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## Preface

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### Preface Publisher's Preface

We are gratified that the Lectures of Abilene Christian College for February, 1939, are now ready for delivery. The many friends of the school who have files of the Lectures that have been published since 1919 will have another volume of excellent matter for their libraries. The Lectures herewith presented were delivered to record audiences in the Sewell Auditorium of Abilene Christian College in February, 1939. The speakers are all well known and representative men—preachers, teachers, elders and well known leaders among the churches. This book is a valuable addition to the religious literature of our time and is sent forth with the hope that it may be read with appreciation, interest and profit by those to whom it may come.

G. H P. SHOWALTER.

## Christian Stewardship: Divine Ownership

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Christian Stewardship: Divine Ownership CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Theme: Divine Ownership

By Harvey Scott

It is a distinct pleasure and honor that I have this opportunity to begin this, the twenty-first lectureship of Abilene Christian College. On behalf, therefore, of the College and of all the churches of Christ in Abilene, let me extend to you good people who are here as our guests our most hearty welcome. We are glad that you are here and that others will be here by tomorrow night. It has been the purpose of those in charge of this program to arrange a series of lectures that will accomplish the most good for the cause of our Lord. How well these plans succeed will depend largely upon those of us who bring to you these messages from time to time. Let us pray that each service will be conducted in a way pleasing unto our heavenly Father and then it will be profitable unto all those who are trying to please In.m. Again let me say that we are glad that you are here and that we hope that your stay will be both pleasant and profitable. But to our lesson for this morning on this important theme of "Divine Ownership in Christian Stewardship."

Christian Stewardship is as much a part of the gospel of our Lord as faith, repentance, and baptism, though the theme is seldom stressed from our pulp'its. and the thought of it occupies too small a place in our meditations. We talk of the necessity of being baptized for the remission of sins that one may be a Christian, but seldom emphasize the importance of Christian Stewardship in the life that one is to live. Too often we leave him to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling without guiding him into that wholesome and sacred realization of "Divine Ownership." The individual is now to be taught that he has been born into the family of God and by this process is no longer his own but has been bought with the price of the blood of Christ.

Paul commends the saints of Macedonia for their liberality in the collection for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem and then says the reason for their liberality was found in the fact that they "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Corinthians 8:5). This was done in the complete surrender of obedience to the gospel of Christ when they became Christians. This giving of themselves to the Lord preceded their great liberality which abounded from their deep poverty. They belonged to the Lord, and what they had was to be used in the Lord's cause. Since the Lord's people were suffering they were more than ready to send relief to them. Paul says this was based upon a willingness on their own part—they did not have to be urged to do it. When Christians realize the fact that they are not their own but have been bought with a price—that they are the Lord's own possession—they will not have to be begged to attend the house of worship on Lord's day or to give of their means to the support of the gospel. They will seek opportunities to worship God, and ask for the privilege of having a part in the work of the church even to the relief of the poor among the saints. They will be glad when they say, "let us go up to the house of the Lord." They will not "forsake the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is, but will exhort one

another so much the more as they see the day approaching.” They will “study to shew themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth.” They will “abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.” They will shun the very appearance of evil, and walk in the steps of Jesus who left us an example that we should follow him. But we have been talking to you about the results of “Divine Ownership”—what the Christian will do when he realizes that he belongs to the Lord and not to himself. But I want to show you from the teaching of God’s word that “Divine Ownership” is taught in the Bible and that we do belong to Jehovah. If I can do this I will then have convinced you that all that you are and all that you are capable of being; all that you have and all that you are capable of having legitimately belongs to the Lord and should be used in his cause to its advancement; this all to be done on our part as Christian stewards. To that task I now invite your attention.

A. The Saints have been bought. In writing to the church of God in Corinth, Paul is teaching them of the sinfulness of using their bodies for the gratification of the lust of the flesh when he says: “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:18-20).

Here it is definitely emphasized that the saints in Corinth could not use their bodies in a way that would be a dishonor to God for they did not belong to them. Their bodies and spirits belonged to God for they had been bought with a price. If the bodies and spirits of the members of the church of God in Corinth belonged to God by virtue of the fact that they had been bought with a price, then can it not be rightfully concluded that the bodies and spirits of the members of the church of God today belong to him for they had been bought with a price? If so, then we can truthfully say that the doctrine of “Divine Ownership” is part of Christianity, and we are not our own, for we have been bought with a price.

B. The church was purchased with the blood of Christ. In recording the conversation between Paul and the elders of the church in Ephesus as they met in Miletus, Luke gives to us the following information:

“Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). In this admonition of Paul to this eldership from Ephesus, he emphasized the fact that the church over which they had been made bishops had been purchased with the blood of Christ. The divine ownership of the church is the divine ownership of the members com-posing the church. Since the church at Ephesus including its eldership belonged to the Lord, then the church of our Lord today including its eldership belongs to the Lord. If the church of Christ today is identical with the church of our Lord in the days of the apostles, and we are members of that church, then it logically follows that we as individual members of the church belong to the Lord for the Lord purchased us with his own blood. This being true— and who will say that it is not—“Divine Ownership” is New Testament doctrine and is a part of Christianity ; and, we today, do not belong to ourselves to labor and sacrifice for our own selfish motives, for we are members of that religious body which was purchased by our Lord.

C. Reconciliation is in the one body—the body of Christ. In Colossians 1:19-21, we read: “For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell; and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things on earth, or things in the heavens.” And in Ephesians 2:13-22, we read: “But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh: for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. So that ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.” In writing to these same Ephesians Paul says that the gospel “which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (Ephesians 3:5-6). In these readings we have the following:

1. God arranged for all the fulness to dwell in Christ.
2. It is through Christ that all things are reconciled unto God.
3. This reconciliation takes place in the one body.
4. This breaks down the distinction between Jew and Gentile.
5. Jews and Gentiles are fellow-heirs.
6. Jews and Gentiles are fellow'-members of the one body.
7. Jews and Gentiles are fellow-partakers of his promise in Christ.
8. They are no more strangers and sojourners but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the house-hold of God.
9. They have been fitly framed together into a holy temple in the Lord.
10. This is all made known through the gospel.

These ten things definitely teach us that all—Jews and Gentiles—who have been reconciled unto God are in the one body and are fellow-heirs, fellow-members of the same body, fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and fellow-partakers of his promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. It therefore logically follows that all who have been reconciled unto God are in the one body which the Lord purchased with his blood; and are, therefore, not their own for they have been bought with a price. “Divine Ownership,” therefore, is taught in the New Testament and is a part of Christianity and should be so recognized by all the people of God.

D. Christ is head of the body. In Colossians 1:18, we read: “And he is head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” And in Ephesians Paul told these saints that God “raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:20-23). In writing to the church of God in Corinth, Paul is teaching the saints the importance of the unity of the local congregation by saying: “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit . . . Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof” (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). In these passages of scripture we have the following:

1. The church of our Lord is called a body.
2. This body is the body of Christ.
3. Christ is the head of this body.
4. There is only one body.
5. We are all baptized into that one body.
6. As head of this body Christ is seated at God’s right hand.
7. He is above all rule, authority, power and dominion.
8. He has been given a name that is above every name, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.
9. All things have been put in subjection unto him.
10. The saints in Corinth (the church of God) are called the body of Christ. The inevitable conclusion, therefore, is that the saints who constitute the body of Christ were baptized into that body. They are governed by him “whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things” (Acts 3:21). Since the saints constitute his body, the body of Christ, they belong to him, for they have been “bought with a price.” Therefore, “Divine Ownership” is taught in the New Testament; is a part of Christianity and should be so recognized by all the redeemed of the Lord. As the Lord’s own possession, we have been redeemed to serve. But we serve through service to humanity. Therefore, let us do good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith.

E. Christ gave himself for the church.

Unto the saints at Ephesus Paul writes: “Wives be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the

church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:22-27).

We learn the following from this passage:

1. Christ is the head of the church.
2. He is the savior of the body.
3. The church is subject to Christ.
4. Christ loved the church.
5. He gave himself for it.
6. He died for the church that he might sanctify it.
7. He cleansed it by the washing of water with the word.
8. He did this that he might present the church unto himself as a glorious church.
9. He does not want it to have any spot or wrinkle, but like a fresh laundered garment.
10. He wants it to be holy and without blemish.

We must conclude that the saints were considered by our Lord of sufficient value that he was willing to purchase us with his blood that was shed in his sacrifice upon calvary, and having cleansed us “by the washing of water with the word,” we might be presented unto him as a glorious church. He loved us— he still loves us—and he does not want us to be defiled with sin. The Lord is proud of his church, and we should see to it that we do not defile our garments that we may walk with him in white because we are worthy; for we do not want him to hate “even our garments spotted by the flesh.”

“And one of the elders answered saying unto me, these that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and whence came they? And I say unto him, My Lord, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple : and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Revelation 7:13-17).

What a consolation! What a blessed hope! What an anchor to the soul! Who but God could make this promise ? Who but those “who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” could enjoy such bliss “unspeakable and full of glory” reserved in heaven for the faithful stewards?

F. The Results.

“Christian Stewardship?” Yes. “Divine Ownership?” A thousand times yes. When you and I fully realize this “Divine Ownership,” we will let our light shine before men as we continue to live with that enthusiasm and interest that God has for man today. We will be “rooted and built up in him” as we build upon Jesus the Christ as the chief corner stone. We can then truthfully sing that song, “How firm a foundation, Ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith, in his excellent word. What more can he say than to you he hath said, you who unto Jesus for refuge have fled.” With Christ as our foundation upon which we build our Christian character, we shall be able to “let the lower lights be burning,” and can “send a gleam across the wave”; for “some poor fainting, struggling seaman you may rescue, you may save.” There are “eager eyes watching, longing, for the lights along the shore,” and who may never see a gleam from the haven of rest save as they see the light for the soul as it is shining through us in our daily conduct among the children of men as we attempt to live the kind of life Jesus has taught us to live.

We shall then live unto God, yielding ourselves unto God as those alive from the dead; being spiritually minded, we shall present our bodies a living sacrifice unto God. We shall be transformed by the renewing of our minds; and, thinking soberly, we shall cleave unto that which is good. We shall be “kindly affectioned one to another; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” We shall rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, and continue instant in prayer. We shall be given to hospitality, and bless them that persecute us. We shall “be of the same mind one toward another,” and “provide things honest in the sight of all men.”

We shall then walk in the footsteps of Jesus; setting our affections on things above; “laying aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us; running with patience the race which is set before us; looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith.” We shall put off the old man, and crucify the affections and lusts thereof; we shall put aside all malice, guile, envy, evil speaking, hypocrisy; and be clothed in love, joy, peace, gentleness, kindness, generosity, courtesy, good-temper, forbearance, and godliness. We can, then, for the joy that is set before us, endure our cross, despising the shame, and stand on “Jordan’s stormy banks and cast a wishful eye” towards the “land that is fairer than day.” We can say, “Death, where is thy sting? Grave, where is thy victory?” for “death is only a dream” because “God hath given us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.” And since Jesus burst the bars of the Hadean world and came forth, “bringing light and immortality to light through the gospel,” he shall “quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us” when we who are in our graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth with that new body suited to our new existence in that eternal world, when Jesus “comes to be glorified in his saints.” We shall then stand before the judge of all the earth and hear him say, “Well done, good and faithful one, enter thou into the joys of the Lord”; which place is described unto us at containing a “pure river of water of life, clear as a crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; and in the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, is the tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month; and there shall be no more curse: But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him” (Revelation 22:1-3).

Then “Divine Ownership” is true and part of Christianity and should be so recognized by all of us as “Christian Stewards.”

## Stewardship of Our Bodies

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### Stewardship of Our Bodies STEWARDSHIP OF OUR BODIES

By J. P. Gibson, M. D. When God formed man, he placed him in the garden of Eden and made provision for his physical needs. He gave him directions as to what foods to eat and what not to eat. He made clothing of skins for Adam and Eve. He gave them work to do in caring for the garden. He told this first couple to be fruitful and multiply. This man and his wife were specimens of physical perfection as they came from the hand of God, unmarred by sin or disease, living in the garden of Eden, and engaging in a healthful outdoor occupation. The lives of the men of the earliest days were very long as compared to our shortened span of today.

Later as God selected his chosen people, he gave them specific instructions for the preservation of their health. Foods were classified into clean and unclean (Leviticus 11), waste and refuse were destroyed by fire or buried (Deuteronomy 23:12-13), those with signs of contagious illnesses were isolated, and quarantined until it could be determined whether the disease was leprosy or some temporary affliction (Leviticus 13, 14). For the leader of his people, God selected Moses, a man who was well educated in the royal courts of Egypt, and physically strong. Even after forty strenuous years in leading the children of Israel he died at the age of one hundred and twenty, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deuteronomy 34:7).

Man was created in the image of God morally, in-tellectually, and spiritually. Physically, he was given a body similar to the animals, a body composed of organs, muscles, bone, sinew, and blood. He was to live in the same environment as the animal creation, eat the same foods, drink the same water, and breathe the same air. Of necessity, his physical equipment had to be similar. Man was physically inferior in some respects to many of the brute creation. There were many birds and beasts who could see better, whose sense of smell was more acute, whose muscular strength was greater, whose ability to travel with speed far excelled the natural ability of man.

However, God placed in man an intellect far superior to all of the animal creation. With this intelligence he was able to control the forces of nature, to form for himself machines that would fly higher and faster than the birds, go faster on land than the animals, and on the sea exceed in speed and endurance the inhabitants of the deep. God gave man dominion over the creation by giving him an intellect capable of subduing, controlling, and reforming the rest of the world. Man succeeded in his dominion over all the creation remarkably well, but in controlling himself and allowing God to control him, a different story must be told. From the very beginning man has revelled in his intellectual superiority over the brute creation. He has concentrated and magnified his powers by his intellect. David was impressed with the wonderful body that he possessed and even, with a very limited knowledge of its anatomy and physiology, he exclaimed, "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves" (Psalms 100:3). "For thou didst form my inward parts: thou didst cover me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: ... My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, . . . Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance" (Psalms 139:13; Psalms 139:16). In the New Testament we find many

references to the body. Jesus, in teaching the people how to abstain from sin, compared it to the removal of an offending organ, "If thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out . . . and if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off" (Matthew 5:29-30). It was a well known fact even then that amputation was a life saving procedure when gangrene threatened the life of a person.

One of Paul's favorite comparisons was the similarity of the church to the body. The early Christians realized that the different parts of the body all functioned harmoniously and all to a common purpose. So Paul said, the church should be like the body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ . . . Now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him. . . . The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, or the head to the feet, I have no need of you . . . Those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary . . . God tempered the body together . . . that there should be no schism in the body. . . . Whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof" (1 Corinthians 12:12-27); Having our attention called so forcefully by the teachings of the New Testament to the wonderful structure and harmony of function of the various parts of the body, it would naturally occur to Christians,

"Just what attitude should we have in regard to our own physical bodies, our strength and health? Should our attitude be any different now, than it was before we became Christians?" This question was answered when Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome, that capital of the civilized world, densely populated, the center of government, and also the center of gross immorality, fornication, and licentiousness of every description. The Christians there could see their Roman neighbors engaging in revellings, drunkenness, adultery, and all types of intemperance. To these Christians in such a wicked city, Paul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service" (Romans 12:1). This reminded them that the Israelites in former times had been required to offer as a sacrifice the bodies of animals, those that were without spot or blemish, but Christians were to offer their own bodies as a sacrifice, not as a dead sacrifice, but a living one, also without spot or blemish, holy, acceptable to God. This physical purity constituted spiritual service. In this same letter to the Roman Christians, Paul said, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof: neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God . . ." (Romans 6:12-13). They understood, therefore, that not only were they to be physically pure, but they must not allow their bodies to be used as the tool of others in any unrighteous activity. In warning the Christians at Corinth against the fornication so prevalent in their city, Paul said, "the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body . . . Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you,- which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:13; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

These teachings are very plain. Our bodies do not belong to us. They belong to Christ because he purchased us with a price, his own precious blood. Not only is our body sacred because it is the blood bought property of Christ, but it is holy because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. So sacred

and so holy is this body of the Christian, that he is warned that should he destroy it, God will destroy him. Refraining then from any destruction of the body, either suddenly as in suicide, or gradually by abuse and intemperance, we are to glorify God in the body. The Macedonian Christians evidently understood this teaching, as Paul said of them, "First, they gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Corinthians 8:5).

Many of the early Christians were encouraged to glorify God in their bodies by remembering the physical appearance of their master, the Man of Galilee. They knew the young man Jesus, who even in infancy was vigorous enough to endure the long journey<sup>1</sup> across the desert to Egypt ; who later was brought back to Nazareth, where he grew up and played with the other boys on the rocky hillside. As a boy of twelve he was strong enough to take the long journey to Jerusalem. He returned with his parents and "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). They knew the strong young Nazarene who labored with Joseph in the carpenter shop and with crude tools produced substantial furniture for the townspeople. He later was strong enough to go into the wilderness and abstain from food for forty days and even then withstand the temptation to eat. He later entered the temple area and seeing it desecrated by merchandising, he knitted a scourge and alone drove out all the merchants, upsetting their tables. Those early Christians understood why the merchants all ran, not from the scourge, but from the bulging muscles that came into view as the scourge was raised in indignation. They remembered a young-man- Christ, one who was well-developed, vigorous, strong, who was able to make long journeys by foot over mountainous country, who as able to accomplish in a few short years of public ministry enough work to turn the world upside down. The early Christians understood that they were being more Christ-like if they were like him not only spiritually, but in physical strength and purity as well. "Glorify God therefore in your body." "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." No doubt, the early Christians were disturbed then, as we are today when illness occurs. Some of them held to the belief that all illness was due to sin, in fact the disciples of the Lord once asked him concerning a blind man, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents?" Of course, we all know that some diseases are due to sin, but there may be other causes not associated with sin. For example, Jesus answered that question in regard to the blind man, "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:3). The apostle Paul was subject to a physical infirmity that he called a "thorn in the flesh." While he was healing others, he himself was suffering. He prayed to God three times for the removal of this affliction. God refused to cure Paul, telling him, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Paul said that the affliction was given to him that he should not be exalted overmuch.

Job was a good man. God himself said that Job was perfect (Job 1:8). Yet God allowed Satan to take away Job's health and inflict upon him a most terrible siege of suffering. God permitted this to test Job's faith. Illness may be the result of our own carelessness or intemperance. For this, we may expect to: be punished, perhaps by illness. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Hebrews 12:6).

Illness, therefore, may be the result of sin, or care-lessness, or intemperance. It may be an occasion for God to show his power. It may be God's way to keep us humble. It may be a test of our faith. Whenever illness occurs, man then becomes greatly concerned about the regaining of his health. It has been said, "When a man loses his heath, then he begins to take care of it." This is often too late.

Jesus performed many miracles of healing. He chose as his subjects for healing those who were afflicted with infirmities of the most incurable nature, such as paralysis, palsy, leprosy, epilepsy, blindness from birth, lameness from birth, conditions that are still to a large extent incurable. His healings were instantaneous, and complete. Contrast the healings of Jesus with the so-called faith healings of today, attended as they are by neurotic people whose afflictions are largely mental. They are encouraged to come down the aisle and pray, then come back again tomorrow night and pray again, and again, then eventually have a spasm and shout their thanksgiving for this installment plan- of healing of an imaginary infirmity. If healings are being done by the power of God, they should be instantaneous and complete in the same type of afflictions that were healed by Jesus and his apostles. But miracles of healing have served their purpose and are no longer necessary. The apostle John has given their purpose, "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (John 20:30-31).

Since we are not to expect miracles of healing today, what instructions do Christians now have when illness comes? This is plainly given by James, "Is any among you suffering? let him pray. Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him" (James 5:13-15). No hint is given that a miracle was intended. They were instructed to pray i for the sick. They were accustomed to use olive oil as a common household remedy. The good Samaritan in caring for the man who was wounded by thieves, poured oil and wine on his wounds (Luke 10:34). The wine with its alcohol content, acted as an antiseptic; the oil as a soothing lotion. This was excellent treatment. Christians, then, are instructed to pray for the sick, and to do what they can do in the way of medical attention. It is the application of the Bible principle of faith plus works. Nevertheless, we must remember that it is not always God's will that even the best of Christians shall recover. "It is appointed unto man once to die" (Hebrews 9:27).

Having considered the causes of illness 'and our duties to those who are ill, let us see what teachings of the New Testament will help us to prevent illness and preserve health. We are aware that health is of great value to us in leading useful lives. Without health we could not enjoy living, or work efficiently. We would be unhappy and unsuccessful. If an aged millionaire should offer us all of his wealth in exchange for our health, none of us would trade with him. Having then a reasonable degree of health, we are truly rich and abundantly blessed. Surely, with health so important to us, and so necessary in being productive servants of Christ, we will be well pleasing to him when we do all that is within our power to preserve our physical strength. It is worth spending time, money, and effort to attain.

Christians are instructed to add to their faith virtue, knowledge, then temperance or self-control (2 Peter 1:5-6). A good definition of temperance is "total abstinence from everything harmful, and moderation in everything beneficial." Temperance or self-control is not one of our national virtues. We live in an age of intemperance and lack of self-control. Civilization is geared to a feverish gait. The man who over-works is intemperate, as also is the man who is lazy. The man who does not sleep enough, is intemperate, as also is the man who sleeps too much. The man who over-eats is intemperate, as also is -the, girl who starves herself on a reducing diet. The man who is too busy

to take a vacation is intemperate, as also is the man who takes a vacation and tries to crowd into one or two weeks all the outdoor exercise and recreation he should have been taking during the whole year. He will work too hard, then play or travel too hard. When a doctor sees a patient all worn-out and haggard looking, he hardly knows whether to prescribe a vacation, or treat the patient for one he has just had. This high-gear life as lived by mature persons sets a bad example for the younger people. Naturally, they follow the example of their parents, so some of them will be found burning midnight oil, and many midnight gasoline. Not only have we as a nation become world famous for our lack of moderation, but we have become a nation of drug addicts. Mr. Average American finds it difficult to get up in the morning because he has stayed out too late the night before. With inadequate rest, his nerves are jumpy, so to soothe his nerves and "get a lift" he takes a drug, nicotine, in the form of a cigarette. This he (or she) repeats time after time during the day. With insufficient exercise and the wrong kind of a diet, he feels bilious, so he takes another drug, a laxative. By evening, he feels all in, but social obligations force him to a party. In order to keep going he uses more nicotine to calm his nerves, and liquored punch to stimulate him to alcoholic sociability. Returning home in the "wee small hours" of the morning and feeling very bad indeed, he takes another drug, a sleeping powder. After a drugged and restless sleep, he is forced to get up in the morning, but Oh, what a morning-after-the-night-before headache. A headache powder will fix that. So he goes his rounds, a jittery, intemperate drug addict whose interior must surely resemble a well stocked drug store.

Unfortunately, the preceding description applies to some who call themselves Christians. Wherein is the temperance, the self-control, the presenting of one's body as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God?

Among the drug habits, all are agreed that the use of opium, morphine, and the indulgence in alcoholic beverages must not play any part in the life of the Christian. But what may we say of the use of nicotine, that drug found in cigarettes and all other forms of tobacco? Who claims that nicotine is helpful or beneficial to health? Not even the tobacco companies do that. When a person is nervous or fatigued, what is it he needs? He needs rest. Are we not abusing the delicate and intricate nervous system of our bodies when we refuse to give it the needed rest, and instead drug it with nicotine to deaden the sense of fatigue while we continue in our work or dissipation, and thereby cause still more nervous strain? Nicotine, like alcohol and opium, is a habit forming drug. The average smoker gradually increases his use of tobacco. After becoming habituated to the drug, one finds it extremely difficult to quit, and very few exercise enough self-control to actually quit. May a Christian use such habit-forming drugs and still say that he is developing the virtues of self-control and temperance? May he poison his body little by little, and yet present his body as a living- sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God? "He that destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

We thank God for the Christian men who have fought it out with the nicotine habit, and have freed themselves from its slavery. Not only have they enjoyed better health, but they have been enabled to contribute money formerly spent on tobacco for spreading the gospel. "Glorify God therefore in your body."

Rest is nature's way, God's way, of restoring our bodies. One time the apostles returned to Jesus from a strenuous preaching tour. They were tired. Yet the multitude pressed in upon them,

bringing their sick to be healed. "There were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat" (Mark 6:31). If we had been there among the apostles, we would have said as many of us do today, "Come on, men, we are engaged in the greatest work in the world. We are healing the sick, and preaching the gospel. Let us keep at it until we drop." But Jesus had enough regard for the health of his followers that he said, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile" (Mark 6:31). Jesus was willing to stop in the very middle of the greatest work in order to rest. He knew that rest was essential if they were to accomplish his will.

Rest is so important that God gave specific laws to his chosen people. He commanded them to rest completely every seventh day, every seventh year, and every fiftieth year. If we take a fifty-year period and add up all their rest days and years, plus their other religious rest days, we find that they were required to rest one-third of the time.

We who live under grace and not under law take undue advantage of our freedom. Since we are not actually commanded to rest certain days, we fail to take sufficient rest. It should be a part of our religion to take restful vacations, away from the hurry and bustle of crowds. "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile."

Rest is the greatest healing agent. This was true thousands of years ago. It is true today. Rest is the treatment for tuberculosis, for nervous breakdown, for fractures, for fevers, and for colds. It is an important essential in the treatment of almost every disease. Industrial leaders have found that their workers do more efficient work with frequent periods of rest and relaxation, with five-day weeks, and vacations. Those who take insufficient rest are cross, irritable, inefficient, and jittery. Indigestion, quarrels, and divorce may result. Fatigue is a frequent factor in undermining health. Those who fail to provide for periods of rest are intemperate. They are shortening their lives. "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile." Not only is rest of the body taught in the New Testament, but the mind is also to be free from anxiety. Worry is a long-range fear. It is an abnormal functioning of the mind. It may interfere with digestion, it may raise blood pressure, it may result in mental derangement or physical impairment. Of all the people on earth, Christians, above all, should not worry. "Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7). "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Php\_4:6-7).

"To them that love God all things work together for good" (Romans 8:28). "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on ... for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matthew 6:25; Matthew 6:32). Those who worry are demonstrating their lack of faith in the great promises of God. Worry is a symptom of a weak faith. Worry, therefore, is not only harmful to the mind and the body, but it is sinful within itself.

God has placed in man certain danger signals to help him to care for his body. One of these is pain. When a pain occurs, this is a warning that something is going wrong. It focuses the attention of the sufferer upon his condition. The location and type of pain help to determine the nature of the disorder. The cause may then be removed and the condition will be ready to return to normal. The pain of a sprained ankle is Nature's way of telling us to give the ankle rest and a chance to recover. A toothache is Nature's way of telling us we have been neglecting our teeth. A

stomach-ache may mean we have been overburdening the digestive system. Aches and pains, therefore, should receive attention. We should not be as concerned in easing the pain, as in locating the cause of the pain and dealing with that.

After all, the laws of Nature are God's laws. We cannot ignore or break them with impunity. How often have we heard the prayer, "Lord, give us health and strength and the right use of our minds and bodies." We could not consistently pray for health unless we are doing our part in caring for these wonderful bodies God has given us.

Much progress has been made in the fight against disease. More has been learned in the past sixty years in regard to health than was learned in all previous history. Yet, there has been a lag in our ability to apply the blessings thus gained. For instance, there are a number of diseases that can now be completely prevented by harmless methods of immunization. We have learned how to raise a person's resistance against smallpox, diphtheria, typhoid, and other diseases so he will not contract the disease. Yet thousands of children die annually in the United States of these very diseases. How thankful we are that we live in an age when we can spare the children that God has given us from so many dangerous diseases. So much progress has been made in the control of disease that now accidents kill more children and young people than does disease. What effect would Christianity-applied have in reducing the accident rate on our highways? Many accidents are due to drinking. A Christian will never be the cause of any accident on that account. Some accidents are due to excess speed. The Christian is temperate in all things, even in his rate of travel. Some accidents are due to driver's fatigue. The Christian who has been temperate, who has had sufficient rest and is not driving too many miles will be less likely to have fatigue as a factor. Some accidents are due to careless disregard for the rights of others, but the Christian whose very life is controlled by the golden rule of love will never be the cause of that kind of an accident. While some accidents seem to be unavoidable, a vast majority of them may be prevented. A practical application of Christianity will do much to decrease this fearful toll.

Upon the subject of sex, the Bible is very explicit. God gave man certain appetites, among them the sex instinct. This urge is as normal as the thirst for water, or an appetite for food. This sex instinct with the reproductive organs were designed by God for the purpose of procreation by man and wife. "Be fruitful and multiply" God said to Adam and Eve. Physically, young men and women are ready for marriage at a much earlier age than is usually economically possible. Under present conditions there is a period of about four to six years between the age of sexual maturity, and marriage. This constitutes the dangerous age, for in these years we have young people possessing more or less powerful sex urges surrounded by an environment including sex-stimulating shows, sexy magazines, semi-nudity on the stage and beach, the embrace of the modern dance set to torrid music, or petting without the music. All these factors in our modern life tend to stimulate and arouse the already powerful sex urge. Add to this a little alcohol with its ability to lessen self-control, and the monotonous results are adultery, fornication, venereal disease, illegitimate pregnancies, shotgun marriages, lawsuits, divorces, and suicides.

The New Testament deals with sex problems in concise terms. There is no double standard of conduct. Men as well as women are to be pure in all their relationships. Not only must the act of adultery be rigidly abstained from, but the very planning of such an act is sinful. Jesus said,

“everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:28). For those who had unusual difficulty in controlling the sex urge, Paul advised, “it is better to marry than to burn” (1 Corinthians 7:9). The sexual obligations of husband and wife are given in 1 Corinthians 7. Faithfulness in the sexual union constituted the basis of marriage, while unfaithfulness is given as the only reason for which one may obtain a divorce with the sanction of God (Matthew 5:32). So serious are the sins of fornication and adultery that those who practice such things shall be consigned to the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Revelation 21:8).

God said, “It is not good for man to be alone.” It is God’s idea of a normal life for each man to have his own wife, and each wife her own husband. Children should be born into the home and brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. “I desire therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, rule the household” (1 Timothy 5:14). Those who have enjoyed the experience of forming a Christian home have counted it the richest part of their lives. It is the closest approach to heaven on earth that man may experience here. As the children grow and ask questions, they should be taught by their own parents. In this way they will gain the proper attitude toward sex. As they mature, they must be taught to exercise self-control in living pure lives in a wicked world; to abstain from all forms of impurity, to marry a believer and form another Christian home. None of the problems of sex will ever be solved by simply ignoring them. God has said much on this subject. This should be taught and practiced by all Christians. As the Christian follows the teaching of the Bible, he takes care of his body the temple of the Holy Spirit. He refuses to destroy it by intemperance, by drug-habits, or by any abuse. He lives a longer and healthier life, accomplishing much in the Master’s service. Yet, even with the best of care, the weight of the years will take its toll. His body will begin, to decay and fade in its functions. As he experiences less and less of his former strength he finds himself unable to render further service; as the pains of advancing years fasten themselves upon him, he actually anticipates release from his body, which has so long and so well served its purpose, and now is worn out in God’s service.

Benjamin Franklin wrote to a friend who was sorrowing over the death of his brother: “We are spirits. That bodies should be lent us, while they can afford us pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge or in doing good to our fellow creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God. When they become unfit for these purposes and afford us pain instead of pleasure, instead of an aid become an incumbrance, it is equally kind and benevolent that a way is provided by which we may get rid of them. Death is that way. He is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together; so why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow and know where to find him.”

Christians, then, may anticipate death as a release from decay, pain, and limitations. “The dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). God shall then clothe our spirits with a new body. “How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? . . . It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body . . . as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly . . . But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, . . . O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? . . . but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians

15:35-57).

## Stewardship of Time

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### Stewardship of Time STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

By Homer Hailey

Brethren in the Lord, and Friends: There are so many things in life we should like to do, and so many things we ought to do, that we are constantly torn between desire and a sense of duty, thus making every decision of life one of moment and importance. On every hand we hear people say, "I haven't time"; but God has given us sufficient time to do and to accomplish all he would have any individual do. The apostle prays that the Philippians may "approve the things that are excellent." That is virtually what "stewardship of time" is, an approving of the things excellent; choosing the important and essential in life; profitably using the time God has given us. A complete appreciation of Christian stewardship will help us to solve the problem of which things to do.

All Life Is a Stewardship The Christian must recognize that all of life is a stewardship. A steward is one entrusted with the management of goods not his own; stewardship is the proper and active managing or handling of goods belonging to another, primarily for the profit and benefit of the owner. One of the fundamentals of life is the recognition of this principle.

Jesus constantly stressed the lesson of man's stewardship, and of God's ownership. A brief review of his parables reveals this note in his teaching: the "Talents"; "the Unjust Steward"; "the Pounds"; "the Rich Fool." In all of these the keynote is "stewardship" on the part of man; and "ownership" on the part of God. The apostle Paul recognized his ministry as a stewardship of "goods" belonging to God; as he says, "Let a man so account of us as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). In speaking of the responsibility of preaching the gospel, the same apostle says, "For if I do this of mine own will, I have a reward: but if not of mine own will, I have a stewardship intrusted to me" (1 Corinthians 9:17). Life, to Paul, was one great, stewardship.

Paul was not alone in this attitude toward life, and the blessings and opportunities that attend life; the apostle Peter also stressed the recognition of one's stewardship of all blessings and benefits. "According as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10). The Christian is obligated to recognize his every talent, opportunity, and moment as that which is entrusted to him, over which he is a steward, answerable to God. The Christian is not his own, "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The Christian belongs to Christ, whether in life or in death, "For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14:7-8). And not only so, but he belongs to the Lord as a "bondservant," "For he that was called in the Lord being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman: likewise he that was called being free, is Christ's bondservant" (1 Corinthians 7:22). Just as the

bondsman of men could claim none of his time as his own, but had to recognize both himself and his time as belonging to another; so neither can the Christian, the bondsman of Christ, recognize either himself or his time as his own, but as belonging to him who bought him. The stewardship of the Christian, therefore, includes the stewardship of time as well as of life. The Preciousness and Value of Time —the Present

It is impossible to think of the value of time and not be reminded of the Saviour's appreciation of the moments, and the apostle Paul's diligent use of it, and exhortation to us to recognize its worth. Jesus said, "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). His was a busy life; the work the Father sent him to do was accomplished in three and one-half years. The apostle Paul, filled with zeal for the gospel of Christ, and realizing the preciousness of time, so used his days and hours that he was able to say of the gospel "which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister" (Colossians 1:23). He then passed on to us a solemn reminder of the preciousness of time when he said "look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16).

Man cannot do with time as he would with money, lay it up for future use; he must use it now or never. The old proverb which said "save the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves" would have to be revised if applied to time. It should have to read "spend wisely the minutes, and the hours will take care of themselves." Someone has said that time is so precious God has given it to us a second at a time.

Benjamin Franklin, in "Letters to a Young Tradesman" said "Time is money." The saying could likewise be made to read "time is knowledge"; "time is wisdom"; "time is power, skill, salvation"; for it is the proper application of time that brings to us these things. In considering the value, of time, the Christian should realize that the emphasis must be placed on "now," for it is on the "now" that God places it. "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation," says the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 6:2). Upon the future no man has any lease, either saint or sinner. James says to the saint, "Come now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14-15). The fatal mistake of governor Felix was the thought that he possessed a lease upon life. He failed to appreciate the value of "now," as he said to Paul, "Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me" (Acts 24:25). That season never came; his time and opportunity were "now."

God's call is to go work in the vineyard "today" (Matthew 21:28) while the problems to be solved are those of the hour, not of "tomorrow"; there will be ample time to consider them when the morrow comes (Matthew 6:34).

"Here am I, Caught up in the wonder of this moment.

This NOW is all I have,

For yesterday is dim and dead,

And tomorrow is always just ahead.”

—Ruth Cooke\*

### Procrastination

Procrastination and the waste of time are grievous sins, which result in many tasks always remaining undone. When we put off until tomorrow the work that should have been done today, then waste the time that should have been assigned to the task, we force something to be forever left undone. That which we have put off will force a conflict of decisions on the morrow; for we will then have to decide between it and the task of that day. Something, therefore, will have to be left undone; either the thing we put off, or that which should have been done on the morrow that is forced out to do that neglected yesterday. The life and field of work of the procrastinator and idler of time become like the field of the sluggard, so graphically described by the writer of Proverbs. (This verse was handed me by one of my students after the lecture. Appreciating it as I did, I here insert it as a part of the lecture.) “I went by the field of the sluggard, and by the vine-yard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, the face thereof was covered with nettles, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I beheld, and considered well; I saw, and received instruction: Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as a robber, and thy want as an armed man” (Proverbs 24:30-34). He then admonishes us to “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no chief, overseer, or ruler, provideth her bread in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of sleep?” (Proverbs 6:6-9). The life of the sluggard becomes like his field and vineyard; the wall of resistance is broken down, weeds and nettles over-run it, and spiritual poverty overtakes him. Truly, idleness is the devil’s work-shop. The Challenge of the Constant Present The constant present keeps ever before us the chal-lenge of stewardship of time. In order to make this talk definite and practical, let us consider the challenge of the present to our stewardship as applied to various groups: To the Preacher. His charge is to study, teach, and i/ preach, “Till I come give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching ... Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all” (1 Timothy 4:13; 1 Timothy 4:15).

There is no group of individuals today with greater advantages and opportunities than the preacher; but at the same time there is no group with greater temp-tation to waste time than they. Engaged by the con-gregation to preach andt teach, evangelizing the local community and neighboring territory; then “turned loose” to do this work, not feeling responsible to an “employer” as men of common occupations, the preacher dangerously drifts into the habit of wasting time. I would not say this is intentional by any means; it just results from a gradual slackening of diligence upon himself. Feeling that he should “visit around,” the habit of slothfulness is developed. To the preacher, “time is souls,” lost or won for Christ. Brethren, let us “redeem the time, for the days are evil,” make every moment of the day count for Jesus and his cause. To the Teacher. His responsibility is to teach, “And the things which thou hast heard from m,e among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). To which charge Jesus adds, “Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment” (James 3:1). To teach acceptably before God demands time for preparation; and in the class-room a proper use of every minute.

Souls are either developed or destroyed by the proper or improper use of the time the teacher spends with the learners. The class-room is no place or time for foolishness, and the discussion of the trivial things of life; it is a time of study and discussion of the things of God. Teachers, "redeem the time, for the days are evil." And remember the wise man's admonition, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." To the Elders, there is the abiding challenge of the constant present. Because of the gravity of the work, much of the elder's time belongs to God. God has appointed him a watchman of souls, as said the apostle, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account" (Hebrews 13:17). Oh, how many are lost today to the church and to God because elders failed to "redeem time"! We realize that the command to "exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called today; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13) is to all Christians; but the responsibility falls in a special way upon elders, as watchmen of the flock. The time to admonish is "now", just as soon as the individual shows that he needs the fatherly admonition, or stern rebuke, of the elder. To the Student, time is knowledge, power, ability. To Christians the writer of Hebrews said, "For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God" (Hebrews 5:12). These had been wasting time. The time students waste, either in the church, or in school, is never regained. The individual must suffer for it always; the task that should have filled that time must be relegated to the archive of "undone things," golden hours, set with sixty diamond minutes. There is no reward offered, they are gone forever." Oh, that students would appreciate this truth while young, when time seems so plentiful to them! To parents, the challenge is present from the very first moment of parenthood. The admonition of God respecting children is ever upon and before you: "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). You have them as babes but once; as children but once; as youths but once; then they are gone as young men or women from your charge to places of maturity, with more or less fixed habits of life. What they are, and where they shall spend eternity, will depend to a large extent upon the discharge of your stewardship of time; how much you spend with them in teaching, training, nurturing, and admonishing them; as also in playing with them as companions. Parents must account to God for the time spent or mis-spent with their children. They are your most treasured and valuable responsibilities, they cannot be reared, nurtured and trained without spending time with them. And again, "Now is the acceptable time." Let Paul's admonition stir you to "redeem the time, because the days are evil." To the church, a challenge is ever before us. The issues of today must be met today. Our pioneers met most faithfully those issues of yesterday, but it is now our responsibility -to meet those of today, of the "now." Those confronting us today are error outside and inside the church, sin, and infidelity. Tomorrow these will have become deeply rooted, bearing fruit of ungodliness in our children and children's children.

Josiah was not responsible for the conditions as he found them when he became king, but he was certainly responsible for the stewardship of his own obligation and time in fighting them, or winking at them. So it is with us today. We may not be responsible for that which we find, but the challenge of the present is ours, and we shall be responsible for what we leave for the next generation. The attitude of Jesus must be ours as his church. "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." Our night shall come long ere we are ready for it. Because of Jesus' appreciation of time, and the grandeur of his task, discharging every

responsibility each day, he could say in his closing moments, "It is finished."

Because of the preciousness of time, and the challenge of the ever present responsibilities, there must be time for prayer, time for study, time for meditation, time for preparation; and then time spent in the work itself. "Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee. Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:14-17). Let the sinner obey; let the wayward return home; and let the faithful work heartily unto the Lord, today, while it is called today; for the Lord shall come suddenly, and shall not tarry. If you are subject to the gospel invitation, come now, while the opportunity is yours.

## Christianity in a Changing World

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### Christianity in a Changing World CHRISTIANITY IN A CHANGING WORLD

By Guy N. Woods

I am humbled by a consciousness of responsibility that is mine in presuming to speak to this vast audience on a subject of such vital importance as that which has been assigned me. The conquest of the world to Christ is the most romantic story in human history. Among the sublime and heart-stirring deeds of the past, this one record of priceless value outshines and excels all others. In its thrilling recital of glorious deeds of indomitable courage and unwavering heroism, it is without parallel in the annals of men. The story is all the more remarkable if we take into consideration the obstacles, and difficulties, which from the beginning, confronted its standard-bearers in their conquest of the earth.

First, the men whom the Lord chose to bear his claims before the world were not possessed of those attributes and characteristics the world usually considers essential to success. With one or two exceptions, the apostles were not men of letters, nor were they possessed of literary attainments; on the contrary, they were illiterate and unlearned, living and moving on a plane far below that of the average citizen of the Roman world. The Roman citizen of that day was the proudest man that ever walked upon the earth. He looked with supercilious disdain on all other races, and the Jews were by him relegated to the lowest realm, viewed only with disgust and contempt. When therefore a group of this despised race, fleeing persecution in their own land, came preaching a new gospel, there was not one human chance in a thousand they would succeed. The second obstacle was in the nature of the gospel itself.

It purported to offer salvation from a doom of which the Roman, enslaved by paganism, was wholly unconscious; what knew he, or cared, for a hell of fire, in the distant future, which in his materialism, he never expected to see? More, it required the acceptance of a low born Jew, without earthly father, and who had been executed as a condemned criminal in one of the far flung dominions of the empire as the Savior and Redeemer of the world. Nor did it stop here. It made obligatory the whole hearted acceptance of him as their Priest and King, demanding an allegiance more solemn and binding than ever that which they delighted to render to Caesar. One cannot easily conceive of a combination of circumstances which would render the cause the apostles pled more abhorrent to the average Roman citizen.

Thirdly, the gospel was wholly opposed, in its spirit and genius, to the Roman psychology.

It required a total abstinence from the vices then so prevalent in society. It would not tolerate pride, and pride and arrogance were ever present in the Roman character. It struck at the roots of sin, and the Roman loved the fleshpots of physical enjoyment. Despite these handicaps, in less than fifty years after Jesus died on Calvary's brow, there was a congregation of believers in every principal city of the Roman empire. In less than 250 years more than half of the vast empire had bowed in humble submission to the divine will.

How shall we account for this remarkable transformation? Was it because Jesus was a great teacher? So were hundreds of others who have lived and labored, but have long since passed into oblivion and forgetfulness, and whose works lie buried in dusty tomes no longer read or known by the world of today. Was it because their Captain and King was a mighty leader? So were Augustus Caesar, Alexander the Great, Napoleon and a host of others whose deeds and achievements brought the world to their feet, only to turn from them to others with equal claims on their homage. Does the explanation lie in the fact that he was a wise philosopher? So, too, were Plato, Socrates and Aristotle. But their works have yielded to the mutations of time, and the world moves on, little knowing or caring for their achievements in the distant past. No, the Nazarene's claim to greatness does not lie in the fact that he was a great teacher, a mighty leader, or a wise philosopher. Though he were all of these and more, he, too, would be sleeping the sleep of the forgotten, were it not for the glorious fact that he came forth from the dead, bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel.

It is a fact known to students of history that the two great Romans, Titus the general, and Pilate the pro-curator, crucified around the walls of Jerusalem 30,000 Jews of the average age of thirty-three years. The name of one of these men is a household word; millions throughout the earth honor it above every other name, counting it an exalted privilege to bow in humble submission at his feet. We feel safe in assuming that there is not a person in this vast audience tonight who can name even one of the other 29,999. How shall we account for the fact that 29,999 of these martyred Jews must evermore remain nameless, while throughout the world men remember and do homage to the one? The explanation is simple, and lies in the fact that all, save one, remained dead, and it is a melancholy fact that the dead are soon forgotten. But Jesus, our Lord, up from his tomb through the wreck of empires and the oblivion of ages, calmly faces the world today with these memorable words, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me." In view of these facts, is it a matter of wonder that the cause of the Lord was simply irresistible in its march across the earth? Not gradually, but with the speed of a prairie fire, the gospel dethroned idols, swept away pagan strongholds, and brought the promise of life and immortality to countless thousands from the rivers to the ends of the earth. It brooked no opposition in its advance, recognized no barriers, whether erected by men or devils, gave no odds and asked none in its conquest of the world. It was everywhere the influencing factor, the determining force. Paganism, the varied philosophies of the day, worldliness and vice, all retreated before its advance. Though rivers of blood were shed, and the dying shrieks of martyred saints were heard, it would not, it could not be checked, and ere long many of the persecutors were themselves bound by the cords of the gospel they had so vainly sought to destroy, ever thereafter preaching the faith they had hated. The wonderful success that attended the spread of the gospel in the first century leads one to wonder why, ere long, all the realms of humanity were not soon gathered into the fold. But it was not to be. Before the death of the apostles, clouds, ominous and foreboding, were appearing on the horizon.

Paul said to the elders of the church in Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:28-30). And to Timothy he said, "Now

the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:1-2). The eminent and learned Moshem recites the sad story thus: "Christian churches had scarcely been gathered and organized when here and there men rose up, who, not being contented with the simplicity and purity of that religion which the apostles taught, sought out new inventions, and fashioned religion according to their own liking" (Vol. 1, page 88).

Slowly at first, but with gathering strength, these innovators got in their hellish work, gradually changing the truth of God into a lie. The torchlight of truth flickered, glimmered faintly for a time, and then went out, leaving a bewildered world to grope its way in midnight gloom. For 1260 long years the world thus blindly wandered in a darkness bereft of the light of God's truth, while the forces of evil held him carnival. Blasphemously styling himself as Lord God the Pope, Representative of Jesus Christ, one sat in the corrupted temple exercising absolute sway over the souls and bodies, of men. The priest ridden peoples were enslaved in soul and body to the the mighty papacy, which, like a giant octopus, had stretched out its arms and enveloped the whole earth. And thus the centuries slipped by like drunkards in the rain, men grouped in spiritual darkness, and the corruptions of the years lay like a heavy pall upon the earth. On this scene came Martin Luther (all honor to his name), and with one fell blow, broke the back of the papacy, and put the scriptures back into the hands of the people. Since Christ stood before Pilate and Paul before Agrippa, a grander scene has not been enacted than that of a humble son of a poor miner, standing before the Diet of Worms and answering the demand that he retract his religion or forfeit his life. To the pompous and august dignitaries of the church of Rome, he said, "Since your serene majesty and high mightiness require from me a clear, simple and precise answer, I will give you one, and it is this . . . unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of the scripture or by the clearest reasoning—unless I am persuaded by means of the passages quoted . . . I cannot, I will not retract . . . here I stand, I can do nothing otherwise; may God help me! Amen!" This answer shook the world to its foundations, and will ring along the corridors of time until it mingles with the funeral notes of the last trumpet that proclaims the end of the world.

Others soon appeared to continue the work of reformation, so nobly begun. Calvin, Knox, Zwingle, and a host of others appeared in due time, to aid in the restoration of primitive Christianity. However, it is to be regretted that, having begun so nobly in the spirit, they sought to finish their work in the flesh; for, ere long, a state of affairs prevailed wholly contrary to the earnestness and spirit of the religion they had endeavored to restore. Creeds and confessions of faith were multiplied, parties and factions sprang into being, tradition and mysticism became the order of the day, and soon the broad truths and fine distinctions of the scriptures were relegated to the background as "mere words" and "dead letters," wholly incapable of bringing life and salvation to the lost. This state of affairs obtained for more than two centuries; the people were influenced more by the accumulated traditions of the years than they were by the testimony of the apostles; synods and councils assumed absolute sway over the convictions of men.

About the beginning of the nineteenth century, in various parts of the land men began to plead for a return to the "ancient order of things," to urge the restoration of that religion which the apostles taught, unmixed and unadulterated with the doctrines and commandments of men. Boldly protesting against the established order, it was their aim to go back of the great apostasy and the

accumulated corruptions of the years to the days when fresh from inspiration's pen the words of truth came, and by them restore the church to that primitive purity and glory which characterized it when it came into being on the memorable Pentecost after the resurrection of the Lord from the dead. They adopted as their slogan, "Where the scriptures speak, we speak; where the scriptures are silent, we are silent." They chose to call "Bible things by Bible names," and resolved that "We will receive as a matter of faith and practice nothing which is not expressly taught and enjoined in the word of God either in expressed terms or approved precedent." These wrought with a will so steady, a purpose so high, and a success so fine, no term but sublime will describe their course. Leaders in the movement were the Campbells, Thomas and Alexander, Walter Scott, Barton W. Stone, and a host of others. Fearlessly they unsheathed the sword of the spirit, went forth conquering and to conquer, and soon the citadels of sectarianism were falling at their feet. One by one the champions of denominationalism were being routed from the field, or were themselves enlisted in the fight for a return to primitive Christianity. Literally thousands of people saw the error of sectism, and declared themselves for the truth, forever repudiating denominationalism and all its attendant evils. As the result of the labors of these men and hundreds of others who have continued the work thus begun, there stretches today from the rock-bound coast of Maine to the shores of California the noblest brotherhood the sun has ever shone upon. Within the hands of this brotherhood, and within its hands only, lies the last hope of the earth. Let us fail let us permit the banner of truth to trail in the dust, and true Christianity will have, perished from the earth. What a tremendous responsibility, then, is ours! With what earnest care and concern should we view the work of the past, that we might discover the causes for our achievements, and thus safeguard them for the future!

1. It will, of course, be impossible to mention all the principles that motivated the reformers in their return to the religion of the apostles. There follows, however, those that were most often insisted upon, and which now need to be ever presented to the world: first. The state now existing in the religious world is wholly contrary to the Will of the Lord; and it is therefore the duty of every faithful disciple to seek its immediate overthrow. Denominationalism is the greatest curse of the age, and so long as a single person remains in its bewildering mazes, our work will not be finished. We have long opposed the existence of denominations, and it is gratifying that our position here has been vindicated at last by the denominations themselves, for in recent years leaders among the denominations have conceded the failure of their organizations to accomplish that for which they were brought into existence. It is therefore, an especially opportune time for lovers of the truth and the true church to press the claim of undenominational Christianity.

2. We, alone, have contended that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is a sufficient rule of faith and practice, and that creeds, disciplines, confessions of faith, church manuals, etc., are not only unnecessary and unscriptural, but that they impeach the wisdom of God, and imply the insufficiency of his Book of Revelation. No other body in Christendom has thus declared itself for God and his book. The history of the past confirms our contention that only by a return to the book of God can we effect that unity for which the Savior prayed in the shadows of Gethsemane.

3. We have ever held before the world the obvious fact that Christianity consists simply and precisely in believing Christ and of doing what he says; and that there is nothing connected with the plan of salvation smacking of the mysterious or incomprehensible. It is positively amazing that such an obvious fact is wholly unknown outside our ranks; but it is so. We boldly assert that no

other body of people in the world promises salvation to people on the simple terms of the gospel, as set forth in the New Testament. To announce, defend and propagate this, we pronounce the greatest boon of the age, the most wonderful achievement of the century. It was this principle so wonderfully advocated in the past that left denominationalism tottering, and which now presages its final doom.

4. We have successfully established the fact that faith is the simple conviction of the truth of what the Bible says, and not, as some would have it, a direct gift, a special work of grace in the soul, etc.; that repentance is the determination of the mind to forsake sin, followed by the act; and that baptism, when preceded by faith and repentance, is performed by an immersion in water, and is for, or in order to, the remission of sins. The task of assigning to baptism its true place in the scheme of redemption has been, and is, a work peculiar to those identified with the restoration movement.

5. We have consistently urged that all human names are unscriptural, and that they constitute a perpetual barrier to that unity for which our Savior prayed. From the beginning we have insisted that the only feasible and workable basis for unity of professing Christians is to "call Bible things by Bible names," purging our speech of such names and phrases as cannot be found from the pen of some sacred writer.

6. We have successfully maintained the fact that the church is God's own missionary society for the evangelization of the world, and that all other organizations designed for this purpose are sinful. Many battles, even in our own ranks, have been fought over this principle, but history and events have vindicated the justness of our claims in this respect.

7. We have ever believed that the Lord delights only in that form of worship outlined in the New Testament; that this is an expression of the divine will touching the question; that we have no assurance that he is pleased with anything other than this; and that it is exceedingly dangerous to presume on the silence of the scriptures. We have accordingly held that all innovations, such as instrumental music, robed choirs, solos, etc., are corruptions of the true worship, and therefore, pernicious and unscriptural.

Many other principles have, of course, been insisted upon, but it is safe to say that these have ever been in the forefront, and on them depended in a large measure the success of the effort. That these items of our faith and practice are eminently scriptural is no longer, with us at least, a matter of debate. Each of them has passed through the crucible, and has been proven pure gold. Indeed, we hesitate not to assert that, at least for the age in which we live, on the successful announcement and propagation of them depends the future of primitive Christianity. They are the grand generalizations of truth and duty with which we have successfully fought the good fight to the present time. To them, we owe our present proud position; and the moment we lose sight of them, we begin to return to the bosom of the great apostasy. These principles must therefore be guarded with sleepless vigilance. Let every gospel preacher saturate himself with them, preach them at every opportunity, never suffer them to be neglected or forgotten; they constitute the hope of the world. This, at least, is our sober judgment.

We are unable to view the future with that unalloyed optimism which seems so characteristic of some. That God's people will ultimately triumph, we have not the slightest doubt; yet we think we

see on the horizon signs which augur ill for the cause of primitive New Testament Christianity. He is a poor observer of men and of things who cannot see slowly developing trends utterly subversive of the principles which thus far have motivated us. There is being made a determined and persistent effort to prepare the mind of the brotherhood for changes, revolutionary changes, which will work ruin for churches of Christ if permitted to succeed. We propose herein to instance a few:

#### 1. The tendency toward institutionalism.

The ship of Zion has floundered more than once on the sandbar of institutionalism. The tendency to organize is a characteristic of the age. On the theory that the end justifies the means, brethren have not scrupled to form organizations in the church to do work the church itself was designed to do. All such organizations usurp the work of the church, and are unnecessary and sinful. The veteran John S. Sweeney well said, "Christians do not need to spend time and means organizing and fostering such societies. The church of God is spiritual house enough for us to live in, temple enough for us to worship in, vineyard enough for us to work in, husbandry enough for us to tend, building enough for us to work on, army enough for us to march, drill and fight in. People who are contending, as they say, for primitive Christianity, for New Testament Christianity, should stand for the church of the New Testament, and leave others to spend their time and money on human societies, if they cannot be persuaded to do better." This writer has ever been unable to appreciate the logic of those who affect to see grave danger in Missionary Societies, but scruple not to form a similar organization for the purpose of caring for orphans and teaching young men! to be gospel preachers. Of course it is right for; the church to care for the "fatherless and widows in their affliction," but this work should be done by and through the church, with the elders having the oversight - thereof, and not through boards and conclaves, unknown to the New Testament. In this connection it is a pleasure to commend to the brotherhood Tipton Orphans Home, Tipton, Oklahoma. The work there is entirely. Scriptural, being managed and conducted by the elders of the church in Tipton, Oklahoma, aided by funds sent to them by the elders of other congregations round about. We here and now declare our protest against any other method or arrangement for accomplishing this work.

#### 2. The Pastor System.

It will not be seriously denied that there is an arrangement in operation in the church of Christ which bears a suspicious similarity to the pastor system of the denominations. It is idle to deny this. Elders have, in many instances employed an evangelist to feed the flock, and take the oversight thereof, to the utter neglect of the work themselves. It is not surprising that, where this is done, the elders are, too often, regarded as but mere figure-heads, without authority and influence in the congregation. The elders are the pastors of the flock, and not the evangelist; and it is their duty to care for it and tend it. i Evangelists are to carry the glad tidings of salvation to the lost, and preach the gospel in regions where it is not known. These facts are so obvious and so well known among us, we attempt no defense of them here. Yet, there is a disposition on the part of many congregations to ignore this and thus to create a new office in the church by transforming the evangelist into a pastor with duties, powers, and responsibilities which belong to the elders alone, re-quiring him to spend his entire time engaged in this work, and in some instances absolutely forbidding him to extend his labors beyond the limits of the congregation he serves. We cannot

but regard this situation as an evil and alarming tendency of the times. It is naturally to be expected that the preachers recognizing the situation, and the responsibility of carrying on the work, themselves, (seize authority which the Lord has never given them. Not infrequently do we hear men speak of "my elders," "taking charge of the church," etc., etc., expressions which indicate that the preachers have accepted the situation as it is. C We believe that the preachers are becoming the masters of the churches, instead of their servants.'

Able brethren throughout the brotherhood are becoming more and more alarmed and fearful of the arrangement now in operation among us. It is time that the elders assert their authority, no longer shirk the responsibility that is theirs, and begin to do the work the Lord expects them to do, thus releasing the preachers to carry the gospel to the lost. We know of nothing that will serve to create more respect for the elderships and restore to them the authority and prestige that is rightfully theirs, than this. We believe that the pernicious and church-destroying doctrine of majority-rule is an outgrowth of the incipient pastor-system now in operation among us. Other evils will surely result if a halt is not soon called. Moses E. Lard said, "The modern office of pastor is an office not known in the New Testament; hence the limit of power which may be claimed to belong to it is not therein laid down. Consequently it is extremely difficult to say when the person who fills the office is usurping power which does not belong to him. Indeed, this cannot be done. He is clearly a lawless one; and may, if he sees fit, go to great lengths, and do great mischief before he can be checked. To me, I am free to say, the points of resemblance between pastor, priest, and pope are more than the mere circumstance that each word begins with a p. From pastor to priest is only a short step, from priest to pope only a long one; still the step has been taken; and for one, I am afraid to run risks; at least I think it safest not to run them. Let us see to it that the ancient practice is our model, and the ancient Scriptures our sole guide in this and all other matters. That our churches need the most constant care, I well know, and also that without it, even the best of them must decline; but let us create no imaginary office, no imaginary officer, in order to meet the case. Better is no church with the word of God unbroken than is the best of so-called churches reared on its ruins" (Lard's Quarterly, 1865, page 259).

### 3. Tendencies toward Compromise.

There has been an ever increasing tendency in the past few years to seek a change in the methods that have formerly motivated us in our attitude toward the denominational world. Brethren have contended for a different method of approach, have urged a modified view of the relation we sustain to the world. Particularly is this true with reference to the tactics that should characterize us in discussing the differences between the New Testament church and the denominations. As a result debates with Sectarians have become unpopular, strong preaching is frowned upon, and a generally soft attitude has become the order of the day. In the field of journalism, especially, has the battle waxed warm. It is urged that argumentation and controversy have no place in a religious journal; that it is detrimental to the Cause to hand copies of our papers containing such to friends not Christians, and that the papers should be purged of all such. It is strange that proponents of this theory do not see that their argument is equally valid against the New Testament, itself. Paul withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed; and later told the world about it in his epistle to the churches of Galatia. Paul and Barnabas dissented so sharply over John'Mark that they parted company. Evidently, Luke did not feel the need of surpassing this interesting bit of information concerning those men. Many other similar accounts are recorded with

great detail in the book of God. Indeed, we hesitate not to assert that this freedom to investigate and criticize, is the one safeguard against corruption of doctrine and innovation in worship. Only the realization that what we write is to be subjected to the most minute examination and the severest investigation will keep us from apostasy in matters of doctrine. It is indeed strange that any one who has regard for the Lord and his word would seek to surpass criticism, or to lift his utterances above the level of investigation. The very attempt smacks suspiciously of the papacy.

Denominationalism is the curse and bane of the age. So long as it remains to mislead and deceive the people, our work will not be finished. It is our duty fearlessly to unsheath the sword of the Spirit, boldly go forth to battle, and plunge it into the very heart of sectarianism, until, mangled and bleeding, it is left to die in its own shame. Let the Lord's disciples learn that their Master came not to bring peace on the earth, but a sword. The servant is not above his master. Christianity is, in its very nature aggressive, and its friends must never succumb to that maudlin pietism that trucks to the popularity of the world. The great characters of the past who have walked pleasingly before the Lord have been men who were not afraid. Noah stirred up considerable strife before the flood, and Moses created quite a storm in Egypt. Elijah disturbed Israel, and John the Baptist was beheaded for his fearless preaching.

Christianity in a Changing World. Yes; and it changes with the world only to its own hurt. In its primitively pure state, it is a savor of life unto life; when corrupted by the doctrines and commandments of men it becomes a savor of death unto death. How great the responsibility, then, with which we are charged in keeping it pure and true to the New Testament. Let it be ever remembered that it is not of the world, and to the world belongs none of the glory of its achievements. In the days of its struggles her kings and potentates gave its founder no word of encouragement, her treasuries contributed not a dollar, her arsenals not a weapon, and her priests not a prayer. He bore the burden of her scorn while he lived, and she contributed a cross and a crown of thorns to decorate his grave when he died. With what contempt would Alexander the Great have viewed the little band of penniless disciples charged with carrying the gospel to a lost world. How Caesar and Napoleon would have laughed to scorn such a muster roll as that. But where is Alexander the Great now? Where is Caesar now? Where is Napoleon now? Lifeless skeletons, standing on their cold and crumbling pedestals in the silent halls of history. Where is mighty Rome now? The very eagles have faded from her ensigns, and her name stands recorded on the broken column that inscribes the downfall of empires. But the cause of the Lord has spread from the rivers to the ends of the earth, boldly bidding defiance to every species of infidelity, giving comfort and hope to millions and pointing sinners to the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

## Evangelists as Stewards or The Stewardship of Souls

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### Evangelists as Stewards or The Stewardship of Souls EVANGELISTS AS STEWARDS

By Leslie G. Thomas

Introduction: Stewardship is preeminently a Bible subject, and it would be difficult to over-emphasize it. "According as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10). "Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Corinthians 4:1). The doctrine of stewardship is applicable to any part of our Christian duty and we should have a general and comprehensive view of the subject, but that view alone will not suffice. We must understand its application to the various duties which the Lord has assigned to his children. The particular phase of the subject for this study is with reference to evangelists. "And he gave some to be ... . evangelists" (Ephesians 4:11). "Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2). No evangelist can be faithful to his duty, unless he tries to learn and to put into practice that which God has ordained for him to do. Therefore, in considering this subject, let us ask....

#### I. Who or What Is an Evangelist?

1. The term from which we have our word "evangelist" occurs only three times in the New Testament. However, the verb from which it comes, and the noun from which, in turn, the verb is derived, are frequently found in that volume. The meaning of the noun form is "good news" or "glad tidings," while the verb means "to proclaim" good news or glad tidings. The word "evangelist," therefore means, according to its etymology, a "proclaimer" of good news or glad tidings.

2. But this, however, is only the generic meaning of the term. In this sense, Christ, the apostles, all the early teachers, and, in fact, all Christians, were evangelists. They were continually telling others the good news concerning their salvation, the glad tidings concerning what God had in store for them.

3. But in Ephesians 4:11 ("And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers") the word "evangelists" is evidently used in a more definite and specific sense. This is true for the following reasons:

(1) Because in that passage the term is used in connection and in contrast with other specific and official names, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, and teachers.

(2) Because, on any other hypothesis, a distinction between "evangelists" and any other class of Christians would be without significance.

4. There were, without doubt, many evangelists during the early days of the church, yet the term is applied to only two men in the New Testament—Philip (Acts 21:8) and Timothy (2 Timothy 4:5).

5. That these men had a specific work to do is clearly implied from the references just cited and the observations just made, and that they did the work of evangelists is clearly taught in the divine record. This leads us to ask....

## II. What Are the Duties of an Evangelist?

1. This question can best be answered by considering what the New Testament says about the men who are therein spoken of as evangelists.

(1) Philip. Acts 6:5; Acts 8:5 ff; and Acts 21:8 record all the New Testament says about him. He was one of the seven appointed to serve tables in the Jerusalem church and when that church was scattered abroad, on account of the persecution that arose concerning Stephen, he went to Samaria, preached the word there, and baptized the believers. And, upon being directed by an angel of God, he went to the way wherein an Ethiopian eunuch was returning home from Jerusalem, where he had been to worship, and, being further instructed by the Spirit of God and invited by the eunuch, he preached unto him Jesus and baptized him. Then, leaving the eunuch, "he preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to Caesarea."

Thus, from the brief record of his evangelistic labors, one would naturally infer that his chief business was to preach the gospel, whenever and wherever he had an opportunity, and to assist those who were willing to accept it in obeying the Lord.

(2) Timothy. This man was Paul's son in the gospel, having, in all probability, been converted by him during his first great missionary journey, and a close associate in the work of spreading the kingdom of Christ among men. Two of this great apostle's epistles were addressed to him—First and Second Timothy. Near the close of the second epistle, which was evidently written just before Paul's death, we find this statement: A "But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5). These words clearly imply that

Timothy was an evangelist, and their obvious purpose was to express, in a few words, a summary of all the duties that pertained to his ministry. Detailed instruction was given to him in both epistles. Consider, for example, the statement as found in 1 Timothy 4:13-16 : "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying' on of the hands of the presbytery. Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all. Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee."

2. Thus, without attempting to specify every individual duty, we note that in a general way evangelists were to teach and baptize people; gather the converts into convenient assemblies or congregations for their edification, improvement, and worship; see that elders and deacons were duly chosen and appointed to their respective offices; and labor earnestly for the general welfare of the churches.

## III. The Duration of the Work of the Evangelist.

1. Some people have taught that the evangelist belonged to the supernatural age of the church, and that with the passing of that period, the office of the evangelist ceased, just as did the office of the apostles. This view, however, does not seem to accord with the facts in the case.

2. The following considerations clearly indicate that the work of the evangelist is of perpetual duration :

(1) The work that he was ordained to do is a per-petual work. As long as people remain in sin, it will be the duty of the church, through her own chosen and appointed representatives, to teach and baptize them; gather the converts into convenient assemblies or congregations for their edification, improvement, and worship; see that elders and deacons are duly chosen and appointed to their respective offices; and labor earnestly for the general welfare of the churches.

(2) From the very beginning the evangelist received his commission from the church, and not directly from Christ, as did the apostles and prophets. Timothy seems to have been recommended for his work "by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium," and was set apart unto it "with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (See Acts 16:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:14).

(3) Paul's instruction to Timothy clearly shows that the work of the evangelist was to continue throughout the gospel age. "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). This was in keeping with the general commission, as given by Jesus.

(4) All subsequent history shows that the office has continued until the present time. Witness the work of the post-apostolic church, the Reformation, the Res-toration, and that of the present time.

#### IV. Qualifications of the Evangelist.

1. He must have a genuine faith in the deity of Je-sus, and must never question his absolute authority as Lord and Christ. "But having the same spirit of faith, according to that which is written, I believed, and therefore did I speak; we also believe, and therefore also we speak" (2 Corinthians 4:13). "For I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye cruci-fied" (Acts 2:36). "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him .shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22-23). "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The following paragraph, complete, from an article in *The Christian Evangelist*, May 26, 1938, by Edward Scribner Ames, for forty years pastor of the University Christian Church, Chicago, entitled, "Disciples, Baptism, and Union," is a fair sample of the widespread disbelief in the basic teaching of the New Testament regarding Christ that is rapidly gaining momentum in its mad rush among the professed followers of Christ.

"Disciples almost completely succeeded from the be-ginning in basing their church fellowship on this spir-itual loyalty to Christ. In the confession which they ask prospective members to make they emphasize its practical and not its theological or formal aspect. When a candidate is asked whether he believes in Jesus Christ, 'belief' is meant in' a practical sense, in the sense of love and devotion to his spirit and leadership. It does not imply belief in the Virgin Birth, in the bodily resurrection, or in any theory of divinity or deity; much less can it imply that one must believe in Jesus as one who would prescribe immersion in water as a condition of entering into an intimate

and saving fellowship with him.”

2. He must be a man of consecration and proven character. “No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:4). “Keep thyself pure” (1 Timothy 5:22). Instead of following the apostle’s advice to this New Testament evangelist, some men today take the plow and look back; some indulge in questionable habits and sinful practices; some hold on to distracting business connections; and some seek “security” by dividing loyalties, that is, they seek to please some lustful supporter by compromising the word of God.

3. He must be a courageous man, and not a timeserver. “I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry” (2 Timothy 4:1-5).

Any gospel preacher, worthy of the name, should always be willing to speak out on any question regarding the teaching of the Bible and the welfare of the church. This does not imply that he should forever be talking about conditions, about which he knows little or nothing, but it does mean that he should always be willing for his position on vital questions to be known, and that he should be willing to make use of all opportunities for using his influence for the advancement of the cause of Christ here in this world.

4. He should be a trained man. “Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:1 b). “The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments.” Although only a step removed from the executioner, Paul was still interested in his books. The proper kind of training is essential to successful work as evangelist. This does not imply that a formal education is always necessary, but experience and observation unite in testifying that those without the advantage of formal training who have succeeded in their work, did so in spite of it, and not because of that lack. Abilene Christian College is doing a great work along this line, as well as other schools among us, and should have the encouragement and support of all loyal and faithful disciples of Christ who desire to see greater good accomplished in the future.

5. He must act from conviction and be driven by an urge. “For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; for woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this of mine own will, I have a reward: but if not of mine own will, I have a stewardship intrusted to me” (1 Corinthians 9:16-17). “For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). “They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word” (Acts 8:4).

“If just one soul were saved to Christ, just one,

By any effort I have made, or work have done;

That's worth a life of earnest toil, or sorrow,  
To waken to the gladsome light of such a morrow.  
"If just one soul were saved to him from evil's blight,  
And that soul leading to the light still other souls:  
Father, mother, children win each to the end of time- -  
Leading souls to him—  
It makes one's heart to yearn and eyes grow dim  
To think of saving just one soul to him."

#### V. The Evangelist of Today.

1. Just as in the days of the apostles, the work of the evangelist today is to endeavor to win men to Christ and his way of living. He has the same gospel as the early evangelists had—the only true gospel, cf. Galatians 1:6-9—but conditions have changed, and he must take these things into consideration. No man can be successful as an evangelist today and at the same time ignore the new situations which he finds all around him in this new age.

2. The evangelist today finds himself "in a time of vast confusion, imminent peril, urgent need, and challenging opportunity." Some of the conditions which affect his work are

(1) The present character crisis and disrespect for authority. This is an age of materialism, of vice, and of crime. People, as a rule, are no longer interested in those spiritual values, which claimed the attention of the masses a generation or two ago. This fact must be taken into consideration by the successful of today.

(2) Disillusionment of the so-called Christian world. Witness the World War and its aftermath. Observe the conduct of individual professed Christians, and entire churches, as well. In many instances professed followers of Christ are no better, and sometimes not as good, as the man who makes no profession. Churches are often quarrelling and dividing, instead of leading men into that holy fellowship of Christ. Such conduct on the part of those who claim loyalty to Christ, whether the so-called Christian world, the church, or the individual Christian, has left the wrong impression on the non-believer. In his eye, Christianity has faded.

(3) The newer implication of being a Christian. This is a natural outgrowth of the condition just mentioned. The world is expecting more of people than simply becoming respectable church members. The New Testament has always demanded more than that. Yet in our day we see gross sins of yesterday, which have become respectable today. Compare the divorce evil, dancing, and general moral delinquencies.

(4) The growing spirit of tolerance. Bigotry, of course, should have no place in the Christian evangelist's program, but he must not be deceived by a false conception of tolerance. He has no right to compromise the word of God or fail to press the fight for right on every side. He must go out, not in the spirit of a conqueror with a desire to dominate another, or simply to add numbers to the church, but in the spirit of one who has made a great discovery, and desires above everything

else to share it with others. Compare the action of Andrew and others, as recorded in the first chapter of John.

(5) Changing conditions in American life. The radio and the picture show are daily influencing thousands of people. The technique of advertising through the press, on the billboard and the screen, and over the radio, has developed to the extent that the lives of millions have been changed. Witness cigarette smoking and beer drinking on the part of women and girls.

3. All of these things have produced a different attitude on the part of people in general, and no man can be successful in the work of an evangelist today and pass them by unnoticed. The gospel must be made to appeal to people with the present-day attitude. The gospel has not changed, but the people have, and if they are to be reached with the gospel, adequate methods of evangelizing must be employed. This does not mean that something must be done which is contrary to the spirit of the New Testament, but it does mean that the use of modern means of reaching the people must be employed. In addition to the pulpit, he must take hold of the very things which have been used to educate people in the wrong way, that is, he must use the radio, printed page, billboard, and, in short, every legitimate means at his command. The battle must be pressed on every side.

“Lead on, O King Eternal,

The day of march has come;

Henceforth in fields of conquest

Thy tents shall be our home.

“Through days of preparation

Thy grace has made us strong,

And now, O King Eternal,

We lift our battle song.”

## Elders As Stewards or The Stewardship of Souls

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Elders As Stewards or The Stewardship of Souls

ELDERS AS STEWARDS OR

THE STEWARDSHIP OF SOULS

By Jesse P. Sewell Introduction:

May we read together some brief passages from the Word of God?

“According as each hath .received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10).

“Let a man so account of us as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).

“Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

“For the bishop must be blameless, as God’s stew-ard” (Titus 1:7).

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief; for this were unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).

“Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercis-ing the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (1 Peter 5:2). A steward is one who is intrusted with something which belongs to another. We become his stewards when Christ becomes our Saviour.

Stewards of Christ are intrusted with the manifold grace of God; his gracious gifts, such as: the material necessities and blessings of life; talents, many or few, great or small; influence, extensive or limited, and also the mysteries of God, that is, the gospel of Christ, now revealed through his apostles and recorded in the New Testament.

Lordship necessarily implies stewardship. There can be no lordship on the part of Christ without stewardship on the part of his disciples. One cannot exist without the other. To acknowledge the lordship of Jesus Christ is to accept stewardship for him. So inseparably are these two things bound together that the extension and exaltation of the Lord’s church and the accomplishment of every purpose for which Jesus died, was buried, arose from the grave, and was exalted to God’s right hand, and there crowned as King, must await the good and faithful stewardship of God’s redeemed children. The law of God is: that stewards of Christ must be good stewards, and that stewards of Christ must be faithful stewards.

I. Teaching of the Old Testament.

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

God created them: they belong to him by virtue of that fact. God gives to men the control and use of the earth, but he does not relinquish his ownership.

“And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28).

“The land shall not be sold forever, for the land is mine,” saith the Lord (Leviticus 25:23).

“The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein” (Psalms 24:1).

God declares his ownership of the earth, of its ful-ness, and of all them that dwell on it. It is God who gives to man his power to get and possess wealth. “But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for he it is that giveth thee power to get wealth” (Deuteronomy 8:18).

King David asked the people for material, gold and silver, with which to build a house for God. They brought, willingly and gladly, all that was needed. In 1 Chronicles 29:11-14 we read his words:

“Thine, O Jehovah, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou rulest over all; and in thy hand is power and might; and in thy hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee and of thine own have we given thee” (1 Chronicles 29:11-14). The teaching of the Old Testament is that God owns the earth and every thing in and on and about the earth; that he owns all the people of the earth, including their talents, even the talent to secure and possess wealth. Those of that age who believed, trusted, loved and obeyed him accepted this doctrine and praised God that they were permitted this relationship to him.

They were conscious of the fact that they were not owners, but that they themselves were the owned pos-session of God, and that their possessions were his, in-trusted to them to be handled by them as his stewards.

## II. Teaching of the New Testament.

“For the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof” (1 Corinthians 10:26).

“And Paul stood in the midst of the Aeropagus, and said, Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by man’s hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having

determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said" (Acts 17:22-28).

There is no change at this point in the teaching of the New Testament from that of the Old. It is declared that God owns the earth and its fulness, and this on the basis that he created it all. He is still the creator of life and breath and all things pertaining to life. This embraces all people of all nations. It is in him, his power and knowledge and wisdom, that they live and move and have their being. No man escapes the ownership of God until some man experiences life through some other agency. But the human family, created by God, in his own image, and for his use and glory, came to the time when they refused to glorify him as God. He gave them over to a reprobate mind, and they separated themselves from him by every conceivable form of sin. And human beings, as individuals, have been doing that same thing until today. Thus, are we lost from God and condemned in sin.

"Because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things (2128). And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting" (28) (Romans 1:21-23; Romans 1:28).

Christians, all Christians, are owned by God in a double sense. They are his on the basis of creation, as are all men. Christians are saved, not because of inheritance, human blood, name or family, but because they have been bought with a price, redeemed from bondage to Satan, to which bondage they had given themselves, by God the Father with the blood of his Son. Christians are the owned servants, slaves of God; not only on the basis of creation, but also on the basis of recreation, redemption, or purchase.

"Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price; glorify God therefore in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

"But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Peter 2:1).

"Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

"Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possessions, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:13-14).

Jesus teaches the lesson of stewardship in that beautiful little story usually called the parable of the talents, recorded in verses fourteen to thirty of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. This is a

very easy, simple, understandable story. It describes a common occurrence in the days of Jesus. The hero of the story owned servants, slaves; they were his property, in the sense in which any person or thing can be the property of another. They were in his possession. He went on a long trip into a far country. Before his departure he delivered to his servants his goods. He gave, in the sense that he delivered it into his possession and use, to each of his servants a portion of his goods, on the basis of the ability of that servant to properly use what he received. They knew what was expected of them. The Master trusted his goods to the possession and use of his servants and went on his journey. When he returned he dealt with and rewarded them, not on the basis of the amount of goods they had for him, but on the basis of the faithfulness with which each had lived up to the trust placed in him. He was just as pleased with the one who brought to him four talents as with the one who brought ten. The two had been equally faithful. He was displeased with the one who brought only one talent, not because it was not four or ten; he had never expected it to be four or ten; but because this servant had not been faithful in the use of his Master's goods. The kingdom of heaven, the church of the Lord, is like this. God intrusts his redeemed, bought and paid for, servants with his goods, material things, talents of every kind, and even with the gospel of his Son in which is deposited his power to save. He delivers his goods to each of his servants on the basis of the inherited and developed ability of each to properly handle and use what he receives. At the end of the way he rewards each one, not on the basis of what he brings, but on the basis of his faithfulness in the use of his Master's goods. This is the doctrine of Christian stewardship. To recognize and set aside a certain percent of one's income, to be used directly for the promotion of the kingdom is a fine practice, but it does not fully meet the demands of Christian stewardship. The Christian steward must realize that he himself is a bought and paid for servant, and that all of his talents and possessions belong to the same Master who owns him, and that all of them, not a certain percent of them, are to be used by him for the honor of the Master, and for the accomplishment of his purposes. The money with which Christians buy their groceries, clothing, homes, furniture, automobiles, radios, tobacco, cigarettes, tea, coffee, beer, and whiskey, is just as much the Lord's money as what he brings and puts in the treasury on the Lord's day. The talent the Christian uses to teach school, practice medicine or law, farm, do the work of a mechanic or machinist is as much the property of God as is the talent with which he preaches, teaches God's word, sings and prays in the church or out. The influence the Christian uses to bring people along his way in his business or profession is just as much the property of God as is the influence he uses to bring people to hear the gospel. This percentage idea is simply no part of the teaching of the New Testament. The Christian must be careful with the money, talent and influence he spends on and for himself as he is with that which he uses directly in and for the church.

III. The Stewardship of Souls. When the Lord provided for the salvation of lost souls and the establishment of his church, he provided that a group of men with specified character and qualifications be selected and appointed in each of his churches for the performance of certain duties. These men are called elders, pastors or bishops. To them he intrusts his redeemed sons and daughters in each of his congregations. These elders, bishops, pastors are his servants. The souls intrusted to them are his, souls, bought and paid for with the blood of his Son. The elders of each church of the Lord are stewards of Christ, in the first place, as are all other Christians, and, in the second place, they are his specially appointed stewards of souls.

“Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

“For the bishop must be blameless, as God’s steward” (Titus 1:7).

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account” (Hebrews 13:17).

“Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (1 Peter 5:2).

There is no more beautiful or fundamental teaching in the New Testament than this doctrine of the stewardship of souls. There is no more sacred relationship than that between the pastors in a church of the Lord and the souls of that church, intrusted to them by Christ the Lord.

There is no more sacred or serious responsibility than that which is placed by the head of the church on the pastors of each church in their capacity as stewards of souls.

There is no more honorable, valuable or profitable position open to man than that of a steward of souls in a church of the Lord. This relationship cannot be successfully maintained; this responsibility cannot be effectively met, and this position cannot be faithfully filled by any sort of accidental, slipshod, unplanned procedure. It calls for and makes necessary the very best and most prayerful effort possible to God’s very best servants. It calls for an intimate and sympathetic knowledge and understanding of each soul in the church. It requires a deep controlling love for and interest in each one of these souls. It demands constant and patient watch, care, nurture and guidance for the weak and careless. The high purpose of the stewardship of souls can never be attained by any number of “elders meetings” and public meetings of service and worship. It calls for a more understanding, intimate, and sympathetic personal contact and service than can ever be given by such organized and public procedure. And all of this calls for an accurate, understanding knowledge of God’s word.

If all of the elders of all of God’s churches could be called together in one group, with all of their limitations and shortcomings, I would, with perfect confidence, challenge any man or group to gather together any group of equal number from anywhere or everywhere, that would be superior to them in the combined qualities of Christian manhood. I would not except preachers, teachers or any others.

But, having said this, I must now say, that when the elders of God’s churches come to fully understand, properly appreciate and to faithfully determine their service on the basis of the New Testament doctrine of the stewardship of souls, these churches will come to partake of the divine nature, to exhibit the image of God, and to exert and influence a power for the salvation and blessing of humanity which the world has not yet seen.

#### IV. Jesus Is Our Example.

Elders, bishops, or pastors are shepherds. This idea carries us straight to Christ himself. Early in Hebrew history the word shepherd came to be a metaphor. The literal keeper of sheep, so prominent in the life of that day and land, became a type of the highest servants of Jehovah, a symbol for the expression of lofty ideas and ideals. Priests were called shepherds, and so also

were prophets. Later princes and kings came to be thus designated. So beautiful was the figure and so rich the idea that finally it was applied to God himself. Kings and princes, priests and prophets were under-shepherds, here on earth, and Jehovah was the over-shepherd in heaven, and we hear the beautiful shepherd song:

“Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;

He leadeth me beside still waters.

He restoreth my soul:

He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil; for thou art with me;

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:

Thou hast anointed my head with oil:

My cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and loving-kindness shall follow me all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah for ever” (Psalms 23).

Before men ever called God father, they called him Shepherd. All of the under-shepherds of Israel, one after another, proved unfaithful. There was a good shepherd in heaven but none on earth. They failed. They did not guide wisely. They did not properly feed the flocks. They were not good in life and they were not faithful in service.

“For the teraphim have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie; and they have told false dreams, they comfort in vain; therefore they go their way like sheep, they are afflicted because there is no shepherd. Mine anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the he-goats; for Jehovah of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as his goodly horse in the battle” (Zechariah 10:2-3).

“And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, even to the shepherds, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Woe unto the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the sheep? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill the fatlings, but ye feed not the sheep. The diseased have ye not strength-ened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought back that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with rigor have ye ruled over them. And they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food to all the beasts of the field, and were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my sheep were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and there was none that did

search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of Jehovah: As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely forasmuch as my sheep became food to all the beasts of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my sheep, but my shepherds fed themselves and fed not the sheep; therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my sheep at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the sheep; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; and I will deliver my sheep from their mouth, that they may not be food for them" (Ezekiel 34:1-10). But a good shepherd was promised. He would feed and guide and save the sheep. Through many generations this idea of the Shepherd-Messiah was thrown before the minds of the prophets of God. It burned into the very soul of the people. When they saw and condemned the bad shepherds, they always presented the picture of the good shepherd who was to come. So "O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up on a high mountain: O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God! Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom and will gently lead those that have their young" (Isaiah 40:9-11). So far as the New Testament reveals, Jesus never referred to himself as priest, preacher, clergyman, elder or bishop. But he did often think and speak of himself under the figure of a shepherd. When he looked upon the crowds of Galilee "he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

He spoke of himself often as sent to gather the lost sheep of Israel.

It was to a people whose eyes, ears and minds had been filled for centuries with this picture of the coming shepherd that Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. He that is a hireling, and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf snatcheth them, and scattereth them: he fleeth because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep" (John 10:11-13).

Thieves and robbers had preceded him, men who had been guilty of all the gross neglect and outrageous sins mentioned by Ezekiel, Zachariah and others, but Jesus is the promised good shepherd. He teaches his under-shepherds their work and how they are to perform it in the following words: "Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing near unto him to hear him. And both the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake unto them this parable, saying, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them doth not leave the ninety and nine and go after that which is lost, until he find it. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance" (Luke 15:1-8).

He said to Peter: "Feed my lambs, tend my sheep, feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17). In other words: "Be a shepherd and do a shepherd's work." Peter got the shepherd idea fixed in his mind and heart. We read from his letter which he later wrote to Christians: "For ye were going astray like

sheep; but are now returned unto the shep-herd and bishop of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25).

Jesus is the great, good divine bishop or shepherd of all redeemed souls. In each church of his he provides for under-shepherds, pastors, elders or bishops. As to these under-shepherds, Peter says: “The elders therefore among you I exhort who am a fellow- elder. Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” (1 Peter 5:1-2). This is what Paul had in mind when at Miletus he said to the elders of the church in Ephesus, for whom he had sent: “Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he pur-chased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).

Through the teaching and example of the great divine Shepherd, who now watches over the souls of the redeemed from the very throne of God, God expects to inspire, train and equip men in each of his churches to shepherd, that is to feed, guide, protect, lead, nurture and train each soul in that church. By building in them the shepherd’s disposition and the shepherd’s skill he hopes to enable them to give a good account of each soul in the flock at the end of the way. And this good account he will demand.

These shepherds in the Lord’s churches will be expected in that final roundup to present each re-deemed soul, entrusted to their care, safe and sound, or to give a justifiable reason for his absence. On that great day even good excuses will not serve. As the elders of the early church began to lose this ideal of the stewardship of souls, they drifted away from the shepherd ideal of service. Little by little they magnified their office in ways not suggested by the good Shepherd of the sheep. They made of themselves priests. They made a specialty of law and discipline. They degenerated into tyrants, and set themselves up as the sole custodians of the grace of God. They came to claim sovereignty, not only over the kingdoms of this world, but also over the vast empire of the dead. The Lord’s elders forgot their stewardship of souls and made of themselves lords over his heritage. Darkness covered the earth. The heirarchy of Rome and the East ruled the world. The dark ages were on.

V. Conclusion On the basis of more than forty years of active and rather widespread observation of and participation in the affairs Of our lord’s churches, my deliberate judg-ment is that the greatest danger to the eldership in these churches at this time is at the point of their stewardship for souls. Their great danger is not in that they do not carefully guard the teaching of their congregations. It is not that they do not rather faithfully see after the hungry and naked and sick and otherwise needy in their midst. It is not that they do not rather faithfully conserve and handle the finances. It is not that they are not interested in the preaching of the gospel at home and abroad. It is not that they do not lead in providing good workshops and houses of worship. In all of these things there is of course room and a call for improvement as in the case of all human endeavor. But I am fully persuaded that the good elders of the Lord’s churches experience their weakest point and face their gravest danger as stewards of souls. Their great danger is that they will fail here as did the under-shepherds of Israel. Their danger is that they will fail here as did the elders during those centuries in which the church was departing from God to the consummation of Roman and Eastern heirarchy. And if they fail here the Lord’s churches fail utterly, as they failed then.

It is the obligation of each church of the Lord on earth today to see to it, that in it, the ideal and practice of the New Testament doctrine of the stewardship of souls is restored and maintained, that “when the chief Shepherd shall appear,” his under-shepherds in all his churches may “receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 5:4). And for all of God’s stewards of souls, everywhere, may we all pray that: “the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our’ Lord Jesus, make you perfect in every good thing to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever” (Hebrews 13:20-21). In Jesus’ name, Amen.

#### Questions for Study

1. What is a steward ?
2. When do Christians become stewards?
3. With what are stewards of Christ entrusted?
4. What two Christian principles are inseparably connected?
5. What two things are required of Christian stewards ?
6. What is the Old Testament doctrine of steward-ship?
7. What is the New Testament doctrine of stew-ardship ?
8. In what additional sense are Christians owned of God?
9. What is Jesus’ doctrine of stewardship in the parable of the talents?
10. To whom does Christ entrust his redeemed children ?
11. In what additional sense are elders, bishops or pastors stewards?
12. Mention and discuss some qualifications essen-tial to the successful stewardship of souls.
13. Discuss the development of the shepherd idea in the Old Testament.
14. Which Psalm reflects this idea?
15. In what ways did the shepherds of old fail?
16. Was this failure serious in God’s mind?
17. By what promise were the people encouraged?
18. By whom was this promise fulfilled?
19. What is the difference between the shepherd and the hireling?
20. Who is the Shepherd or Bishop of souls now?
21. Who are the under-shepherds or bishops?

22. In what passage of scripture does Jesus teach his shepherds their work and how it is to be performed ?
23. What instruction did he give Peter at this point ?
24. What instruction did Peter give his fellow-el-ders ?
25. Who must give an account of the souls of a church ?
26. What should be the attitude of the members of a church toward their shepherds?
27. In what ways did the bishops of the early churches depart from the New Testament spirit and practice?
28. In what did such departure result?
29. What are present-day conditions in the church-es at this point?
30. What can and should be done about it?

## The Relationship of God's Natural and Spiritual Worlds

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The Relationship of God's Natural and Spiritual Worlds THE RELATIONSHIP OF GOD'S NATURAL

AND SPIRITUAL WORLDS

By Dean H. E. Speck

### I. Introduction

Twenty-three years ago this morning, a little girl was born here in Abilene. In the chapel service at eight o'clock that morning in the college, Sister Sewell christened her "Martha Washington," and Abilene Christian College took a holiday. To this little girl who has grown into radiant womanhood and is helping to build a Christian home, I affectionately dedicate this paper.

I also wish to make clear the conscious lack which I feel in attempting to discuss such a profound subject. The relationship of the natural world to the spiritual world has been a theme of inquiry during all the ages. Philosophers, theologians, and scientists alike have conjectured and theorized in imaginative and dogmatic fashion with respect to their relation. Dare I face all of this with the simple statement that the difference is largely man-made? In order to have a clear notion of the point of view taken in the discussion of the subject: "The Relationship of the Natural World to the Spiritual World," an effort is being made to define the terms. I shall use the word "natural" to refer to that which is derived from or produced by the universe of things, and "spiritual" to include only that which is of or pertaining to God, his Spirit, or his spiritual laws. The term "world" is used to refer to the realm or sphere of activity of nature on the one hand and of God on the other hand.

It is impossible to conceive of the world, natural or spiritual, through any other medium than through language. That which I conceive by my senses or create out of my ideational data is interpreted in terms of my language. My concepts and my language are not your concepts and your language. We create meanings for our language to fit our concepts. Words can be the signs of ideas only to the individual who has the ideas. Man has created a world of science, or, perhaps it is better to say that man has discovered the fact that the world is scientific. He has divided this science into such fields as chemistry, physics, and biology. Since man has done this, does it follow that the fields of science are unrelated or that the field of science is not one? We speak of the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the animal kingdom. Because we do this, does it necessarily follow that these do not in the end constitute a unity? Have they not been separated merely for the sake of convenience? We refer in a familiar fashion to the organic world and of the inorganic world. Do these worlds exist as separate entities, or has the idea been created by man? In like manner, our world has been forced to exist as a natural, world and as a spiritual world.

I do not object to the use of such terms as social environment, educational environment, or economic environment, except in so far as they may hinder my larger concept of environment. I accept the divisions of science as chemistry, physics, and biology, but I have often thought that

they hinder my general understanding of science. I classify things as to whether they belong to the mineral, the vegetable, or the animal kingdoms; but I wonder if I have not lost something by thinking in terms of such "logic-tight-com- partments." There is a unity to individual development as there is unity in the universe. Continuity exists and breaks across all the lines of distinction which man has made.

We classify human beings and their powers along with rocks, trees, and insects. Man is physical, mental, moral, and spiritual. So fixed are our ideas in this re-spect that teachers claim to train the hand, the head, and the heart. As if one develops the use of the hand independent of the head and the heart. As if man could live with his thoughts without their directing his hands or influencing his heart. As if man could be touched by the feelings of others' infirmities without his head knowing it or his hand doing something about it.

## II. God and the Universe

It is easy to play upon words and difficult to make a clear statement. Therefore, man has used these differentiating terms to make himself understood. He classifies and labels materials as a matter of conveni-ence. Although he speaks of the vegetable and the animal kingdoms, he knows that the bioplasm of each is, as far as man can tell, identical. "Oak and palm, worm and man, all start in life together." There is a state in every living tissue when there is no structural peculiarities whatever between them. It is at the point where life begins. It is when "the whole organism consists of a transparent, structureless, semi-fluid—living bioplasm—masses of protoplasm with a nucleus." This protoplasm is not only the structural unit with which all living things start in- life, but it is also the unit by which they are subsequently recreated. It is the clay in the hands of the Potter, and there is only one kind of clay. There is in the clay and in the plans of the Potter a unity in the structure of all living things, whether they are to live on land or sea, whether they are to creep or fly, whether they are to walk or swim, or whether they are to vegetate or think. That unity is produced by the Creator of all living things, and he lives in all things which he creates. "There is no world of nature aside from God, and there is no spiritual world that is not natural." "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth." In this statement, we find the natural world of space and matter, but the spiritual was present, for it moved in space and upon matter. In this beautiful description of the creation of the universe, God created matter, vegetation, and animal life. Each is dependent upon the other. Although we separate them in our multiple forms and classifications, they are so closely related that neither can live without the other. They are created and perpetuated by the same power which performs miracles in the supernatural world. When the Psalmist looked at the universe, it was filled with God. And God was as truly in the natural as in the spiritual. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Shall I go into the natural world of my everyday experience to avoid him? "Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising. . . . Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all of my ways. . . . Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." No, he is in that area of my natural world. Surely, says one, if I fly from this orbit of things into space, I shall be in my natural world without God. "If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the seas (unknown distances); even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." No, God is there and is in control. If my spirit returns unto God who gave it and my body to the dust from whence it came, surely that part of me which is laid to rest will be under the power only of the natural world. But David says, "If I make my bed in the grave, behold thou art there."

God as certainly transforms the body into dust, and is as certainly there in the process as he is in the passing of a soul from the "kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son."

III. God's Universe, the Natural and Spiritual World, Is One of Law and Order In the natural world, everything conforms to pattern. Every organic object is formed after its type. This is just as true of the starry heaven as it is of the flowers beneath our feet. Pythagoras observed that there was a beautiful regularity running through every part of nature. "The planets have a spheroidal shape, and move in orbits which perfectly describe and ellipse." This order becomes so exact that in many cases definite number systems are used. Ten is the typical number of digits for all vertebrate animals. In the mammalia, seven is the number of vertebra in the neck. There is also a beautiful order in nature with respect to time. The primary and secondary planets are periodical in their revolutions. The moon always makes its trips around the earth in definite periods of time. An eclipse can be calculated with mathematical exactness as to time and place. Even the mysterious comets are so periodic that astronomers can definitely calculate the time of their return.

Such order cannot be admitted without acknowledging the existence of a supreme intelligence. Nothing less than intelligent thinking and planning in the realm of cause can account for such clear manifestations in the realm of effect. David felt the power of this supreme intelligence when he said, "I will praise thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." The order which so definitely runs through the entire universe is maintained through the operation of law. If this were not true, we would have a chance universe. Because the sun rose yesterday would be no reason to expect it to do so today. The sun might come up in the west instead of the east, and it might set a few moments after it arose. One might be lighter than air at one time and many times more dense at another. Man as a rational being must be able, however, to depend upon nature for continuity. The principle of continuity is an expression of our trust in nature that she will keep her promises. The laws of the universe must therefore be unchangeable. They are fixed and operate without respect to persons or to things. As long as we live in these natural bodies, it will be necessary for us to obey the laws which have to do with physical life. To disregard them is to invite the penalty of the law; for in the natural world, as well as in the spiritual world, "every transgression and every disobedience receives a just recompense of reward."

It is impossible to live as a physical being in the natural world in violation of or in disregard to the physical laws without suffering the consequences. The same is true of life in the spiritual realm. It is equally true to say that no one has ever been blessed by Jehovah except as a result of his obedience to law. In the natural world, man has to take food. He may have little to do with it afterwards, but the initial act is his. So in the spiritual world, man has his own part to play. He must choose spiritual life; he must nourish this new life; he must starve the old life; he must abide continuously as a living branch in the true vine. The spiritual life will thus flow out to him, assimilating, renewing, conforming to type, until "Christ be formed" in him. The laws are just as dependable, as reliable, as absolute in one realm as in the other. God's universe is one of law, and these laws are immutable.

#### IV. Man Stands Between the Natural and the Spiritual

There is order in the natural world which cannot be the result of chance. Law and order are the rule. The various types in nature were pre-arranged by an intelligent being. In no other way can they be accounted for. In like manner, to understand the patterns in nature, it is necessary to admit that their author fully knew their adaptations in the natural world. The God of nature and the God of the Bible correspond—indeed they are one—and the two great volumes which he has written are in harmony and are the result of the same intelligent mind.

God has used natural things to reflect his glory. There are but few things in the natural world more striking in their appearance than clouds. They are beautiful and sublime. There is something sacred about them, as well as something very mysterious. Since Job asked, “Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?” science has endeavored to ascertain the causes which balance them in the air. They seem to defy the natural law of gravity. God used this physical medium to guide the children of Israel; he used it as a means through which he revealed himself on the Mount of Transfiguration. When our Savior ascended, a cloud received him out of the sight of his disciples, and when he comes in the glory of his Father with all the holy angels, he will come in the clouds of heaven. And God has selected the most beautiful object of nature as an emblem of his promise to man. This emblem, the rainbow, exists in the presence of clouds. No one can study the beauty of a sunset or the starry canopy without saying, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.”

None of these animate or inanimate things enjoy, in this respect, the distinction which is given to man. Everything which preceded him seemed to be a promise of his coming. That he bears a close relationship to the animal below him, no one will question. It is just as evident that he has elements in his nature which relate him to a world above him. He occupies the hiatus between the natural and the spiritual. His very nature seems to be composed of the grossness of the one and the refinement of the other. In his bodily organization, he is an animal, but the definition must not stop there. While man is an animal, he is much more than an animal. The history of creation presents the story of a definite plan, in the first period of which only dead matter existed. Then unconscious life in plants appeared, and in the process of time, intelligent life in the lower animals was introduced. God used pre-existing material in the formation of man's body, and “breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul.” In the material world, the animal feeds upon the vegetable and the vegetable upon the mineral. But what use would the animal, the vegetable, or the mineral have been if God had stopped there? But he did not stop there. The word create is used but three times in the first chapter of Genesis. It is used to refer to the origin of matter, the origin of life, and the origin of the human soul. After matter and life had been created, God said, “Let us make man in our own image. ... In the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” The word used here for create is primary, and indicates that man was not the product of preceding species, but was the offspring of God. He is, therefore, the only being capable of obedience to spiritual law. To bring about obedience, God makes himself known to man through revelation. Man is created in the image of God and with the power to obey. This power is awakened and used as God makes himself known to man. “God who at sundry times in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son.” Man is created in the image of God, in his intellect, in his feelings, and in his power of free will. When God speaks to him, he is therefore able to understand what is said, to feel a

definite oughtness with reference to it, and to make a specific choice in regard to it. It is said that Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, that he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and that he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

It seems evident, therefore, that man becomes the shrine in which the natural and the spiritual worlds may live together. In his body, he personifies the natural world, and in his soul, he may bear the essence of the spiritual. It is altogether unlikely, therefore, that the spiritual man should be separated in all the conditions of growth, development, and life from the physical man. It is difficult indeed to conceive that one set of principles should guide the natural life, and these at a certain period suddenly give way to another set of principles altogether new and unrelated. Man cannot, in the nature of thought and in the nature of language, be separated into two such incoherent parts.

While man is a dual being, he needs constant guidance. The history of the race, as well as that of the individual, shows that "it does not lie in man to direct his own ways." He must be placed under law. There can be no law without a law-giver. The author of man's dual nature is a law-giver. Man's nature not only demands physical law, it demands spiritual law. The nature of the human mind is such that it demands an intelligent and a spiritual guide to secure its complete development. The God of the natural who is the God of the spiritual has given a system of revelation by which man may appropriate and enjoy the blessings of the supernatural. This revelation is a system of laws.

V. Some Analogies in the Natural and Spiritual World In one sense all laws are spiritual, because they are God's laws. These are certain definite laws, however, which are operative in what we call the natural world and in the spiritual world. Their dignity is not as natural laws but as spiritual laws. For the visible is the ladder leading to the invisible; the temporal is but a scaffolding of the eternal.

#### 1. The law of generation.

The existence of natural and spiritual law does not explain the existence of life which is subjected to law. The question of the origin of life has baffled the thinkers of all time. There are two distinct theories with reference to the origin of life: the doctrine of spontaneous generation, and the doctrine that life can come only from pre-existing life. Moses said, "And God made the beasts of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth on the earth after his kind." The idea of generation and regeneration must rest upon the principle of life producing life. "Like begets like." The inorganic world of nature is isolated from the organic world. No change of substance, no modification of environment, nor any other form of energy, nor any evolution can endow a single atom of the mineral world with the attribute of life. This dead world must be taken up by the organic world before it can associate itself with life. The physical laws may explain the inorganic world, and the biological laws the organic, but of the strange border land between the living and the dead, man is silent and impotent. It is as if God had reserved this point for his own appearance.

Spontaneous generation does not take place in the spiritual realm. Such a thing would mean that a man may become gradually better and better until, in the course of time, he emerges into a quality of life known as spiritual life. The doctrine of regeneration represents man as a new creature and not as a mere development of the natural man. It is as easy to expect that stones become bread

as it is to expect man by his own bootstraps to lift himself into this spiritual relationship. He must be born from above and he must first be begotten, "not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God."

Spiritual life is seldom claimed as the product of the possessor. Jesus came that we might have life. Paul said, "I live, nevertheless, it is not I but Christ that liveth in me." "He that hath not the Son hath not life." This great truth distinguishes Christianity from other religions. Christ occupies a unique position. It is not true to say "He that hath Buddha hath life." There are a large number of statements in the revealed word of God which make the claim or similar claims for Jesus. A few of these • statements are: "Know ye not your own selves how that Christ Jesus is in you?" "Your bodies are the members of Christ." "At that day ye shall know that I. am . the Father, and, ye in me, and I in you." "We will come unto him and make our abode with him." "I am the vine and ye are the branches." "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

## 2. There is the law of life.

The law of life as it operates in our natural and spiritual world may be more readily seen if we consider the principles, or opposite tendencies of degeneracy and development. It is possible for a life to develop in one respect and deteriorate in another. The principle of degeneracy in life is easily seen in a garden which has been neglected. Not only will it be choked out by weeds and briars, but the kind of plants which grew in the garden will have changed into something different. Any organism in nature which fails to develop, fails even to keep what it has. It deteriorates and becomes more and more adapted to a degraded form of life. There are certain burrowing animals which spend their lives under ground. Nature seems cruel in the revenge which she takes. She closes their eyes. If an animal persists in living in darkness and refuses to use its optical powers, they will atrophy. "From him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath." When God gave nature the law unto her hands, he seems to have given her two interpretations upon which her sentences were to be based. The first is a positive law and deals with acts of commission. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The other law is negative and deals with acts of omission. "Inasmuch as you did it not unto these." "How shall we^ escape if we neglect so great a salvation."

Degeneracy takes place in spiritual life in. the same way as in natural life. To neglect or fail to develop by the spirit of God the finer Christian graces is to lose them. It is unnecessary to trample underfoot the great salvation, to despise its holy calling, or to reject its pleadings in order to destroy life. In the nature of things, we cannot escape degeneracy if we neglect to develop. If an individual hides his talent, even though it does no harm, God will not allow him to have it. God no more allows man to keep his talents than nature allows the mole to keep his eyes. "Thou wicked and slothful servant . . . take, therefore, the talent from him," was God's pronouncement against him who failed in the holy stewardship of life. This degeneration takes place while we live. In this respect, every day is a judgment day. God and nature must bring about this gradual decay. It is their defense against misuse. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," else he will lose his ears.

Life does not need to be notoriously bad to de-generate. Degeneracy is a natural consequence of neglect, but growth and development are the natural consequences of care and hard work. "If we neglect the ordinary means of keeping a garden, how shall it escape from running to waste and weeds? If we neglect to cultivate the mind, how shall it escape ignorance and feebleness? So if we

neglect the soul, how shall it escape the inevitable relapse into barrenness and death?"

Growth, on the other hand, is natural. Jesus calls our attention to the lilies, how they grow. It is well to consider that they are alive; that they are beautiful; but Jesus wanted us to know that they grew. Seeds are planted that plants may grow. The growth is spontaneous and mysterious. It comes without effort and in a way that we do not know. The flower awakes into the beauty and fullness which only growth can produce. In doing so, "it toils not; neither does it spin." It grows without trying to grow.

Applied in any direction, to plants, to animals, to man, or to his spiritual life, the law holds true. No one would tell a boy to grow. The doctor has no prescription for growth. He can tell how growth may be impaired, but not how the process takes place. The secrets of the "hows" of these processes nature and God seem to keep in the absolute. There is no prescription for spiritual growth. "If these things be in you and abound," must be urged, must be longed for, and must be realized. Earnestness, prayerfulness, faithfulness are essential in life, but growth seems to be a by-product.

Spiritual growth, like all other growth, seems to come spontaneously, but naturally. In our spiritual life, we are urged to "desire the sincere milk of the word that we might grow thereby." The desire is for the word, however, and not for growth. "Culture, for example, the inner richness of an affluent mind and spirit, cannot be secured by methods of direct aggressiveness. Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to the measure of his culture? Culture, indeed, we never get; it comes. It is an aftermath, a by-product, an unconscious consequence of fine conditi" Growth takes place when conditions are conducive to growth. In the plant world, the very things which ordinarily minister to growth and beauty may cause decay. The sun which warms the plant and creates the rich color in its fruit and flower may wither it. The air and rain which nourish it may cause it to rot. These forces may be ministers of life or the unseen hands of death. It is in like manner true in the spiritual world. The Christian graces give the only promise of fruit-bearing. The admonition is to add them to faith, and the law of God in his spiritual realm will prove them to be "a savour of life unto life or of death unto death." It is comforting to hear Paul say, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints and with the household of God; and are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, in whom the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord."

### 3.The law of death.

Life and growth are the things we cling to and death is the reality we most often dread. The natural world is full of it and the Christian system emphasizes it. Its mystery is perhaps as great in one as in the other. From the time that, "If thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," was heard in the long ago, the solemn reality has been linked with human interests. It is a natural consequence in a world of life. It comes as naturally as life.

In the natural world, a living organism assimilates food, discards waste material, matures, reproduces it-self, and dies. In all normal life, these functions are performed. To the extent that any one or all of these powers are absent, dormant, or destroyed, life is lessened or does not exist. In this sense, death may be partial or complete. A man may have a diseased brain and lose consciousness. The sensory nerves cease to acquaint him with the outside world. The world still

exists, but he is dead to it.

Some organisms correspond more fully to environment than others. "Only God can make a tree," but it is much more limited in its power to correspond to environment than a bird. The bird listens to the love call of its mate. It is more alive than the tree. The tree is more dead than the bird. Let us place man in this same environment. A hundred things the bird never sees appeal to him. Man is the only organism which seems to be able to correspond in full to the environment which God provides. The limited way in which we live only indicates how nearly dead we are. You can dwarf a soul as you can dwarf a plant. "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." When there is no functioning of the powers of assimilation, discard, maturation, and reproduction, death is complete. Death is natural, at least it conforms to natural laws. Death is a result which is produced by a lack of adjustment to environment. The organism fails to adjust to its environment, and the result is death. In the spiritual world, life and death are used to express opposites. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins." "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." With respect to spiritual death, it is lack of communion with God. The unspiritual man lives only in the environment of this natural world. To be carnally minded is to correspond only to the environment of the natural man. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." The mind may be cultured, refined, and enlightened, and still be carnal. It must be adjusted to the environment which God creates by his holiness to be spiritual. It must "think on these things." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him,; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

According to the scriptures, when the natural man becomes the spiritual man, he passes from death unto life. He dies to sin but lives unto God. Before the transition from death to life occurs, the difficulty is how to get in correspondence with the new environment. "Except you are born of the water and the spirit, you cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." The process is reversed as soon as the new birth takes place. After the new birth, the problem then corresponds to Paul's statement, "For if ye live after the flesh (although you have been born again) you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the needs of the body, ye shall live."

## VI. Conclusion

However man may classify and arrange the universe into different worlds and ages, God cannot be removed from the smallest particle or the most distant point. He creates one form of life with greater possibilities than other forms. There is a gravitation of the whole universe towards quality. "Some mineral, but not all, becomes vegetable; some vegetable, but not all, becomes animal; some animal, but not all, becomes human; some human, but not all, becomes Divine." Quantity decreases and quality increases as we ascend the ladder of creation. We see form rise above form and kingdom above kingdom.

These silent and patient processes, elaborating, eliminating, and developing with unaltering purpose and unflinching power from the dawn of the creation until time shall be no more, are only stages in the redemptive work of "him who filleth all in all." Since the Magi saw his Star in the East, signs of these redemptive processes have not been wanting in the firmament of truth. And these kingdoms rising tier upon tier in ever increasing sublimity and beauty are only the signs which proclaim that "the kingdom of God is at hand." And so out of the infinite complexity of a vast and

mysterious universe there rises the fore-shadowing of a final unity of that— “One God, one law,  
one element,

And one far-off divine event,

To which the whole creation moves.”

## The Soul of Man: The Bible View Versus the View of Modern Psychologists and Philosophers

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The Soul of Man: The Bible View Versus the View of Modern Psychologists and Philosophers THE SOUL OF MAN:

THE BIBLE VIEW VERSUS THE VIEW OF MODERN

PSYCHOLOGISTS AND PHILOSOPHERS

By G. C. Brewer

President Cox, Brethren and Friends: The subject which has been assigned me for this occasion is a hard one because it covers such a wide field both in theological speculation and scientific and philosophical deductions and conclusions. It is not difficult to set forth what the Bible teaches about the soul of man, but the Bible does not enter into a discussion of this question in the same way the philosophers do. I am tonight given the task of presenting the contrast between the views of psychologists and philosophers and the view that is set forth in the word of God. This is a very interesting study to me, and I hope it will not prove too dry for my hearers. First, then, let us enter into the view:

### I. The Teaching of Psychologists and Philosophers in Reference to the Soul of Man.

This is by no means a new study and while I am to present the view of modern philosophers, it is profitable first of all to get a general survey of what philosophers of former days have thought on this question. The Greeks were the first people of which we have any knowledge who began to speculate about the origin of life. Thales (624-548 B.C.) is the first man who began the study of this great mystery. He was followed by Anaximander in trying to solve the problem of life. These Greeks lived on the shores of the blue Aegean Sea, which teemed with multitudinous life. And their knowledge of nature was marvelous considering the advantages they had for study. Empedocles (495-425 B. C.) formulated what they had learned about nature for the first time. These Greeks held that all life originated in the water and that all land animals, including man, came from the animals that had lived in the ocean. But with the coming of Aristotle (384-322 B. C.) we have (Henry Fairfield Osborn says) the beginning of a new world. Aristotle was the son of Nichomachus, who was the physician of Philip of Macedon, and he had the advantage of his father's instruction in science. Later, his famous pupil, Alexander the Great, placed at his disposal a library that was the wonder of the age. Aristotle's knowledge of nature was encyclopedic but he differed from those Greeks that preceded him in that he attributed life to a Creator. He was not an atheist nor a materialist as modern evolutionists are. He said that all nature manifested design and that there was wisdom displayed in the order and system that are before us and that life itself could not have been produced from dead matter. He wrote a book called "Peri Psyches," which means "Concerning the Soul." He regarded the mind as superior to matter and believed that man possesses a soul that is independent of the physical organism. His treatment of this question

dominated the whole philosophy of men for many centuries. The scholastic philosophers of the thirteenth century treated the subject in the same way that Aristotle did and used the Latin words "de anima" to designate this division of their study. The Greek word "psychology" was then applied first by Melanchthon in the sixteenth century to this branch of study. This was an effort to get one word that would include the whole field covered by the speculations in reference to the soul or mind. The Greek word "psyche" means life or soul and "psychology" originally meant the study of the soul. It used to be called also "mental philosophy." Toward the close of the seventeenth century, a change began to take place in this branch of science that has continued until the present time and the end is not yet. Under Descartes, psychology was changed from the science of the soul to the science of the mind, and men began to study mind, thought and thinking as something produced by the physical organism and not as an entity or a part of man that might live independent of the organism. Then under the influence of Hume and Kant, the noumenal mind disappeared and left us phenomenal consciousness. Then in more recent times with the advent of Watson, consciousness itself was discarded and psychology became the science of behavior. We, therefore, now have behaviorism. So we see that psychology first lost its soul, then lost its mind, then lost consciousness, and now we have behaviorism. This gradual degeneration of psychology from animism to behaviorism is one of the greatest ironies in the history of human thought. Disintegration set in when Descartes substituted his psycho physical dualism of mind and matter for Aristotle's hylomorphic dualism of Soul and body. This continued to the point that men believed thinking to be a function of a physical organ. The brain produces thought in some way for which they could not account but which they accepted as true. Cabanis (pronounced Kah-bah-nee) asserted that "the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile." This, however, was entirely too materialistic for his age and he later receded from this view or altered the statement to some degree. But in our modern age, we are right back to this same idea even if our psychologists would not accept this statement. Our psychologists—or rather our behaviorists—of today do not believe that man has any soul that could live independent of his body. They do not believe that there is any self or rational ego that may be considered apart from the physical organism. Man is, according to their view, a product of heredity, and what he does and says or thinks may be all traced to the function of his glands. Man is not the same personality all the time, according to their philosophy. He is one man at one age and another man at another age. He is one being under one set of circumstances and another being under a different set of circumstances, and he is not responsible for what he does under any circumstances. He is a mere automaton. Thus we hear of various complexes. One man is explained as possessing an inferiority complex; another man has sadistic impulses; another has a fixation; and little Johnnie possesses a pyromania and is not responsible therefore for setting fire to things. This is a brief statement of the conclusions of present day psychologists, and yet it is amusing to know that materialistic philosophers used to tell us that these glands that now determine our character, were vestigial; that is, these were the remains of organs that once functioned in our body but are now just useless vestiges. They claimed that all the ductless glands were vestigial. But these are the very glands now that determine our health, our growth, and our character. These glands are called endocrinal glands and they secrete a material called hormones that go into our blood stream and determine our conduct. This we know to be true for scientists demonstrate this in their experiments. The pituitary gland is one of the most important of all and this gland is very small but it has a division or mark that separates it into three sections and the different sections of the gland secrete a different

substance. It is found that one section secretes what they call prolactin. This is the mother hormone and an injection of this secretion into a hen will send her around clucking and endeavoring to mother chicks; or it produces milk even in the virgin rat. These marvelous discoveries in reference to the body and the function of the different organs in the body has led man to identify himself with the beasts.

## II. Man a Beast?

Some men are today not only trying to trace the origin of man through the brute creation and concluding that man is only an improved ape, but some of them are placing man on the level with the beasts in the present time. In fact, they are trying to show that there hasn't been such a great improvement after all. Such writers as James Harvey Robinson, author of "Mind in the Making" and other articles on this subject, have tried to show that man is simply a beast and that his mind as well as his body has developed through a long series of transmutations. Robinson speaks of this as a discovery and therefore parades it before the unthinking students of our day as something that is entirely new. It is one of the strongest manifestations, of the bias of many men who claim to be scientists that they praise such writers as James Harvey Robinson and H. G. Wells. Neither of these men is a scientist at all; they are simply sycophants that take the wildest and most untenable conclusions and speculations of philosophers and preach them as scientific facts, and these preachments are lauded to the sky by the scientists. That is the way that these philosophical conclusions of the scientists become current. They reach the mind of the average man through these sycophants. But to say that the fact that man has much in common with the beasts is a discovery is laughable. Men have always known that they had many things in common with the lower animals. There are not only certain undeniable homologies in his structure but also certain likenesses in his experience. Solomon knew this and wrote of it thousands of years before J. H. Robinson was born—witness these verses from Ecclesiastes 3:19-22 : "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; and man hath no preeminence above the beasts: for all is vanity. All go unto one place: all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man, whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward to the earth? Wherefore I saw that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him back to see what shall be after him?" But instead of explaining the mystery of life by trying to study the body in all of its functions and reduce man to the level of the brute, the scientists have only complicated the matter and run into a blind alley. They are not even able to explain the development of the body to say nothing of the origin of life and of the existence of the soul. Let us consider some of the things that these scientists have found out about the body. Biology and psychology have always been closely associated and, as we have seen, men have always tried to find a physical basis for the mind. We may, therefore, turn our attention briefly to a study of biology.

## III. The Beginning of the Life of an Individual and the Development of His Body.

Each one of us began our existence as a single cell and from this minute particle of matter, these bodies, that are "wonderfully and fearfully made" developed. This process of development is, within itself, a marvel if not a miracle; and we shall see that the most learned scientists today living admit that there are some things even in this process that can not be explained on the mechanistic

basis. We were told this morning that life begins as a single cell and that one cell cannot be distinguished from another; so that, looking at this cell, we can not tell whether the being that is to be developed therefrom is going to walk or fly, crawl or swim. This is true if we think of it only from a superficial observation. We might even go further and say you could not tell whether the finished product is to be animal or vegetable; but we must remind you again that this would be a very superficial observation. Upon an analysis of the cell, we can determine to what species it belongs. The cell itself now constitutes a universe, and some scientists give their entire lives to the study of only one division of a cell. The cell is composed of such things as nucleus, cytoplasm, chromosomes, centrosomes, etc. The number of chromosomes in the cell will differ according to the species to which it belongs; and, too, the scientists cannot tell whether it's a human cell or a cell that belongs to some other species by the number of chromosomes. Thus we see that the species differ all the way down as far as the microscope can take us. The human cell contains 48 chromosomes and a new individual begins as a single cell and yet here is a marvel: This one cell is really two cells. It is formed by the union of the ovum, the female cell, and the spermatozoon, or the male cell. Each of these cells contains 48 chromosomes and yet in the final ripening process before the two are united, each one is reduced by some unknown process to half the number of chromosomes so that when the two are united, there is after all, only one cell of 48 chromosomes. The cells of the different species cannot be united because they do not contain the right number of chromosomes—or the proper constituents. This is why we cannot cross the species. The male spermatozoon carries in its head the right solution to dissolve and penetrate the wall of the female ovum so that the two may be united. The sperm of any species other than the human could not even penetrate the human ovum. But the mystery has not yet been fully presented. Look now at this single cell that has been formed by a union of male and female element. It begins to divide and thus to multiply. It divides geometrically: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, until the completed human body contains twenty-six trillion cells. But what is more marvelous, it not only divides and multiplies, but it differentiates; that is, from this one cell come many different kinds of cells; there are the blood cells, the nerve cells, the muscle cells, the brain cells, and on and on until the body is completed. But here again we find another old theory of the evolutionists completely annihilated. The old idea was that acquired characters could be transmitted but this was completely ruined when Weismann (1834-1914) put forth what was known, or what is sometimes called, the germ plasm theory. This is the idea that all we inherit was in the germ of life that came from our parents and from their parents and on back no one knows how far. The study of the cell has proved Weismann's doctrine to be correct. Thus in the very beginning of the new individual, somewhere about the time the cell begins to divide, certain cells are set apart which are known as germ cells. The body that is now forming, has two distinct sets of cells: the germ cells and the soma cells. These somatic cells are the ones that continue to divide and differentiate to produce the body. The germ cells lie dormant through all this period of development before birth and even through all the childhood years after birth. They have no function until the child reaches puberty; then these cells begin to function. They are the reproductive cells and they carry the qualities that we inherit. What you are doesn't determine what your child will be but the same things that made you what you are will continue to operate and will make your offspring what they are.

Now to show that the scientists themselves recognize something in this marvelous process something that cannot be taken hold of and explained by physical research, we wish to give you the statements of a few scientists. Winterton C. Curtis in "Science and Human Affairs" (Harcourt,

Brace & Co., 1922), in discussing the cell and this development about which we have been talking, speaks of: "The living substance was revealed as a continuous, never-dying stuff, which could, be traced back through many cell divisions to egg and spermatozoon, and thence to preceding generations. These facts led to the inference that the protoplasm had persisted through an infinitude of cell divisions since its first cell organization in the remote past. Thus it consists of the mortal body-cells, which constitute the adult bodies existing at any given moment, and of the potentially immortal ova and spermatozoa. The origin and nature of these germ-cells, their union in fertilization, and the processes of cell division and differentiation by which the adult organism arises from the single cell formed by their union, are all parts of the cell-theory as developed during the last fifty years. Cellular phenomena will probably remain an outstanding feature of the developmental process for all time." This man is an atheist and in his book he takes pains to try to destroy all faith in supernaturalism and yet here we have him using the astounding terms concerning the material that goes to make up the body and the life, "never dying stuff" and "the potentially immortal ova and spermatozoa." The Yale University press has put out a book written by the professors of the University called "The Evolution of Man." The whole purpose of this book is to prove that man is of brute origin or to establish the mechanistic or materialistic philosophy of life, and yet Dr. Harry Burr Ferris who wrote the chapter on Embryology makes this very fine statement on page 42: "As a result of fertilization the egg cell has the power of almost indefinite multiplication and the still more marvelous power of differentiation so that its descendants are not all alike, but some form nerve cells, others gland cells, still others muscle cells, et cetera. This differentiation in structure is accompanied also by a corresponding functional differentiation.

It may be possible to explain many of the processes of life on the mechanistic, or physico-chemical basis, but it is difficult, at present, to explain reproduction on this theory" (Emphasis mine). Here again we find this scientist compelled to admit that this process of reproduction cannot be explained on the mechanistic basis. The following statements from E. B. Wilson are also appropriate on this point. In discussing such words as soul, vital principle and directing force which some writers use in describing the process of body development, Wilson says: "They are words that have been written into certain spaces that are otherwise blank in our record of Knowledge, and as far as I can see no more than this" ("Biology," page 23, 1908). And yet he could not get away from the idea conveyed by these words. He had to fill in that blank space with them. In telling of the development of the body from a single cell he speaks of "a formative power pervading the growing mass as a whole" ("The Cell," 2nd Ed., page 59). And in his lecture on "The Physical Basis of Life," he speaks of "the integrating and unifying principle in the vital processes" (Science, March 9, 1923, page 284). If this does not show that he sees some superorganic power directing in this marvelous development of the body, the following question does show it. He asks, "Shall we join hands with the neo-vitalists in referring the unifying and regulatory principle to the operation of an unknown power, a directive force, an archaean, an entelechy or a soul?" (Science, March 9, 1923, page 285). This proves that the scientists themselves find in their study of the physical man and of his development an unseen, unknown principle or power that they can not explain. Yet they will not acknowledge the Creator. This is illustrated by the following quotation. This quotation is from Dr. Gustave Geley, director of the "Institute Metapsychique International." In his book "From the Unconscious to the Conscious," pages 30-31, he says: "By its whole biology the insect presents the symbol of what evolution really is, and as we shall see later, it proves that the essential cause of evolution should be sought neither in the influence of the environment, nor in

the reactions of organic matter to that environment; but in a dynamism independent of that organic matter directing it and superior to it.

“It shows us evolution taking place primarily by an internal impulse entirely distinct from surrounding influences, by a primordial effort, unerring but still mysterious and absolutely inexplicable by classical naturalism.

“Not only so: this incomparable testimony, while it is the negation of contemporaneous naturalistic theories, contradicts also the antiquated concept of Providential creation.

“From the Psychological point of view, the leading characteristic of the insect is that it possesses pure instinct almost without a trace of intelligence. Further, • we And that this pure instinct, which has remained such for ages, is marked by a refined and cruel ferocity without counterpart in the rest of the animal world, but nevertheless perfectly innocent.

“This ferocity then, if there were a responsible Cre-ator, would be the pure, the immaculate work of that Creator, whose creation would then appear to be his faithful reflexion.” This author shows that there is some directing principle which he calls dynamism and which he says can’t be explained and knocks out. the idea of evolu-tion ; yet he will not acknowledge the Creator and puts up the weak statement that this developing mass or this embryo manifests a ferocity which would be a re-flection on a Creator! I present this as evidence of the weakness of men when they undertake to overthrow truth which they themselves have discovered.

#### IV. Man’s Intellect Proves Him To Be Superior to the Beasts.

We have seen that even in the formation of the body there is evidence of a directing power that is above the natural laws. This proves to the Christian thinkers that there is a Creator who not only brought man into existence in the beginning but who governs now in the perpetuation of the species and even has an unseen power operating in the reproduction process. It might be said, however, that this mystery is as much observable in the formation of the body of beasts and the insects as in the human embryo. This we admit because upon this we rely to prove the existence of the Creator, and not to show the difference between man and brute. This difference is seen in the function of man’s mind which not only lifts him above the brutes but gives him control over them. Which mind is not produced by matter but which uses and controls matter and the forces that work through it. Alfred Russell Wallace, who was an ardent evolutionist, recognized man as far superior to the beasts. He said: “He stands apart, as not only the head and culminating point of the grand series of organic nature, but as in some degree a new and distinct order of being.” Thomas Henry Huxley, another evolutionist, recognized this difference and said the distance between man and the highest brute is im-measurable, “practically infinite.” But the materialistic philosophers of our present day. don't want to recognize this great difference between man and brute. They dwell upon the homologies and give no attention to the differences. Of course, man is akin to all the rest of the animal kingdom and shares with them some things that are common in this life. His metabolic life he shares with the plants; his sentient life he shares with the beasts; but rational thinking and willing are uniquely human. No beast possesses this power. Also, sense perceptions and sensual emotions are also powers that belong to the beasts and many men emphasize this side of the human being to prove that he is a brother to the beasts and give no thought to that which proves man to be far above even the highest brute. What beast ever wrote a

book, or painted a picture, or composed music? What beast gives any thought to the world around him and endeavors to understand the phenomena of nature? What beast admires the glory of the heavens and studies the wonder of the starry sky? A dog may bay the moon but he would never be able to understand that the moon is a satellite of the earth and that she only reflects a light that is borrowed from the sun. The wild beasts of the great northern region, as they go trotting over the frozen surface of the earth, may stop for a moment in the glow of the northern lights and look at it with fixed gaze but then they drop their heads and trot on with no more thought of what this wonder is. Man observed these lights, wondered about them, gave them the name of *Aurora Borealis*, and he can explain now the wonder of these lights of the north. Man tries to understand the secrets of the earth on which he lives. He invented a microscope that enables him to study things that are too small to be seen with his natural eye. He invented the telescope and studies the heavens, learns to calculate the movements of the planets, to weigh the sun and to measure the distance to the farthest star. Through his mathematics he can tell of the approach of a celestial wanderer, give the speed that it is traveling, and name the hour when it will come into view on the earth. Not only does man thus study the problems of life and enter into the secrets of the solar system, he even studies his own heart, analyzes his emotions and endeavors to understand this "divinity that stirs within him." The achievements of man put him as far above the brute creation as the heavens are higher than the earth.

#### V. The Bible View Concerning the Soul of Man.

We come now to present what the Bible teaches in reference to man's soul. This is so simple and easy that it will be like child's play compared to the philosophical speculations with which we have been dealing. The Bible simply states certain things as true and does not enter into a study of how these things can be true. This is a fortunate arrangement for all of us, for the greatest intellects that exist have never been able to comprehend some of the things that these mighty philosophers have found out in their study. If the Bible, therefore, had attempted to explain to us all the things that are involved in man's existence and in the relation of mind and matter, of soul and body, the great majority of the human race would have been unable to comprehend what the divine mind had thus discussed. The Bible teaches us that God created man in his own image and likeness. It tells us that after man had been formed from the dust of the ground, God breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives (the Hebrew is plural, and we have seen that man possesses different lives some of which he shares with the beasts), and man became a living soul. Male and female created he them and then he gave to this pair the power of procreation. We have been studying something about the marvels and the mysteries of this procreation process. We found that everything brings forth after its kind just as the Book of God states it in the beginning and that the species cannot be crossed, and all we learned about the matter is something of why they cannot be crossed, which was only a confirmation of the statement of the Book of God. The Bible sets forth the fact that man is a dual being that he is composed of an inner man and an outer man. This inner man we call soul and the outer man, body. The Bible, however, uses the term "spirit" to designate the inner man. It uses the word soul a number of different ways, but rarely does it designate the inner or immortal part of man. When it does, it is used Hebraistically. In order that the Bible student may have a working knowledge of the uses of these terms, we here give you the following discussion of the number of times they are used and the way they are used. This is my own work but it is taken from something I wrote many years ago. I'm reading from my discussion

with Dr. Spence:

“In the Hebrew the word is *Nepesh*, and in Greek *Psyche*, and in English *soul*. This word occurs many times in the Bible and has a variety of meanings. Souls are ascribed to both animals and men. Souls are said to die and perish, etc. The word *soul* is very often used to designate a person, as, ‘Fear came upon every soul’; ‘Eight souls were saved by water’; ‘There were added three thousand souls’; ‘Three score and fifteen souls’; and when God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life and ‘man became a living soul,’ i. e., a living creature or living person. The spiritual or immortal part of man is not here designated. The word *psyche* or *soul* is never applied to God or angels and rarely to the human spirit. It occurs in the Greek New Testament one hundred and five times and has various meanings. In a few instances it is used as equivalent to the word *spirit* but is never translated *spirit*. *Spirit* is the word that designates the immortal element, the conscious Ego, the Self, the part of man that reasons, thinks, and dictates the actions of the body. In the Hebrew the word is *ruacii*, and in the Greek *pneuma*, and in English *Spirit*. The word of God divides between the soul and spirit and distinguishes them one from another (Hebrews 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:28). Of the creation of this spirit Moses gives no account except that man was made in the image of God. The Spirit is something higher than the soul. In the spirit is the unity of our being, our true Ego. The soul is but an element in its service. At death the soul passes away, the spirit ripens to a new existence’ (Lotze). The word *spirit* in some translations is a few times substituted for *soul*, but these terms are never interchanged in the original versions. The soul is said to die, but it is never said that the spirit dies. The dead are spoken of as spirits (Luke 28:37; Acts 23:8; Heb. 12:23; 1 Peter 3:19), but the living as souls. The most important difference in their uses is that the soul is applied to the individual, but the spirit is never so used. Mortality, or death, or destruction is never affirmed of a spirit—any spirit, good or bad. The word *pneuma* occurs three hundred and ninety-three times in the New Testament and *Psyche* one hundred and five times, yet *pneuma* is never translated *soul* and *Psyche* is never translated *spirit*. Let us not then, confound these terms and when we read that the soul dies imagine that we have found proof of the mortality of the spirit. ‘Spirit’ is never said to die, to be destroyed or to cease to exist. Of the whole number of occurrences of *pneuma* in the New Testament, it is applied to the Spirit of God two hundred and eighty-eight times; to evil spirits thirty times; to the human spirit forty times; and, figuratively to indicate disposition seventeen times. It is also shown from the analysis of the occurrences of this word *spirit* that when any one in dying gives up or commends himself to the Lord, or to the Father, in such words as ‘he gave up the ghost,’ or ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,’ or ‘Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit,’ the word *Psyche* or *soul* is never used. This shows clearly that the terms are different and that the soul is merely the animal life while the spirit is the vital principle, the rational being that outlasts death.” That the soul may depart from the body and live on independent of the body is taught in many passages of Scripture. Since we have quoted Ecclesiastes we may now say that the writer of that book before he laid his pen down indicated that man is more than mortal—that all of him did not come from the dust and that, when the body decays, the spirit wings its way back to its Maker. It says: “And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it” (chap. 12:7). In Genesis 35:18, we have the story of the birth of Benjamin and the death of Rachel; the death there is simply represented as a separation of the spirit and the body. It says: “As her spirit was departing (for she died) she called his name Benoni, but his father called him Benjamin. Then again in 1 Kings 17:20-22, we have the story of the widow’s son that had died and his restoration to life by the prophet. The prophet

prayed God to let this child's soul come back into his body and we are told that the soul re-entered the body and the boy lived again. Here we see that the departure of the soul means death and that when the soul is re-united with the body, life is restored. In Luke 20:37-38, our Lord answered the Sadducees in reference to the resurrection of the dead. He showed them that God had called himself the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. He did this when he spoke to Moses out of the burning bush and yet Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had been gone from the earth and, therefore, from our viewpoint dead, for three hundred years. God was still their God; and since God is not the God of the dead but of the living, this shows that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are not dead but living; and our Lord says "all live unto God." Then, when men die and their bodies return to dust, there is some part of them that is not dead but continues to live. This is the soul or the spirit and the fact that this soul or spirit lives apart from the body proves that there will be a resurrection from the dead. This implies that the per-sonality is not complete without the body and that therefore there will have to be a resurrection in order that the complete being may live again. In Hebrews 12:9, Paul says, "We have all had fathers of our flesh and they chastized us at will and we gave them honor. How much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?" Here the apostle divides man into flesh and spirit and declares that the flesh came from one father and the spirit came from another. Our flesh or our bodies came to us from our physical parents through a flesh birth but our spirit came from God. Here we see that there could be no explanation of this passage unless we understand man to possess something that didn't come to him through physical laws or from flesh birth. It came from God. Zechariah 12:1 tells us that God forms the spirit in man. When this spirit enters man is a problem which theologians speculate upon. Some have said that man receives his soul from his flesh parents just as he receives his body from them, and this was the seminal theory. A long time ago this was repudiated by most theologians and yet we saw in the discussion of embryology or the forming of the body, that there is an element there that the scientists speak of as immortal. So the idea of man's immortal part coming from his parents is not so unscientific and absurd after all. But we do not care to speculate on this problem; it's enough for us to know that God forms the spirit in man, which is equivalent to saying that God creates his soul when the body is created. Probably it enters into this body at the very union of the two cells, that results in a new life. We are, each one of us then, a special creation; we are the off-spring of God and we shall go back to him when our life in this material existence ceases to be. Since we are the offspring of God, we can no more be destroyed than God himself can be destroyed. The fact that God used our fathers and our mothers to produce us does not prove that we are not his workmanship. We have seen that his power and wisdom are manifested even in the formation of the body and that men cannot explain the process without acknowledging a. mysterious presence. Then we must not refuse to believe in the power that combined with that developing body an immortal soul. It is an enkindling thought that we shall live forever; that when we began to have a being, right , then there was a creature formed that will never end. He may live a brief three score and ten years on this earth and that body that came through a biological process may wear out and decay, but that spirit that came from God will continue to live in his presence. We will serve God through the endless years of eternity. What ministrations he may have for us on other stars, we do not know, but if we serve him well in this existence, we shall be prepared for any promotion that he may have for us and we will be ready to perform our part in the next act of the divine drama. Therefore let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

## The Steward's Accountability to God

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### The Steward's Accountability to God THE STEWARD'S ACCOUNTABILITY TO GOD

Bv Yater Tant

Tonight when you leave this auditorium to return to your homes for a comfortable bed and a night of rest, more than 200,000,000 of your fellow-men will lie down to sleep with hunger gnawing at their vitals. And ere the morning breaks many thousands of them will have, because of their sufferings, entered into a slumber from which the rising sun will not awaken them. One and a half times the population of our nat'on—they stand today by a terrible indictment of what we boastingly call our modern "civilization": children with rickety limbs and sunken eyes, mothers with unspeakable despair in their hearts, fathers who are either desperate or resigned to death. And while these 200,000,000 are hungry and naked and destitute, there are another 20,000 who are daily being trained in ways and methods of increasing the sum total of human suffering. We refer to the standing armies of the earth, to these millions of men who are trained as butchers of humanity, and who are themselves sent forth to be slaughtered like cattle. From the four corners of the earth there ascends day and night one deafening crescendo of anguish, torn from the Jips of those whose lives are crushed by hunger, pain, brutality and human injustice. It is Rachel weeping for her children, and with her children she will not be comforted.

Surely no one can know all the factors involved, nor all the reasons for this continual blight of suffering on the earth. But one thing should be obvious to us all. And that is that this present chaotic condition of world unrest, economic injustice, personal and political immorality is due, in large part, at least, to the prevailing philosophy of our times—a philosophy that in its essence is a blatant and raucous denial of the whole concept of stewardship. Mankind refuses to acknowledge that he is accountable to anything or anybody for what he thinks or says or does. The whole moral tone of our modern generation is that "it's every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost." Instead of looking upon life as a sacred entrustment, for which an account must ultimately be given, the modern man is inclined to consider himself lord of life. He glooies in his own power of soul and mind and body, and defies the whole universe to call him to account for anything. Nowhere is the philosophy of modernism more clearly expressed than in the pagan and blas-phemous cry of "Invietus":

"Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.  
In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.

Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.  
Beyond this place of wrath and tears,  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds and shall find me unafraid.  
It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishment the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:

I am the captain of my soul.” In contrast with this boasting challenge, the Christian considers himself neither the master of his fate, nor the captain of his soul. His fate he has placed in the hands of another master; his soul into the keeping of another captain. His life is lived daily in recognition of the claims of other men and the call of another life. In a most vital sense the philosophy of Christianity is the very antithesis of this boasting cry. For Christianity regards all life as a stewardship. The Christian realizes his obligation to his fellowmen, to himself, and supremely to God. Man cannot live unto himself, nor die unto himself. He is accountable to his fellow- men. Even if we were avowed atheists we could not evade or escape that principle. As human beings we live in a society which was not of our creation; we partake of benefits which were not of our making; we enjoy privileges which are possible only because we belong to the group. This places man under an inescapable responsibility and duty to his fellows. It was the apostle Paul who said, Romans 1:14, “I am debtor both to Greeks and Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are at Rome.” He assumes his obligation to the race in this passage. He has something which he owes to humanity. He does not speak of any obligation to Christ, but rather “I owe it to you, my fellow-mortals.” This acceptance of our responsibility to human beings has ever been recognized by the finest minds of earth. When the immortal Lincoln stood that bleak November day on the tragic battlefield of Gettysburg and in his short speech of but two and one-half minutes duration gave utterance to one of the greatest of human discourses, it is not without significance that the climax of that talk comes in the recognition of man’s responsibility to his fellow man. He says, “It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work, that they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.” It was impossible for his auditors to escape their feeling of responsibility. They had a sacred trust committed unto them. The blood of their fellow men demanded an effort on their part worthy of that sacrifice. And may I lay it upon your hearts this morning that the tears and sweat and blood of our predecessors in the gospel of Christ place us today under a terrific obligation to them. We are stewards of a glorious heritage in Christ. From righteous Stephen, whose blood was poured out at the hands of an angry mob, on down through

the long list of Christian martyrs, Polycarp, Huss, Savonarola, even to our own day the sacrifices of untold thousands places us under an obligation to them. By their blood the flame of faith was kept alive. Campbell and Stone, Lipscomb, McGary, and McGarvey, and a host of others have placed us in their debt. And we cannot break faith with those who gave their lives to the advancing of the kingdom of God.

Consider, too, that we are not only stewards of the benefits and privileges coming to us through our fellowmen, but in a very real sense each of us is accountable to his own highest self. If we cannot break faith with those who died, no less can we break faith with those who live, and with ourselves. Whatever else life may give or may deny, one thing is absolutely indispensable—that a man should not break faith with himself, that he will keep his honor bright in his own eyes; that whatever else may fail, he will not inwardly be a failure. Any of us may fail, yea all of us will fail; time and again we will fail in the things we attempt to do. It has been true of the greatest souls the earth has known. Socrates was executed by the state; Jesus was nailed to the cross; Paul was beheaded outside the gates of Rome, Livingstone died in the heart of Africa. All of these men knew the bitterest depths of failure; but not one of them was a failure in his own life. They had a certain central integrity of conscience which raised them above their failures, and we cannot know of them without realizing that they lived on high terms with themselves. They kept their white plumes; they kept their honor bright in their own eyes; they came into port with all flags flying.

Oh, how sadly the church today needs that sort of idealism! How desperately we need men who will look upon their honor, their conscience, their convictions, as a sacred trust; men who will die before betraying that trust. How desperately the time calls for men who will be true to their own highest impulses and noblest ideals; men who will not stoop to petty politics and unworthy methods to carry their point; men who will look upon their lives as a stewardship too sacred, to be sullied by participation in anything low or base or ignoble. Cyrano de Bergerac wore a white plume, which to him was the symbol of his honor, of the right. Men laughed at his grotesque appearance, but if caught laughing, they felt his sword. He loved his cousin, but she loved another who was merely beautiful and had no mind. Cyrano furnished the other with words of love to speak and to write, and in silence loved her to the end. Then sinking under the blow of an assassin, with his last breath he gasped, "But I have kept my white plume." There are men like that in every age, not merely in the age of Picheieu. In this time of grave and disturbing influences in the church of the Lord, when many are fearful over a spirit of compromise and softness which seems to be evident throughout the land, there can be no thought quite so heartening as to know that there are men in the church who will not yield to pressure; there are men who value their own integrity higher than they value the favor of their fellows; there are men who will suffer every hardship and every adversity before they will give an inch to that which they believe to be wrong, They have convictions which are not subject to the veering tides of popular favor, and live or die, they will follow the right as God gives them to see the right. They have an inner self which is true and noble and they are determined not to break faith with themselves. That is the spirit which guarantees the future for us; that is the spirit which all of us must seek to cultivate. If we cannot live at peace with others, if we cannot have the approval of others, we must have our own self-respect and be at peace with our own hearts:

"I have to live with myself, and so

I want to be fit for myself to know;  
Always to look myself straight in the eye.  
I don't want to stand with the setting sun  
And hate myself for the things I've done.  
I want to go out with my head erect;  
I want to deserve all men's respect;  
But here in the struggle for fame and self  
I want to be able to like myself.  
I don't want to look at myself and know  
That I'm bluster and bluff and empty show.  
I never can fool myself, and so whatever happens I want to be  
Self-respecting and conscience free."

Man owes an obligation and a responsibility to the race because he partakes of benefits through the race; he owes it to himself to be true to the highest that is in him because only in this way can he really be at peace with himself and with others. But in all we've been saying there is neither point nor merit unless man also recognizes above his obligation to his fellow men or himself his obligation to God. It is his accountability as a steward toward God that gives meaning and significance to his stewardship toward the race and toward himself. Eliminate God from the picture and all other obligations are without substance or foundation. Destroy man's sense of obligation to God, and you have destroyed the very basis of all sense of obligation. Historically, the race has never been able to devise a philosophy or a system of morals or ethics which would work without the motivating power of a belief in divinity. It is this inner conviction of our accountability to God that makes of man a moral being; it is this deeper and more vital relationship that makes possible the carrying out of our other obligations.

For one thing man is accountable unto God because his life has been created, and is sustained, by God. In Romans 9, Paul argues quite forcefully the absolute sovereignty of God in this respect. "Hath not the potter a right over the clay?" he asks. Since we are God's creation, and have been formed from the dust of the earth only by his express will and desire, our lives are not our own; they belong to him. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein," said David in the 24th Psalm. Thus by the highest and most universally recognized of all rights, that of ownership by creation, the human race is responsible to God. In view of this fact, how absurdly stupid is the attitude of the rich fool of Luke 12. When his fields through the workings of God brought forth an abundant harvest, he took all the credit to himself, thinking only of the advantage to his own selfish desires. "What shall I do?" said he. "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which

thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?" The fatal mistake of this man was in thinking only of himself; he laid up treasure "for himself," refusing to acknowledge his responsibility either toward his fellow- man or toward God. He had denied any obligation to his Creator; he had betrayed his stewardship. In this second place, this responsibility toward God arises not only from God's having created us, but also from his having made known his will for us. If he had made no revelation of his will, if he had left man to grope- his way up to moral and religious truth, as he has to scientific and political truth, then man might indeed be excusable for blunders and mistakes and perversions of the truth. But in the realm of the soul and spirit God has not left himself without witness. All nature declares the existence of a supreme being. David said in the 19th Psalm, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." And Paul tells us that "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." But the heavens and the world of nature could never reveal to us the will of God. They could, and do, declare God; but it takes the Bible to reveal God. We know that God is from nature; we know what God is from the Bible. And it is here that he makes known his will and the terms of our stewardship.

Ignorance of the law has never been regarded by mankind as a justifiable excuse for violation of that law. But this holds true only where knowledge of the law is possible. If it were utterly impossible for a man to know the law, then it would be absurd to hold him morally accountable for its violation. If God had not revealed himself to man, or if he had revealed his will in such a way that man could not understand it, or if he had even couched his revelation in mysteries that could only be solved by the learned and erudite, then we might plead some justification for man's failure to obey God. But obviously such has not been the case. In Europe during the middle ages it was quite common to bring animals into court and make them stand trial. In the current issue of Reader's Digest there is quite a long list of such trials—in the Norman town of Falaise in 1386 a pig was tried for the murder of an infant. The pig was convicted, and the court gravely ordered that the luckless porker should be beheaded. He was dressed in human clothes, whipped and maimed before being brought to the block and having his cranial extremity separated from the rest of his carcass. A horse was executed in Dion for homicide in 1693, and there was a lengthy and complicated trial of a bear which raided certain Schwarzwald villages in 1499. The lawyer for the defense came near winning an acquittal for the bear when he insisted that Mr. Bruin be tried by a jury of his peers!

This, of course, strikes us as the height of absurdity. But it is no more absurd than would be a God who would hold men accountable without making it possible for them to know his will. In a moral universe such a thing is absolutely inconceivable. Man is either not accountable to God, or else God has revealed his will to man. But the universal testimony of the race is that man is accountable—even the atheist, however much he may hate the idea, deep in his heart has an inescapable sense of right and duty. He knows that nothing on earth can destroy that inner conviction, nothing can remove it from his intelligence. That God has revealed his will to man must be conceded by every rational man who believes in the existence of God; that the Bible is the highest and most complete form of that revelation is a fact equally open to demonstration, but is not within the realm of our present discussion. It needs hardly more than passing comment. By every worthy canon or judging of the merit of a book, the Bible must be accorded first place in all the literature of the earth. For aim, content, clearness of purpose, and intelligibility of language, it is

unsurpassed. There is no work of man in existence which could deal with such profound and tremendous themes in such simple and intelligible language. Truly, God has spoken in terms that even the lowliest can comprehend. In making known his will God has not only told what he wants done, but has shown exactly how it is to be accomplished. Back to the original meaning of stewardship, the master has not only given over his land and his goods to the steward, but has told the steward exactly how he wants the land cultivated, and how he wants the goods cared for. In the other lectures of this series the method and extent of this divine entrustment have been clearly outlined. Man's life, his property, his time, his strength belong to God. And in all things, God's will having been made clear, he must consider himself accountable to God. But there is one other thing necessary in this tri- ology of forces which make us accountable. And that is the motive for obedience which is brought to bear. God has created man; therefore, man is accountable to him. God has made known his will to man, thus increasing that responsibility, and in the third place, God has urged upon man every conceivable motive to bring him into obedience to that will.

God has appealed to man's understanding, his in-telligence, his reason. In Isaiah 1:18 are found these words: "Come let us reason together, saith the Lord." The service of God is a rational, intelligent service. The invitation of Christ, when people would inquire into either his home or his teachings is always, "Come and see for yourselves." His religion is not one of pure emotionalism; it is not merely a pleonastic platform of pious platitudes. Paul says the presentation of our bodies as living sacrifices unto God is a "reasonable service" (Romans 12:1).

Again, God makes his appeal to our conscience. Deep within the soul of every mortal there is that faculty of being which either approves or disapproves our decisions. We call this faculty conscience. Of some things the whole human race says, "this is right," of other things, "this is wrong." This moral capacity, this ability to discern between right and wrong is unique in man; no other earthly creature possesses it. And it is to this attribute that the Lord makes his appeal. For example, "Children, obey your parents, for this is right." Not only to man's understanding, and his conscience, but also to his self-interest is God's appeal. He pictures to us the inevitable end of certain ways of life, and says "Choose ye." By example and precept it is shown that the way of the transgressor is hard; that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap; that God will bring every work into judgment with every hidden thing; that the wages of sin is death. And on the other hand is shown the fruit of the spirit, joy, peace, love, self-control, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and finally the gift of God which is eternal life. The two lives are set before man; the horror and awful degradation of the one is shown; the supreme happiness and exalted beauty of the other is shown. And man is told, "Choose ye." But the greatest appeal God makes is to man's af-fections. We acknowledge him as our Lord and Master because we love him;. And we love him because he first loved us. The tragic reality and poignant sacrifice of that old rugged cross must ever touch the hearts of those who are right-thinking and fair minded. This is the demonstration of God's love which is the compelling motive for man's obedience. God made man in his own image, gave him all the dominion of nature for his habitation, revealed the gospel truth to him, and then that his heart might be reached gave his only begotten Son to suffer and die for man's sins. Ah, friends, it is at the foot of the cross that we are forced to bow our stubborn wills and acknowledge our debt to God:

Under an Eastern sky,

Amid a rabble's cry  
A man went forth to die For me.  
Thorn-crowned his blessed head,  
Blood-stained his every tread,  
Cross laden on he sped For me.  
See, from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down.  
Did ere such love and sorrow meet?  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?  
Were the whole realm of nature mine  
That were an offering far too small  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my life, my soul, my all.

## The Stewardship of Our Material Possessions

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### The Stewardship of Our Material Possessions THE STEWARDSHIP OF OUR MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

By P. D. Wilmeth

Introduction.

Brother Cox, Brethren and Friends: I am made tremendously humble by this occasion and moved to a deep sense of gratitude. You have favored both your-self and the speakers of this Lectureship by your presence. I have been invited to speak upon the subject of “The Stewardship of Our Material Possessions,” and therefore, challenge your attention to that end.

Strange as it may sound, our Lord had much to say about material things, and of money in particular. It has been suggested that twelve out of thirty-two of his parables deal with stewardship or use the parable to thus illustrate the thought. Some have even suggested that one out of every eight verses in the four gospels has something to say about money. The church therefore, which claims in a peculiar way to be a proponent of his teaching finds that it cannot avoid speaking upon this subject. And that, not primarily because the church wants or needs money, but because it is interested in the saving of the souls of “baptized believers” by creating the right attitude toward life. A man’s attitude toward his money is his attitude toward life (1 Timothy 6:10). Paul touched the heart of both the problem of money and its solution when he said, “The love of money is the root of all evil.” It is impossible for a man to have the right attitude toward life and the wrong attitude toward money, and vice-versa. But with the average person in the pew, a sermon on money or its equivalent is but a means to extract something precious from others apart from conscience and unrelated to salvation. Such is based upon a false premise. It is at once an inescapable part of God’s pattern for a true disciple. It is a component part of the plan of human redemption. We need to develop a consciousness of stewardship that will make giving an inspiration and a joy.

#### I. What Is Stewardship?

1. In Its Broader Sense: The word “stewardship” came out of the vivid life of the Orient. It literally glows with color and life. In a literal sense the word “steward” means “a man who is over—one to whom something has been intrusted.” “Ship” of course implies a relation between two persons or things. In its broadest sense it means the responsibility for administering our whole life, personality, time, talents, in fluence, material substance, everything—in accordance with the purpose of God.

Moreover, the idea of stewardship is a New Testament conception. There is mention of the steward of Abraham (Genesis 15:2, A. V.); of Joseph (43:16, R. V.); and of the king of Babylon (Daniel 1:11), but it took Jesus to actually impress us with the reality of its meaning. Twice he expressly uses the term steward to set forth the relation between God and a man and his property (Luke 16:1-8; Luke 12:42), and in many other places it is implied (Matt. 18:23-25; 19:16-22 21:33-41; 24:25; 25:31-46; Luke 12:16-21; 13:6-9; 19:11-27). This is an important fact and one that

has not always been observed by students of the Bible.

Abraham, of Old Testament fame, practiced the high art of stewardship when he put himself and all he had at God's disposal; he never refused God anything, not even his only son, Isaac. Joseph, one of Abraham's posterity, was given to the noble ideal of stewardship. His poise was remarkable, his purity incorruptible and his piety was paramount. God was central in his life. That God-consciousness (a sense of all belonging to God) kept him from sin. When sorely tempted, he could say: "He is not greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9). He is an example of what every young man can and should be, and by the grace of God can be in personal life. William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, after his blindness, said: 'T've done my best for God with eyes, now I'll do it without eyes.' He had a consciousness of stewardship. But we must narrow this thesis to a particular emphasis upon material things.

2. It Is a Trust: Stewardship is a trust with an obligation. "It is required of a steward that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2). There is no option—it is required. This is true, in any relationship of human endeavor. That philosophy of trust began in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:16-17). They misused God's portion, and this is sufficient to teach us that it is dangerous to be unfaithful in our stewardship. Two companion parables in Luke 16 teach us this same lesson. The parable of the Unjust Steward whose sin was "wasting" his master's goods was spoken against the Pharisees, who were "lovers of money" (1 Timothy 6:10). Reduced to the one essential truth, that steward's one fault was "untrustworthiness." He just could not be trusted. The fate of Dives is an illustration of the man's reward who misuses his money. After a life of sumptuous feasting, and extravagant dressing, he found in hell that he could get no relief. (No he could not even get on relief of any kind). Why? Because he had been unfaithful to the charge committed to him while on earth. Jesus warned his disciples of the dangers of infidelity in our stewardship.

Brother McMillan in his tract on Stewardship suggests that, as a people, churches of Christ, have so afflicted the Bible doctrine with "don'ts" that little of the penetrating lessons on giving money has been able to enter our consciences. We have said, "Don't get money except by free will gifts"; "don't preach too much on giving for fear of being misunderstood." "Don't take a collection except on Lord's day morning." Still others have said, "Don't pass the collection baskets ; don't pledge or promise ahead (promise anybody but the Lord) what you intend to give"—and most of us have said, "Don't distribute any gifts except through the treasury." The result of all this is that we have been very meticulous to guard against off- brand giving and distributing, and have not been very conscientious about the spirit and reality of giving.

3. It Is An Investment: This is an age of investment, some wise and some unwise. When we have succeeded in convincing a man that a given investment will pay large dividends, he will usually manage to find some money to invest. Considered from any angle susceptible of presentation giving of one's material possessions is one of the best investments that one can make. Few, however, regard it as such. It is a worthwhile investment to the man on the street. The philanthropist who invests in hospitals and schools, finds the culture of the soul as of inestimable value. Churches as such have a way of insuring him of his money invested in these other two areas. Think of the value of morality to society, and the dangers from the lack of it. Think of what it

means to any business man to have a dishonest partner, or a dishonest banker, customer or employee. It is worth the investment to society. Real estate values are enhanced wherever the church has gone. Few men would want to move into, and rear a family in a town where they had no church privileges. If the validity of these truths are axio-matic here, how much more so for those who are its members. The church of our blessed Lord does not need to beg; it is a good investment to give into its coffers. Jesus tells the story of a certain rich man whose lands produced plentifully, all of which harvest he selfishly stored away in new barns. At the end of his greedy hoarding, his unclad soul was called to account before God. The lesson deduced is without question. "So is everyone that lays up treasure for " himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21). In the light of this philosophy we find two questions clamoring for an answer.

## II. Two Pertinent Questions

1. How Much Should One Give? Throughout our study we have been made aware of two ideals in practicing stewardship. One may be defined as legalistic and the other as spiritual. The legal aspect has to do with giving which is prompted externally, usually by law. Now all efforts to determine this question by giving so many cents out of each dollar are based upon false premises of strained interpretations. The highest motive of giving is not "the percentage basis." Throughout the Old Testament, at least from Abraham down, God's people gave a tenth of all their earnings to the Lord (Hebrews 7:4-10). But we have men who strongly oppose tithing, which is right if opposed as a statutory law, To make the tithe a specified amount demanded by divine law would be out of harmony with the whole spirit and teaching of the New Testament; moreover, it would cause many to be satisfied with much less than they should give. But unfortunately, those who oppose tithing, usually imply on their contention, that we should not give that much.

How much to give? Paul said to the Galatians and Corinthian brethren, "to give as prospered" (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). There are no warnings against giving too little. Examples already cited are sufficient evidence of this. From approved examples we learn that a widow once gave all she had and the Lord approved it (Mark 12:43-44) Another woman broke a cruse of precious ointment on the Savior's head and he rebuked her critic, and praised her (Mark 14:3-9). Jesus' own example reveals how much he was willing to give (2 Corinthians 8:9). He gave up his earthly home, even to the point of possessing a pillow, which he could call his own. He gave up his heavenly honor, and gave up as a crowning gift for us his life's blood to wash away our sins. If he had done less, our memories of his love could not rise to such heights of appreciation. Our gifts to the lost world are expected to be the duplicates of his."

2. What Motive Should Prompt Giving? The spiritual ideal may be defined as those impulses from within which prompt our giving. Jesus was inclined in this direction. He taught that the quality of life depends upon the motives. Every distinction between right and wrong is traced back in the Sermon on the Mount, to the motive of the heart. Giving can therefore be either an irritation or an inspiration. If it is motivated by outward compulsion, it is usually an irritation. If it is motivated from within, it is usually an inspiration and joy. Some give to be seen of men. Jesus condemned this (Matthew 6:1-3). Sometimes appeals are made to various motives, any one of which may have some merit. Giving is urged because it brings dividends. It does pay to give, but this can degenerate into crass commercialism. The need, the urgency of the task, and the brevity of time are all valid motives with a reservation. The supreme motive, the capstone of them all is that of

love. We should be motivated to give for the good of others and for the glory of God. As the mother joyously sacrifices herself for her child, and as Christ lovingly gave himself for all the world, our all (self included) should be placed upon the altar of service for the glory of God and the good of others. The Macedonians are noble examples (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). We observe that they gave of their own accord, beyond their power, over protest, prayed for the privilege, and above all else gave themselves. When we develop this consciousness about stewardship, we shall be seeking places to use the money given.

#### Conclusion

Allow me to leave the words of William Booth to you who said: "I will place no value on anything I possess except in its relationship to the kingdom of God." And then the words of a familiar old hymn should assume meaning here.

"I gave, I gave my life for thee,

What has thou given for me?"

## What Is a Local Congregation

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What Is a Local Congregation IT IS A LOCAL CONGREGATION?

By K. C. Moser

Whoever speaks upon a Scriptural subject assumes a grave responsibility. He speaks after Jehovah himself has spoken. He must respect Jehovah, therefore, and speak as the "Oracles of God." Human opinions and prejudices are out of place in such a discussion. It is with a sense of such responsibility, therefore, that I shall speak to you upon the theme, "What Is a Local Congregation?" Let us first note The Uses of the Word Church

In the New Testament the word church is used in at least two senses. It is used in a universal sense to include all of God's people in the aggregate. Examples of this use of the word are found in the following passages: "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18); "I persecuted the church" (Galatians 1:13); "And he is the head of the body the church" (Colossians 1:18).

Then the word church or congregation is used in a local sense to include all of the children of God in a given community, as "The church of God which is at Corinth." It is in this sense that I shall discuss the word. The Nature of the Church

In approaching my subject directly, there is a fact of fundamental importance which deserves special emphasis. The church is a spiritual institution. It is not political, financial, or social. Please note carefully these Scriptures: "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36); "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21); "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).

Furthermore, "God is Spirit"; his kingdom is spiritual; entrance into it is by spiritual birth; the saved compose a "spiritual house," a spiritual priesthood, to offer up "spiritual sacrifices"; true worship is "in spirit" and "by the Spirit of God"; it is "by the Spirit" that we "walk," even as it is "by the Spirit" that "we live." Being a spiritual institution, the church must be described, therefore, in spiritual terms, "combining spiritual things with spiritual words." (Since the church is spiritual, its progress must be spiritual. Growth in numbers, in wealth, in prestige, does not necessarily signify true development.)

Now the congregation is composed of individual Christians. If, then, I shall describe a Christian, I have made progress in the discussion of my theme. Let us inquire, therefore, Who Is a Christian?

A Christian is the product of the "gospel of Christ." By gospel is meant Christ crucified, buried, and raised for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). Paul wrote, "I was sent to preach the gospel" (1 Corinthians 1:17). Then he added, "But we preach Christ crucified." It was the apostle's determination to preach nothing "save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2). Christ crucified is the foundation of the church (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Hence the apostles were commanded to “preach the gospel.” And they did preach it. They did not take the gospel for granted; they did not merely make a passing reference to it. They took the gospel for their subject and discussed it. Paul said he preached it “first of all.” (Some preach it last of all, others, not at all). As the gospel was preached to the Galatians— “before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified”—so should it be preached to all sinners. Then sinners will be converted to-Christ and not to a mere theory. But the sinner must respond to the gospel. The gospel merely preached will not save. It must be accepted by Gospel Faith

### Gospel Faith

By gospel faith is meant a faith compatible with the gospel. “Jesus Christ and him crucified” is the-object of this faith. Our Saviour is a person, not a theory. This person is the Son of God, crucified, buried, and raised for our justification. Simply to believe in God cannot save. Or to accept Christ as a good man and a great teacher is not gospel faith. He must be believed on as God’s Son, and the atonement for our sins.

Faith is composed of at least two elements, belief of facts, and trust. The element of trust is that which is especially fitted to appropriate the benefits of the death of Christ. Faith in the sense of trust in Christ lays hold of the grace of God. One does not believe in Christ till he has trusted in Christ crucified for salvation. Apart from this faith all else is vain. But added to faith is Gospel Repentance

### Gospel Repentance

And by gospel repentance is meant a repentance based upon and growing out of the gospel. “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name” (Luke 24:46-47). On Pentecost, Peter first preached the gospel and then demanded repentance. Repentance based upon the gospel is repentance “toward God.” A repentance growing out of self-respect, or based upon the desires of friends is not gospel repentance.

Here is another reason for preaching the gospel. The sinner should know that it was for his sins that Christ died. A consideration of this fact leads to conviction, and conviction, to repentance.

### Gospel Confession

“Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:9). It will be noted that confession is a statement of one’s faith in Jesus Christ crucified. This is certainly gospel confession.

### Gospel Baptism

Just as faith, repentance, and confession must be based upon the gospel, so must baptism. Baptism relates to Christ’s death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). The divine order is first to preach the gospel. Then follow faith and baptism. Baptism is the em-bodiment of faith. But faith must be gospel faith. Hence baptism must be gospel baptism. The meaning of all the conditions of salvation is two-fold- They signify “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” The sinner repents toward God against whom all sins are committed, and believes in Christ—trusts in him for salvation. Confession is the embodiment of faith, and baptism is the

embodiment of both faith and repentance. Since one is baptized into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, he stands as a justified person related to all three. Christianity is the sum of Spiritual Relationships:

1. The Christian's Relationship to God. "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." "I . . . will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters." "For we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them." Here is a relationship that is real, vital, and spiritual. The child of God . has been really "born of God." God is. really his Father, and he is truly God's Son. This relationship is the basis of holiness. "And put on the new- man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians 4:24). A mere theoretical creation cannot have practical results.

2. The Christian's Relationship to Christ. He is related to Christ as the saved to the Savior. Christ is the object of his faith, the cause of his repentance, the content of his confession, and the consideration of his baptism. "Christ... is the head of the church." "We are members of his body." "Your bodies are members of Christ." As was observed with reference to the Chiistian's relation to the Father, here is a relationship that is real, vital, and spiritual. Oneness with Christ may be as incomprehensible as the oneness of the husband and wife, but the "mystery" should be freely accepted as a fact. And here again do we find the reason for holy living. Not through fear of the Lord, or mechanically must one refrain from evil, but through respect for our oneness with him. Here is a nobler incentive to holiness than the prohibitions of the lave.

3. The Christian's Relationship to the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1 Corinthians 3:16). ""iour body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God" (1 Corinthians 6:19). "But ye are not in the flesh but ili the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (Ronv 8:9). "But if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Romans 8:13). "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). These and inany other scriptures tell us of our relationship to the Holy Spirit as certainly as it defines our relationship to God and to Christ. The indwelling of the spirit is no more a "mystery" than oneness with Christ, or the oneness of the husband and wife. If I accept one, I must accept the other. Has not God said what he meant, and meant what he. said?

Now the church is comnosed of just such persons. Hence I have largely described a local congregation when I have described a true Christian.

In addition to Christians, as such, there are to be found in a local congregation a group of men who have been designated by the terms,

Elders, Bishops, Pastors

These three words refer to one and the same person. While at Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus and called for the "elders of the church." When they had come the apostle admonished them: . "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:17; Acts 20:28). Elders are expressly called bishops, and bishops are "to feed" the flock. But "to feed" is from the noun translated pastor. Hence either expressly or impliedly the same person is denominated elder, bishop, pastor.

The elders of a congregation are on an equality in every way. The New Testament knows nothing about a chief elder called the "Presiding Elder." And it knows no more of an elder who is recognized as the permanent "Chairman of the Board." A permanent "Chairman of the Board" usually renders the other elders mere figureheads.

## Deacons

Besides the elders or bishops the congregations of the Lord have within their membership certain special servants of the church known as deacons. Just what their special function is need not be discussed here. The Congregation an Autonomous Body

Each congregation is strictly independent, of every other congregation. The church has no earthly head. Christ is yet the head of the church. The complicated organization of many churches is wholly unknown and unwarranted by the scriptures. When the Lord desired to teach, reprove, warn, or admonish a particular church, he addressed the individual church directly. His message was not delivered to some earthly head of the church and relayed to the congregation. Paul wrote to the "church of God which is at Corinth," "to the saints that are at Ephesus," or to "all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, with the bishops (overseers) and deacons." This local congregation was composed, therefore, of saints (holy persons), bishops and deacons. The bishops and deacons lived at Philippi and were members of that particular congregation. The independency of the local congregation is to be carefully guarded. The spiritual welfare of the congregation is at stake here. To surrender this principle is to surrender our spiritual liberty in Christ. In order to emphasize this point further, let it be observed that though the elders might sustain other relationships in life, yet in the church they are simply elders. They are not lawyer-elders, banker-elders, merchant-elders, professor-elders, doctor-elders. The rights of the elder are in no way dependent upon earthly relationships. He is a spiritual overseer. And in the church he is not to be regarded in any other light.

If a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States were an elder, it would be well for him and all others to forget his earthly honors while he functions as an elder. He would have no special rights as an elder. The courts and the church must be kept apart. Likewise the church and all things strictly secular must be kept separated. It will be a sad day for the church when it is dominated by an outside influence. The church and state, the church and finance, the church school, or the church and any other human affair, while not necessarily antagonistic, are not to be mixed. For the sake of yet more emphasis upon the independency of the congregation, let it be said that in no sense is the church to be dominated by a paper or a magazine, by a school or a preacher. Each is good in its or his place. But out of its place a paper, for example, might do much harm. And just so with schools or preachers. The "position" or "policy" of any religious journal is not to become the standard of orthodoxy of any congregation. After all the "position" of a religious journal is but the "position" of men. And no paper worthy the support of Christians desires to dictate, to the churches. The same might be said of any individual. Regardless of one's influence, financial, social or political, he must not "lord it over God's heritage." Regardless of one's intellectuality or special talents, he must not be regarded as a spiritual lord. For one possessing special influence, therefore, or having unusual advantages over congregations, to attempt to dictate as to faith or practice is anti-Christian. The true church is a "glorious" institution. It is a precious institution. . It is blood-bought and Christ owned. To its own master, its head, and chief shepherd, it stands or falls.

let us hold it sacred; let us love it; and let us help to keep it free of all destructive influences.

I love thy kingdom, Lord,

The house of thine abode;

The church our blest Redeemer saved

With his own precious blood.

I love thy church, O God!

Her walls before thee stand,

Dear as the apple of thine eye,

And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,

For her my pray'r ascend;

To her my cares and toils be given,

Till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joy I prize her heav'nly ways,

Her sweet communion, solemn vows,

Her hymns of love and praise.

## The Need of Organization

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### The Need of Organization THE NEED OF ORGANIZATION

By Luther G. Roberts

Every organism is in a state or condition either of order or chaos; arrangement or disarrangement; unity or division; organization or confusion. The universe when spoken into existence by the mighty fiat of God was without organization (Genesis 1:1-2). "The Spirit brooded upon the face of the waters," God spoke, chaos vanished and light appeared. The waters, were divided by the firmament, and the waters underneath the firmament were gathered together into one place, and the earth appeared. Then the plant life was brought into being upon the earth. The sun, moon, planets, and the stars, each was brought into its respective place in the universe. Animal life was created and given a place under the sun. Each plant and each animal life was perfectly organized. As the climax of his organizing power, man in God's own image, was made. He was given dominion over the living things upon, the earth, in the heavens, and in the sea. As the Psalmist says of man's organization, he is "fearfully and wonderfully made." Since man was honored with the divine image, and since God never gives too much for anything, the conclusion is plain and easy that man was and is more valuable and honorable than all the rest of creation. Yet, God's material universe is not to be overlooked or despised. As the architect is seen in the building, so we behold God in the organization, the symmetry, and beauty of nature, in which each plant, planet, and animal is perfectly adapted to its respective sphere of activity. "The devout astronomer looks far beyond millions of suns with their planets and satellites ; far beyond all luminous and non-luminous bodies; far beyond the nebulae of the milky way, into fathomless and infinite space-space as superior to the grasp of the finite mind as God is to an atom, and high and lifted above all expression is God 'blessed forevermore.' " While we are especially interested in that which pertains more directly to man let us glance at the organization and government of the material universe. In the organization and divine administration of the material there are three elements, the natural, the providential, and the miraculous. First, the natural, Natural power is that ordinary force which God deposited in nature for common or ordinary purposes! It remains in matter as a permanent factor. Second is providential power. Providential power is that additional force which God puts into nature for the accomplishment of special purposes. Through nature and nature's laws the providence of God works. Third is miraculous power. Miraculous power is force independent or, above natural power or means, as in the creation before there was any nature or natural power. Hence, there is perfect organization and perfect functioning in the government of nature, or the material universe. See this matter further treated in Milligan's Scheme of Redemption.

Since God does not do the superfluous, organization was and is necessary in the material creation. Just so in his dealings with humankind there is need of organization. Organization in the government of man was needed in the first 2500 years of man's existence on the earth. The plan of organization for the government of man during this time is not fully revealed to us. But it is

evident that God gave commands and that by faith man offered sacrifices to God. Parents governed their children and patriarchs their tribes. God was not it would seem favorable to confederated governments, but men were. God's provision was for man to be governed not by a confederated form but that the government be that of a community of brethren.

Man was not content to be thus governed. God called the Hebrews out of Egypt and inaugurated, amidst the awful solemnities of Sinai, a system, of government for the good of the people. It was necessary that the nation called out of Egypt be organized. It was necessary in order to fulfill the promises of God; to govern the Jews, the law was their schoolmaster, tutor and governor, a wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile. Under God's government the Jews prospered, but they became strong, worldly and proud, not content with God's method of governing them. They desired to be like the nations round about them, and to have a government like theirs. So they asked for a king, which God granted them. Under this corrupt form of government they never did so well in pleasing God, as under that plain, simple form given by Jehovah.

Organization is needed also in the Christian dispensation, "the last days," or final age before the end of time, in which we are now living. This is necessary to provide those things that pertain to man's spiritual welfare as well as for his physical good.

We know that organization is needed in this age because it is Commanded, and examples of organization are found in the New Covenant, by which we are to be governed in this era. When Jesus chose twelve of his disciples to be apostles, and to be with him, to be taught and trained by him for the great work he purposed, there was some kind of an organization, of which Judas was the treasurer. During this period of the Savior's personal ministry the material was prepared which went into the first organized congregation by the authority of Christ. Jesus promised and sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles to guide them into all truth; to direct them in organizing the greatest, most glorious institution ever inaugurated upon the earth—the church, eternity-purposed and blood-purchased. Jesus Christ is the reigning and ruling head of this institution. Of course, this church is the body of Christ, and was and is necessary, for Jesus would not give his blood, nor would God purpose from all eternity, a non-essential institution, "a spiritual contingent." That the church universal is to be made up of local churches, in various communities, each independent of every other one, and organized for effective work is clearly set forth in the New Testament (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23).

Because the New Testament church is not an ecclesiasticism with a human head, and earthly head-quarters, with its convention, conference or synod, to direct its affairs, no one should draw the conclusion that there is not any system or organization about the Lord's work. There must be some organization, some arrangement, in order to carry out the Lord's appointments efficiently.

So, the conclusion is that organization is needed to do the work of the Lord effectually. The work ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ in this age or dispensation is, broadly speaking, three-fold: first, the preaching of the gospel; second, the edification of the saints; and third, the caring for the needy. Some work may be accomplished in each of these fields without organization, but for the work to be done thoroughly there must be some system for doing it. God has ordained that the work of preaching the gospel be done through the church. "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God

who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," is the language of the apostle Paul to the church at Ephesus (Ephesians 3:8-11). Again, Paul in writing to Timothy states this truth: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:14-15). It is the obligation of the churches of Christ to preach the gospel at home and abroad. This institution is the only agency which God has ordained for this great work. Churches are not fulfilling their re-sponsibility when they fail to proclaim the "gospel of Christ which is the power of God unto salvation." The world could not have been evangelized in the first cen-tury of the Christian era as it was without organization.

Likewise God has purposed that through the church the saints shall be builded up in the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God (Ephesians 4:11-16). This scripture and many others show the organization which was set in order for the perfecting of the saints, for the growth of the body of Christ. It is the duty of the church to teach, train, and instruct those who become Christians by obedience to the gospel. Worshiping God is a part of the work of edification of the saints. Organization is required here to maintain a place for worship and to conduct the actual worship. A person might worship God acceptably under the trees in the woods by himself, but there by himself he cannot assemble with the saints and fellow-citizens of the household of God, he cannot speak to his fellow- worshiper, "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs." For mutual edification and fellowship we need organization.

Also in caring for the needy there must be some kind of an organization. James commands that we visit the "fatherless and widows in their afflictions," or gives instruction which amounts to a command to do such work if we are true Christians (James 1:27). The examples of New Testament church doing this work as at Antioch, in Galatia, and in Macedonia, furnish us with authority for doing this work, and the method of doing it as well. In order to feed, clothe and shelter orphans, fatherless, widows who are widows indeed, efficient organization is required.

Moreover it is impossible to enforce discipline in the congregation unless there is organization. The erring are to be cared for, and disciplined when necessary, and without organization this cannot be done. There is no society, social, political, or religious, which does not, and of right ought to have, authority to exercise discipline among its members. In the state we have duly elected officers to maintain law and order. It is the responsibility and duty of every citizen to encourage obedience to the laws of the land. But in a special sense it is the duty of the officers of the law to see that the laws are enforced and that the guilty are punished. Just so, it is the duty of every Christian who is faithful to "restore the erring." But In a special sense It is the duty of the bishops or elders, those "who watch in behalf of the souls of the saints as they that shall give account" unto God. If a congregation permits persons to lead sinful lives, or to teach false doctrines, in its membership knowingly, the whole congregation becomes a partaker of the sins. "A little leaven leavens the w'hole lump," says Paul. If therefore, there were no other reasons for the existence of organization in the Lord's work this one alone would be sufficient Now. as Brother Jas. K White, the Indian evangelist, would say, I want to make a careful statement: If the church of Christ d>d not exercise the other functions of the church to any greater extent or degree than the

work of discipline there would be little reason, if any, for any organization whatsoever."

Finally organization is required in the work of the Lord, for unless we have organization there cannot be successful cooperation. Without operation there can be no cooperation, and without cooperation our efforts will result in puny, small, and insignificant effect. This is the reason for the slow progress the churches of Christ have made in preaching the gospel through the world. We are divided into factions, or at least one congregation will not cooperate with certain other ones for various reasons which ought not to be, we are divided over preachers, colleges, etc.. until one group will not cooperate with the other. The only thing that matters is for each one of us, each Christian, to be lined up with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles, and then we will be united. If the preacher or the college is out of line with the New Testament then we ought to follow the New Testament regardless. The human body properly organized as a unit, works, and has perfect cooperation of all its members. Each member does his part and results are produced. This figure is used to show the relationship of members of the same congregation, but it may be used to enforce the teaching of cooperation of a number of congregations. Each congregation scripturally organized will willingly cooperate with every other congregation in every good work possible. Completely organized and functioning according to New Testament teaching there will be no schism, di-vision, and strife among brethren (Ephesians 4:16). When each congregation is organized properly, that is scrip-turally, there can be cooperation among the various congregations in the common labor for the salvation of the world. The cooperation of the churches in Mace-donia serves as an example as to how we may now cooperate in any work ordained of God. No society, political, social or religious, can function efficiently without organization. Since it is God's will and purpose for man in this dispensation that he shall be saved through the church, the church must be organized, if it is to function according to the divine pattern. In conclusion permit me to drop a word of warning. Although organization is necessary, it is difficult, if not impossible, to keep man from overrganizing, or-ganizing something which is not authorized by the New Testament. But unless the organization is au-thorized in the scriptures for the age in which we live, we shall be condemned for organizing and having a part in such. We are living in a world of organizations religiously. These organizations in religion are called denominations, each of which has its related auxiliary organizations of all kinds and types. But these do not constitute the organization established, instituted, and set in order by scriptural authority. Hence, we should be content with the organization perfected by the apostles of Christ, and revealed unto us by "holy men of old who were moved by the Holy Spirit/' Human organizations in the work of the Lord are unnecessary, and they are plants which the heavenly Father did not plant, and they shall be rooted up. May the Lord help us who claim to "speak where the Bible speaks, and to be silent where the Bible is silent" to work diligently through the organization revealed in the New Testament, and to trust God to give the increase.

## The Purpose of Organization of the Local Congregation

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### The Purpose of Organization of the Local Congregation THE PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION OF THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

By Basil D. Shilling

#### Introduction

I am grateful for the fine fellowship that Abilene Christian College makes possible by conducting, from year to year, a lectureship program. I am persuaded that we all owe a debt of gratitude to Brother Cox and all others who are laboring so faithfully to maintain colleges such as this, in which our children can be educated and prepared to enter into some gainful and useful vocation in life without being taught infidelity and spekticisms—where while being taught other things they will be taught the word of the living God. The brethren who have preceded me on the program today have set before you the facts concerning the propositions, “What constitutes a local congregation,” and “The need for organization of the local congrega-tion.” I have been asked to discuss the subject, “The Purpose of Organization of the Local Congregation.”

#### Discussion

##### I. The meaning of Organization.

At the outset of the discussion of this subject it is in order, I-think, that we try to determine just what is meant by the expression, “the organization of the local congregation,” to the end that we may all be thinking along the same lines. Brother Moser has defined for us, in the light of the New Testament what constitutes the local congregation. I need only to define the word organize. The word organize means to systematize; to set in working order. It also means to arrange, connect and relate the parts in and for a whole in such a manner as will permit and promote an efficient, effective and harmonious functioning of the thing 6r- ganized. Hence, the organization of the local congregation is the systematic and orderly arranging, connecting and relating of its parts into such a unified whole that it will function efficiently, effectively and harmoniously in all the ways whereunto God has appointed it. But as to how, and to what extent, the local con-gregation is or should be organized is not for me to discuss. These points will be discussed by Brother Overby, who is to follow me in the program of the afternoon. It is my assignment to speak, rather, of the purpose of organization of the local congregation.

##### II. The Goal of the Church Considered.

I believe that it can be correctly said that the organization of the church is merely a means to an end—not an end within itself. Hence, it seems to me that we need to take into our consideration first of all the end or the goal to be attained by the church. What then is the goal of the church? What is the objective toward which it strives and for the accomplishment of which it spends its energies, efforts and talents? Of course, we understand that the church, as the bride Of Christ, is

to be received, some day, into the place which Jesus has gone to prepare, to rejoice for-ever in the grandeur and glory of that holy and eternal city. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my-self; that where I am, there ye may be also," said Jesus unto the disciples (John 14:2-3). But this is the ultimate or final goal of the church. What about its goal while here in the earth its members are? While here it waits and seeks to make itself ready for that glorious event and day? I find there are many passages of Scripture which speak of this point. Remembering, of course, that individual Christians constitute the membership of the church, we are told that the church has been created in Christ Jesus unto good works. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). Hence, it might be said that the objective of the church is the performance of good works. Again, we are told that the church was built for an habitation of God through the Spirit. "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22). So it can be said that the end of the church is to serve as an habitation of God. Then, the church is said to be the medium through which the wisdom of God is to be made known. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:10). Therefore, it can be said that the goal of the church is to make known the wisdom of God. But what seems to me to be about the most complete statement of the goal of the church while here on earth its members are—the one thing it shall seek to attain—is found in verse 13 of the fourth chapter of Ephesians. Here, after having enumerated some provisions which Christ had made for the church, the apostle Paul said that they were provided in order that the church may attain unto a full grown man—may attain unto the measure of the stature of the fulness in Christ. Allow me to read his statement: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The Revised Version says, ". . . Unto a full grown man." Hence, the objective or goal of the church—that for which it shall exercise itself to attain—is to come unto a perfect man or' a full grown man; to attain unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; to attain unto spiritual maturity. This means that the church must seek to bring each and every member unto a full grown man —unto spiritual maturity, instead of being content with their remaining babes in Christ and spiritually immature. But for the church to attain this goal will require not a little at the hands of all those who compose it. First, it will certainly require unity. This very fact is plainly set forth in the same verse in which Paul declared that spiritual maturity of its members is the goal of the church. Let us hear again his statement. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith . . . unto a perfect man ..." My brethren, may we become more keenly conscious of this fact! Let us remember that a divided church is a very, very immature church; that it is, yea, a carnal church. Of this we are confident by reason of Paul's statement to the church at Corinth, wherein he said:

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto\* babe& in Christ. I have fed you with milk (the diet of the immature) and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" (1 Corinthians 3:1-5). This settles the fact, then, that when and if a local congregation is torn by division, strife and envy it has not reached spiritual maturity and will not as long as these things prevail in it. Second, to reach

spiritual maturity, it will be necessary for the church to have knowledge of the word of the Lord. This fact was also stated by Paul in the same sentence in which he declared spiritual maturity to be the goal of the church. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man . . ." Without doubt, the church that is not full of the knowledge of the word is an immature church. Of this fact the writer of the book of Hebrews spoke by saying: "For when by the time ye ought to be teachers; ye have need that one teach again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk (the diet of the immature) and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:12-14). Moreover, if the church does not have a knowledge of the word it will be tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine. Third, in order for the church to reach its goal of spiritual maturity it must be characterized by love. The absolute necessity of love, and the utter failure and emptiness of the church or the individual that does- not possess it, was proclaimed by Paul when he said:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a clanging symbol. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Undoubtedly, the church void of love is a very, very immature church. And lacking love, all else that it may do or attain will count for nothing.

### III. The Church Attains Its Goal By and Through Organization.

Now if someone asks, what does all this have to do with the purpose of organization of the local congregation, I am ready to tell you that the purpose of the organization of the local congregation is to enable it to reach its divine appointed goal—to come to a full grown man in Christ.' in order to show' that this is true,' I want to call attention to verses 11 to 15 inclusive of Ephesians "And, he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 'For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till'tve all come in the unity of'the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ': That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to 'hnd fro,\* and carried -about with' every • wind\*of!'doctrine, by the-sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby\*' they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Now let it be noted that here it is said that Christ provided in and for the church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. These words indicate an office to be filled in the church: a service to be rendered: a work to be performed. Undoubtedly, the setting of these in the church is a part of organizing the church. I think this will not be questioned. But, why did Christ thus provide for the church? For what purpose did he provide these ministries in and for the church? In the answer to this, we will have also the answer to the question, What is the purpose of the organization of the local congregation? These ministries the Lord provided in and for the church as a means to an end. And what that end is, is stated in plain, simple language, namely. "For the perfecting of the saints, for

the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” But why perfect the saints? Why should the work of the ministry be carried on? Why edify the body of Christ—the church? To the end that “we may all come ... to a perfect man”; to the end that “we henceforth be no more children”; to the end that we “may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” In brief, it was to the end and for the purpose that the church may attain spiritual maturity. What, then, is the purpose of organization in, and of, the local congregation? It is for the purpose and to the end that the church may attain unto its divine appointed goal—the attainment of spiritual maturity.

Let us consider a New Testament example.

According to Acts 6, there arose in the church at Jerusalem a murmuring: of the Grecians against the He-brews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the apostles directed that seven men, who were of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, should be selected whom they might appoint to have charge of the matter. In giving instruction for the matter to be thus handled, the apostles explained that it was not reason or appropriate that they should leave off their work of teaching the word in order to look after the matter themselves. They knew that the word of God must be taught to the end that the church might be edified and brought to spiritual maturity. Therefore, in order that they might continue to do so to the best advantage, and at the same time the matter be properly cared for that was causing the complaint, they directed that seven men be selected to be appointed by them, and unto whom they would give the responsibility for the matter. Here we have an example of organization in the congregation at Jerusalem. But what was the purpose of this sort of organization? Undoubtedly it was for the purpose of so arranging the affairs of the church that it might have supplied unto it, by the apostles, the spiritual instruction and guidance necessary for it to reach spiritual maturity —to “come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

## The Local Congregation: How Organized and the Extent of Organization

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The Local Congregation: How Organized and the Extent of Organization THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

How Organized and the Extent of Organization

By Coleman Overby

Strange as it may seem, the words, “organize,” and “organization,” are not found in the Bible. Yet the principles are so manifest, “that he may run that read eth” (Habakkuk 2:2), the Book to any profit. Such passages as, “For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace,” “But let all things be done decently and in order,” and “Set in order the things that are wanting” (1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 14:40; Titus 1:7), emphasize organization, The handiwork of God is systematically unfolded throughout his Revelation to man. The Bible teaches by precept—the plain teaching of his word; by examples—to simplify, and lead the reader to imitate; and, by necessary inferences—by that, which is contained in the precept or example— implied, but not expressed. The last process mentioned, belongs to men who are seasoned in experience. “Brethren, be not children in mind: yet in malice be ye babes, but in mind be men” (1 Corinthians 14:20). It is by this principle of studying God’s word, organization is clearly seen.

Defined. Much of the confusion that exists over organization, is due largely to a misunderstanding of terms. “Doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing” (1 Timothy 6:4). To organize means, “To furnish with organs; to give organic structure.”—Webster. In this sense, the church cannot be organized. This, Jesus did when he established it. He placed in its structure all the organs essential to its growth and development.

Examples. The church is a building, composed of “living stones”—living organs, “a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). God placed every stone (organ) in this building, on the ground of conversion (Acts 2:41; Acts 2:47). The church is the body of Christ (Colossians 1:18), divinely organized, with all the elements necessary for its unique work. Just as in the creation of man, God “set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him” (1 Corinthians 12:18) ; so it is, in the creation of the “one new man”—the church (Ephesians 2:15). Jesus added all the organic structure necessary. Let man beware of adding to or taking from this spiritual body! The church is the temple of God (1 Cor, 3:16; 6:19). In the first temple all of the material—wood, stones, iron, brass, silver, gold, and precious stones, were prepared by inspired craftsmen, so that in its structure, “there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building”<sup>1</sup> (1 Kings 6:7). So it is in the temple of the Holy Spirit, every convert is divinely placed into the building, where he can best serve. All of the organic structure for the enlargement of the building is there. To further illustrate. The church is a city and light (Matthew 5:14-16), with all the elements to grow and shine. It is the family of God—God is the Father, Christ is the Elder Brother

and Saviour, -and every Christian is a member of this house. As-such, it has all the organs necessary for household interests. Too, the church is the kingdom of Christ (\*Matthew 16:18; \*Matthew 16:19').

Christ, is the King, and every member is a subject, and citizen. JBeing a heavenly institution, it has all the elements of organization.

These illustrations forcefully set forth the complete-ness of the church in respect to all its organic parts. Nothing can be added without an impeachment of the wisdom of the Divine Architect—Christ Jesus. It is presumptuous and perilous to try.

How Then Organize. This way. “To arrange or constitute in interdependent parts, each "having a special function, act or relation with respect to the whole; to systematize; to get into working order; as, to organize an army; to organize recruits.”—Webster. While the church has all of its organic parts, each part must be taught its special function; and, while functioning, it must understand its relationship to the whole—all parts must be systematized, arranged into harmonious working order. The “living stones,” of the church must be taught their relationship one toward another, and the profoundest respect for the Chief Corner Stone. “Being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone. In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:20-22).

Here, all the principles of organization are set forth, both divine and human. God “fitly framed” and “builded together”—furnished with complete organs— gave to it organic structure. This, no man can do. On the manward side, “each several building, working in, and as a part of the walls of Zion; must function with due respect to the whole of the walls; and, with reverential submission to the Head Stone, Jesus the Christ Thus the building “groweth into a holy temple of the Lord,” and God habitates therein. This principle, too, is seen in the church as the body of Christ. As in the creation of the physical body (Genesis 2:7), God set each member in the body as it pleased mm; lust so, in the creation of the “one new man”—the church, each member of the body was set therein as the handiwork of God, and by divine right (Ephesians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 12:18; Colossians 1:18). In the creation of the natural and spiritual bodies, all organs were complete and God-imparted. This is Divine Organization! Into each body God set all of the members; but man must exercise them, systematize their use, and get them into the best Working order. Each member must be taught his special function in relation to the whole, and how\* to take orders from the head. This is how to organize. “For it is God who worketh Ephesians 4:15-16). Here, it is demonstrated how the Christ-wara, and man-ward sides of the church function. Christ, in creating the church, “fitly framed and knit together” every member of the body.

Man,

- (1) “speaking truth in love”;
- (2) grows up in all things into Christ;
- (3) each joint supplieth strength to every other member;
- (4) according to the “working in due measure of each” member;

(5) “maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.”

Christ supplied the organs, man utilizes and systematizes them. This is how organization takes place. The church is the army of the Lord (Ephesians 6:10-17). In the raw recruits, as they enter the Lord, there are all the possibilities and powers for a ranking army. These undeveloped soldiers must be trained, drilled, exercised, rationed, marched, clothed, ranked, and classified—systematized, before they are prepared for the fullest service. They must be organized into a working unit for Christ.

Different Gifts—Supernatural and Natural. To the Corinthian church, Paul gave various “manifestations of the Spirit to profit with all.” Nine gifts were specified. Wisdom, knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues. These gifts of the Spirit were divided “To each one severally” as God willed (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). Paul gave the twelfth and fourteenth chapters of 1 Corinthians to tell how these gifts were to be used. Each had a special function, act, or relation with respect to the whole. Herein is organization, and how it was done, in the age of miracles. In reasoning then, from the miraculous to the natural, it will be found there must also, be order. Certainly, supernatural gifts have ceased, - but the gifts and ministries of such have not ceased- They are to be supplied; not by miraculous powers, but by spiritual culture. Yea, they are to be supplied by the members of the church, from the members, and for the members. The church is to be self-perpetuated, self-edified; both, with due regard for order and diversity of labor. The body, the church, is not to make this advancement by the assumption of power on the part of each member, nor by each having the same office, but by the due working of each member. When diversity and order are respected, the problem of organization will take care of itself.

Time Out. Various speakers on this lecture course have taken “time out,” to deliver a manifesto against some evil that is or has risen “among us.” Some writers, and speakers have unsheathed the sword of the Spirit, and with one mighty thrust, have driven it to its hilt, into the very heart of the evils of “Majority Rule.” All of this is well, but it seems timely to remark, There is another evil “among us,” that is perchance, more deadly than “majority rule”—it is the “minority rule.” The church of the Lord is to be controlled, neither by majority nor minority rule, but by its head—the Lord Jesus Christ; and the rule of the head, is revealed in the New Testament. Let writers, papers, ministers, evangelists, members, deacons, and elders, beware of these “rules.”

Works of Ministry. The first churches had various ministrations. There was the ministration of tables, for which the apostles made provisions (Acts 6:1-4). There were ministrations of men and women. Phoebe was a servant of the church in Cenchrese, she was to be received and assisted, for she had been a helper of many (Romans 16:1-2). Priscilla and Aquilla were to be considered for their sacrificial service (Romans 16:3-4). There were ministries of households. The house of Stephanas set themselves to minister to the saints. They were to be respected, with all those who “helpeth in the work and laboreth” (1 Corinthians 16:15-16). Then there were manifold ministries—prophecy, preaching, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and showing mercy (Pom. 12:6-8).

God’s Plan To Order These. How did God in his wisdom systematize these ministrations ? “And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11). Yes, apostles—to testify, to reveal his will, and to ratify as

eyewitnesses. Prophets—to speak for him, to edify, exhort, and warn, Evangelists—to speak the word, to sound it “withm” and Pastors—to lead, to watch, to tend, and to rule the flock. And, teachers—to instruct all ages and classes.

Now, why and for how long were the miraculous elements of these gifts to continue? “For the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministry, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the fait® and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12-14). This five-fingered gift to the church in Ephesians 4:11, is in the church today. Not miraculously. The apostles are on thrones as judges, and by their decisions and counsels as revealed in the New Testament, are ruling (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:29-30). The prophets, speaking for him—to edify and exhort; evangelists, as ministers and preachers to tell the story of his love; the pastors as elders, bishops, overseers, rulers; and the teachers, to instruct all. Too, just as the miraculous had to do with the revealing, ordering, diversifying, and systematizing of the work of the churches; just so, this fivefold gift, attained by spiritual culture of the various members, is to put into working order, and to diversify the work of the church. Every qualification of an elder has to do with successful organization of the church. Titus was left in Crete, to “set in order the things that were wanting, and to appoint elders in every city” (Titus 1:5). For the qualification of the elders see 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9.

Key To Organization. The first rule is, To Teach; the second one, is just like it—teach; and the third, is made up of the first and second—teach. The word “teach” or “taught” is used more than one hundred times in the New Testament. It was applied to Christ, fifty-six times. The word “preach” with its different forms, is used one hundred and twenty-one times. It was applied to Jesus, thirty-five times. Jesus opened carried on, and closed his ministry by teaching and preaching. He then, climaxed his life’s work, by ordering the disciples to go into all the world and preach or teach the gospel of Christ to every creature. Order and light were God’s first laws (Genesis 1:6).

Teach what? Every word of God is to be included in heaven’s teaching program (Matthew 4:4; Matthew 28:19-20). The relationship of members to fellow-members (Romans 12:3-5; Romans 12:10). The relationship of servants to masters, and masters to servants (Ephesians 6:5-6; Ephesians 6:9). The relationship of husbands to wives, and wives to husbands (Ephesians 5:22-25). The relationship of parents to children, and children to parents (Ephesians 6:1-4). The relationship of aged women to younger women (Titus 2:3-5). The relationship of preachers to the church, and the church to the preachers (1 Timothy 6:1-2). The relationship of members to hteir “Income,” and to its 40). The relationship of the church to missions (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 5:12-13). The relationship of the church to the world (1 John 2:15-16). The relationship of members to their “Income”, and to its “Out-go”—giving (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). The relationship of elders to the church, and the church to the elders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-14; 1 Peter 5:2-3). Many other themes might be suggested. There is no way to successfully organize without teaching, constructive teaching, and continual teaching. The more teaching, the better the organization. No church can rise higher than its teaching. “For it is precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little” (Isaiah 28:10).

Another vital factor in organization is that of work. It is inseparably connected with teaching. Teaching may be called the heart; and working, the life of it. One is the source; the other, the stream. God works and he created man to work. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10). A working church develops talent for the various ministries, and an outlet for service. Talents grow and multiply by use. Every inactive church buries its ability and ultimately, becomes visionless. The working church creates emergencies. This is forcefully illustrated in the activities of the first church.

The apostles were set in the church first, in respect to time and rank (1 Corinthians 12:28). They began the work of the church, as commanded in the great commission—by teaching or preaching the gospel (Acts 2:14-40). As the believers were multiplied (Acts 2:41; Acts 4:5; Acts 5:14; Acts 6:7), emergencies arose.

(1) This great multitude must be grounded in the work of the Lord.

Hence, , the anosties taught, and preached daily, in the temple, and from house to house. These converts 'continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, and the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

(2) Thousands of these new converts were far from home, they must be cared for.

To meet this demand, "They sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need" (Acts 2:43-41; 4:32-35). A little diversion. These devout Christians said that they might give; too many Christians now, buy so they cannot give.

(3) These provisions given so generously, must be used and dis-tributed wisely.

The apostles must preach the word. They ordered: "Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full ox the Spirit and wisdom, whom we mav appoint over this business. But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and m the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:3-4). Thus this emergency w'as met.

(4) As tune moved on, men who were capable were selected to have the oversight of this church.

So, elders wnre appointed to oversee, tend, and shepherd the Jerusalem flock. These elders are mentioned in Acts 15:2; Acts 15:4; Acts 15:3; Acts 15:22).

(5) Since the church wras "scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judsea and Samaria"—the plan and order, Christ had designed to evangelize these provinces (Acts 1:8), there was a pressing demand for many teachers.

How was it met? This wray. "They therefore that were scattered abroad, went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Thus this emergency was met.

(6) And finally, the new converts of the church that were established in many places, would need spiritual nurture, and to be firmly established ip the faith of the Lord.

So the apostles sent Peter- and John to the city of Samaria, to encourage them, and to transfer the Holy Spirit. This miraculous bestowal of the Spirit was to reveal and confirm the church there,

in the absence of the New Testament record. These men having “testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans” (Acts 8:14-17; Acts 8:25). Later, this church sent Barnabas to Antioch, to exhort and strengthen the saints there (Acts 11:22-26).

Thus it is seen the first church was ordered—systematized—put into working order by, (1) Continual teaching; (2) Working, and encouraging all to work. Talents were developed for the various ministries of the church by work; and (3) As this working church created emergencies, men full of wisdom, were selected to meet the demands. Thus it should be now; and it will be, if the New Testament is followed.

Extent of Organization. No organization that is properly organized, is overly organized. Reverting to the definition as to how to organize; a second look, will simplify this division of the lecture, and will give a new slant on the extent of organization. “To arrange or constitute in interdependent parts, each having a special function, act, or relation with respect to the whole; to systematize; to get into working order; to organize an army; to organize recruits.” When any phase of the church work—however worthy, hampers the work as a whole, it is overly organized. When the relationship of part to part, or part to the whole, or the whole to the head of the church is not respected; rest assured, there is over or super organization. It is top-heavy, and will, sooner or later fall under the weight of human wisdom. When missionary zeal, charitable functions, or local preaching, or a committee on finances, or the Bible School work, or the Ladies’ Bible class, or the Young People’s Meeting, or any other work of the church, hampers any part, or the whole of the work, it is ill-timed, or overly organized. When one or more of these functions predominates, the church is turned from its God-given channel, and it has too much organization.

It is also well to remember, there is to be no organization within the Divine Organization, the church. Organized Sunday Schools, Classes, Young People’s Meetings, Ladies’ Bible Classes, Missionary Societies, with their presidents, secretaries, treasurers, vice-presidents, and committees—-independent of, or within the church; all alike, are unscriptural, and are pointed examples of over-organization. They are a repudiation of Divine Wisdom. One of the speakers on this program quoted a Christian preacher as saying: “There should be a ‘Four-S-Society’ among us—a society of Suppression to Suppress the Superfluous Societies among us.” The gentleman was well qualified to speak, and sounds a timely note of warning to “us.” This does not mean that all of the work of the church should not be “set in order,” and properly timed, and done in the most fitting way. No, it means there is one Divine organization—the church, the body of Christ. Over this, Christ is the head, and Chief Shepherd with all authority; elders are under-shepherds, to rule, defend, feed, protect and lead; with its deacons to serve; with its members to work; and with the preachers to preach. Anything short of, or beyond this, is going beyond that which is written (1 Jno. 9).

## The Pastoral Work of a Local Church

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### The Pastoral Work of a Local Church THE PASTORAL WORK OF A LOCAL CHURCH

By Roy H. Lanier In this study of the pastoral work of a local church we shall first ask, What is the pastoral work of a church? The answer to this question may be stated both in principle and detailed application of the principle. We shall use three passages of scripture, in the analysis of which, the pastoral work of a church is clearly defined.

First, Ephesians 4:11-15, "And he gave some to be apos-tles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ." From this scripture we learn it to be the duty of each church to perfect, the saints, to bring each individual into the state of maturity, "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." And I hope you will not lose sight of the fact that each individual member of the church is entitled to such attention as is necessary to bring that one to maturity. This perfecting of the saints, as set forth in this passage, contemplates at least five things:

1. That we come into the church in an immature state; that we are babes in Christ, unable to care for our own growth properly.
2. It contemplates the operation of a law of growth in each individual in the church; that it is God's plan, and intention, that each person shall grow in knowledge, experience, wisdom, strength, and activity; and that this growth will be in harmony with certain fixed laws, and the result of certain efforts on the part of the church.
3. It contemplates the character of Christ as the ultimate goal for each individual to reach, or at least toward which to strive.
4. This passage contemplates hindrances, such as "every wind of doctrine," "the sleight of men," and "the wiles of error," which may check, or completely prevent, the operation of the law of growth toward the fulness of Christ. And,
5. It is also suggested that the work of the church is to care for the immature and guide them safely past all hindrances. It is for this purpose that the gifts, mentioned in verse 11, were bestowed upon the church. And among these gifts is found that of "pastors," which proves that the work outlined is a pastoral work. Our second passage is found in Colossians 3:10. ' "And have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him." This verse also suggests five things:

1. That we begin the Christian life as a new (young) creature.

2. That the new creature is being renewed. Notice the tense of the verb, "is being," which denotes continuous process; it is being continually renewed. Notice too that it is passive, which suggests that the renewing is something done to the individual. And the word "renew" simply means gathering strength, or growing, developing.

3. This growth is "unto knowledge." Of this word "Knowledge," Thayer says it is used in the New Testament to mean "precise and correct knowledge of things ethical and divine." The teaching is this, that the individual is to be brought to that stage of maturity where he can distinguish between right and wrong; where he can make keen, clear-cut distinctions in spite of the devil's efforts to make all things appear acceptable.

4. Again the likeness of Christ is the goal of all efforts, the standard by which our pastoral work is judged. And,

5. This renewal of the new creature is made the basis of a high standard of morals, which standard is urged "seeing ye have put off the old man and have put on the new man which is being renewed." The third passage which teaches our principle is Colossians 1:28. "Whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ." This passage suggests five things:

1. Imperfection on the part of every man, and the responsibility of improvement.

2. It lays stress on the individuality of the work. The phrase "every man" is used three times in this short verse, "admonish every man," "teach every man," and "present every man." This suggests that we will not be presented to the Lord as a congregation, but that the pastors of the churches will present their work one individual at a time for the Lord's inspection, when they give account of the souls over which they have watched.

3. The methods and instruments of the maturing process are suggested as, proclaiming, admonishing, and teaching God's word.

4. This is a work which requires wisdom, for which we are taught to pray. This work is to be done "in all wisdom." It also requires labor and striving on the part of the one who thus works on this material which is to be presented to Christ. And,

5. This work is done in view of a day of presentation. The laborers work and strive that they may have "every man" perfect, or full grown, when the time comes to present their work to the Master. And since the Master will inspect, judge, each piece of work separately, the pastoral work of the church is to give special attention to each member, doing what is necessary to bring each one to the highest possible stage of perfection. The application of the principle set forth in these three passages is two-fold. First, the pastoral work of the local church is to bring each member to the highest possible stage of perfection in doctrine. Doctrine is the foundation on which the structure of life is erected. The need of a good, broad, deep foundation to support a superstructure is the need of sound doctrine as the sure foundation for an active spiritual life. It is then the duty of the local church to teach the word of God to each member, to ground each in the faith, that he may stand against the wiles of error. Not only should each member be taught the whole truth as it is revealed in the Bible, but he should be taught the false doctrines most prevalent that he may be prepared to make his own choice between truth and error and that he may be able to lead others out of error

into truth. The apostle Paul warns us that in these “later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1); and that the faith of some may be “overthrown”-by the teaching of error (2 Timothy 2:18). Since babes in Christ must associate daily with people who believe and teach false doctrines, they must be equipped with sufficient truth to withstand “every wind of doctrine,” and, if possible, open the eyes of them who are blinded by false teaching. Considering the value of souls it is imperative that the local church begin early and earnestly to bring each convert to that degree of maturity which will insure his safety. Since false teachers are going about seeking whom they may ensnare, the church is also obligated to furnish protection by “exhorting in sound doctrine and convicting the gainsayers. For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers ... whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not” (Titus 1:9-11). This protection against false doctrines is as necessary as the teaching of the truth, and should be done as fearlessly and as unsparingly. But to bring babes in Christ to maturity in doctrine without leading them to apply that doctrine in every-day life will make legalists, formalists. And that is a danger toward which, I fear, some of us are working. Surely then it is the pastoral work of the church to perfect every saint, to present every man as fully developed, and as near perfection in practical Christian living as possible. But that we may make the matter as clear as possible, let us descend once more to details, only to suggest the different spheres of life in which each member should be brought to the stage of maturity.

#### 1. In His Social Life.

Each member of the church is to be brought by teaching and guidance to correct social standards, that he may choose between what is right and wrong. From a failure on the part of many to form correct social standards and maintain them, the boundary line between the church and the world is all but erased. “Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (1 Corinthians 15:33), said Paul, and it is still necessary for us to remember this when doing the pastoral work of the church. One may learn Christian doctrine perfectly and attend every service of the church, and still be in danger of becoming again entangled in worldliness on account of his companionships. It is also a common experience with preachers to find some who are best versed in the scriptures living on about the lowest moral level of any in the church. We must learn that regardless of how well one knows the scripture, and regardless of how regularly one attends church services, if his social life is on a low vulgar level, that one is not a Christian.

#### 2. In Amusements and Recreation.

It is the pastoral work of the church to lead each member to the plane of mature Christian living in regard to his amusements and recreation. There are types of amusements and recreation which are positive hindrances to spiritual growth. Babes in Christ are to be taught self-denial, and led into the application of that principle by refraining from taking part in such. The time and expense of certain types of amusements and recreation forbid that a Christian take part while his time and money are to be used in carrying the gospel to this sinful world, and to feed and clothe the destitute. To know the doctrine and attend church services regularly while continuing to take part in questionable amusements and recreation not only subjects the church to shame and reproach on one's account but it also exposes one to the danger of other and more grievous departures from correct standards.

### 3. In His Business Life.

It is the pastoral work of the local church to give each member engaged in business such instruction and guidance as will lead to the formation and practice of thoroughly Christian principles in legitimate activities. Young people need help to interpret business ethics in the light of Christianity. They need to be taught how Christ would meet the business world, and which of its principles he would use and which he would discard; and then they need to be shown by their elders how Christ would do these things. As in other activities mentioned, so in business, one may be well versed in the scriptures and attend church services regularly and still use unchristian principles, or be engaged in unchristian activities. It is easy for one to divorce completely his church life and business life, and excuse his unchristian principles and activities on the ground that present day methods and competition make it impossible to follow first century standards of ethics. Such reasoning on the part of even one business man in the church makes it imperative that those responsible for the pastoral work of the church provide such instruction and guidance as will lead all to attain to that measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ in business life.

### 4. In His Home Life.

Another pastoral work of the church is to make the homes of its members thoroughly Christian. The home is God's oldest institution on this earth, and a very important institution. Statesmen have been saying for years that the success of our nation depends upon the success of the homes. And with an equal degree of truth it may be said that the success of the homes depends in whether or not the church gives it that instruction and guidance it needs in order to make a worthwhile contribution to the nation. Christian homes are not the product of chance or accident; they are the result of Christian planning and Christian building which must be done in spite of discouragements and hindrances from within and without. And the success of this planning and budding depends upon Christian teaching and examples. Every church owes it to its young people to offer a course of study in home planning and building. Young men need to be taught what are the duties of a husband and father; and young women need to be taught by experienced teachers how to be Christian wives and mothers. As in business, so in home life, many are inclined to divorce it from the church; they fail to apply in their homes the principles which they learn from the church. So a man who never prays in his home may most frequently lead the church in prayer; and the man who offers thanks every Sunday at the Lord's table may never offer a word of thanks at his own table. And the woman who so tenderly and patiently teaches her class of children in the Bible school may scold and upbraid her own children at home, but never teach them God's word. And the husband and father who is the soul of courtesy and unselfishness before the public, may be a contemptible, self-centered old grouch in his home. In all such cases there is need for pastoral work in order to bring such individuals up to that degree of perfection which will be pleasing to our Lord.

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### 5. In Jesus Worship.

Since people do not become fervent worshippers of God by accident, it is the duty of each church to teach each and every member how to worship. Our Lord's disciples asked him to teach them how to pray as John taught his disciples. Babies in Christ need to be taught how to sing, how to

pray, how to take the Lord's supper, and how to give. Anyone can sing or pray, or take the Lord's supper or give, but few worship when they do these things; few enter into communion with God, or know how pleasant or profitable such experiences are. Those who know the joys and satisfaction of worship do not need to be urged to attend prayer meetings. So all should be led, through proper instruction and guidance, into such experiences as will cause them to love the worship, rather than go through the form because of a sense of duty.

## 6. In His Service.

Saints are to be perfected in order to the work of serving, or ministering. This statement from Paul suggests that there ought to be some work done toward perfecting the saint before he can render service; and that this work of perfecting the saints is the pastoral work of the church. Since there are many lines of service to be performed in the church, and since there is to be a member for each service, it is necessary that each babe in Christ make a choice as to what line of service he will enter. He then should make careful preparation to render the best service possible in his chosen field. In his choice and preparation the church should lend encouragement and counsel. He should be encouraged to make his selection as early as possible, and to persevere both in preparation and performance of his service. No doubt many are idle today because no one has given them the leadership they need in selecting and preparing for service. Thinning ranks of experienced servants are emphasizing the need for such leadership in the church today. The second question in our study of the pastoral work of the church is, Who should do the pastoral work of the church? I realize this is a very simple question, the answer to which, especially to this audience, is most evident. All through the years from the pulpits we have preached the truth, and from the debate platform we have contended for the right; but in spite of this in our practice, "brethren, we are drifting." For this reason I think it worthwhile to set forth the New Testament plan for doing the pastoral work of the church. In the first place the student of the New Testament cannot keep from noticing certain words or titles used in certain definite connections. The first of these is the word "elder."

"And when they had appointed for them elders in every church" (Acts 14:23) ;

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church" (Acts 20:17);  
"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in word and in teaching" (1 Timothy 5:17); and,

"The elders therefore, among you I exhort .... Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly" (1 Peter 5:12). The word "elder" is a Jewish term which denotes rank of office, and, according to Thayer\* is used "of those who preside, over the assemblies, or churches." The next word which suggests something as to who should do the pastoral work of the church is "bishop" or "overseer." "Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock, in the which the Holy spirit hath made you bishops—to feed the church of the Lord" (Acts 20:28); Paul writes to "all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" - Php\_1:1); "If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. The bishop therefore must be without reproach" (1 Timothy 3:1-2); and, "For the bishop must be blameless" (Titus 1:7). This word "bishop" is taken from Greek institutions, and denotes function, whereas "elder" denotes rank of office. The definition of the word as given by Thayer is, "An overseer—a man charged with the duty of seeing that things done by others are done rightly .... In the New

Testament, a guardian of souls, one who watches over their welfare; the superintendent, head, or overseer of any Christian Church.” Certainly the word itself, to say nothing of the connection in which it is used, would suggest to the student that the one wearing the title would have much to do with the pastoral work of the church. And the third word used in the New Testament which suggests who is to do the pastoral work of the church is “pastor,” or “shepherd.” This word is from the Greek word “poimeen,” and is used by Jesus when he said, “I am the good shepherd”; it is used of him when he is called “that great shepherd of the sheep” (Heb. 13:30), and “Ye have returned to the shepherd and bishop of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25); and the word is used by Paul to designate those who are to “perfect the saints,” when he said, ‘And he gave some to be pastors .... for the perfecting of the saints” (Ephesians 4:11). That all three of these words refer to men filling one office is more than evident. For when Paul left Titus in Crete to appoint elders in every city, he described the qualifications in which he referred to them as bishops’. Again, Paul called the elders from Ephesus and told them that the Holy Spirit had made them bishops of the church. But if someone contends that bishops were appointed from among elders, I remind you that one became an elder, in this use of the term, by appointment. For Titus was to appoint elders in every city, and Paul also appointed elders in every church (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23). Another line of reasoning which proves these words to refer to the same office, and which ties in the third term used, is taken from Peter’s charge. “The elders therefore among you I exhort .... Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight” (1 Peter 5:1-2). Here the elders are to tend, or shepherd the flock; but to shepherd the flock is the work of the shepherd, or pastor; therefore the elders are to be pastors. Again the elders were to “exercise the oversight.” The words “exercising oversight” are the translation of one Greek word “episkopountes,” which is the participial form of a verb whose noun is translated “bishop,” showing that the work of the elder is, using another translation of the word, “doing the duty of a bishop.” Surely no careful student can read through the New Testament without getting the idea that the men who are described by these terms are charged with the responsibility of doing the pastoral work of the church. But when we study the duties of elders, bishops, pastors, as laid down in the New Testament, we are led to the firm conviction that they are the men whom God expects to do the pastoral work of the church. First, these men are said to “rule over” the church (Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17)\* The words “rule over” here are a translation of the Greek word “heegeomai,” which is defined by Thayer to mean, “leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel.” While; in 1 Timothy 5:17 -- “Let the elders that rule well,” the word rule comes from “proisteemi,” and means “To be over, superintend, to preside over.” This word is also used in 1 Thessalonians 5:12 Where Paul exhorts the church to “know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.” And in the same connection Paul says to them that are over the church, “Admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all.” In this connection we may as well study a third term which suggests a similar duty of these men who are to do the pastoral work of the church. This word is “episkopountes,” and is translated “exercising the oversight,” or “doing the duty of a bishop.” This is to be done willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; “neither as lording it over the charge allotted you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2-3). From this we learn that these elders, doing the duty of bishops, have a charge allotted to them. And the relationship of these elders to the charge is expressed in the words “exercising oversight,” and “neither as lording it over.” But surely these passages are sufficient to prove that the elders were responsible for the conduct of the members’ of the churches. But there are two

other words Which more clearly indicate the pastoral duties of these men. These words are taken from pastoral life. The first is "agrupneo," which Thayer says means, "to watch." He also says it is a term taken from pastoral life That means "to exercise constant vigilance;"? This word is Used in Hebrews 13:17, "Obey them that have the rule over you and submit to them: for they Watch; in behalf of your Souls as they that shall give account."

Here we have the picture of an undershepherd keeping constant watch over his flock, feeding each one and caring for each one, knowing that he must give account to the owner, or overshepherd. The other word taken from shepherd life is "poimaino," and means "To feed, to tend, to keep sheep." It is used in Acts 20:28 where the bishops are told to "feed the church of the Lord," and in 1 Peter 5:2 where elders are told to "tend the flock of God which is among you." Of this latter use Bloomfield says, "The sense is: Nourish with sound doctrine, and take care of the morals of those committed to your care." To shepherd a flock is to do more than to feed, or tend; both words are necessary to express the idea. The shepherd both fed and cared for his flock. So the elders are to shepherd the flock, to feed and protect, to nourish and guide people in the charge allotted to them. From these passages it is evident that the Lord made the elders, pastors, bishops, responsible for the pastoral work of the church. And that every member in every church might have this pastoral care the apostles "appointed elders in every church." As stated before we all believe this and preach it this way, but with one consent we all begin to make excuses: It is said, Our elders are business men and do not have time to visit from house to house, or to look after each individual in the Church. Or, Our elders are laboring men whose employers require all their time, and they are not financially able to take off sufficient time to do such pastoral work. But if similar excuses were given by our denominational friends for not being baptized, or for not taking the Lord's supper, we would literally cover them with arguments that God's plan is to be followed regardless of the sacrifice one must make. The fact that these conditions exist is proof that our present trend is definitely toward the one man pastor system. I do not believe preachers are to be blamed for being the pastors of the churches. In many places they have found the elders incapable of doing the work, and in other places they were not financially able to take the time to do their work. So rather than see the work go undone, the preachers have done it for the elders. We have tried to justify ourselves in this by saying the elders are having the work done, overseeing it; doing the work by proxy. But the leading part taken by the average preacher silences this quibble. Neither do I think our elders are to blame for this situation. In the main they are good men who love the church and want to see it grow. But they are working men and have little time or energy to give to study or to visiting, and consequently it has seemed necessary to ask the preacher to do the pastoral work of the church. And since it certainly is no sin for a preacher to visit from house to house, encourage, admonish, exhort and reprove, it has appeared to be a fair solution of our problem. Another thing which has contributed to our failure to use God's plan is the fact that when an elder becomes efficient as a public teacher, and has sufficient ability to meet and mix with the public to make him a leader, he immediately turns preacher. So instead of being one of the pastors, he becomes "the pastor" of a church. But I am not an alarmist; I am not afraid the church will fail, or that it will apostatize. When we found ourselves on the back street in a little one-room building, where you couldn't do the work of the Lord, we pulled up on Main Street and built a suitable plant for work and worship. When we found our boys and girls educated by infidels, we built Christian schools where they may have a college education under faithful teachers while living in a Christian environment. When we discovered that we were doing nothing

to care for homeless children, we built and equipped homes to care for them. We have been busy at these tasks and our success may truly be said to be outstanding. In my opinion our next task, and a pressing need, is to outline and put into operation a program of pastoral work in the churches by the pastors whom the Holy Spirit has placed over the churches. To my mind this will require a three-point program. First teach and train, as far as possible, our present elderships, this work will have to be done by preachers who do not want to be “the pastors,” and by those elders who are really qualified for their work and are awake to the need of a scriptural pastoral work.

Second, an extensive course of teaching and training for young men who wish to be elders. Elders are not made by chance or accident; neither are they born. Elders are made through teaching and training. These courses ought to be offered in each local congregation, and in our Christian colleges. And third, when a man has been prepared to do the pastoral work of the church, keep him from turning preacher and be-coming “the pastor” of a church. To do this churches may have to pay their elders a part-time salary, and possibly full salary; but if they do, they have scriptural authority for doing it. As a result of such a program churches will be able to carry on their work and worship without the aid of a preacher every Sunday in the year, and preachers will be released from so many pastoral duties so that they can preach the gospel in communities where there is no church, and in regions beyond where the gospel has never gone.

#### Questions for Study

1. With the aid of a dictionary the student should learn the meaning of the words elder; presbyter; pastor; shepherd; bishop; overseer. The difference between Bible usage and present day usage should be noticed.
2. Name and discuss the five things contemplated in Eph. 4:11-15.
3. Name and discuss the five things suggested in Col. 3:10.
4. Name and discuss the five things taught in Col. 1:28.
5. Discuss the importance of sound doctrine in perfecting the saints.
6. What is the result of much doctrinal teaching without guidance in application of the doctrine taught ?
7. What is the duty of the church to each member with reference to his social life?
8. What can the church do about the recreational life of each member ?
9. What guidance may business men and women expect from the church?
10. What contribution should the church make to our home life?
11. What oversight should the church exercise in our worship?
12. How can the church help each member to render his best service to the church?
13. What terms are used in the New Testament to designate those who are to do the pastoral work of the church?

14. Were these terms, according to New Testament usage, applied to one person ?
15. Who has the ruling power in the church? And what restrictions are placed on their power to rule?
16. What is the duty of members of the church toward the rulers?
17. What words describing the duties of elders are taken from shepherd life?  
And what peculiar duties are expressed by them?
18. Why have churches not followed God's plan for pastoral work?
19. What can be done to improve our situation? Name as many as possible.
20. To whom can we look to take the lead in making these improvements?
21. What can the young people in the church do to improve our situation?

## Worship

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### Worship WORSHIP

By James Burton Coffman

#### I. What Is Worship?

A. Definition difficult

B. The channels of worship

C. The conditions accompanying true worship

1. Consciousness of God's presence

2. Realization of sin and imperfection

3. Recognition of the love of God

4. Sense of forgiveness

5. Personal acceptance of the call for duty

D. Man may participate in the ceremonial of worship without really worshipping

#### II. How May the Spirit and Experience of Worship Be Developed in a Congregation?

A. The practice of worship

B. The emphasis of the worship rather than the sermon

C. The building of the proper atmosphere of worship by attention to

1. The building

2. The preacher

3. The song leader and song service

4. The congregation

5. Participants in the services

D. An educational campaign along the lines suggested

1. In colleges

2. In religious papers

3. In the local churches

#### III. What Are the Blessings that Flow from the Wor-ship of God?

- A. The formation of Christ-like character
- B. A revitalizing of the forces for Christian unity
- C. Attainment of the proper perspective for true living
- D. Release from fear
  - 1. Fear of the natural elements
  - 2. Fear of the animal creation
  - 3. Fear of the supernatural creation
  - 4. Fear of the unknown
- E. Conclusion

#### Introduction

There is an elusive quality about all spiritual things that defies definition. It would be as easy to catch a sunbeam with a typewriter ribbon or to show the beauty of the rainbow in a pencil sketch as it is to produce an adequate definition of that deep spiritual phenomenon! that men call worship. Every student of .the Bible is aware that in New Testament times the church of Christ functioned along five definite channels of worship:

1. Meditation upon the sacred word, aided either by Scripture reading or a sermon
2. Singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
3. Prayer
4. Observance of the Lord's Supper
5. Giving of material support to the cause

These five spiritual activities were distinctly a part of the regular Lord's day assemblies in the churches; yet these five items of worship were then, as they are now, merely the authorized channels in which the rivers of true worship were designed to flow. They bear, in fact, the same relationship to true worship that a river channel bears to the roaring flood between its banks; or, using a different figure, they bear the same relationship to worship that a power line bears to the mysterious current moving within it. Presenting a definition of worship, then, is not so simple as merely listing the so-called items that are found in it.

#### What Worship Is

Worship is that consciousness of the presence of God that the Pharisee did not have as he stood praying with himself in the temple. It is that devotion so evidently lacking in the Corinthians who degenerated the Lord's Supper into a drunken revel. It is that illumination which was needed by the woman at Samaria's well who could speak glibly about the most Sacred matters without the slightest understanding of them. It is the realization in an active conscious way of our sinfulness, dependence upon God, and of our desperate need of his mercy and help. It is the overwhelming conviction that he loves us, and the defi-nite accumulation in one's heart of a purpose to be worthy

in as much as it is humanly possible of that “love which passeth understanding. An analysis of worship shows that it is always accompanied by certain conditions that vary only in degree and without which true worship simply does not exist, no matter how vigorously one may give himself over to the practice of the authorized ceremonial of worship.

### Analysis of True Worship

1. First among these conditions is a consciousness of the presence of God. It is impossible to separate this awareness of God's presence from any worship that is real in spite of the fact that a person may go to church, listen to the sermon, and even take the Lord's Supper without discerning the Lord Jesus (See 1 Corinthians 11:29). The fact that people sometimes engage in the most solemn acts of worship without really worshipping is demonstrated by our own experience as well as proved by the Word of God. If some men do, however, frequent the place of worship without any consciousness of God's presence, it was not so with the prophet Isaiah. He too went into the place of worship, but what did he see? “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly And one cried to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isaiah 6:1-3). But if Isaiah was filled with a consciousness of God's presence, there are many others who seem blissfully ignorant of his very existence. There were men like this even in the days of Jesus, for example, the Pharisee who prayed with himself in the temple. He has been accurately described as a man who had a good eye upon himself, a bad eye upon his neighbor, and no eye at all upon God! Just listen to his prayer. It is the classic example of, how men: ought not to pray (Luke 18:11). He recites a list of his supposed virtues, casts an evil slur upon the unfortunate publican, and struts through the ritual of the temple service with about as much spiritual feeling and worship as would be evidenced by a fat swine at a flower show.

2. There is another condition that is an inevitable accessory to worship and that is a realization of one's sin and imperfection. It is no accident that when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord, he cried out in the same breath and said, “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:5). Wherever, whenever any man is able to gain a consciousness of the presence of God, there is the immediate realization of sin. That greater robber who was crucified with his partner in crime by the side of our Lord was brazen enough until he saw himself against the sinless background of the holy Savior. But with that perception his self-sufficiency was gone. He did not even join in the railings of the crowd as did the other thief. “Dost thou not fear God?” he asked in amazement. He was willing to admit in the bitter agony of that hour that such a horrible death was no more than he deserved (Luke 23:40-41). This is the attitude of every man who is made to feel that he is in the presence of God. Sinner or saint, robber or prophet, the man who sees God is keenly aware of sin. How remarkably different is the man who does not realize God's presence! The Pharisee (Luke 18) rolled his professed virtues as a sweet morsel under his tongue and went down to his house without justification simply because it had never dawned upon him that he had the slightest need of justification.

3. Again, there is in true worship a realization of the love of God. The same sunshine may fall upon a lump of charcoal or a wondrous diamond like the Star of Africa, but how different the results!

One is as black as midnight. The other is a jewel of priceless beauty. One is worthless. The other is the guarded treasure of an empire. Why? One is able to reflect the sunlight. The other is not. It is this quality alone that makes the vast difference, for the chemist declares the two lumps to be very similar in every way. But this. This quality of being able to reflect light is highly suggestive of the person who worships God. The worshiper who reflects in his soul the love of the Father has found the secret of worship. This ability to reflect the love of God was the characteristic that wrote in the everlasting hall of fame the name of a poor woman who slipped into the dining room long ago where Jesus sat at meat with Simon to break upon his blessed person a treasured box of nard. When this woman encountered in the person of Christ one whose love was of the essence of truth and purity, she was swept with deepest emotion bursting forth in a flood of hot tears falling down upon his feet. She reflected the Lord's love, and in the glory of that borrowed light her name and deed will shine forever in the constellation of God's great. Simon the host on that occasion, had no such quality: He brazenly slighted Christ, his invited guest, by denying him the common little courtesies of the times like a bowl of water for his feet and a kiss of welcome. He was not a bad man, for the Lord admitted that Simon was ten times as righteous as the weeping woman at his feet. The sin of Simon was that he did not love the Lord. His righteousness could not atone for that damning failure. He could not reflect the love of Christ and was therefore unacceptable to God.

4. A fourth condition in worship is a sense of the forgiveness of sins. This is a most remarkable result of worship and is one reason why men should worship frequently. Sin is a deadly weight and burden upon the heart of man, and the true worship of God is alone capable of removing the sense of guilt with which all are afflicted because all have sinned. Worship alone will yield that happiness and release of spirit that accompany a sense of the forgiveness of sins. In the vision of Isaiah already mentioned it will be remembered that the prophet received a sense of the forgiveness of sins in this way, "There flew one of the seraphims unto him having a live coal in his hands, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar." And he laid it upon Isaiah's mouth and said, "Lo this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged" (Isa. 6:67). In the New Testament there is frequent mention of the rejoicing of the true worshippers. This rejoicing followed the sense of the forgiveness of sins that came with obedience in baptism, as, for example, in the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch. It also followed from the true worship engaged in after the new birth as Paul said in Php\_3:3, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus." Joy is listed second among the fruits of the spirit in Galatians 5:22, being preceded only by love. The absence of "Rejoicing in Jesus Christ" is the symptom of a dreadful illness, the cure of which is worshipping God in spirit and in truth.

5. But there is yet another condition present in worship. That is a vivid personal response to the call of duty, in other words, a sense of dedication of one's self to the doing of God's will. Isaiah is also a good example of this condition, for he said, "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom, shall I send, and who will go for us? then I said, Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8). Every man who worships God in spirit and in truth will find the same expression in his heart if not actually on his lips. Paul in the blinding light of the Damascus road accepted the obligation to serve and dedicated his life to Jesus in the words, "What shall I do, Lord?" (Acts 22:10). This conscious dedication of one's life to God is an integral part of worship; and the absence of it is a sure sign that a man is attempting to worship with reservation. From this we see that worship consists of five fundamentals : a consciousness of God's presence, a realization of sin and unworthiness, a

quicken awareness of the Father's love, a rejoicing because of the remission of sins, and a personal acceptance of our obligation to serve God without limit or reservation. From this analysis there then derives a conclusion that ought to shatter the smug self-righteousness with which some in our day would try to cloak their spiritual barrenness. That conclusion is this: A man may be regular at the Lord's table; he may pray the longest prayers in the church; he may sing the loudest, give the most money, and know the Bible by heart, and yet not be in any adequate sense a genuine worshipper of God. This does not in any way depreciate the true worth of the authorized routine of worship. It is only the channel which can prevent a river from becoming a swamp. The same is true with regard to worship. The five items recognized in the New Testament as belonging in the acceptable worship of God are there by God's authority not men's; but in this address we are pleading with men to use them as they were intended. They are the true channels of worship; but the real thing must flow in them or they will become dry, dusty beds of formalism and spiritual poverty. May we never forget that we are to worship God in the spirit as well as in the truth (John 4:24).

#### How the Spirit and Experience of Worship May Be Developed in a Local Congregation of the Body of Jesus Christ

Out of this conclusion, there naturally arises a question: How may the spirit and experience of worship be developed in a local congregation of the body of Christ? You will permit me to confess that I do not feel able to answer this question to the satisfaction of this audience. I am not even able to answer it to my own satisfaction. There are, however, certain methods, the observance of which will at least encourage a more objective approach toward meeting this great need. Our efforts to do this are exceedingly timely, for the dearth of true worship in the churches is a common scandal. The Roman Catholic Church in America today is able to proselyte all other religious bodies, including (in a very limited sense, thank God) the churches of Christ; and they are doing it simply because they are able to demonstrate a better atmosphere of worship in their regular services. It is not our intention here to impose the blame upon others. In the early days of the restoration movement, men said, "Let us restore apostolic Christianity in worship, doctrine, and life." This was a great vision to which they devotedly gave their lives and their fortunes. Their work was heroic; but because of the bitter sectarian rivalry of the times, they were compelled by sheer force of circumstances to give the most of their energies to the restoration of the New Testament doctrine and were compelled to be more or less governed by the accepted standards of the day relative to the spirit of worship and the formation of Christ-like character. To use the words of Dr. J. E. Belcher of the University of Oklahoma, "The letter of New Testament Christianity was restored during the nineteenth century, and it is high time that the spirit of it be restored likewise." It is as true now as it was in the days of Paul that the "letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

Here are a number of suggestions that might in some instances prove helpful in promotion of a better spirit of worship:

1. Let there be a sharpening of the spiritual faculties of men through the practice of worship. As matters are today in many churches it is possible for a well planned service to fall upon unappreciative ears and hearts, simply because many of the people are not fitted through their training to participate in a truly spiritual service. This accounts for the generally poor showing that

is now made at the prayer meeting service. At least, it partially accounts for it. Many people who are not equipped by training to participate in the worship service such as a prayer meeting are in the same condition as the people mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." The sharpenings of this sense of spiritual discernment should be one of the prime objectives in any campaign to improve the spirit of worship in our services, and that can be accomplished only by practice. Men and women should be persuaded to readjust themselves upon a more spiritual plane of living and begin to utilize more generally those fine spiritual services of the church like the prayer meetings.

2. The building of the services around the idea of the worship, rather than around the sermon is becoming more and more necessary.

The over-emphasis upon the sermon that was the natural result of the reformation is taking an evil toll of the churches. Christian people are demanding that the sermons be shorter and shorter. Admittedly, some of this demand arises from questionable motives, but not all of it. The space of the last one hundred fifty years has cut the length of the average sermon from about two hours down to less than thirty minutes. Why is this? Because audiences, more and more unskilled in the practice of worship, have found the sermons less and less satisfying; and preachers, catering to the degenerating taste have gone in for sensationalism of the lower types and have thereby continued the vicious circle by leaving the audiences still less trained in worship. When people are better taught how to worship they will again be happy to listen to longer sermons. The present condition is the natural, result of a misplaced emphasis upon the sermon. It is imperative that instruction be undertaken at once upon the broadest possible basis that people may accumulate true skill in most essential business of the worship of God. There is a single sentence in Acts of Apostles that shows where the emphasis in our services really belongs. Acts 20:7, "And when the disciples came together upon the first day of the week to break bread, Paul preached unto them." Such a thing as that could have happened only in the apostolic age. In our day it would have happened like this, "When the disciples turned out in a body to hear Paul preach, they also break bread." Let the emphasis be returned once more to the worship instead of left upon the sermon, and paradoxically that will give us more and better preaching. Martin Luther said that it was impossible to have a worship service without a sermon; but the intervening four hundred years have proved that where people are incapable of worship in the deeper sense, it does precious little good to listen to sermons. This in no way minimizes the importance of preaching. It is still God's will that by the foolishness of preaching he will save them that believe; but it should be heeded that in the assembly of the church, the worship service, not the sermon, is central and deserves the emphasis. Men should be taught to remember that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst of them. Attention should once more be focused upon the invisible Christ instead of the too audible preacher. It is this invisible presence of the Master in our services that constitutes the heart, soul, and reality of worship. God help us to teach men so and to show them that we believe it!

3. The creating of the proper atmosphere of worship is essential in the development that we should strive for.

The following factors enter into the final equation:

#### A. The Building Itself.

We cannot agree with Dr. Lockhart that a church needs the kind of stimulus that can come only from a Gothic cathedral. Yet, we cannot deny that the building itself has a definite bearing upon the atmosphere of worship. This principle is capable of abuse; and it should not be forgotten that Paul and Silas worshipped God in a dungeon at Philippi; and that the martyrs poured out their acceptable worship unto God even amid the howling cries of the Roman circus. In spite of this, however, we must admit that circumstances were present in those cases which do not now exist; and we must confess that worship is today often hindered by the types and conditions of some of our church houses. Michaelangelo was on his death bed, and a priest with a crucifix approached and began intoning the last rites of the Catholic Church; but the great artist-sculptor interrupted him to say, "Father the spirit is good, but the art is terrible." The same thing may honestly be said of many of our church houses. This is no plea for extravagant church buildings ; but surely, it is in keeping with the dignity and mission of the church of Christ to locate our church houses in accessible and pleasant surroundings, to keep them in a state of thoughtful cleanliness, to give attention to landscaping etc., and to provide in them the intangible something called atmosphere by the judicious use of flowers, paint, rugs, tapestries, etc. Certainly, it is no glory to God in the church which permits its building to go without repairs or present an untidy appearance on the Lord's day.

#### B. The Preacher.

The preacher himself is a definite part of the atmosphere in a church. A church will sometimes over-look this fact, but not for long. The preacher whose undignified antics in the pulpit or whose carelessness of dress are unbecoming the gospel will find after awhile that entertainment cannot take the place of worship. The pulpit is no place to be rowdy, boisterous, or silly. Every man who habitually goes before an audience assembled for worship should be awed by the terrible responsibility of it and so live that men may realize that he has been with Jesus. His part in conducting the services should be executed without error. The kind of God who set the planets in space is not honored by a service that begins five minutes late or by a minister who has to have a conference with the elders and deacons while the first song is being sung. Handshaking with late comers, not only encourages their tardiness but disturbs the ones who came on time—to worship.

#### C. The Song Leader and Song Service.

Instead of trying to fit the songs in with the sermon topic, why should they not be selected with a view to inducing the audience to worship God? There are two widespread hindrances" to a spiritual song service that should be removed. These are, (1) interruptions of the singing by conversation of the worshippers (?) and the seating of late-comers during the song and (2) the use of a sype of songs unsuited to church worship. Admittedly there is room for honest differences of opinion as to the "type" of songs to be used, but certainly we can all agree that a song to qualify should be "spiritual."

#### D. Scripture Reading.

Reading of the sacred Scriptures is a splendid way to improve the atmosphere of worship as well as to increase reverence for the Word of God. The church that uses this method, however, should take care as to the one selected to do the reading. The Bible should be read with perfection of

diction and dignity of inflection. Attention should also extend to the Book itself. It is no honor, as some seem to think, to read from a ragged Bible, especially before an audience. Let the Book, a large one preferably, be placed upon an imposing stand, handled with reverence and tenderness, not slammed, rolled, or crowded into a pocket.

#### E. The Congregation Itself.

Friendliness and good fellowship are splendid attributes of any church, but if they are gained at the expense of reverence in the meeting house, it is but an empty victory. If the audience must be warned by a dimming of the lights or the sounding of a warning bell, then let it be done. There is no excuse for the picnic atmosphere prevailing in some congregations for the first ten minutes or even the first ten seconds of the worship service.

#### F. All Participants in the Service.

No matter how seemingly trivial is the part to be taken by ushers, assistants at the Lord's table, janitors, and all other persons coming even momentarily before the eyes of the worshippers, that part should be done with a gravity and in a manner becoming to people who have assembled to worship the God of heaven and earth. The principle for this statement is contained in the language of James (2:2-4) who lays down some definite, practical instructions as to the behaviour of ushers in the performance of their duty in seating the visitors who attend divine service.

4. Another means of developing the spirit of worship in the churches is that of planned definite instruction along this line in every possible way.

A. Let the colleges among us devise and offer acceptable courses which will better train young people in the art of worship. Isn't this as important as a course in Latin or Mathematics?

B. Let our religious papers devote some space to this important subject.

C. Let the various congregations plan and conduct schools such as daily vacation Bible schools in which the matter of worship will receive the attention that it deserves.

D. Let the Bible classes (Sunday Schools) that meet on Sunday mornings recognize the need of the children to be trained in worship and provide for their use adequate assembly rooms, planned programs, and personal guidance in this most necessary field of activity. In answering the question how may the spirit and experience of worship be improved among us, I have suggested:

1. A more widespread practice of worship
2. The emphasis of worship rather than the sermon
3. The proper attention to the right atmosphere
4. An educational campaign by college, paper, and congregation.

What Are the Blessings that Flow from the Worship of God?

This brings us to a third and final question about worship: What are the blessings that flow from it?

To answer this in detail would be the work not of one speaker, but of a thousand. It would require not a sermon outline but a library! Nevertheless, there are four definite blessings that follow

worship; and to these we invite your careful attention.

### 1. The Formation of Christ-like Character.

It is a strange phenomenon of the spirit that a person tends more and more to become like the person or thing worshipped. In this respect, the old legend of the Great Stone Face is as true as truth itself. This admitted, then, how germane to the happiness of the race is the selection of the proper object of worship! Make no mistake about it. Men will worship something. Even God did not take the trouble to command men to worship, for he knew that they would do that anyway. He merely commanded them to worship God! The human soul tends as easily to worship as do the webbed feet of a duck to the nearest pond. The question is not then, "Shall I worship?" but "Whom shall I worship?" Every man has his own religion and worships his own God. The Indian worships the Great Spirit, the Chinese his ancestors, the hypocrite himself, the miser his gold, the atheist his own colossal conceit, and the Christian his Christ. And here is a challenge: If the religion of Jesus Christ had done nothing for humanity except take the uni-versal tendency of man to worship and direct it toward the sinless, perfect life of Christ with the resultant fact that men should everywhere in all succeeding generations grow in his blessed likeness, then that service is the greatest single achievement and the most wonderful blessing in five millenniums of human history!

### 2. A Revitalizing of the Forces for Christian Unity

Under existing conditions, poorly planned, inadequate services of worship have in many cases acted as a barrier to people who were inclined to accept theologically the primitive New Testament doctrine. A more spiritual worship among us, coupled with the true doctrine, would be almost irresistible in its appeal to the spiritually minded of the denominational world. Our lack in this regard has been one of the biggest obstacles in reaching a certain class of people, especially the Roman Catholics; and if we should be able to combine with the old Jerusalem gospel something more of the spiritual earnestness and reverence of the old Jerusalem worship, the results might be as amazing as they would be gratifying. If the churches of Christ will get down to the holy business of producing it, they will be able to give the world the most appealing worship service that has ever been known since apostolic times. This statement is based upon the conviction that God's way is actually best and that in the practice of his way all men shall find the fulfillment of their deepest need.

### 3. Attainment of the Proper Perspective for True Living

Life is a pitiful jumble of frustration and petty busy-ness until there enters into the spirit of man that rhythm, poise, and beauty which are gained by the proper spiritual orientation. A man may be lost in a great city, not even knowing the directions; but if he will climb to the top of the tallest skyscraper, he will soon be able to untangle the mystery of which is north or south; and the sense of relief which follows is very similar to the relief and peace that come from a period of worship. In worship, a man is projected out into the great tides of the ocean of truth instead of being left bound in the shallows and miseries of today's trivial and vexing problems. A man who has learned to wait for the tides is not dismayed by the waves and ripples. In Mark Rutherford's autobiography, he tells the story of how he went off for a long afternoon's tramp in a downpour of rain. For him it was a time of darkness, of ghastly doubt and uncertainty. "But just before I reached home," he said, "the clouds rolled off with the southwest wind, into detached fleecy masses, separated by blue

gulfs in which were sowed the stars. The effect upon me was what that sight, thank God, has ever been—a sense of the infinite, extinguishing all mean cares.” This sense of the infinite is one of the prime benefits of worship. No man can properly consider anything except against the revealing background of the worship of God. In fact the very word consider is a derivative of a Latin term sidera, which means the stars. This is just the kind of consideration that one learns in the sacred intimacy of worship; and from it there comes perspective, the perspective of the stars. It was this perspective that God sought to bring to Abraham when he said, “Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them!(Genesis 15:5). The same upward look is today accomplished in the man who worships God aright.

#### 4. Release from Fear

A fourth blessing that comes from worship is release from fear. Without this release, man is but a frightened child, trembling in the cosmic dark. This blessing is unique to the religion of Jesus Christ and is the one reason why Christian lands are lands of progress, whereas other religions tend to ignorance, superstition and darkness. This release from fear is everywhere evident in the New Testament. From the day when an angel appeared to Mary and said, “Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favor with God” (Luke 1:30), till the New Testament canon was closed, almost every great character in it was admonished to “Be not afraid!” An old man, shocked and astonished by the appearance of an angel on the right side of the altar of incense was calmed when the heavenly visitor said, “Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard” (Luke 1:13). Shepherds abiding in the field and keeping watch over their flock by night were dazzled with a radiant splendor from heaven, but the angel said, “Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people” (Luke 2:10). A distracted father named Jairus, overwhelmed with the news of his daughter’s death was told by Jesus Christ, “Fear not!” (Luke 8:50). The disciples, storm-tossed upon a Galileean lake, were greeted amid their fears and apprehensions by the cheerful words of the Master, who said, “Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid!” (Matthew 14:27). The apostles, chilled by the news of the imprisonment of John the Baptist, and contemplating the hardships of discipleship, were commanded by the Lord, “Fear not them which are able to kill the body but are not able to kill the soul” (Matthew 10:28). Many other passages of the New Testament relate how the three witnesses of the trans-figuration, the women who saw Christ after his resurrection, the apostles in the trials of the mission field, at home and abroad, on land and sea, in bondage or freedom, were comforted, sustained, cheered, and motivated by that greatest, gladdest, and grandest thought that God ever sent down from heaven to sinful man, namely, that we can be released from fear and anxious care. John summed it all up with the words, “Perfect love casteth out fear” (1 John 4:18). This blessing is inconceivably large and includes within its bountiful proportions a veritable host of important benefits.

##### A. Fear of the Natural Elements

To the man unblessed by Christianity, every flash of lightning, every cloud, every tree, become the manifestation of an angry God or the hiding place of a demon who might destroy him. He must appease by worship and sacrifice every strange object that he encounters. This stifles his progress, shackles his mind, and oppresses his soul. The proof of this may be observed in India till this day. The Parsees, one of the ancient and powerful religious groups, believe in four sacred elements, earth, water, fire, and air, which according to them cannot be contaminated without

en-gendering the wrath of God. Some people are inclined to look with tolerance upon these old superstitions and even go so far as to say that they do no harm; but we shall take an up-to-date example of what a little false doctrine can mean to a benighted people. It was October of 1934, and the worst malaria epidemic within the memory of man was ravaging the island of Ceylon. Three million people live there, and more than half of them were stricken with the disease. Over eighty thousand lost their lives in a single month. Now, thanks to the skill and efficiency of our modern doctors, men know how to wipe out this disease. It is simply a matter of destroying the breeding places of the "Anopheles minimus" mosquito. The physicians and engineers did their part. But up surged the old religion of the Parsees who would not permit their wells or cisterns to be covered or treated with oil. The result was a major epidemic of this frightful disease. It caused such a furore among western peoples that leaders in India felt that some explanation was due. Gandhi, the recognized speaker for the masses, stated in the "Times of India," June, 1935, "We have no right to take the lives of mosquitoes, flies, rats, lice, fleas, etc. They have as much right to live as we."

#### B. Fear of the Animal Creation.

Christianity also releases man from the fear of everything in the animal creation. Sacred animals, insects, and reptiles are widely worshipped in the Orient and with the most frightful consequences. Strange to say, the underlying error in the whole system of animal worship is the doctrine, sometimes even smiled upon in the United States, of the transmigration of souls! What a horrible tool this old delusion has proved to be against human life and progress in those lands where the true worship has not been accepted! Take a single example: Plague was sweeping India in 1924; and according to Doctor Victor Heiser (American Doctor's Odyssey, page 91), a million people were dying of it every year. In spite of this, no effective prevention of it could be had because the people refused to kill the rats which were carriers of the infected flea which gave the infection to man. To them every rat was somebody's ancestor!

#### C. Christian Worship also Releases from the Fear of Demons and Angels.

Have you ever thought how pitiful was that motive which erected in the streets of ancient Athens a statue to an "unknown God"? No wonder the Bible says that Paul's spirit was moved within him when he saw the city wholly given unto idolatry (Acts 17:16). The situation was this: Every imaginable demon had been honored with a shaft or inscription. Every, possible precaution had been taken, and yet there was no peace in the worshipper's heart. There still might be some • God that he had slighted who would turn upon him in anger - and pour havoc upon him. This was the fear that stalked like a plague through the city.- Thirty thousand "Gods" were enshrined in this old capitol of pagan learning; and yet such was the uneasiness of the population, that someone went out and erected a statue to an unknown God! The true worship of God has released humanity from this fear of multiple gods to be honored and appeased. The only tragedy is that during the Dark Ages, the old fear came back disguised as the "Invocation of the Saints" or "Adoration of Saints" thus countermanding the release from this type of fear and imposing upon humanity once more the heart-chilling system of multiple mediators.

#### D. Fear of the Unknown.

The Christian worshipper is also released from the fear of the unknown. Each of us can truly say, "I am the first that ever burst into this silent sea!" We have not passed this way heretofore. No one has. But here is our consolation, the way is not new to our Lord. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me!" (Psalms 23). It has been noted that the old geographers in mapping the oceans that lay out beyond the narrow limits of their knowledge were accustomed to write upon these distant and unknown frontiers, "Here be dragons. Here be demons which devour men!" This is not the attitude of the Christian for he is released from all such fears. Wherever we may go, our God is there before us. Whatever experiences may await us today or tomorrow, our God is able to lead us through them. We can joyfully claim the assurance of the 139th Psalm: "If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." In conclusion, permit us to point out that worship is positively the most important of all human activities. It is worship, improperly carried out, that causes mental and physical illness, that steeped whole civilizations in the terror of darkness, and that makes pygmies of the race of men, physically as well as mentally and spiritually. It is no accident that the Dark Ages came during the period of the Great Apostasy of the church. They are related one to another as cause and effect. On the other hand, worship properly engaged in, means the poise and happiness of the true perspective; it means the endowment of humanity with personalities that are fragrant with the virtues of the Christ; it means the banishment of fear, the furthering of the ends of progress and the cementing of the ties of human brotherhood under the guidance of the Father of life and salvation.

#### Questions

1. What are the divinely authorized channels of worship ?
2. How are these channels or items of worship different from the worship itself?
3. Is it possible for a person to practice the routine of worship without actually worshipping God?

Can you give an example of this from the New Testament?

4. What are the five conditions that accompany true worship?
5. Why are the sermons of our times shorter than they were in the days of colonies?

What will tend to give us longer sermons? Why has the present short sermon developed?

6. Why did the leaders of the Restoration Movement give most of their time to the preaching of the correct doctrine and neglect the establishment of proper worship standards?

7. What practical suggestions would you make as a means of re-emphasizing the true worship?

8. Does the building have anything to do with our worship ? Explain.

9. What law does James lay down for ushers in the discharge of their duty?

10. Do the preacher and song leader play any part in providing the proper atmosphere of worship in a church? Explain how.

11. What two hindrances are today causing the song service to be less effective?
12. How should the Scripture reading be given? How should the Bible be handled?
13. What four great blessings flow from the proper worship of God ?
14. What particular fears are dispelled by the true worship ?
15. Show how fear was the cause of the erection of the statue to the "Unknown God" in ancient Athens
16. Show how fear of the natural elements caused the death of thousands in Ceylon.
17. What relationship did the fear of the animal creation bear to the death of a million people a year in India in 1924?
18. How did the disaster mentioned in questionn 17 have its roots in a false doctrine?
19. How did the ancient fear of demons find its way into the apostate church of the Dark Ages ?
20. Why is the worship of God the most important thing in all human activity?

## Evangelism in a Local Church

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### Evangelism in a Local Church EVANGELISM IN A LOCAL CHURCH

By C. E. McGaughey No subject is more deserving of our consideration than that of evangelism. It is the preeminent work of the church. To evangelize means to spread glad tidings, to tell good news. What glorious news the church of our Lord has to carry to the lost world. It is ours to tell of the Christ who died for our sins, who was resurrected from the grave to ascend on high to rule as King of Kings and be our Great High Priest and Savior. Our task is to tell the news that "in none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). No wonder that it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 10:15). The church in the New Testament was sometimes spoken of in the aggregate (Acts 20:28), and on other occasions it was referred to as a local congregation (1 Corinthians 1:2). All of the local congregations were in-dependent and were not bound together by any kind of district or national organization. There was no missionary society through which they were to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. The responsibility rested on each individual • congregation to see that the world was evangelized. Churches could help each other and cooperate together but never did they form some1 separate i organization apart from the local church to see that the work was done. The one un-varying organization in direct control of the work was the local church through its divinely appointed over-seers. The authority divinely invested in the local church was everywhere strictly respected, which ef-fectually kept the early church from the entanglements which in later history came as a result of ecclesiastical organizations unknown to the New Testament. So this subject, "Evangelism in a Local Church," is strictly a Biblical subject for the local church serves as the beginning place for all proclaiming of the gospel, "the power of God unto salvation." If those around us are taught the truth of God and if those in "regions beyond" ever hear it, the local church must see that the task is accomplished.

Let us observe further why this question of evan-gelism by the local church is of such great importance. While the church engages in many fine works such as feeding the hungry, ministering to the sick and caring for the orphans, all of these things are incidental to its one great purpose of saving souls. This is its supreme mission. Jesus fed the multitudes with the loaves that they might also partake of "the bread of life." He healed the lepers that he might teach men of the healing of souls. He raised the dead that those within the tomb of sin might listen to his voice and have eternal life. The eyes of the blind were opened that men might see the glorious light of the truth. The ears of the deaf were unstopped that souls might hear the wonderful story of love. The church likewise is to help people in a material way but when Christians relieve distress and suffering another end must be constantly kept in mind, that of' soul saving. When we minister to the physical needs of-those about us it must be remembered that to neglect their spiritual needs will result in souls being lost forever.

Just before Jesus left the earth he said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16). Through the ages that same word comes to the church today. Jesus left his work in the hands of his disciples. In speaking of the gospel left in our hands, Paul said, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7). We are the agents through which he is to reach the world. Not dealing directly or through angels, he has placed the gospel in us, vessels of the earth. Since Christians are the only means by which the world can be reached, their responsibility is tremendous. We are "stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10). "Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2). If Christ was willing to leave heaven to suffer and die that souls might be saved, certainly the church should be faithful to the trust left it in carrying on the work he began. He is depending on us. We must not disappoint him. The destiny of the souls around us depends on how faithful we are in carrying the good news to them.

Such passages as: "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-14), show what our responsibility in this matter is: Since salt is to preserve and light is to shine, the Lord was merely showing us in figures that we are soul-winners. In explaining this further, Paul said, "among whom ye are set as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (Phil' 2:1'6). No more fitting emblem to show the church's function could have been used than that spoken of in Revelation when it is said that John saw Jesus walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. In explaining this, the Lord said, "the seven candlesticks are seven churches" (Revelation 1:20). Long ago, the Psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path" (Psalms 119:105). In apostolic days, Paul, fully understanding the chief function of Christians, described the church as being the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). The importance of evangelism is suggested again when the question is asked, "What will happen to the local church if its members fail to be soul-winners?" The result of being unfaithful stewards of the gospel and allowing those to perish whom God has placed within our reach is more serious than we sometimes think. Coming to the judgment empty handed means that we will be consigned to the state of the wicked for ever. Without a passion for souls and content to merely try to save self, it will mean that we have failed in the main purpose for which we have been left in the world. The words of Joseph to his brethren concerning young Benjamin seem to be a fitting prophecy of what Jesus now says to us, "Except ye bring your brother with you, ye cannot see my face" (Genesis 43:5). Not only do we need to see the importance of evangelism, but also do we need to see the great open doors that are waiting for us. It is just as true now that the fields "are white already unto harvest" as it was when Jesus saw the great need and said to his disciples, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields" (John 4 :5). Even in the sections where churches are already established, there are millions who are not Christians. In Oklahoma City, my home, the churches of Christ have a membership of about 2,000. The population of Oklahoma City is estimated to be 225,000, That would mean that only one out of every 113 we meet on the streets of that city is likely to be a member of the New Testament church. A similar comparison in other sections where strong churches are found will reveal the same startling facts. In our great nation there are vast sections still unevangelized, large cities with no church seeking to restore apostolic Christianity. There are even some states where there is no church loyal to the New Testament. The great Northwest and the Northeast with its teeming millions are both right at our doors. There are about 130,000,000 in our nation and though there be 600,000 members true to the cause of Christ, that would mean

only one out of every two-hundred- sixteen. Two-hundred-fifteen out of every two-hundred-sixteen in this nation then, are either nothing religiously or have been blinded by the doctrines of men. A survey of Oklahoma where there are many strong congregations revealed about fifty cities and towns with over a thousand inhabitants where there are no congregations after the New Testament order.

It has been estimated that there are one thousand million that have never heard of Christ. If buried in graves side by side, they would make a cemetery of fifteen rows reaching entirely around the globe. It is also claimed that only thirteen of the one hundred and thirty-one nations of the world are represented by Christians who "speak where the Bible speaks" and who are "silent where the Bible is silent." In India alone, there are over three hundred million people with no member of the church of Christ, to tell them the way of .salvation. Altogether, we have less than fifty missionaries in foreign fields and we spend less than ten cents per year year capita for the support of the gospel m "regions beyond." All of this is true in spite of the fact that Jesus has told us to go and preach the gospel to every creature. The need is so great that we cannot afford to sit idly by and do nothing about it.

How is the local church to perform this task of evangelism confronting it? First, it is clearly evident that before much can be done by any local church, the members must be educated to see their responsibility in soul saving. The leaders in every congregation should endeavor to see that the membership is taught and inspired to constantly spread the gospel in every place. It should be the goal in every congregation to develop each member into a soul-winner. When we are brought face to face with the fact that we cannot be saved without saving someone else, we will begin to give this matter serious thought. When once we begin to recognize how many are lost and it begins to dawn on us just how valuable a soul must be since Christ died for it, then our evangelistic zeal will be so aroused that results are certain to come.

We need to have a deep and abiding concern for the lost. Our Savior was touched when he beheld the lost souls about him. He even forgot his own weariness, hunger and thirst in bis efforts to save them,. He worked and prayed for them and wept over them. Before we can ever do very much, we must be con-cerned .and burdened like our Savxp1' was. Hew im-portant it is that we become possessed with a passion for the souls of men. Witnp.ut It cur efforts will never be much and their results will never be very fruitful. But when we really love them enough to be anxious about them, a wave of evangelism will sweep the country like that of apostolic days when multitudes were brought to Christ.

There are many who have never been made to see the importance of this work and the full force of their talents and resources have never been realized. The church has too long under-estimated its resources. The prayer of Elisha of old is still appropriate. His servant Gehazi felt that the task confronting them was too great. And Elijah prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see" (2 Kings 6:17). His eyes were opened and how different things did look. He discovered resources of which he had never dreamed. Thus it will be with the church when once our eyes are opened and we see just what we can do by the help of God.

After first educating Christians to the importance of evangelism the second great step in winning the world to Christ is to restore the evangelistic fervor that belonged to the church of the first century. To be truly apostolic we should seek to preach the same gospel preached 1900 years

ago; we should wear the same name worn then, we should worship in the same way but even all this is not enough. We should yearn to be apostolic in our zeal for evangelism. How zealous they must have been then to accomplish such great results. Soon after the conversion of the three thousand on Pentecost it is said that the number of men was five thousand (Acts 4:4), and then "Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). Later it was said, "And the word of God increased and the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied exceedingly; and a great company of priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). When persecution scattered the Jerusalem church the members continued in the faith "and went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Within thirty years after the beginning of the church, Paul wrote that the gospel had been "preached in all creation under heaven" (Colossians 1:23). Not only should we return to apostolic zeal for evangelism but a third important step in accomplishing the task before us is to put into practice apostolic methods of evangelism. What were the apostolic methods that enabled one generation to carry the gospel to the people of that generation? To his disciples Jesus said, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8). While Jerusalem was to be a very fruitful field, God did not desire that their efforts be wholly confined to that city. There were other sections to hear the message of salvation. So we learn that after witnessing in Jerusalem, they "went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

Upon learning of the fruitful field in Syria, the Jerusalem church "sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch; who when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord, and much people were added unto the Lord" (Acts 11:22-24). Let it be carefully noted that "the church," as such sent Barnabas to an inviting field of which it had heard. This one example is sufficient to show all churches how to act when they learn of a fruitful territory for the gospel. Let them send some Barnabas that "much people" may be "added unto the Lord."

After the church at Antioch was well established, "the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:2-3). Thus from Antioch these two men went on a great missionary tour establishing churches in cities where Christ had not been named. After completing the first journey, Paul went out from the same church on two other great evangelistic expeditions. Finally, the Lord led him into Europe to establish the cause in sections without churches. The newly established church in Philippi helped Paul in planting a congregation in Thessalonica. From his own testimony we learn, "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need" (Php\_4:15-16).

All of these examples show us conclusively that the Lord did not intend that a church be content with its own progress and forget the sections round about. It is the mission of every church to reach out and evangelize those sections still without the truth. Local congregations should feel keenly the fact that they are not doing all that is expected of them when their preaching is limited to four walls. An earnest effort must be put forth to reach those in our immediate community and even those regions which have never heard of Christ. Every church should have a definite program of establishing new congregations and supporting those who are preaching the gospel in

countries still in darkness concerning the kingdom of God. Many congregations are able to support two evangelists, one to preach locally and the other to preach in places where new congregations need to be established. If a church is not able to engage two preachers, let it do its best, with the cooperation of some other congregation to support someone in preaching the gospel in mission fields. A fourth and final step in evangelizing the world is to once more let evangelism flow freely through the same channels that proved so effective during the time of the first century Christians. These two channels of evangelism are clearly pointed out in the New Testament. In explaining how he worked, Paul said that he preached “publicly and from house to house” (Acts 20:20). Both public and private or personal evangelism played an important part at that time.

Public preaching was powerful and fruitful during the apostolic age. As a result of Peter’s sermon in Solomon’s porch, “many of them that heard believed; and the number of men came to be about five thousand” (Acts 4:4). In the synagogue of the Jews at Iconium Paul and Barnabas “so spake that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed” (Acts 14:1). Of Apollos it is said that “He powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ” (Acts 18:28). Even in the heathen city of Athens Paul preached publicly and “certain men clave unto him, and believed; among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them” (Acts 17:34).

Today this means of reaching the people is being undervalued by many. The Catholics abandoned the revival type of evangelism years ago and many denominations are about to follow in their steps. Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that we should do the same. This is one of the Lord’s own methods and will still work if members of the Lord’s church will diligently make use of it. Many meetings fail because members of the body of Christ are not possessed with enough interest to attend themselves when they should be so zealous that they bring others. In such cases meetings are really needed and the term “revival” is the right name for it. Public preaching of the gospel is still effective in sections where the church is not represented if it be worked at earnestly.

We must not think that the limits of public evangelism is “pulpit evangelism” on Sundays and occasional gospel meetings. The radio is being used effectively in this field. People are being reached that have never been in our church buildings. The church that has the gospel preached in this way is taking advantage of an exceptionally fine medium. I rejoice that various congregations throughout this nation are doing that very thing.

Then, there is the press, which in my estimation, properly belongs in this field. While literature may be used to a splendid advantage in private or personal evangelism, the influence of the press is so great that it can properly be called an avenue of public evangelism. This method has been worked too little in the past. The growth of Christian Science and Russellism and Adventism has been greatly aided by the power of the press. They have specialized in scattering their doctrines to the four winds by means of the printed page. Their tracts, papers and magazines are put in prominent places for free distribution and homes of the nation have been sowed down with their publications.

Unfortunately we have not been so wise. While our papers have wielded a tremendous influence for good in calling men back to the “old paths,” these very same papers have never been read by our own people as extensively as their importance deserves. Members of the church need encouragement to read gospel papers. Where they are read the members are given a more comprehensive view of the church and its work and those not members are instructed in the way

of the Lord also. We need more good gospel tracts and then we need to use them. The gospel should be scattered in the homes of the land until thousands who know nothing of the New Testament church are led to see the truth.

- That personal evangelism also was a mighty factor in spreading the gospel in the first century is very evident for a study of the Scriptures. A favorite example with many is that of Andrew bringing his own brother Simon to Jesus. "He findeth first his own brother Simon,, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is being interpreted, Christ)" (Jno. 1:41-42). After Jesus revealed himself to the Samaritan woman, she rushed into the city and said, "Come, see a man, who told me all things that I ever did; can this be the Christ? And from the city many of the Samaritans believed on him because of the word of the woman" (Jno. 4:29-39). Aquila and Priscilla were great personal workers. When they found the eloquent Apolios in error "they took him unto them and expounded th eway of God more accurately" (Acts 17:25). Who doubts but what personal evangelism was a source of great power when the Jerusalem church was scattered and "went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4) ? Then we must not forget that Paul preached "publicly" and "from house to house."

It is as much a Christian's duty to do personal work in trying to save those around him as it is his duty to read the Bible, pray, attend worship or observe the Lord's supper. The power to lead souls to Christ is not a secret to be possessed and used only by a few preachers and leaders. That power belongs to each individual Christian. Solomon says, "He that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30), and Daniel declares, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 32:3). When members begin to grasp the fact that God is depending on them as individuals to lead those about them to Christ, and they learn that they really can do such work, it will not be an impossible task for a church to double its membership in a year. Surely every member through personal evangelism should be able to win cne soul for Christ in three hundred sixty-five days. The only reason why this is not done is because we do not work earnestly at it. [f we can talk to our neighbors and friends about the every-day affairs of life, we can likewise teach them the gospel and lead some of them to Christ. In a certain city in Kansas lives a Christian doctor who as he goes about visiting his patients remembers that he should be concerned about their souls. Through his efforts many souls are led to Christ every year. In every walk of life, it is possible for followers of Christ to do the same thing. There is someone somewhere whom each member can reach and the sad thing about it is that unless that particular member opens his eyes to his

responsibility, the one he could win will be lost, merely because one who claimed to be a follower of Christ for-got his greatest mission in life. The problems of getting people to attend Bible school, Sunday services, mid-week meetings, of in-ducing them to contribute cheerfully and liberally, of encouraging them to live clean and holy lives, all will be much more quickly solved when they can be persuaded to enter into the task of saving souls. A joy would be derived from that work that will stimulate them more and more to abound in every good work. A church that loses its evangelistic fervor has no right to exist and has forgotten its greatest mission. A Christian who is not trying to develop into an efficient soul winner is disappointing to his Savior. In discussing this subject of Evangelism m a local church, attention has been given first to its importance; second, to the great fields that are waiting at home and abroad; and third, suggestions as to how the task may be accomplished. May our understanding of the importance of soul-saving be so great that our eyes

will perceive the fields and our hearts will prompt us to lovingly do our best to fulfill the task our Lord began. Let us pray that again a wave of evangelism will sweep over the earth as did 1900 years ago. In the strength that Christ supplieth, let us arise, and take the world for him.

## Benevolence in a Church

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### Benevolence in a Church BENEVOLENCE IN A CHURCH

By Paul C. Witt The Grace of Giving

I. Some general principles concerning giving.

A. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

B. Giving is a grace, and Christians are exhorted to abound in this grace as in others. 2 Cor. 8:7. 1.

Blessing is associated with, if not dependent upon, the extent of this grace. 2 Corinthians 9:6; 2 Corinthians 9:10.

C. True giving involves the giving of oneself to the Lord. 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Acts 4:32-37.

D. Christians are, in reality, only stewards of God. 1 Corinthians 10:26; 1 Corinthians 6:20.

E. Giving is a matter of Christian fellowship. Acts 2:42; Php\_4:14-16.

II. Some special details concerning giving.

A. When should Christians give?

1. Upon the first day of the week. 1 Corinthians 16:2.

a. This seemed to be the general "order." 1 Corinthians 16:1.

B. How should Christians give?

1. As congregations. 2 Corinthians 8:1-2; Php\_4:15-16; Acts 11:27-30.

2. As individuals. 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7; Acts 11:29.

a. As each has prospered. 1 Corinthians 16:2.

b. According as each hath. 2 Corinthians 8:12; 1 Timothy 6:17-18.

(1) That there may be equality. 2 Corinthians 8:13-14.

c. Not of necessity; grudgingly. 2 Corinthians 9:7.

d. But with liberality; cheerfully. Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 9:7.

e. As unto God, and not as unto men. Matthew 6:2-4.

f. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Colossians 3:17.

C. For what purposes should a Christian give?

1. To provide relief for needy brethren. Acts 11:27-30.

a. Ministering unto the saints. 2 Corinthians 8:3-4; 2 Corinthians 9:1; Romans 12:13; Romans 15:26; Acts 4:34-35.

2. To care for needy widows. Acts 6:1-6.

a. Fatherless and widows in their affliction. James 1:27.

b. Widow's indeed. 1 Timothy 5:3; 1 Timothy 5:5; 1 Timothy 5:9-10.

3. For the furtherance of the gospel. Php\_4:15-16; 2 Corinthians 11:9; 1 Corinthians 9:14; Romans 10:15; Php\_1:5.

III. Joys and blessings resulting from giving.

A. The enrichment of the giver.

1. That he “. . . may abound unto every good work.” 2 Corinthians 9:8.

2. And “. . . reap also bountifully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6.

3. That his every need might be supplied. Php\_4:19.

B. The increase of the fruits of the giver's righteousness. 2 Corinthians 9:10.

1. To the glory of God. 2 Corinthians 9:13.

2. To the filling up of the measure of the wants of the saints. 2 Corinthians 9:12. The matchless apostle Paul, in speaking to the elders of the church at Ephesus, exhorted them “ . . . to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). This exhortation was given at the same time and in the same spirit as the admonition, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). We can see, therefore, a vital connection between spiritual oversight and physical ministrations. Furthermore, the Master's statement, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” reveals to us that giving is not a mere act of patronage and condescension affording relief to the recipient, but that it is an act calculated to bring blessing to the benefactor as well. When the young rich man came to Jesus inquiring about the things he needed to do in order to inherit eternal life he was told by Jesus: “. . . go, sell what-soever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me” (Mark 10:21). In my judgment Jesus was far more concerned about what this experience would mean to the young man than he was about how much it would help the poor. Jesus wanted him to learn that there is blessedness in giving. On another occasion one from among the multitude requested Jesus to assist him in persuading his brother to divide an inheritance with him. Jesus took advantage of the incident to teach that “. . . a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15). He followed the statement with the parable of the rich fool. This parable teaches us that it is not what a man possesses but how he regards it and uses it that counts. Jesus then closed the lesson with the admonition, “Sell that which ye have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth” (Luke 12:16-33). In Paul's advice to Timothy he said, “Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be ready to

distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed" (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

When Paul wrote his second letter to the saints at Corinth he referred to giving as a grace (2 Corinthians 8:1). He compared this grace with that of faith, utterance, knowledge, earnestness, and love, and exhorted them that they should abound in the grace of giving in the same wonderful way in which they had abounded in the other graces (2 Corinthians 8:7). To make clear to them just what he meant he referred to the attitude and spirit of the churches of Macedonia. "Moreover, brethren," he wrote, "we make known unto you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints: and this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God" (2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

Such a beautiful example of devotion to the Lord, and concern for the welfare of others, could not fail to produce an understanding response in the hearts of the Corinthian brethren. No doubt they could now better understand the deep significance of the words of Paul's first epistle, "And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:3).

Three lessons are brought to us in these scriptures. In the first place, we are taught that the administering of the benevolent work of the church is a part of the responsibility of the elders, being a part of, rather than separate from, the shepherding of the flock. We are taught, in the second place, that abounding in the grace of giving leads to the enrichment of the giver rather than to his impoverishment. In the third place, we are reminded that effective giving is the fruit of a sanctified or dedicated life.

Having noted these lessons let us turn to a discussion of the things for which the elders may administer the funds made available to them. In the early church in the city of Jerusalem, ". . . all that believed were together and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need" (Acts 2:44-45). The work was made more effective because, ". . . not one of them said that ought of the things which he possessed were his own; but they had all things common" (Acts 4:32). This arrangement made it possible for the ministrations to be coextensive with the needs. However, even such an ideal situation as this seemed to be proved to be imperfect. "Now in these days when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." The attention of the twelve was called to this and, ". . . they called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you, seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their

hands upon them” (Acts 6:1-6).

We see, thus, a delegation of the actual physical duties to a group of selected and designated men. We usually refer to them as deacons. The leaders, however, showed their realization of their own responsibility in the matter by specially dedicating the men to the work for which their brethren had chosen them. Two or three things are worthy of note here. The actual ministrations were attended to daily, and “. . . according as any man had need.” Furthermore, the ministrations were referred to as “this business,” indicating that it was done in a systematic and business-like way.

These scriptures give us a splendid picture of the handling of such affairs within a congregation. Aside from the fact that congregations today do not have all things common and hence must depend for their benevolent funds upon individual offerings from individual members, the same or a similar system can be followed. We may look further, however, and find a record of the members of one congregation of saints ministering to the needs of the members of another congregation. In Acts 11:27-30 we read, “Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judaea: which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.” The individual members of the congregation at Antioch sent their contributions by Barnabas and Saul to the elders of the church in Jerusalem, setting for us a scriptural precedent for the gathering of funds from members of one congregation to send to the assistance of needy brethren in another congregation.

Furthermore, the church at Antioch was not the only church responding to needs arising in the Jerusalem church. Churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia were also called upon. In writing to the Corinthian church Paul said, “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me” (1 Corinthians 16:1-4). From this scripture we see that Paul was giving the same order in Achaia that he gave in Galatia. Not only this, but we find that the apostle pointed to the readiness of the Christians in Achaia in order to stimulate the brethren in Macedonia. In 2 Corinthians 9:2 we read, “. . . for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them.” The liberality of the Macedonians, in turn, was used as a stimulus to the Corinthians. In writing to them Paul said, “. . . brethren, we make known unto you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.” In the light of this response Paul exhorted Titus to complete this grace in the brethren at Corinth also, and Titus responded by going willingly to the work. “For,” said Paul, “. . . he accepted indeed our exhortation; but being himself very earnest, he went forth unto you of his own accord” (2 Corinthians 8:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 8:17). In writing to the brethren in Rome about the matter Paul says, “. . . but now, I say, I go to Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem” (Romans 15:25-26). Paul then asks the

Roman brethren to petition God in his behalf that the ministrations which he has for them may be acceptable unto them (Romans 15:30-31).

We have, therefore, a record of the solicitation of funds from the churches in Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia, and from the church in Antioch, not only to meet the emergency of the famine in Judaea, but also to minister to the needy saints in the church at Jerusalem over a period of time.

We know, too, that these churches considered it a privilege to be able to do this, and Paul made it plain to them that it was a matter of reciprocity on their part for the sacrifice that the Jerusalem church had made in order that they might receive the gospel. In writing to the Roman brethren with reference to the contribution made by the Macedonians to the Jerusalem church, he said, "Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things" (Romans 15:27).

One of the cardinal principles guiding both Jew and Gentile Christians was the principle that the poor should be ministered unto. When Paul was given the right hands of fellowship of Cephas, James, and John, and was bidden God-speed in his mission to the Gentiles, he said that these brethren "would that we remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do" (Galatians 2:10). In the catalogue of things each consecrated Christian should do, recorded in the letter Paul wrote to the Romans, we find ". . . ministering unto the necessities of the saints" included (Romans 12:13).

And, besides, this liberality on the part of the Gentiles proved to be a three-fold blessing in that it satisfied the physical needs of the poor, saints, brought spiritual blessings, to the contributing congregations of Christians, and gave glory to God. As expressed in the scriptures, "For the ministrations of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God; seeing that through the proving of you by this ministrations they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all; while they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you" (2 Corinthians 9:12-14).

We find, in the second place, that funds made available by the contributions of the saints may be used to care for the fatherless and the widows. It has been a tradition of God's people that the fatherless and widows are special subjects of the ministrations of their fellows and of the Father's divine care. In the earliest recorded legislation there was a clause protecting them against oppression and affliction, and various provisions were made to protect them against destitution. We read in Exodus 22:22, "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child." Likewise, in Deuteronomy 14:28-29, "At the end of every three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase in the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: and the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest." And in Deuteronomy 24:19-20, we find, "When thou reapest thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow . . . and, "When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the sojourner, for the

fatherless, and for the widow.” This same sentiment is reflected in many other passages in the Old Testament scriptures, and, in my mind, James had such a sentiment in his heart when he was inspired to write, “Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). I think it is universally understood that to “visit” means to minister unto; to take the oversight of; to relieve the wants of or sympathize in the distress of. I am glad that the churches of today are finding benediction in their visitations of the fatherless, and are indeed learning to experience the great truth, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). In the Jerusalem congregation the first murmur of discontent arose as the result of the neglect of certain Grecian Jewish widows in the course of the daily ministrations. The divine record of the dispatch and completeness with which the need was supplied is a good index of the degree of importance of the responsibility. The spontaneity of the response is overshadowed only by the completeness of the solution of the problem (Acts 6:1-6).

We get more specific directions with reference to widows in Paul’s instructions to Timothy. He said, “Honor widows that are widows indeed. . . . Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, hath her hope set on God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. . . . Let none be enrolled as a widow under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed the saints’ feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently- followed every good -work” (1 Timothy 5:3; 1 Timothy 5:5; 1 Timothy 5:9-10). He continued, “If any that believeth hath widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed” (1 Timothy 5:16).

Practically every congregation of Christians today, particularly if it is a large congregation, has enrolled in its membership widowed mothers who are sixty or more years of age and all alone, whose lives have been a benediction to all who have known them. To care for such an one is to enjoy a distinct blessing and to court the divine favor of our great God. In the next place, we find that a congregation may- have “fellowship in the furtherance of the gospel.” In writing to the saints as Philippi, Paul said, “I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you, always in every supplication of mine on behalf of you all making my supplications with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ: . . .”(Php\_1:3-6). Further along in the same letter he wrote, “And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessa’onica ye sent once and again unto my need” (Php\_4:15-16). And to show them the real reason why he was so pleased with their fellowship he continued, “Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that in- creaseth to your account.” Then, as a fitting climax, and to impress upon them the realization that their ministrations to his need would in reality prove to be a means of supplying their own needs, he wrote, “And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Php\_4:17; Php\_4:19). From the foregoing Scriptures we can see that the elders of a congregation have precept and example for sending or receiving funds to be used for the relief of their brethren in a time of distress, or to care for the “poor among the saints.” We see, furthermore, that they are Scriptural and wise in “visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction,” and even to enroll

as special charges any who are “widows indeed.” Not only this, but they have example for having fellowship in the extension of the borders of Zion by supporting those who are preaching the gospel in needy fields. What more noble work could be done than any or all of these? And yet, brethren, have we, as shepherds and ministers, been appealing to the congregations of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to contribute solely for the sake of, and in proportion to the needs of, those who are distressed? Are we ministering to the needs of the poor saints simply for the sake of the poor saints? Are we visiting the “fatherless and the widows in their affliction” solely on their behalf? Are we preaching the gospel to the lost just for the sake of the lost? Or are we doing these wonderful things for their sakes, and for our sakes, and for Jesus’ sake?

Let us pray that we may experience more and more the truth that “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Let us make our benevolent work our “good pleasure.” Let us not forget that such service “. . . not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God; . . .” Let us be more zealous “... to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction,” and let us not fail to have “. . . fellowship in the furtherance of the gospel.” And let us remember and teach that “He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” Let us know and preach that “God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work,” and that “. . . he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness: . . .” (2 Corinthians 9:6; 2 Corinthians 9:8; 2 Corinthians 9:10). When we have studied and understood and prayed about these things, and have set our hearts and hands to the doing of them in the Christ-appointed way, then the benevolent work of a congregation will cease to be the performance of an unpleasant task. It will indeed become a glorious opportunity for service.

## Education in a Church

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### Education in a Church EDUCATION IN A CHURCH

By Alonzo Williams

#### Introduction

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Education is the general and customary word for schooling. It is used in this study to mean the acts, or processes by which Christian character is produced.

Hence, this study deals primarily with the means of producing Christian character. The processes of education are teaching and training. Teaching includes all facts to be taught and the methods and means necessary thereto. This process is described by such words as teach, study, learn, instruct, all of which deal with the impartation and acquisition of knowledge. Training, the second element of the educational processes, includes all acts, or development, in the application of the

knowledge learned, and is described by these words: discipline, exercise, nurture, growth, service. Teaching and training are not separate and independent processes, but they are interwoven, and run concurrently in the matter of education. People learn to do by doing. The only way to have a Christian life is to grow it.

It is not enough to teach gospel truth. The pupil must be directed in the practice of said truth. When these two processes produce Christian character, or personality, we have education. When a church uses these processes with the result that Christian personality is produced, it has an educational policy.

I

Education—A Function of the New Testament Church.

New Testament churches functioned through educational processes. A study of New Testament churches justifies this affirmation. But before studying this topic specially, it is enlightening to consider two subjects closely related to this one. They are: The teaching of Jesus on education; and the general teaching of the New Testament on education.

First. The teaching of Jesus on education.

Jesus was an educator. He taught and trained people. Consider the magnitude of his great invitation: "Come .... and learn of me" (Matthew 11:28-29). His plan for religious education was packed into that brief statement, for "learn of me" implies (1) teaching, and all of the means necessary thereto, (2) pupils, and their various needs, and (3) lessons, and all of their various applications to pupil needs. So, we have in that passage Jesus the teacher; all of the world as his pupils; and all of the lessons he taught, including his ideals, purposes, attitudes, purity, righteousness and the whole of his personality.

Jesus had a private class of twelve pupils—the twelve apostles. They came from the common walks of life. The Master Teacher taught and developed them into the greatest staff of religious educators this world has known. "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men," said Jesus to four fishermen. After two and one-half years of study, observation and training, Jesus made them efficient teachers. Formal sermons alone did not make them "fishers of men" and courageous exponents of Christianity for which they sacrificed their lives. Jesus taught, nurtured and disciplined until they grew into his likeness. Their faith, courage, devotion and loyalty became stronger than earthly powers. Indeed, "they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). In the Great Commission Jesus presented the apostles as religious educators. They were to preach, teach, baptize; then teach those baptized to observe. It was a program of teaching and service, both on the part of the apostles and those whom they converted. The apostles understood that their mission was one of teaching and training; because, when they taught and baptized people, they remained to train, direct and develop them in Christian service. Evangelism was only a part of Christ's plan for Christianizing the world. The evangelized community, or church, was to be developed and directed into Christian services.

Second. General teaching of the New Testament on education.

The New Testament churches functioned through Christian education as is shown from the general emphasis it received in the Epistles. The words "study" and "grow," on terms of similar

purport, are found in the following Scriptures:

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a work-man that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

“Abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

“And the things which thou hast learned of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men; who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).

“Aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that

which is good; that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:3-6).

“For when by reason of time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for full-grown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. Wherefore leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on to perfection; not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” (Hebrews 5:12 to Hebrews 6:3).

“Wherefore putting away all filthiness and over-flowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. Be ye doers of the word, not hearers only, deluding your own selves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that work-eth, this man shall be blessed in his doing” (James 1:21-26).

“And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

“If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now: but refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness” (1 Timothy 4:6-8).

“And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another” (Romans 15:14).

“I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it; nay, not even now are ye able . . . . I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:2; 1 Corinthians 3:7).

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

These Scriptures are all to the same point, viz., Christian character depends on teaching and growth.

New Testament churches were educational agencies, and functioned according to Jesus' plan of education. The high spiritual qualities of the Jerusalem church were produced by teaching and training on the part of leaders within that group. Read of those qualities in Acts, chapters 1-9. The member could teach, preach, exhort, and pray. They were generous in the use of their money and were united in heart and soul. Five thousand men were as one man. They converted common people, priests and civil officers. The statement “for neither was there among them any that lacked” shows the church contacted, studied and knew the needs of every member. They loved the Lord, suffered for their faith in him-, sacrificed their

homes and dispersed among heathen nations; but through it all, their loyalties remained. There is only one explanation for their Christ-like qualities: they learned and grew into them. Diligent and systematic effort was necessary on the part of both teachers and students; for knowledge and development can be had in no other way. Concerning that church it is said:

“And with many other words he testified, and ex-horted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation, They then that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them in that day three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved. Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour” (Acts 2:40 to Acts 3:1).

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common .... For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the prides' of the thihgS that Were sold, and laid them at the abb's tick' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according' as any one had need” (Acts 4:32; Acts 4:34).

“And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ” (Acts 5:42).

“And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were scattered abroad throughout Judiea and Samaria, except the apostles .... They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word” (Acts 8:1; Acts 8:4). The

church in Antioch, Syria, functioned according to Christ's plan for producing Christian character. Teaching and preaching in that church produced a membership in which every man gave according to his ability. The spirit of generosity is produced that way. With Barnabas and Paul for teachers, it is said:

"And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch .... And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judaea: which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 11:26; Acts 11:29-30). The Berea church conducted a daily study of the Scriptures.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessa- lonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Consider the church at Ephesus. Paul used the synagogue and the school of Tyrannus for teaching, preaching and admonishing in everything profitable, even in the "whole counsel of God." Within three years, men who had been heathens learned enough gospel truth and had enough spiritual growth that they were made elders, qualified to tend the "flock" and "feed" the church (Acts 20:17-36). Diligent and systematic teaching and nurture soon qualified them for Christian leadership. Luke wrote of Paul's work in Ephesus thus:

"And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to things concerning the kingdom of God. Rut when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:8-11).

## II. Education—A Need in Churches Today.

Local churches conduct some kind of instructional and training service. The usual set-up is too well known to need explanation. Churches in general feel that their educational set-up is not producing desired results; that it does not adequately teach and train the people. Conditions in most churches justify this feeling of dissatisfaction. The following conditions exist in most congregations, and can be corrected through Christian education in said congregations:

### 1. Lack of Bible knowledge.

It is a rare, thing to find anyone, with the probable exception of the minister and the Bible teachers, who. has a general knowledge of the Bible. Most peoples' information of the Bible consists of a few verses of Scripture, or a few chapters and the most familiar Bible characters. Too few people can give an intelligent statement of the plan of salvation. Every church member of average learning ability should have a general knowledge of the Bible after one year of systematic study. The idolatrous Ephesians learned enough truth in less than three years to become teachers and elders in the church at Ephesus. One great trouble is that people do not study the Bible itself. We learn the Bible by handling, examining and studying the Book itself. Books about the Bible help the pupil, but he can never learn the Bible by studying only books about the Bible. Many people who have studied the Quarterlies for years feel almost lost, or helpless, with only a Bible, and are unable to read the Bible with understanding and interest. Many Bible teachers, in their preparation

to teach, are slaves to Bible helps. Their knowledge of the Bible itself is so limited they cannot locate, classify and organize their subject-matter. Of course, after a general knowledge of the Bible has been acquired, anyone may spend a lifetime in special study of it.

## 2. Lack of a trained membership.

This condition is general. An untrained membership is the cause of incompetent elders, Bible teachers, song leaders and church workers in general, because leaders are selected from the membership. Untrained leaders cause poor attendance in Bible classes and church worship; and they rob the church of dignity and good will in the community. An untrained membership causes penurious giving. It causes intelligent people to avoid the church. It is self-evidence of a lack of vision. It is not in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus and the New Testament churches. A well planned and carefully executed program of Christian training and development will remove these hurtful conditions. It is in training that people exercise in godliness, become "doers of the word, and not hearers only." Service develops attitudes, habits; arouses interest and produces spiritual growth. Churches today cannot function Scripturally without a knowledge of the Bible and a trained membership. When the church fails in any essential activity, some movement arises with a substitute. The corrupt and incompetent sons of Samuel who were to be heirs to the judgeship of Israel caused the Hebrews to revolt and demand a king (1 Samuel 8). Poor singing has encouraged the use of instrumental music in Christian worship as an "expediency." Incompetent elders have encouraged the "pastor system." Lack of mission work by local churches has contributed to missionary societies. Failure to contribute money Scripturally has caused special collections, begging and various unscriptural methods of raising money for the church. Commercial amusements have supplanted home entertainments. The church is the Lord's educational agency; it will grow like a mustard seed when it functions as such agency.

## III. Suggestions Concerning An Educational Program for a Church.

If a church does not know how to set up a program of Christian education, it should employ someone who does. A church employs a janitor, carpenter, song leader, or minister; so why not an educator? In this study, only general suggestions are made, leaving the details to be worked out according to local needs and working facilities. A church must "tailor" its program to fit its size and needs.

**Organization.** This means order, system, arrangement, or classification. The workers must be classified and their work arranged so that each one will know what he is to do. The personnel includes the elders and all necessary assistants, as: teachers, minister, song leaders.

**Administration.** This means the direction, or management of the organization. One person should be selected to direct the organization and manage the educational activities. He should be an elder or someone appointed by the elders.

**Teachers.** They are an important part of the organization. They may be elders and such other competent persons as may be selected by the director and approved by the elders. They should be selected on the basis of their Christian character, knowledge of the Bible, knowledge of pupil needs and teaching ability.

Pupils. The whole church should be included and as many others as can be reached. Paul taught bishops to feed the “flock.” Jesus commanded Peter to feed both “lambs” and “sheep.” He further said, “they shall all be taught of God.” Jeremiah wrote (Jeremiah 31:34), “They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.”

Objectives. The ultimate objective of Christian teaching and training is Christian character. Immediate objectives will depend on the physical, mental and spiritual, stage of the student. For example: Children must be taught to obey their parents, but it would be a waste of time to teach the same lesson to aged people. God has arranged for every normal person to pass through three general periods of life:

(1) Childhood—which includes early childhood, or from birth to about six years of age; middle childhood,

or from six to nine; later Childhood, or from nine to twelve.

(2) Youth—which includes early adolescence, or from twelve to fifteen; middle adolescence, or from

fifteen to eighteen; latter adolescence, or from eighteen to twenty-five.

(3) Adulthood—which includes the rest of the natural life.

These different periods of development require different objectives because the pupil's needs are different. Jesus administered to the body, mind and spirit of man. His truth meets the needs of man throughout the entire life. A church must not be satisfied with anything short of a Christian education for the body, mind and spirit of the individual through the whole span of life.

Subject-matter. The subject-matter to be used depends on the pupil's physical, mental and spiritual need, and on the kind of lesson to be taught. The subject-matter will vary according to the pupil's growth. God has made available the lesson necessary for each stage of growth. It is our responsibility as Christian servants to find that lesson and apply it to the pupil at the time he needs it. As teachers, we must know where to find and how to serve both “milk” and “meat” of the Word.

Materials. This includes Bibles, books, notebooks, maps, charts, blackboards, pictures, games, sand tables, other tables, or desks, cabinets, adequate seats, and any other class-room equipment necessary to the teaching and development of the pupil.

Agencies. The following activities provide opportunities for a program of Christian education:

(1) Sunday Bible School,

(2) pulpit,

(3) week-day classes at the church plant, or in private homes,

(4) young peoples' classes,

(5) vacation Bible school,

(6) teachers training class,

(7) young men's training class,

(8) social and recreational functions,

(9) committees for visitation,

(10) church news writing,

(11) keeping of records and reports,

(12) church announcements,

(13) ushering,

(14) communion and contribution services. To illustrate: In a church where six brethren assist in the communion service, twenty-four different men can be used each month of four Sundays without using the same man twice. In a short time every man in the church may have an opportunity to be in the public service of the church. Four classifications of the male membership according to age level may be made in order to have age-uniformity each Sunday. Too often only a few people perform the many services in the church, whereas, with proper organization, many people could be used.

How may a church begin its set-up for Christian . education ?

(1) The elders should meet and decide what the various needs of the church are and what activities are necessary to

meet those needs.

(2) The elders should call a meeting of the workers of the church and explain to them the needs of the church and the

activities necessary to meet those needs.

(3) The elders should appoint a director, or over-seer, of all educational activities.

(4) Subject to the approval of the elders, the di-rector of education should select teachers for all classes, and leaders

for all other activities in the program of education.

(5) The director, with the elders, teachers of classes and leaders of the various activities should set up the educational

objectives and select the subject-matter and materials necessary to teach and train all students so as to achieve

said objective. A stronger statement of the plan and purpose of education in a local church could not be made than the one Paul gave the church at

Ephesus.

“And, he gave some to be apostles; and some, proph-ets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the

building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full- grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:11-17).

#### Questions

1. Name the two processes of education and tell what each process includes.
2. When can it be said that a church has an educational policy?
3. Show that Jesus was an educator.
4. The statement “learn of me” implies what three things ?
5. Describe the moral and spiritual character of the apostles. Tell how such qualities were acquired?
6. Show from the language of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and from the practice of the apostles that evangelism was only a part of Christ’s program for Christianizing the world.
7. In the following Scriptures point out the words that suggest teaching, learning, training, growth, exercise, development, or service: 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:3-6; Hebrews 5:12 to Hebrews 6:3; James 1:21-26; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 4:6-8; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 3:2; 1 Corinthians 3:7; and 2 Peter 3:18.
8. Point out the spiritual qualities of the Jerusalem church.
9. Show by the Scriptures how the Jerusalem church acquired those qualities.
10. How long did Paul and Barnabas teach in the Antioch church and with what results?
11. How did the Berea church treat the Scriptures ?
12. How long did Paul teach in Ephesus until men were made elders (How many years are usually required to develop men for the eldership in churches today?)
13. What two conditions in the church can be corrected through Christian education?
14. Point out some evils of an untrained church membership.
15. Show that formal sermons are inadequate to teach and train a church.

16. Show the evils that may appear when the church fails in any of its essential activities.
17. When should a church employ an educator?
18. Give the name, meaning and importance of each item in the proposed set-up for Christian education in a church.
19. Explain how a church may use many different men each month in the communion service.
20. Give in order the suggested steps in setting up a program of Christian education.
21. What agencies did the Lord set in the church and for what purposes?

#### Subjects for Special Study

1. A Practical Program of Christian Education for Rural Churches.
2. A Practical Program of Christian Education for Urban Churches.
3. The Selection of Scriptures and Materials to be Used in Each Period of Pupil Development.
4. Coordination of Subject-Matter in the Several Classes so as to Have Unified Effort in Accomplishing Fixed Objectives.

## The Relationship of the Local Congregation to Other Local Churches in Full Standing

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The Relationship of the Local Congregation to Other Local Churches in Full Standing THE  
RELATIONSHIP OF THE LOCAL

CONGREGATION TO OTHER LOCAL

CHURCHES IN FULL STANDING

By Ted Norton

Brethren, friends, it is with pleasure that I speak to you today. I have attended quite a number of Lectureships here—while attending school and since finishing school. During these Lectureships I have heard a number of different kinds of speeches.

Some speeches are like a dog's tail—they are bound to a cur (occur). Other speeches are like a cat's tail—they are fur (far) to the end. Many speeches are like a rat's tail—straight to the point.' A few speeches are like a rabbit's tail—only a suggestion. If I can't make this speech like a rabbit's tail, at least I want to make it like a rat's tail—straight to the point. This talk deals with the relationship of the local congregation to other local churches in full standing. Of course, there is no ecclesiastical body which shall determine which congregations are, or are not, in full standing. Then what shall be the determining factors which decide the characteristics of ' a congregation in full standing?

Evidently, a congregation professing to follow the teachings and principles revealed in the New Testament in regard to work, worship and life, and against which no serious criticism is made, is in full standing with other like congregations.

Let us bear in mind that the local church is an autonomous body. But along with its independence there is a co-operative responsibility with other congregations in full standing. Churches in New Testament times recognized this co-operative responsibility as is suggested by the following Scriptures: "Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judea: which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 11:27-30). Compare 1 Corinthians 16:1-4. These churches of Gentile Christians were co-operative in their mutual responsibility. Then in 2 Corinthians 8:18-21 we read about a "brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches; and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace." These Scriptures show that churches in New Testament times were mutually co-operative in their responsibilities.

Mission Work

Since the local church is an autonomous body, it is free to do mission work at any place in any manner and at any time it sees fit. Also, two or more congregations desiring to co-operate in some particular missionary effort, can mutually agree to do so. For instance, say the church in Bryan and the one in Huntsville decide to work together in sending a preacher to live and work in the city of Livingston. The two churches working together do not surrender their congregational independence, though they are co-operating in the same undertaking, On the other hand, they grow in zeal and vision, for the church is God's missionary society (1 Timothy 3:14-15). God grant that we shall lift up our eyes and look on the field and send laborers into that field! There is so much that can be done by smaller churches working together on a project. But here is the heart-rending situation that often obtains. The average congregation has labored and sacrificed to grow in numbers and financial strength to hire a regular preacher and build a commodious church house, which is all good enough. But, when the budding debt is cleared, the congregation begins to "coast." The members begin to do a number of things they had planned to do when the church debt was lifted. The feeling of responsibility is lost and the church lacks the sacrificial living that is so essential to spiritual growth. Such conduct produces an unhealthy spiritual condition. In too many places the church is content to work in its immediate community—and good work is done, but other communities need the gospel as well. Can anything be done about it? Certainly!

Many congregations are conscious of the latter part of the Great Commission: "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you (Go into all the world and preach the gospel): and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Such congregations, when the building debt was lifted, have continued to give. They have engaged the services of a capable preacher with the money that had been used to pay off the indebtedness and have placed that preacher in some city that in their mind was the logical place for the cause to be established. They keep that missionary there until a new congregation is begun and has grown sufficiently to merit the removal of this missionary to some other mission center. It certainly is encouraging to see how many churches are waking up to this plan of evangelism. When a church is not financially able to do as larger churches are doing, two average size congregations may, and should, co-operate in doing this evangelization. We must not merely believe in the Christ. We must be ardent advocates of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." However, a note of warning needs to be sounded just at this point: Co-operating churches must guard against an ecclesiasticism which resolves itself into a machine like the United Christian Missionary Society.

### Discipline

There is a co-operative responsibility among churches in another phase of activity—discipline. Of course, teaching, encouragement, admonition, long-suffering and patience are all understood to be a part of discipline. But when a congregation "withdraws" from a member or members, sister churches are morally bound to respect these disciplinary measures. This needs to be stressed. Let churches concur with the disciplinary action made by other churches to the extent that Paul teaches us: "Keep no company with him; no, not to eat" with him! (1 Corinthians 5:9-11). Let churches present a united front in this matter! Be it remembered that "delivering a person to Satan" is an extreme measure and should be done only as a last resort—not simply to "get rid" of the member, though that has been done, but to save his soul—to bring him to repentance. When such disciplinary action is taken against immoral living as well as against false teachers, churches should present a united front. This united front should be just as real as was that of the Allies

against the German drive on Paris in 1918. We considered that important—and it was, but it is infinitely more important that the army of the Lord press on with a united front against sin.

However, suppose a disciplined member, of the church at Madisonville, for instance, comes to the Huntsville church desiring membership or fellowship, with the explanation that he had been withdrawn from at Madisonville and that he believed the action taken was unjust, but that he would like for the Huntsville church to investigate the matter before making a decision regarding him. The Huntsville church should by all means investigate. And should it be found, in the eyes of the Huntsville church, that the church at Madisonville had made a mistake or was unjust—and churches are subject to making mistakes even as individuals are, the disciplined member may be received into full fellowship of the church at Huntsville. To deny this right to the Huntsville church is tantamount to saying that she is not an autonomous body. And, it is just as broad as it is long. The Madisonville church has the same autonomous right to investigate and pass upon the action of the Huntsville church as the Huntsville church has upon Madisonville.

Such a course of action "would protect individuals from the narrowness and spite of church leaders who might do an injustice to a deserving brother.

#### Christian Colleges and Orphans Homes

I discuss Christian Colleges and Orphans Homes in the same topic, and limit my discussion to the matter of fellowship between congregations, regardless whether they do or do not support them.

It goes without saying that such schools as Abilene Christian College, George Pepperdine, David Lipscomb, Harding and Freed-Hardeman Colleges render a distinct service to the world. Likewise, Boles, Tipton, Sunny Glen, Arkansas Christian and other such orphans homes render a unique and outstanding service to the world. Be it understood that the Christian Colleges and the orphans homes are not adjuncts to the church, even though the Bible is taught and Christian morals are upheld in them. They stand in relation to the home—not to the church, the same as our public schools. Parents send their children to Christian Colleges that they may have the advantages that are afforded there. And the service rendered by such institutions takes the place of the parent just as the high school rendered a service which could not be rendered by the parent. If a family is broken up by death, separation, or divorce, the little victims of such conditions must be provided for. The orphans homes perform a service for the absent parents.

It is the experience and observation of Christian parents that it is economically sound to care for our orphans in a supervised group thereby rendering a service that local churches do not give.

Likewise, Christian parents have realized that higher Christian education can be given in colleges maintained for that purpose. Experience shows that fewer men and women become infidels who receive training in Christian Colleges than those who receive training in institutions without Christian influence. Thereby Christian Colleges render a service which the local church does not give.

Mr. Carl L. Basland, head of the Classification Department of the Texas Prison System, Huntsville, Texas, reported in a recent speech before the P. T. A. of the Huntsville Elementary schools, that very few men serve a prison term who have attended a church school—the percentage could hardly be figured. And Christian colleges would be classed as a church school in

his grouping. He added, there was one exception —those who attend Catholic schools. He suggested that, perhaps, was due to a larger number attending Catholic schools than other church schools. He also stated that very few serve a prison term who come from orphans homes—the percentage could hardly be figured.

Since Christian Colleges and orphans homes are not adjunct to the church, a church is not obligated to include them in its financial budget. But, if a congregation desired to make a place in its budget for some particular Christian College or some particular orphans home, surely a congregation or individual of like professions would have no grounds for severe criticism, to say nothing of making it grounds for severing fraternal relations.

If an individual contributes to Boles Orphans Home and I contribute to Tiptons Orphans Home, we have a fraternal affection for each other—we are both interested in the welfare of orphans. If your son goes to Abilene Christian College, and my son goes to Harding or George Pepperdine, we have fraternal affection for each other—we are both interested in higher Christian education. Now, if you send your son to a Christian College and I send my son to a state college we still have a fraternal affection for each other —we are Christian gentlemen and are interested in the educational welfare of our sons. Just because we do not see “eye to eye” with each other about where our sons should be educated is no ground for severing the bond of brotherhood in Christ. That is the individual business of each one of us.

Equally so, should a congregation decide to contribute to some orphans home, it would ill-behoove a sister church to use that as grounds to sever fraternal relationships. Or should a church make occasional or regular contributions to a Christian College and a sister church did not see fit to do so, their fraternal relationship need not be strained—that is their individual business. Nor should there be, on the part of those congregations contributing, a criticism of the congregation which does not.

Other activities in which some churches engage, such as contributing to the Community Chest, Red Cross, etc., have not raised questions of fellowship between congregations, in so far as I know, but should they do so, they should be considered as above indicated and should never be made a test of fellowship between congregations. In other words brethren, full fellowship between congregations, in my opinion, means not only participation in common work in which two or more churches may be interested, but also a recognition that other congregations of Christians may also be in full fellowship pursuing a policy of non-participation in these activities. Even congregations participating in worthy activities in which the first congregations may not be interested, are still in full fellowship. We act on that principle of fellowship as individual brethren, why not as churches? “Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother’s way, or an occasion of falling. For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:4; Romans 14:13; Romans 14:17).

## The Relationship of a Local Congregation to Those Congregations of Christians in Error

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The Relationship of a Local Congregation to Those Congregations of Christians in Error THE RELATIONSHIP OF A LOCAL CONGREGATION

TO THOSE CONGREGATIONS OF CHRISTIANS IN ERROR

By Harvey Scott In the speech preceding this one you were told of the relationship of the local congregation to other congregations in full fellowship. This speech had to do with the relationship between two or more congregations who are alike in origin, doctrine, and practice, and at the same time following the principle of “where the Bible speaks we will speak; where the Bible is silent, we will be silent.” This makes the New Testament their only rule of faith and practice.

“My theme has to do with the “relationship of these local congregations to congregations of Christians in error.” The congregations sustaining this relationship we are now discussing will of necessity be alike and Scriptural in origin for neither of them could be Christian in any other way. Any congregation of people originating in a way foreign to the teaching of the New Testament cannot be a congregation of Christians. The very wording of the theme that has been given to me to discuss declares that there is a difference between these two groups. One of them is a group of Christians in error—whatever that error is—and the other one is a congregation of Christians not in error. But what does it take to constitute a congregation of Christians in error, is a question that should be given some consideration. Will just any kind of strife or confusion within the congregation be sufficient to classify it as a congregation of Christians in error? How much error, or what kind of error must be found in a congregation before it can be referred to as a group of Christians in error? Remember that this group is not in error as to its origin, for in that case it would not be a congregation of Christians.

It must be that this group is in error either in doctrine or in practice or in both, But who of us will be willing to affirm that even we, who claim to be true to God’s order, are a group of people that is free from error in our practice. Since about ninety-five percent of the membership of the church are faithful in their attendance on Lord’s day for the worship, only about thirty-five percent of them are faithful in the teaching work of the church. Is this sufficient to constitute us a congregation of Christians in error, or does it require more than this? I do not think that we can say that we are free from error with this situation as it is. A careful study of the first Corinthian letter will reveal that the church of God in Corinth had within that congregation a number of outstanding sins. Was this a “congregation of Christians in error”? Again I ask the question, What does it take to constitute a congregation of Christians in error? This sentence is paradoxical to me. For a congregation to do that which causes it to lose its identity as a congregation of our Lord: to me it has done that which has caused it to lose its identity as a congregation of Christians. They may be still children of God who are disobedient, but I cannot understand how they can still be Christians. But the theme calls for a discussion of the question of our attitude toward those congregations of Christians in error.

It therefore must refer to that group of people who, although they are Scriptural in origin, are in error because of their teaching and practice. Concerning such people John has this to say: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in

the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (2 John 1:9). While it is true that John is talking about individuals, the admonition will apply to congregations since they go onward and abide not in the teaching of Christ. In that case they have not God, and we should not give them an opportunity to lead others astray with their false teaching. Neither should we give to them any words of encouragement in their procedure, for to do so would be partaking of their evil works. To any congregation of Christians, therefore, we should give no word of encouragement in their undertakings or give to them any opportunity to teach their false doctrine to those within our group. "Receive them not into your house" is the language of John— permit them not into your assembly to promulgate their teaching. Thus we can see that one relationship of the local congregation to those congregations of Christians in error is to offer no encouragement to them in their errors or give to them no opportunity to promulgate their false teaching. To offer this encouragement to them or to give them opportunities to teach their doctrine would be to be partakers of their evil works.

History reveals that the people of God have never been faithful very long at a time. This is true through all their history. The very wording of this theme assumes that a part of the people of God now are in an apostate state by asking what shall be the relationship, of those following God's order, toward those Christians in error. This is neither a new nor a modern problem—a problem that for the first time is presented to this generation. It has its origin in the language of Cain: "Am I my brother's keeper?" That question has been ringing in the ears of the people of God from that time until now. This same problem we are discussing now—the relationship of the people of God in full fellowship toward those in error—faced Judah in her relationship to her sister kingdom Israel. Although in final analysis Judah was in almost as much error as was the northern kingdom of Israel, yet she does not lose her identity in the captivity which follows as did Israel.

This was the problem of Nehemiah as he rebuilt Jerusalem when Sanballat, Tobiah, and Gesham proposed a compromise to him when they said:

"Come, let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do mischief." Nehemiah replied: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Nehemiah 6:1-5). When those who have departed from God's order in their doctrine and practice see their mistake and want to take counsel with those who still cling to God's order, with a view of coming back to that way themselves, then mutual counsel will be in order; but when it becomes a compromised proposition which asks men to turn from God's order of doctrine and practice and to accept a way outlined by man, it should be respectfully and resolutely denied.

I would therefore suggest that our relationship to a congregation of Christians in error is not to form any compromise with them but to make an honest effort to get them to see the error of their way and to return to the way of the Lord; for they have departed from the faith. We are doing a good

work. Why should the work cease, whilst we leave it and come down to them. We have not time to meet with them in any kind of counsel where a compromise of some sort is to be proposed. If they wish to correct the error of their way, and come back to their first love, then a mutual counsel with them would be in order. We are not only not to fellowship them in their work, but we are not to make any kind of compromise with them in regard to the doctrine and practice of the Lord so as to bring about a reconciliation. This problem was bothering the early church as seen from the language of the apostle Paul in Romans 16:17. "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them." On this point, I give to you the following from the pen of Brother J. C. McQuiddy in the Gospel Advocate of November 3, 1921:

"Christians, before striving and contending with each other and before dividing up into parties and factions, should remember just what the church of Christ has cost God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. They should remember how great the sacrifices of a dying Savior to establish his church. They should not overlook the fact that Christ gave his body and shed his blood for his church. It is a greater sin for a man to rend the spiritual body of Jesus Christ than the man committed who pierced the side and drove the nails through the hands and feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the church is wrapped up the wisdom and love and power of God Almighty. What a fearful thing it is to destroy the unity of the Spirit, to rend the body of Christ, which the divine wisdom conceived, the di-vine love prompted, and the divine power executed." The esteem with which the body of Christ is held in many cases is entirely too low. Some (especially those Christians in error) think more of their human opinions, instrumental music, societies, future reign of Christ, or whatever it might be, than they do of the body of Christ and the sacredness of that great institution. These might be called the Christians in error if through the teaching and practice of these or other errors they are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine of Christ. In that case we are commanded of the Lord to turn away from them. We may then cause the division rather than to accept and practice their errors. But this would be according to the doctrine of Christ. The Holy Spirit is specific in his teaching as to our treatment toward those who put their personal ambitions and interests above the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Men who would make a party or a sect simply for the purpose of furthering their personal ambitions "are schismatics and should be so treated," is the language of Brother McQuiddy in the Advocate. The Holy Spirit says through Paul, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them" (Romans 16:17).

Those from whom we are commanded to turn away are those who are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine of Christ. Christ teaches that his followers are to be humble, to be meek and long-suffering, and to be free from the love of money and selfish interests. But those who put them-selves above the body of Christ are entirely out of harmony with the religion of our Lord. This must include the congregations of Christians in error. We are therefore admonished of the Lord to turn away from them. Instead of seeking to gratify our personal ambitions, we should listen to the admonition of Paul:

"Doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting' other better than himself: not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others. Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God,

counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Php\_2:3-11). The man who is not willing in meekness and humility to hold fast the form of sound words is not in the mind of Christ: for, “If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain” (1 Timothy 6:3-5). In our relationship toward those congregations of Christians in error we are not to indorse or to encourage them in their unscriptural teaching and practice lest we become partakers of their “evil works.” But we are to teach, admonish, and exhort them to turn from the error of their way and accept the order of God in all they teach and do. That we should be interested in them and attempt to save them from their error, we have the example of our Lord in three illustrations as he answered those who opposed him as to why he associated with publicans and sinners.

1. At Matthew's feast as recorded in Matthew 9:10-12 we have this:

“And it came to pass, as they sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Teacher with the publicans and sinners? Which when he heard it, he said, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. Go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” In other words, Jesus said that “I am a physician, and where would you expect to find me but among my patients?”

2. “The second occurs in the house of Simon the Pharisee as recorded in Luke 7:36-39 :

“And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And behold, a woman who was in the city, a sinner; and when she knew that he was sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster cruse of ointment, and standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee that had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is that touched him, that she is a sinner.” The answer that follows from Jesus to this meditated procedure is to the effect that it is a good policy to be a friend to sinners who have much to be forgiven; for when they have been forgiven and restored to their Lord their love is greater than their sins. Behold the woman, weeping for sorrow as well as for joy, washes his feet with her tears and wipes them with her hair. And thus he tells Simon, “you did not shew me this kind of treatment.”

3. The third is the circumstance of the great charge of the scribes and Pharisees that he receiveth sinners,

and eateth with them. We read:

“And both the scribes and the Pharisees murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake unto them this parable saying, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance” (Luke 15:2-7).

Thus Jesus said the reason that he received and ate with sinners was that by that means he might obtain their restoration into the fold of God. It was the same reason that moved the shepherd to leave the ninety and nine and hunt for the one that had gone astray. Someone has said, “there is more joy in this world in finding the things that are lost than in the possessing of those things that have not been lost.” Jesus said there was more joy in heaven “over one sinner that repenteth, than over the ninety and nine who need no repentance.”

I am wondering now as I close this study of the “relationship of the local congregation to those congregations of Christians in error,” if some of us might not more often leave the ninety and nine who are safe in the fold and hunt for the one that has gone astray until we find it and placing it on our shoulder bring it home? With this true story of a wandering child I close:

“Mr. and Mrs. Spraggins settled in Comanche county, then a border region, early in the '70's and from a Comanche paper dated October 18, 1879, we copy the following pathetic story of the lost child.

“The most pitiful and heartrending affair that has occurred in this county took place last week several miles south of town on the Bushy Gap road. On Wednesday morning (October 8, 1879) Mrs. Spraggins went to the spring several hundred yards distant, leaving her little child, only 21 months old, at the house. Upon her return to the house she missed the child and could not find it. She searched everywhere but in vain. The neighborhood was aroused, and fact was soon made evident by the little footprints in the path that the child had attempted to follow the mother to the spring and had become bewildered and lost. The whole neighborhood became aroused and a thorough search commenced. Again was the trail lost and found and every moment they expected to find the little fugitive but were doomed to disappointment. Night fell over the scene, and the last sign of the child was found four miles from home. By this time the mother had become frantic with grief, and her agony was heart rending. At night fires were built and at early dawn the search was resumed with renewed vigor. The morning passed and the sun hung low in the west, but no new signs of the child were discovered. A messenger was sent to town for reinforcements. Some fifty or sixty men appeared on the scene. A search was kept up all night by means of numerous lanterns, but the same fruitless result. But the next morning (Friday) some three hundred resolute men had gathered and a single line was formed nearly a mile in length and all day long the country was scoured everywhere it was in the bounds of reason to suppose that the child had wandered. ‘Hope deferred maketh the heart sick,’ and many gave up all hope of finding the child alive. Many supposed it had fallen prey to the numerous wolves, bears, and cougars which abound in that country, and were about to give up the search when a piece of its dress was found hanging to a

bush, far up the side of a rugged mountain, and fully five miles from home. This gave the weary hunters new encouragement and vigor. But again darkness interferred and the men camped in small groups all over the country. One man lay in twenty feet of the child's dead body, where early the next morning (Saturday) it was found dead on the mountain side. The body was found lying dead on its face, and a bush was caught in the back of its dress. Its little feet were swollen to twice their normal size. Thorns had pierced its body, and its breast, face and legs were literally scratched to pieces. No one can know or even imagine the suffering and misery the little wanderer endured. The child had been walking but four months. It would appear impossible to the casual observer for a child to travel over the rough mountains and through thickets five miles from home as this one did. Death, no doubt, was a sweet relief to the little wanderer's terrible suffering" (Bandera Era May 24, 1923). No one will ever know the suffering on the part of the child and especially of the mother. But what about the suffering in heaven over those "congregations of Christians in error"? Are we as willing to bring them home as these good people were to bring this child home? But he could not find the way back home. Neither can many of these people in these congregations who are in error today. Brethren: Are we selfish, are we interested, do we love those in error? I know, some will not come. But does that excuse us?

## Dangers of Church Cooperation

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### Dangers of Church Cooperation DANGERS OF CHURCH COOPERATION

By G. H. P. Showalter The church of the New Testament is a spiritual institution. The Savior before the Roman governor declared, "My kingdom is not of this world .... now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36). He rules from heaven not from some great center on earth. His sovereignty is in heaven, not in the earth. The faithful of earth—his servants and subjects— recognize his heavenly kingdom, his heavenly sovereignty, and place their lives under this government. The rule of Christ is in the heart of his subjects and through this he controls the life and conduct. "Behold the kingdom of God [his sovereignty, his rule] is within you." "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (Luke 17:20-21). We have been told: "Just so the heart is right all is right." While this statement is not correct, it remains that the heart must be right in order that, and before, all else can be right. The Savior declares, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8), and Peter said to Simon, "Thy heart is not right before God" (Acts 8:21). This suggests to our minds the nature of the kingdom of heaven. In fact these statements, directly from the inspired truth of heaven, set forth the character and manner of the government of Christ, and, incidentally, dispel forever the idea that Christ is now or ever will be on an earthly throne as a ruler among the kings and kingdoms of this world. The church of Christ in its general sense as the body of Christ has no earthly organization. Christ is in his glory at the right hand of God, and all the divinely called and sent apostles and prophets have long ago departed from earth to be with Christ. They left no successors in office. Christ himself left no earthly successor in office. He is our ever-living and everlasting Sovereign and any assumption of office, position or authority as a succession of him is nothing short of rebellion against the kingdom of heaven and a subversion of the divine order. God has never authorized anyone to become or be the "vicar of Christ" on earth. Neither is there a succession of apostles. The holy apostles of the Lamb, who through inspiration gave the Holy Oracles in the collection called the New Testament, perfected a work that needs no revision nor modification. They have said enough and the world needs no more. What could another group of apostles do more than has been done ? The apostles of the Christ were called and qualified for a special work and they completed this work. To contend otherwise would be to challenge the perfections of heaven. What could other apostles now do that has not been done already? What could they reveal for the salvation of the world that has not been revealed already ? What truth could they demonstrate by miracle that has not been abundantly attested by the miracles and mighty signs wrought already? Besides to have other apostles now would be to usurp the office and work of the apostles of Christ. They have left the earth but they have not passed out of existence. They are living still, alive unto Christ. The Christ is still enthroned at the right hand of God, with his holy apostles and prophets as the ambassadors of his will, with all . the authority of heaven and earth divinely committed to his hand. We have no need of another Christ, but still we have as much need of another Christ as we do of another college of apostles, or of a succession of apostles in some earthly office.

It was a sad day in the history of the church when the divine order was set aside and men began to organize the church. A great ecclesiasticism was developed exercising authority over the churches, whereas neither Christ nor any of his apostles ever authorized any man to have any authority outside of the local congregation. Let it be distinctly noted that there is no earthly organization of the church of Christ outside of the local congregation. Outside of this there is, on earth, no legal existence of the church founded by our Lord. There is no earthly president, or head of the church to rule, serve, live and die and be succeeded by some other mortal. Nothing of the sort. The church cannot sue and be sued in the civil courts. It is a spiritual, heavenly institution and is not organized and controlled like governments and institutions of earth. Every religious institution or organization of earth founded by men with presidents, popes, cardinals, bishops, archbishops and other high ecclesiastical functionaries is an institution different from and apart from the church of Christ and in its final analysis is rebellion against God. The wisdom of God may be observed in the; divine arrangement for his church. The local assemblies or groups with their elders and deacons, constitute a sisterhood of congregations with a common! cause and the same divine, and holy purpose, but independent so far as their local church government is concerned. Each congregation is a distinct unit responsible directly and only to God and Christ Jesus his Son. The elders and deacons of one congregation have no authority whatever, over the membership of any other congregation. And thus while there may be, and it is important that there should be cooperation among the churches of Christ, this cooperation must never be permitted to go beyond the limitations authorized in the inspired writings of the New Testament. There may be, there is, and should be, a concert of action on the part of congregations of disciples of the Christ. But there cannot be an institution made up of representatives of a plurality of churches, and officers elected and installed to preside over and serve in such an institution, apart from, and distinct from, the local congregation with any sort of authority from the word of the Lord. Such a body has no counterpart in the work of the inspired apostles of Christ Jesus our Lord. They left no precedent for it, and gave no orders nor instructions for the creation nor for the existence of such an organization. Such an arrangement becomes indeed an existing entity—and what is it? It is not the church. The church consists of all the saved in Christ, redeemed by his blood. But the institution of men mentioned above does not consist of all the saved in Christ. Hence it cannot be the church of Christ. It cannot be a local congregation or church of Christ, for its members and officials are not the same as any local church. It is an institution that was not founded by Christ—is not the church of Christ—is not the same as the church of Christ—is not like the church of Christ. It is an institution founded by men with no authority whatever from Christ our great Leader and Lawgiver and the Captain of our salvation.

It is manifestly within the scope of approved prece-dent and precept from the inspired records of the New Testament that two or more local congregations combine their effort and service in any particular mis-sion work, or any case of charity or need, but they can perform such service or render such relief, each as an independent group, or body only. Some examples under the direction and approbation of the apostles will make this clear to all. In Acts 11:27-30; Acts 12:25 we are given some insight into just how the disciples and the churches proceeded in relief work.

The passage reads:

“Note in these days there came down prophets -from Jerusalem to Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Aga- bus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over

all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren that dwelt in Judea: which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul" .... "And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministration."

Let us note:

1. There was a famine in Judea and the disciples there were in need of relief.
2. The disciples over at Antioch, in keeping with the benevolent and unselfish spirit of their Master, determined to send relief to their needy brethren in Judea.
3. In this instance the offering—the relief was sent by the church at Antioch and the individual "disciples, every man according to his ability," making the offer-ing.
4. Their relief was sent by faithful men—Barnabas and Saul. 'In this instance these men were serving in the capacity of deacons and deacons should always be men of blameless and faithful lives.
5. This relief was delivered to the "elders" of the church,'or probably churches, in Judea.
6. Note the "relief" sent was not delivered to a board, or any sort of an organization outside of the church—and if was given "to the elders"—the elders of the local church.

This should be sufficient so far as divine authority is concerned in the matter of sending relief to any who are in need. The work was done through the local congregation at Antioch without re-course to any other temporary or permanent institution or organization. But let us consider another passage of Scripture that throws some light on this very interesting question. In First Corinthians 16:1-4 we have from Paul the following:

"Note concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come. And when I arrive, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send with letters to carry your bounty unto Jerusalem: and if it be meet for me to go also, they shall go with me."

1. From the above we learn that Paul gave this special instruction to the churches in Galatia and that it went forth from him an inspired apostle, as an "order."
2. Later he gave the same "order" to the church at Corinth.
3. "The churches in Galatia"—how many we do not know, but we have reason to infer the number was considerable—were separated many miles from the church at Corinth in Greece.
4. Here we find, another instance of the local congregation—rather mention of a plurality of

local congregations in their congregational capacity--sending relief to a distant place. No

other organization other than the local church was resorted to in making up this bounty,

and in the service of its delivery to those in need. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians Paul enlarges upon this very matter of relief for the poor saints, and in the 8th and 9th chapters, sets forth in lucid terms the requirements and manner of giving for such cause. It seems these words of Paul should find a place just here. Notice the directness and simplicity of his message, instruction and exhortation.

"Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; how that in much proof of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship in the ministering to the saints: and this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God. Insomuch that I exhorted Titus, that as he had made a beginning before, so he would also complete in you this grace also.

"But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich. And herein I give my judgment: for this is expedient for you, who were the first to make a beginning a year ago, not only to do, but also to do with. But now complete the doing also; that as there was the readiness to will, so there may be the completion also out of your ability. For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not. For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed; but by equality: your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality: as it is written, he that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack.

"But thanks be to God, who putteth the same earnest care for you into the hearts of Titus. For he accepted indeed our exhortation; but being himself very earnest, he went forth unto you of his own accord. And we have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches; and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and to show our readiness: avoiding this, that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us: for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many things, but now much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which he hath in you. Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my partner and my fellow-worker to you-ward, or our brethren, they are the messengers of the churches, they are the glory of Christ. Show ye therefore unto them in the face of the churches the proof of your love, and of our glorifying on your behalf" (2 Cor. Ch. 8).

“For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: for I know your readiness, of which I glory on your behalf to them of Macedonia, that Achaia hath been prepared for a year past; and your zeal hath stirred up very many of them. But I have sent the brethren, that our glorying on your behalf may not be made void in this respect; that, even as I said, ye may be prepared: lest by any means, if there come with me any of Macedonia and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be put to shame in this confidence. I thought it necessary therefore to entreat the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up before-hand your afore-promised bounty, that the same might be ready as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion.

“But this I say, he that someth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that someth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in every thing, may abound unto every good work: as it is written, he hath scattered abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness abideth for ever.

“And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness: ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God. For the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God; seeing that through the proving of you by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all; while they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift” (2 Cor. Ch. 9).

Notice then that,

1. The churches in Galatia, as churches, and under the instruction of Paul the apostle, provided and supplied through free-will offerings relief for those in need.
2. The church at Corinth was instructed of Paul to do the same thing.
3. The churches in Macedonia, as churches—not as an ecclesiasticism, as combination of churches—  
— did also as the churches of Galatia and Achaia.

This, then, should suffice, so far as relief work is concerned, and how it was carried on in apostolic times. There is not found an exception to this method or manner of doing this type of divine work and service. But just here we may consider with profit the report of Paul to the church at Philippi, for what they were doing to support him in mission work.

“But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled

and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. Howbeit ye did well that ye had fellowship with my affliction. And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need. Not that I seek for the gift; but I seek for the fruit that increaseth to your account. But I have all things, and abound: I am filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things [that came] from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. (Php\_4:10-18).

Paul was a great missionary. He made many sacrifices in order to preach the gospel. Sometimes he worked with his own hands to support himself that, he might preach the gospel (See 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 2 Thessalonians 3:8-9). Again churches sent up to him things necessary for life. The church at Philipp: had had fellowship with Paul. Other churches did the same. The statement, "When I departed from Macedonia no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only" is an implication that other churches on other occasions had extended such fellowship.

Outside of their needs within their own local affairs there are two great responsibilities for the churches of Christ. These are:

1. Relief work, ministering to the necessities of the saints, and doing good to all men, including possibly the care for

and the training of orphan children and others in need.

2. The support of men who are preaching the gospel in destitute fields, often referred to—with possible inaccuracy—

as "mission work."

Some have supposed in the past and many presume at the present time that the successful execution of such service necessitates, or at least warrants the organization of a society other than and in addition to the local church. But in proceeding to institute such organization it becomes necessary to create offices and elect officials other than, and in addition to, those elders and deacons and evangelists of the local congregation of the New Testament. Thus a society is formed with officials performing a service that is not limited to, and does not of necessity belong to, any one local congregation—a sort of supervisory body with either assumed or delegated authority over, and administration of, the affairs of the local church. And all this without one particle of authority from the New Testament. To such a body the New Testament gives no jurisdiction whatever over the churches nor any authority to handle the money or direct the missions of the local church. Churches of Christ may act in unison, or by a concert of action—directing their services to the same needy field—but each, to act scripturally, must maintain its congregational independence with no supervision of outside overlords.

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