

# WORKS OF R. A. TORREY

by R.A. Torrey

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*Collected works of the American evangelist and Bible teacher R.A. Torrey, including his influential apologetic arguments for the authority of Scripture and practical guides to the Christian life, prayer, and evangelism.*

32 Chapters

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## A Summary of Ten Reasons Why I Believe the Bible to Be the Word of God

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A Summary of 'Ten Reasons Why I Believe the Bible to be the Word of God' (by R A Torrey)

1). I Believe the Bible to be the Word of God because Jesus testified to the Fact that the Bible Is the Word of God

In the first place I believe the Bible to be the Word of God because of the clear and definite testimony of Jesus Christ to that fact.

We live in a day in which many people say 'I accept what Jesus Christ teaches, but I do not know about the rest of the Bible'. Now at first glance that looks like an eminently rational position, but in point of fact it is utterly irrational and impossible. It is utterly irrational and impossible for this reason - if we accept the teaching of Jesus Christ we must accept everything on which He sets the stamp of His endorsement. And Jesus sets the stamp of His endorsement on the entire Bible.

As to the Old Testament you will find this, for example, in Mark 7:13. Here our Lord, in reasoning with the religious leaders of His day, said 'you do make the Word of God of non-effect through your tradition'. He had just been drawing a sharp contrast between their traditions and the teachings of the Law of Moses, not merely of the Decalogue but of other parts of the Pentateuch as well, and having drawn this contrast He says these words, 'making the Word of God of non-effect through your traditions', thus in so many words calling the Law of Moses 'the Word of God'.

When I was holding meetings in England, a prominent dignitary and scholar in the Church of England, in a private correspondence with me, took me to task for calling the Bible 'the Word of God' and said, 'the Bible nowhere claims to be the Word of God'. In reply, among other passages, I called his attention to the one just quoted and showed him how the Lord Jesus Himself in so many words called the Law of Moses 'the Word of God'.

Now turn to Matthew 5:18, where you will read these words of the Lord Jesus, 'Verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.' Now a 'jot', as every Hebrew scholar knows, is the Hebrew character 'yodh', the smallest character in the Hebrew alphabet, less than half the size of any other character in the Hebrew alphabet, and a 'tittle' is only part of a letter, the horn that the Hebrews put on some of their consonants, less than the cross we put on a 't'. So our Lord Jesus here sets the stamp of His endorsement, upon the Law of Moses as originally given, as being absolutely inerrant down to its smallest letter or smallest part of a letter. That is 'verbal inspiration' with a vengeance, and it is from our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Of course, this only covers the first five books of the Bible. But if you can accept them you will not have much trouble with the rest of the Old Testament, for this is the very part of the Bible where the hottest controversy is being fought today, and always has been fought, between the

rationalists and the believers in the Bible as the inerrant Word of God. It is in this part of the Bible that we read the story of creation, the story of the Fall, the story of the Flood, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, the destruction of the Canaanite nations, and pretty much all the other things on which the objectors to a Bible verbally inspired most violently pour out their condemnation and their scorn. And is it not a remarkable fact that our Lord Jesus Christ, looking down through the coming centuries and anticipating the controversies of today, should have put the stamp of His endorsement in the most unmistakable way upon that very portion of the Bible where the hottest conflict would be raged eighteen centuries later?

Now turn to John 10:35. Here the Lord Jesus says, 'the Scripture cannot be broken'. He had just quoted Psalms 82:6 as ending all controversy in the matter in dispute between Himself and His opponents, and having done it He utters the words quoted above, 'the Scripture cannot be broken', thus setting the stamp of His endorsement upon the absolute irrefragability or inerrancy of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Now turn to Luke 24:27, 'And beginning from Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself'. Now read the 44th verse of the same chapter, 'All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me'. The Hebrew in our Lord's time divided his Bible, our Old Testament, into three divisions - 'the Law', that is the part we call the Pentateuch, 'the Prophets', including not only the books we call prophetic, but many of the historical books as well, the material for which was derived from the prophets, and 'the Psalms', or 'Hagiographa', or 'sacred writings', including all the remaining books of our present Old Testament. So our Lord in these verses takes up each one of the three recognised divisions of the Jewish Bible of His day, and sets the stamp of His endorsement upon each and every one of them. Therefore if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ we are logically compelled to accept the entire Old Testament as the Word of God.

Furthermore, as regards the Divine origin and authority of the Old Testament, our Lord Jesus says in Luke 16:31, 'If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead'. In these words He endorses in the most emphatic way the infallible truth of the Old Testament. He says again in John 5:47, 'If ye believe not his (Moses') writings, how shall ye believe my words?' In these words He sets the stamp of His authority upon the teaching of Moses as being as truly from God as His own, and declares that the same spirit that led men to reject the teaching of Moses, would lead them to reject His own teachings. So then, if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ we are compelled to accept the entire Old Testament as the Word of God.

But how about the New Testament? Did our Lord Jesus set His stamp of approval on that also?

He did. But someone will say, 'How could He? Was the New Testament written while He was here on earth?' No, not a single book of it. How then could He set the stamp of His endorsement upon books that were not as yet written? The answer is simple, by way of anticipation. Turn to John 14:26 and you will hear Jesus saying, 'But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you'. In these words our Lord Jesus set the stamp of His endorsement not only upon the teaching of the Apostles as being Divinely inspired, but also

upon their recollection of what He said as being also Divinely inspired.

The question is often asked me, 'how do we know that in the four Gospels we have an accurate record of what Jesus Christ said? Did the Apostles take notes of what our Lord Jesus Christ said at the time, and if not, may they not have forgotten and misreported Him?' To this question I would say, 'There is reason to suppose that the Apostles did take notes at the time of what the Lord Jesus said, that Matthew, the author of the first Gospel, and Peter, from whom Mark derived his material for the second Gospel, and that James, the brother of John, from whom there is reason to believe Luke derived much of his material for the third Gospel, took down what Jesus said in Aramaic, and that John took down what the Lord Jesus said in Greek, for we must remember that when our Lord Jesus was here on earth the people among whom He lived were a bilingual people, speaking sometimes Greek, and sometimes Aramaic. But all this does not matter for our present purpose, for our Lord Jesus Christ Himself distinctly tells us that, in the Apostolic records of what He said, we would not have the Apostles' recollection of His words, but the Holy Spirit's recollection, that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance all that He had said unto them, and while it was possible the Apostles might forget or misreport, the Holy Spirit could never forget nor misreport.

Now turn to John 16:12-13. There you will read these words, 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all the truth'. In these words our Lord Jesus declares that the Apostles' teachings were not only to be Divinely inspired, but that furthermore they would contain more truth than He Himself taught, that indeed they would contain 'all the truth'. So if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ, we are logically compelled to accept the New Testament as being Divinely inspired, as containing more truth than Jesus Christ Himself taught, as indeed containing 'All the truth'.

There was a fad cry that arose some years ago in England and was taken up in this country (USA). 'Back to Christ', they said. By this men meant, 'Do not tell us what Paul said, do not tell us what John said, do not tell us what Peter said, let us go back to Christ, to the original source of authority. Very well, 'Back to Christ' - I rather like the cry myself. But when you get back to Jesus Christ you hear Him saying, 'On to the Apostles. I have many things to say that I could tell you, but you are not ready to hear them yet; but when the Holy Spirit is come, He will guide you into all the truth'. So then if we accept the authority of Jesus Christ, we are compelled to accept the entire New Testament as being Divinely inspired, as containing more truth than He Himself taught, as indeed containing 'all the truth'.

Here then is the point at which we arrive. If we accept the authority of Jesus Christ we must accept the entire Old Testament and the entire New Testament as the Word of God. It is either Christ and the whole Bible or else no Bible, and no Christ.

There are many in these days who say that they 'believe in Christ, but not in the Christ of the New Testament'. But there is no Christ other than the Christ of the New Testament. Any other Christ than the Christ of the New Testament is a pure figment of the individual imagination. He is just as much an idol, made with men's brains, as any idol men make with their hands.

But can we accept the authority of the Christ of the New Testament? If we honestly face the facts we are compelled to accept His authority for Jesus Christ is accredited to us by five unmistakably

divine testimonies.

First of all Jesus Christ is accredited to us by the testimony of the Divine life that He lived, for He lived as never man lived. If anyone takes the four Gospels for himself and lays them side by side, and reads them through carefully and honestly even once, he will discover two things. Firstly that the story here related is the story of a life that was actually lived here on earth, and not a mere romance. To imagine that any one man imagined such a character as that of Jesus of Nazareth, when such a life was never lived upon earth, is to suppose a greater miracle than any one recorded in any of the four Gospels. But to suppose that not only one man did it, but that four different men did it, and that each one not only made the story consistent with itself, but also consistent with the other three, is to suppose the absolutely preposterous and impossible. Secondly he will discover that the life here recorded stands absolutely apart from any other life lived upon earth.

Napoleon Bonaparte, late in life, was discussing Jesus of Nazareth with some of his friends, and he is reported to have said, 'I know men, (and if he did not know men, who ever did?), and Jesus of Nazareth was no man'. He meant of course by this that while Jesus Christ was a man, he was also more than a man.

In the second place Jesus Christ is accredited to us by the Divine words that He spoke. If anyone will take the four Gospels and just read with candour and open mind the words spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, he will soon discover that there is a quality in these words that distinguishes them from all other words spoken on earth. He will be compelled to say what the officers said who were sent to arrest Jesus, 'Never man spoke like this man'.

In the third place Jesus Christ is accredited to us by the divine works that He wrought. Not only healing the sick, which many have done, but cleansing the leper by a mere word, opening the eyes of the blind by a mere word, raising the dead by a mere deed, stilling the tempest and the sea by a mere word, turning water into wine, and feeding five thousand people with five small loaves and two small fish, which was a creative act. These works of Divine power are clear credentials of a God-sent teacher. We cannot study them carefully and not come to the same conclusion that Nicodemus, a great Jewish teacher, came to, when he said, 'We know that you are a teacher come from God, for no man could do these signs which you do, except God be with him' (John 3:2). The truth is that all attempts to isolate Jesus and His teachings from his miracles, and there have been many, have ended in failure, and they are the unmistakable evidence that He was a teacher come from God..

In the fourth place Jesus Christ is accredited to us by His Divine influence on all subsequent history. There is no doubt that Jesus Christ claimed to be the Son of God in a unique sense. He says in Mark 12:6 that while all the prophets of the old dispensation, even the greatest, were 'servants', He Himself was the 'Son', and the 'one' and only 'Son' of God (see the Greek). He did not hesitate in John 10:30 to say 'I and the Father are one' (which the Jews themselves recognised as a Divine claim). He went so far as to say in John 14:9, 'he who has seen me has seen the Father', and He even went so far in John 5:22-23 to say that all men should honour Him, 'the Son, even as they honour the Father'. But this very claim shows us that He was not just a good man. No good and rational man could have made the claims that Jesus did unless they were true. So we must conclude that He was unquestionably one of three things. Either He was truly the

only Son of God, or He was deluded, or He was an impostor. So as we look at His influence on all subsequent history we have to ask, was this influence that of an impostor or a deluded man, or was it the influence of One uniquely come from God?

In the fifth place Jesus Christ is accredited to us by His resurrection from the dead. It can easily be shown that the historic evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so absolutely and overwhelmingly convincing, that doubting it would be impossible on the part of any man competent to weigh evidence, who will sit down before the evidence of His resurrection and carefully examine it with the single hearted desire to know and obey the truth. But this clearly proven resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the Lord God Almighty's stamp of endorsement on Jesus Christ's claims.

We must then, if we are honest, accept the authority of Jesus Christ, and consequently we must accept the entire Old Testament and the entire New Testament, which He endorsed as being the Word of God, as being such in reality.

2). I Believe the Bible to be the Word of God Because of It's Fulfilled Prophecies. My second reason for believing the Bible to be the Word of God is because of its fulfilled prophecies. The subject of fulfilled prophecy is a large one, and to go into it in any fullness would take many hours, but I think I can sufficiently outline it in a few minutes so that you will see its unanswerable force.

There are two kinds of prophecy in the Bible, first the explicit verbal prophecies, and second the prophecies of the types and symbols. Let us take up firstly the explicit verbal prophecies. These are of three kinds, first, prophecies regarding the coming Messiah, second, prophecies regarding the Jewish people, and third, prophecies regarding the Gentile nations. We will limit ourselves to the prophecies regarding the coming Messiah, and take only five of them by way of illustration.

The first we will consider is Isaiah 53, the entire chapter. A very determined effort is being made in our day to discredit the Messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53. This is done by both rationalists and unbelieving Jews. It is very natural that both of these classes should deny the Messianic implication of this chapter, for if Isaiah 53 is Messianic then beyond a doubt there is a predictive element in prophecy and this is denied by rationalists. Also if Isaiah 53 is Messianic then beyond a doubt Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah and of course unbelieving Jews are unwilling to believe that, so we are told that it is not Messianic.

But two things prove to a certainty that Isaiah 53 is Messianic. The first is that the Jews themselves taught that it was Messianic until Jesus of Nazareth came and fulfilled it. Then once He had come they began to deny the Messianic application of the prophecy because they did not wish to believe that He was the Messiah.

The second thing that proves that it is Messianic is that, if it does not refer to the Messiah, to whom does it refer? The best answer of those who do deny it is that the sufferer signifies suffering Israel. But anyone who will read the chapter through carefully, even if only once, will see that this explanation is impossible, for we are told that the sufferer in Isaiah 53 was suffering for the sins of others than himself. This we are told again and again. For example we are told, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed'. We are told furthermore that the others for whose sins He was suffering, were Israel. Now put these two facts together - the sufferer suffering for the sins

of other than Himself, and the others than Himself for whom He was suffering, i.e. Israel. Thus certainly the sufferer cannot be Israel.

Some years ago a Jew wrote to one of the most learned and best known Rabbis in America asking him if Isaiah 53 referred to Jesus of Nazareth. To this the brilliant Rabbi replied, 'It seems to but don't'. The answer was astray in only one or two words. It seems to and does. If you will read the chapter through carefully and thoughtfully for yourself you can hardly fail to be convinced.

The other passages to which I would call your attention are Micah 5:2; Daniel 9:25-27; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Psalms 16:8-11. In these five passages we have predictions of a coming King of Israel. We are told the exact place of His birth (Micah 5:2), and the exact time of His manifestation to His people (Daniel 9:25-27); we are told of the precise family of which He was to be born (Jeremiah 23:5-6 compare Isaiah 11:1), and the condition of His family at the time of His birth, a condition entirely different from that existing at the time the prophecy was written, and contrary to all the probabilities in the case (Isaiah 53:2-3); we are told of His death, the exact manner of His death and other details regarding it (compare also Psalms 22:16-18), we are told of His burial and the details in connection with it, (Isaiah 53:7-9) and of His resurrection and His victory subsequent to His resurrection (Psalms 16:8-11 compare Isaiah 53:12). Every one of these predictions was fulfilled centuries later with the most minute precision in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Now I submit that any book that has the power of looking centuries into the future, and predicting with minuteness and precision, and accuracy of time, person, place and circumstances, events to occur centuries later, must have for its author the only person in the Universe who knows the end from the beginning - that is, God.

There is furthermore a noteworthy and significant fact regarding the prophecies of the Bible, and that is that often there are two seemingly contradictory lines of prophecy, and it seems as though if the one line of prophecy were to be fulfilled, the other could not by any possibility be fulfilled. And yet these two seemingly contradictory lines of prophecy converge and are fulfilled in one person, the Lord Jesus Christ. For example in the Old Testament we have two apparently contradictory lines of prophecy regarding the Messiah. One line predicts a suffering Messiah, 'despised and rejected of men', 'a man of sorrows, acquainted (or humiliated by) grief, one who would lay down His life as an atoning sacrifice for sin, one whose earthly mission would end in death and ignominy. The other line predicts equally clearly and definitely a Messiah who would be an all-conquering Messiah, a king who would rule the nations with a rod of iron. How could these two lines of prophecy both be true?

This was the problem that faced the ancient Jew, and the best answer he could give was that there would be two (or even more) Messiahs, one a suffering Messiah of the tribe of Joseph, and the other an all-conquering Messiah of the tribe of Judah. But in the person of Jesus of Nazareth we find both lines of prophecy converging and being fulfilled in one person. The first line of prophecy is fulfilled in His first coming which culminated in His crucifixion on the cross of Calvary, the second is fulfilled in His glorious resurrection and ascension whereby He received all authority and power at the right hand of God and will find its glorious completion in His final return to earth as King and Judge of all men.

But if the explicit prophecies are conclusive, the prophecies of types and symbols are even more conclusive. If you ask the ordinary, superficial reader of the Bible how much of the Old Testament is prophetic he will answer something like this, 'Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the minor prophets, together with some prophetic passages here and there in the Psalms and in the Pentateuch. But if you ask a thoroughgoing student of the Bible how much of the Old Testament is prophetic he will reply that the entire Old Testament is prophetic, that its personages are prophetic, and that its institutions, ceremonies, offerings, sacrifices and feasts are all prophetic.

If you doubt his statement, and you have a perfect right to doubt it, he will sit down and take you through the whole Old Testament from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Malachi, and will show you everywhere unmistakable foreshadowings of things to come. He will show you in Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, David and Solomon, and also in every sacrifice and offering in the Tabernacle and every part of the Tabernacle, its outer court with its brazen altar of sacrifice, its Holy Place with its seven-branched candlesticks and tables with the loaves of shewbread upon it, in the golden altar of incense before the curtain separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, in the curtain itself, in the Ark of the covenant beyond the curtain, with its perfectly kept law overshadowed by the blood-sprinkled mercy seat, in its various coverings, in every sacrifice and offering, in its laws regarding cleansing, in its feasts and all its ceremonies, the most unmistakable foreshadowings and types of Jesus Christ, His twofold nature, divine and human; His sinless character; His atoning death; and His resurrection and return. And as you go on you will encounter all the facts concerning Church and Jewish history. Now at first this will seem a happy coincidence, but as you go on, chapter after chapter and book after book, the theory of 'happy coincidence' is ruled out by the law of mathematical probability, and you are forced to see that it is intended. You will find every fundamental truth that was to be fully revealed in the New Testament prefigured in the types and symbols of the Old Testament. Now I submit to you that any book that has the power of putting into a legislation, which is intended in the first place to meet the immediate needs of the people then living, the clearest foreshadowings of happenings and truths not to be revealed for at least fifteen hundred years, must have for its author the only being in the Universe who knows the end from the beginning - and that is, God.

3). I Believe the Bible to be the Word of God because of the Unity of the Book.

My third reason for believing that the Bible is the Word of God is because of the Unity of the Book.

This is an old argument, yet it is not only a good one but an unanswerable one.

The Bible is composed of sixty six separate portions or 'books'. These sixty six books were written in three languages, Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. The period of their composition extends over more than fifteen hundred years. They were written in countries hundreds of miles apart. They were written by at least forty different authors. They were written by men in every plane of political and social life, from the king on his throne to the herdsman, the shepherd, the fisherman and the politician. They display every known form of literary composition. We not only have in the Bible both prose and poetry, but every known form of prose and poetry. We have in the Bible epic poetry, lyric poetry, didactic poetry, erotic poetry, elegy and rhapsody. We have also in it every form of prose. We have historic prose, didactic prose, epistolary prose, argument, theological treatise, proverb, parable, apothem, allegory, satire and oration.

In a book so marvellously composite, made up of such divergent parts, composed at such remote periods of time, and under such divergent circumstances, by so many different persons, what would we expect? Surely variance and discrepancy, absolute contradiction and discord, total lack of unity. But in point of fact what do we find? We find, as every thorough Bible student knows, the most marvellous unity known anywhere in literature. Every part of the Bible fits every other part of the Bible. One ever-increasing, ever growing, ever deepening thought pervades the whole. It is true that the Bible is a library, in fact it is a whole literature, but at the same time it is the most intensely and unvaryingly a unity of any book known in literature. The more we study its message the more we become aware of its unity. Now here is an astonishing fact. How are we to account for it?

If we were simply the type of theologian who does not bother with the facts but simply weaves his theories out of his inner consciousness we would not have to account for this fact. But being hard-headed, common sense, everyday men and women, we must account for facts, and this fact needs accounting for.

Two things about the character of the unity of the Bible demand attention. First of all is that it is not a superficial unity, but a profound one. It is not a unity that lies on the surface, it is a unity that only comes out of careful and protracted study. On the surface we often find apparent discrepancies and discord, but as we study and go far beneath the surface the apparent discrepancies and discord disappear and the deep underlying unity appears. The more deeply we study, the more complete do we find the unity to be.

The second characteristic of this unity is that it is an organic unity. That is to say it is not the unity of a dead thing, like a stone, or even a building, but of a living thing like a plant or a tree, where you have first the seed, then the young plant, then the mature plant, then the bud, then the blossom, and then the ripened fruit. In the early books of the Bible we have the germinant thought. As we go on we have the plant, then the bud, then the blossom and then the ripened fruit. Revelation is, as every student of the book knows, simply the ripened fruit of Genesis. Now how are we to account for this unity?

Suppose we proposed to build in Washington DC a Temple made up of stones from every state of the Union. Suppose some of the stones came from the marble quarries of Marlboro, N.H.; some from the grey granite quarries of Quincy, Mass; some from the brownstone quarries of Middletown, Conn.; some from the white marble quarries at Rutland, Vt; and indeed some from every state in the Union. These stones are of all conceivable sizes and shapes - large, medium and small, cubical, spherical, cylindrical, conical, and trapezoidal. And each of the stones is to be cut into shape at the quarry from which it comes. Not a mallet or chisel is to touch the stones once they have reached their destination. The stones arrive in Washington and the builders get to work. As they build they find that every stone fits into every other stone, and into its appointed place. They find that there is not one stone too many, nor one too few. How would you account for it? There is one simple way of doing so and that is to accept that behind all the individual activity of the quarrymen was the master mind of the architect, the one who planned the whole operation from beginning to end, and gave to each quarryman his specifications for the work.

Now that is precisely what we find in the Temple of eternal truth, the Bible. The 'stones' for it were quarried in widely separated places, over more than a thousand years, and yet they fit neatly into

place producing the perfect whole. There is only one way to account for this and that is by recognising the hand of the Great Architect who planned the whole. The Bible is His handiwork.

4). I Believe the Bible to be the Word of God Because of the Immeasurable Superiority of its Teaching.

It was quite the fashion when I was studying at University to compare the teachings of the Bible with those of the ethnic philosophers and sages, with the teachings of, for example, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Seneca, Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Mencius and Mohammed, and it is getting to be the fashion again. Anyone who institutes such a comparison, and puts the Bible in the same category with these ethnic philosophers and sages, must be either ignorant of the Bible, or else ignorant of the teachings of the ethnic philosophers and sage, or, what is more frequently the case, densely ignorant of both.

There are three points of radical difference between the teachings of the Bible and those of any or all other books.

First, that while the teachings of these ethnic philosophers and sages do contain truth, even precious truth, it is truth mixed with error, while the Bible ethical teaching contains nothing but truth. There are gems of thought in these ethnic philosophers and sages, but as Joseph Cook pointed out nearly half a century ago, they are 'jewels picked out of the mud'.

We are often asked, 'Did not Socrates teach in a way worthy of our attention how a philosopher ought to die?'. He did. But those who put Socrates in the same category as the Bible forget to tell us that Socrates also taught a woman of the streets how to conduct her business, and that was not quite so pretty.

'Did not Marcus Aurelius teach, in a way that is worthy of our thought today, the excellencies of clemency and moderation?' these men ask. He did, but they forget to tell us that this same Marcus Aurelius taught that it was right to put men and women to cruel, painful deaths for no other crime than that of being Christians, and being Roman Emperor, and having the power to do it, he practised what he preached. One of the most awful persecutions of Christians, that in which the holy Polycarp was martyred, was under the special patronage of this same Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

'Did not Seneca teach in a thoughtful and suggestive way the excellencies of poverty?' these men ask us. He did, but they forget to tell us that at the very time Seneca was writing so beautifully about the excellencies of poverty he himself was one of the most notorious spendthrifts in Rome, the single item of onyx tables in his Roman mansion costing a fabulous fortune. Furthermore he was the tutor of the most infamous Emperor in Roman history, Nero, and under him Nero was trained for his awful work.

'Did not Confucius teach the duty of children to parents in a way that is worthy of our attention today?' these men ask. He did. But they forget to tell us that Confucius also taught that it was right to tell lies, and unblushingly tells us in a fragment of his own life which he has left us, how he himself told lies on occasion. And there is nothing in which his most devoted disciples, the modern Chinese, have proved themselves adept pupils of their great master as in this single matter of lying, for they have reduced lying to a fine art. In order to facilitate 'saving of face' they will resort to

any type of untruth.

The second radical point of difference between the teaching of the Bible and that of all other books is that the Bible contains all the truth, while those other books only contain fragments of truth.

There is not one single known truth on moral and spiritual subjects that cannot be found for substance between the covers of the Bible. Often when speaking to audiences composed largely of secularists and unbelievers I have challenged anyone to produce one single truth on moral or spiritual subjects which I could not find for substance somewhere between the covers of the Bible. But no one has been able to do it yet. Of course, it is quite possible that somebody might be able to do that, for I do not pretend to know everything that is in the Bible, but it has not happened yet.

The Bible is a very old book, the last part of it was written over eighteen hundred years ago, and yet in all the thinking that men have done in the many long centuries since they have not been able to discover one single truth on moral or spiritual subjects that cannot be found in substance between the covers of the Bible. Is that not a remarkable fact? Is it not suggestive? Does it not point unmistakably to God as the author of the book? Let me put it this way. If all other books in the world were destroyed and only the Bible be left, we would not lose one single known truth on moral or spiritual subjects.

The third point of radical difference between the Bible and all other books is that the Bible contains more truth than all other books put together. You can go to the literature of all ages and of all nations, the literature of ancient Greece and ancient Rome, of ancient Persia, ancient China, ancient India, and to all modern literature as well, and cull out of it all that is good, setting aside all that is bad or comparatively worthless, and put the results of your labour together in one book, and even then you will not have a book that can replace this one Book.

It is as clear as day then that the Bible stands absolutely in a class by itself, and that while other books are men's books, this is God's book.

5). I Believe the Bible to be the Word of God Because of its Ability to Stand up Against Continual Attack.

My fifth reason for believing the Bible to be the Word of God is because of the history of the Book, because of its omnipotence against all men's attacks. It is as plain as day that what man has built man can destroy. Why then if man alone produced the Bible have nineteen centuries of assault upon the Bible been unable to destroy it?

Scarcely was the Bible given to the world when men discovered three things about it. They discovered that the Bible condemned sin. They discovered that the Bible demanded the renunciation of self. They discovered that the Bible laid human pride in the dust. But men were not willing to give up sin, they were not willing to renounce self, they were not willing to have their pride laid in the dust, therefore they hated the Book that made these demands, and they determined to destroy the book they hated.

Fronto, the most accomplished rhetorician of his day, the man whom the great Emperor Antoninus Pius chose to be the tutor of his even greater son Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, brought all the powers of his matchless rhetoric to bear against the Bible with the intention of discrediting it and destroying it, but he failed. Then Celsus tried it with the brilliance of his genius, and he failed. Then

Porphyry, beyond a question the leading neo-Platonic philosopher of his day, tried it with all the depth of his philosophy, but he failed. Diocletian, the Roman Emperor, brought other weapons to bear against the Bible. He summoned all the military and political forces of the mightiest Empire the world has ever seen, Rome at the zenith of its glory, to discredit and destroy the Bible, and he failed. He issued edicts that every Bible in the Roman Empire should be destroyed, and that failed. Then he issued sterner edicts that everyone who had a Bible in his possession should be put to death, and that failed. And for nineteen long centuries the assaults on the Bible have gone on. (The Roman Catholic church proscribed it, forbidding ordinary people to read it. Russian Communism banned it and punished severely anyone possessing it.) Every engine of destruction that human reasoning, human science, human philosophy, human wit, human satire, human cunning, human force and human brutality could bring to bear against the Book have been brought to bear against it, vast resources of modern scholarship have sought to discredit it, and with what result? That the Bible has a stronger hold upon the confidence and affections of the wisest and best men and women in the world than ever before. This demonstrated indestructibility of the Bible is proof positive of its Divine origin.

6). Because of its influence and power to lift men up to God.

7). Because of the character of those who accept it as the word of God.

8). Because of the inexhaustible depth of the Book.

9). Because as spiritual Men grow in wisdom and character, knowledge and holiness, and towards God they grow towards the Bible.

10). Because of the testimony of the Holy Spirit towards that fact. (John 8:47).

## Beginning Right

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### Beginning Right

by

R. A. Torrey

(1856-1928)

There is nothing more important in the Christian life than beginning right. If we begin right, we can go on right. If we begin wrong, the whole life that follows is likely to be wrong. If anyone who reads these pages has begun wrong, it is a very simple matter to begin over again and begin right. What the right beginning in the Christian life is we are told in John 1:12, "To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." The right way to begin the Christian life is by receiving Jesus Christ. To anyone who receives Him, He at once gives power to become a child of God. If the reader of this book should be the wickedest man on earth and should at this moment receive Jesus Christ, that very instant he would become a child of God. God says so in the most unqualified way in the verse quoted above. No one can become a child of God in any other way. No man, no matter how carefully he has been reared, no matter how well he has been sheltered from the vices and evils of this world, is a child of God until he receives Jesus Christ. We are "sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26), and in no other way.

What does it mean to receive Jesus Christ? It means to take Christ to be to yourself all that God offers Him to be to everybody. Jesus Christ is God's gift. "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16). Some accept this wondrous gift of God. Everyone who does accept this gift becomes a child of God. Many others refuse this wondrous gift of God, and everyone who refuses this gift of God perishes. He is condemned already. "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son" (John 3:18).

What does God offer His Son to be to us?

1. First of all, God offers Jesus to us to be our sin-bearer. We have all sinned. There is not a man or woman or a boy or a girl who has not sinned (Romans 3:22-23). "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives" (1 John 1:8, 1 John 1:10). Now, we must each of us bear our own sin or some one else must bear it in our place. If we were to bear our own sins, it would mean we must be banished forever from the presence of God, for God is holy. "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). But God Himself has provided another to bear our sins in our place, so that we should not need to bear them ourselves. This sin-bearer is God's own Son, Jesus Christ: "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might

become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). When Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary He redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse in our stead (Galatians 3:13). To receive Christ, then, is to believe this testimony of God about His Son, to believe that Jesus Christ did bear our sins in His own body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24), and to trust God to forgive all our sins because Jesus Christ has borne them in our place. "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

Our own good works, past, present, or future, have nothing to do with the forgiveness of our sins. Our sins are forgiven, not because of any good works that we do; they are forgiven because of the atoning work of Christ on the cross of Calvary in our place. If we rest in this atoning work we shall do good works, but our good works will be the outcome of our being saved and the outcome of our believing on Christ as our sin-bearer. Our good works will not be the ground of our salvation, but the result of our salvation, and the proof of it. We must be very careful not to mix in our good works at all as the ground of salvation. We are forgiven, not because of Christ's death and our good works, but solely and entirely because of Christ's death. To see this clearly is the right beginning of the true Christian life.

2. God offers Jesus to us as our deliverer from the power of sin. Jesus not only died, He rose again. Today He is a living Savior. He has all power in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). He has power to keep the weakest sinner from falling (Jude 24). He is able to save not only completely, but "completely," all that come to the Father through Him ("Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them." -Hebrews 7:25) "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). To receive Jesus is to believe this that God tells us in His Word about Him, to believe that He did rise from the dead, to believe that He does now live, to believe that He has power to keep us from falling, to believe that He has power to keep us from the power of sin day by day, and just trust Him to do it.

This is the secret of daily victory over sin. If we try to fight sin in our own strength, we are bound to fail. If we just look up to the risen Christ to keep us every day and every hour, He will keep us. Through the crucified Christ we get deliverance from the guilt of sin, our sins are all blotted out, we are free from all condemnation; but it is through the risen Christ that we get daily victory over the power of sin. Some receive Christ as a sin-bearer and thus find pardon, but do not get beyond that, and so their life is one of daily failure. Others receive Him as their risen Savior also, and thus enter into an experience of victory over sin. To begin right we must take Him not only as our sin-bearer, and thus find pardon; but we must also take Him as our risen Savior, our Deliverer from the power of sin, our Keeper, and thus find daily victory over sin.

3. But God offers Jesus to us, not only as our sin-bearer and our Deliverer from the power of sin, but also as our Lord and King. We read in Acts 2:36, "Let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Lord means Divine Master, and Christ means anointed King. To receive Jesus is to take Him as our Divine Master, as the One to whom we yield the absolute confidence of our intellects, the One whose word we believe absolutely, the One whom we will believe, though many of the wisest of men may question or deny the truth of His teachings; and as our King to whom we gladly yield the absolute control of our lives, so that the question from this time on is never going to be, What would I like to do or what do

others tell me to do, or what do others do? but "What would my King Jesus have me do?" A right beginning involves an unconditional surrender to the Lordship and Kingship of Jesus.

The failure to realize that Jesus is Lord and King, as well as Savior, has led to many a false start in the Christian life. We begin with Him as our Savior, as our sin-bearer and our Deliverer from the power of sin, but we must not end with Him merely as Savior; we must know Him as Lord and King. There is nothing more important in a right beginning of the Christian life than an unconditional surrender, both of the thoughts and the conduct, to Jesus. Say from your heart and say it again and again, "All for Jesus." Many fail because they shrink back from this entire surrender. They wish to serve Jesus with half their heart, and part of themselves, and part of their possessions. To hold back anything from Jesus means a wretched life of stumbling and failure.

The life of entire surrender is a joyous life all along the way. If you have never done it before, go alone with God today; get down on your knees, and say, "All for Jesus," and mean it. Say it very earnestly; say it from the bottom of your heart. Stay on your knees until you realize what it means and what you are doing. It is a wondrous step forward when one really takes it. If you have taken it already, take it again, take it often. It always has fresh meaning and brings fresh blessedness. In this absolute surrender is found the key to the truth. Doubts rapidly disappear for one who surrenders all (John 7:17). In this absolute surrender is found the secret of power in prayer (1 John 3:22). In this absolute surrender is found the supreme condition of receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32).

Taking Christ as your Lord and King involves obedience to His will, so far as you know it, in each smallest detail of life. There are those who tell us that they have taken Christ as their Lord and King who at the same time are disobeying Him daily in business, in domestic life, in social life, and in personal conduct. Such persons are deceiving themselves. You have not taken Jesus as your Lord and King if you are not striving to obey Him in everything each day. He Himself says, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46).

To sum it all up, the right way to begin the Christian life is to accept Jesus Christ as your sin-bearer and to trust God to forgive your sins because Jesus Christ died in your place; to accept Him as your risen Savior who ever lives to make intercession for you, and who has all power to keep you, and to trust Him to keep you from day to day; and to accept Him as your Lord and King to whom you surrender the absolute control of your thoughts and of your life. This is the right beginning, the only right beginning of the Christian life. If you have made this beginning, all that follows will be comparatively easy. If you have not made this beginning, make it now.

## Did I Miss God's Will for My Life

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Did I Miss God's Will for My Life? By R. A. Torrey

I recently received a letter from one who is evidently an earnest Christian woman but who was in a condition of great depression because some years ago, when in college, she felt that perhaps she was called to go to China but did not want to go but became engaged to a Christian man, whom she married, and now the old question has come up again and she is fearing that perhaps she is not saved, and may have committed the unpardonable sin, because she failed to yield to what she thinks may have been the leading of the Holy Spirit to go to China. The letter was so similar in many points to others that I have received, that I think the answer to it may be helpful to a great many, and as the letter was full of questions which are answered in my reply, it seems appropriate to put it under the head of "Questions and Answers." Of course, we have avoided everything that would lead any one to know who the writer of the letter was.

April 14, 1913.

Dear Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

Your letter of April 5th received, and carefully read. Let me say first of all, that I am glad that you wrote to me. I think that I can help you. In fact, I am very sure that I can. In regard to the substance of your first letter, let me say:

First. I do not believe that you were ever called to go as a missionary to China. The fact that the thought comes to one that they ought to go to China does not constitute a call. Neither does the fact that China seems to be the hardest field for one to go to, constitute a call. It is utterly to misunderstand God to think that a surrender of the will to Him necessarily involves doing the hardest thing, or even hard things. God is love, and absolute surrender of the will to Him is simply absolute surrender to infinite love. God is a Father, and not only wiser than any earthly father but more tender than any earthly mother.

Do you suppose that if my son, when he was a boy, should have come to me some day and have said, "Father, I want this to be a red letter day. I want no will of my own today whatever. Just make me out a plan for every step of my life today"--do you suppose that if he should have done that that I should have tried to think up all the hard things and disagreeable things, the things that he disliked the most, and have given them to him as his plan for that day? Don't you know that if he should have done that, I would have made that the happiest day he had ever known? So it is with our Heavenly Father when we surrender our wills to Him. He puts forth all the powers of infinite wisdom and infinite love to fill our lives with sunshine. Or course, He may ask us to do things that we would not have chosen to do; but if He does, those things will become the pleasantest things when we do them.

At the root of your difficulty lies a totally false conception of God, and a totally false conception of the way of salvation. I do not think God ever called you to China, for you do not seem to have

fitness for that work, and certainly now that you have a husband and children, He does not call you to go to China. There is nothing in all that you tell me about the matter that indicates any call of God for that particular work.

Second. Even if you were called to go to China and did not go, salvation is not impossible for you, neither is large usefulness impossible for you. According to the clear teaching of God's Word, we are not saved by service, we are saved simply by faith in Jesus Christ. Our service and our works have absolutely nothing to do with our salvation, i.e., as the ground of our salvation. Works and service are the outcome of our having already been saved. If you will turn in your Bible to Romans 4:5, you will read these words, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," so it is evident that all we have to do with our salvation is to believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly. Our salvation is purchased, not by anything that we do but by what Jesus Christ did when He bore our sins in His own body on the cross. His atoning death covered all our sins. "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). Every sin that we ever committed or ever shall commit was fully atoned for when He died upon the cross; He "redeemed us from the curse of the law (which we had broken) by becoming a curse in our place" (Galatians 3:13) "He who knew no sin became sin in our behalf, (i.e., took our place of condemnation) that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (i.e., our sins were put to His account, and His righteousness is put to our account (2 Corinthians 5:21).

It was His death and His death alone that secured salvation by simply believing on Him who secured it for us by His death, i.e., by accepting God's testimony about Him that our sins were laid upon Him (Isaiah 53:6) and trusting God to forgive us because He died in our place. The moment any one thus believes he is justified from all things (Acts 13:39); he has eternal life (John 3:36); he becomes a child of God (John 1:12).

We obtain assurance of salvation by simply believing what God says in His Word about Christ and about those who believe in Him. John tells us in 1 John 5:13, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may know that ye have eternal life (i.e., that we may know it through His written Word, not through our feelings and not through the witness of the Holy Spirit). The Holy Spirit does afterward bear witness together with our spirits that we are the children of God (Romans 8:16), but it is only when our spirit bears witness to it on the simple ground that God says so in His Word that the Holy Spirit bears witness together with our spirit. And it is our duty to believe that we are saved, and have eternal life (if we believe on Jesus Christ) whether the Spirit bears witness to it as yet or not. Not to believe it until we receive the Holy Spirit's testimony is to question God's Word and to make God a liar. He that does not believe God (i.e., what He says in His word, viz., that every one that believes in Jesus Christ is justified and has eternal life) makes God a liar, because he does not believe the record (or witness) that God gave of His Son (1 John 5:10). The record or witness that God has given concerning His Son (given in His Word) is that "he that hath the Son (has Him simply because he has received Him) hath life."

You are looking in the wrong place for assurance. You are looking at your feelings, or at the witness of the Spirit, instead of looking right at what God says in His Word. If you have received Jesus Christ (i.e., if you have taken Him as your Saviour, believing what God says about Him, namely, that He has laid your sins upon Him) and trusted God to forgive you because He died in

your place, and if you have taken Him as your Lord and King (i.e., making His Word, as far as you understand it, the rule of your life) and if you have taken Him as your risen Saviour who has power to save to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25) and are trusting Him to keep you, then you are saved even though it was God's will that you should go to China, and you did not go. If you have not so received Him, why so receive Him this very moment, and the moment you do, your sins are all forgiven (Acts 13:39); you have eternal life (John 3:36; John 5:24); you are a child of God (John 1:12). The first thing for you to do is not to decide the question of going to China, the first thing for you to do is to decide whether you have received Jesus or not, and if you have not, just receive Him now. Indeed, I would not bother too much about the question whether I had received him in the past or not: to be absolutely sure, I would let the past alone, just receive Him now and say, "If I never believed on Jesus before, I will now."

Third. It is already indicated in what I have said above, but I want to say it again so as to make it absolutely clear, that your root difficulty is legalism. You have mixed up law and grace. Thousands of others are doing the same. You have got it into your head that you are saved by doing everything that God tells you to do, and that if you should not do what He tells you to do in everything, or even if you should be uncertain as to what His will was, and through not clearly understanding or knowing His will should not do what He tells you to do, then you should not do what He tells you to do, then you would be lost. If that were true, pretty much everybody that professes to be a Christian would be lost, for there are certainly very few Christians who are not at times uncertain about the will of God and who do not at times wrongly interpret God's will and, of course, every one of these, according to your theory, would be lost.

Let me repeat it in another form, we are not saved by doing God's will, in going to just the place that He would have us to go, and in doing the exact thing He would have us do: we are saved on the single ground of Christ's atoning death and on the single condition of believing in Him who died and rose again. If you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, you will be saved the moment you do it (Romans 10:9), and you won't become unsaved by misinterpreting His will some time, and neglecting to do what it was His will you should have done. It is after we know we are saved because He says so in His Word that we are in a position to understand His will and do it.

Fourth. Now I will take up your specific questions, though they are really answered in what I have said.

(1) "If Abraham was willing to offer up his only son," of course we should be willing to give up, if God asks us to, our son or daughter, or husband, or any one else, but even Abraham was not saved by offering up his son. It was after He was saved that he offered up his son. He was saved by simple faith in God (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3-5). Even if Abraham had not offered up Isaac, he would have been saved, but he would doubtless have missed blessing that he might have had. But you have no reason for supposing that God wishes you to give up your husband and children. Indeed, God in His Word tells you very plainly that your duty is to your husband and children, and it would take a very clear and definite and remarkable revelation in the face of God's teaching about the duty of a wife and of a mother to make it clear that you should leave your husband and children and go to some foreign field. There doubtless have been cases where God has called upon a man to leave wife and children and go to the foreign field. I have a dear friend who has done that very

thing, but it was with the hearty consent of his wife and children, and they expect to follow him some time, though he has been separated from them most of the time for the past few years.

It is to such a case as that that God refers in the passage which you quote (Luke 18:29-30) and in similar passages such as Matthew 10:27; Luke 14:26. Of course, if anybody would be a disciple of Jesus he must deny himself (i.e., say to self, "I don't know you; I recognize no master but Jesus") and take up His cross (i.e., bear the shame and reproach and suffering that may lie in the path of duty, rather than wandering out of the path of duty in order to avoid the shame and suffering that lie in the path), and follow Christ (i.e., take Jesus and Jesus only as our example) (Matthew 16:24), but bear in mind this verse does not state the way to be saved, it states the way in which a saved person becomes a disciple. We are not saved by denying self, or taking up our cross, or doing anything else, we are saved by simply believing in Jesus. When we are saved, of course we will desire to be true disciples of Him.

Let me add to this, though it is not exactly put in your letter in the form of a question, that even if you made a mistake in being married, instead of going to China (I don't believe you did make a mistake, but even if you did) you cannot go back now, and have no right to go back now and break your marriage promise to your husband and desert the children whom God has given you. Your duty now is plain, simply to go on and witness for Christ by being a gentle, true, loving, self-denying wife and a faithful mother. Even if this were not the highest calling that God had for you (I really think it was the call God had for you, but even if it were not), nevertheless it is a high calling and one in which you may have great blessing. The woman most honored in the Bible is not the woman in public work but the woman who is a mother (1 Timothy 5:14; 1 Timothy 2:14-15). The woman who John saw in heaven was a mother (Revelation 12:1-2). Sanctified motherhood is a Christian woman's first call. I do not doubt for a moment that God calls some women to a celibate life and to forms of service where a married woman would not fit the case, but the ordinary call to a woman is to be wife and mother. It is evident that you have no special fitness for the lines of service to which God calls some women, and, as a condition, calls them to give up the privileges of motherhood.

(2) You write (though it is not exactly a question, it involves one), "I felt that God cared not for earthly things except spiritual matters and He would not save me unless I would go to China, and yet I could not see how to go." This has been already answered in what I have said above, but I will repeat it, you are not saved by going to China or going anywhere else; you are saved by believing in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, God does not tell you to go to China and then not let you see how to go.

You add the words, "Obey God and do His will mean nothing but go to China." Well, that is not in the Word, that was simply your fancy. You add still further, "The impression came, 'You will never have the power of the Holy Spirit and peace until you go to China.'" Well, that impression was certainly not from God. When you are saved you may obtain the Holy Spirit anywhere by simply meeting the conditions. Of course you will need to be willing to go to China, if it is God's will, but it is not clear that it is His will; in fact, it is very clear that it is not His will. Anyway this does not have anything whatever to do with your salvation. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is the gift of God to people who are saved; it is not a condition of their being saved.

You say further down, "Some months ago, while reading reports of our missionary work and the great need for workers, the old feeling came over me, 'Possibly I should have gone to my knees on my promise, but I did not go.' I began to probe my Christian life, I became anxious again, so much so that I could neither eat nor sleep." To this I would say, that even if you should have gone to your knees and did not, even though you made some mistake, it is done, it cannot be undone, it should be left with God, you cannot possibly go to China now without disobeying God, and even if you have failed of God's first choice for you, He has other things for you to do. Mark failed when he went with Paul and Barnabas; he left the work and evidently did wrong in leaving it, but God found for him other fields of opportunity and made him a useful servant. Even if you have failed of God's best and highest choice for you, you have not buried your talents; you do that when you do nothing, and even though you do not gain ten talents with your one, you can give five, and will have the Master's "Well done." Let me add, we are not saved by using our talents to the best advantage, we are saved by believing on Christ.

(3) You ask, "If it was a call from God and I have failed to heed, can you give me any assurance from God's Word that Jesus will yet accept me, although I may have thwarted His life purpose for me?" I have already answered this in the above, and given you much assurance from God's Word, but I will repeat it briefly: Jesus does not accept you on the ground of your falling in perfectly with God's will and not thwarting to some extent His life purpose. He saves you solely on the ground of His atoning death, and on the one condition that you believe on Him. You have His own Word for it, that if you come to Him, no matter how much you may have thwarted His purpose, no matter what sins you have committed, He will receive you (John 6:37). You say, "Do you think this was the unpardonable sin?" I not only do not think it was, I know it was not; for God has defined the one only unpardonable sin in His own Word, and according to His own explicit Word, the only sin that has no forgiveness is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, not sinning against the Holy Spirit. We have all sinned against the Holy Spirit at some time; the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the deliberate attributing to the Devil what we know to be the work of the Holy Spirit. This sin, of course, you have not committed, and even if you have thwarted God's purpose in the matter of going to China, it does not bear the faintest resemblance to the unpardonable sin.

(4) You ask, "How can I know the Spirit's leading from Satan's?" Let me say, first of all in answering this, that you need not go back and decide whether it was the Spirit's leading that you should go to China. Even admitting that it was and that you resisted or grieved the Holy Spirit in that case, it is done now and cannot be undone, and you are saved just the same and may expect the Spirit to lead you in the future.

Now in direct answer to your question would say, that the way to know the Spirit's leading is found in James 1:5-7. This involves five things: First, that you sincerely desire to know the will of God, and therefore the Spirit's leading; second, that you realize your own inability to decide ("lack wisdom"); third, that you definitely ask God to show you His will; fourth, that you confidently expect God will show you; fifth, that you go step by step as He does show you.

You have a perfect right to ask God to give you clear light, and if you really desire to know and do His will, if impressions come to you of which you are not at all sure, you have a right to say, "Heavenly Father, I want to know Thy will and will do it as soon as Thou hast made it clear; make it clear as day," and you have a right to wait until He does make it clear as day, and not be at all

bothered that you have not done what is not as clear as day; for "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5), and any impression or leading that is not clear is certainly not His leading for you as yet. When men and women want to really obey God in everything, the devil tries to thwart them by bringing all kinds of impressions that they ought to do things which very likely are not God's will at all, but which the devil simply brings in to annoy and to bring people into darkness as he has you. God is a Father and we are His children. If I want my children to do anything, I make it clear, and if one of my children was not sure that I wanted them to do something and therefore should not do it, I should not want my children to be afraid of me or cringe before me, but come to me and ask me to make it plain as day—and I would—and so will God. And if my children made a mistake and failed to do the thing I wanted them to do, I would not exclude them from my presence; I would love them just the same and would want them to be perfectly free with me still; and so does God.

(5) Of course the thought of getting a divorce from your husband and leaving husband and child is not of God. I think you see that without my going into it. Your present duty is as plain as day.

There are a number of other questions which are so plainly answered in what I have already said, I think it would only confuse you to go over them again. You ask me to tell you what qualifications one needs for a foreign missionary. I will not bother about going into them: for it is evident God does not want you now to go as a foreign missionary, so it is not necessary to go into it now. I will say frankly, however, that I don't think you have them anyway.

You ask what it means to say, "All for Jesus." It means simply that you give all your powers to Him and are ready to go where He tells you to go, to do what He tells you to do, and to be what He tells you to be. Of course it involves your being willing to leave husband and child and go out into the world with nothing to do if that were His will, but it is not His will, and Jesus would not have you do this. Indeed, He tells you not to do it in His Word, and doing His will does not mean for a moment that we are to choose the hardest thing and decide because the thing is the hardest that it is His will; the hardest thing is not His will, though His will may sometimes be a hard thing. You say, "How can I appropriate Christ's promises if I feel that such a thing is God's will and yet cannot do it?" Anything you "cannot do" is not God's will. He is not a hard Master, certainly not an utterly unreasonable Master (Matthew 11:30).

You ask if you have interpreted the words of Esau right in thinking that perhaps you have sold your spiritual birthright for the pottage of life, and that there is no place for repentance. You certainly have not interpreted them right. Your case does not bear the slightest resemblance to Esau's. Esau sold his birthright deliberately and intentionally for a mess of pottage. You have done nothing of the kind; even though you have made a mistake in interpreting God's will, you were not deliberately and knowingly selling your salvation for the sake of getting a husband.

You ask, "Do you think it is well for me to read and try to understand these deeper spiritual books of men like Dr. Gordon and Dr. Murray or had I better just read my Bible with such helps as I need to understand it?" To this I would say, in your present state of mind, I think you had better stick to your Bible. I do not think the books of Gordon and Murray would be helpful to you. Indeed, I do not think that too much reading of them is good for any one; I think a great many people are neglecting the Bible to read devotional books and harping on one narrow line and so get more harm than good.

You say, "Shall I wait for the witness of the Spirit before I try to present Christ as a Saviour to others?" No, be sure that you have received the Lord Jesus, and, therefore, believe that you have eternal life, and that your sins are forgiven, and that you are a child of God, because God says so, and go and witness to others for Jesus and some day you will find that you have the witness of the Spirit. It may dawn upon you gradually, or come like a burst, but the ground of our assurance is not primarily the witness of the Spirit, but God's own written Word.

I find I have omitted a part of your letter, where you speak about "trying to love God." My advice is to stop trying to love God; simply keep dwelling upon His love to you. We love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). Read over and over again the passages that tell you of His love to you (such passages as Isaiah 53:5, John 3:16). Ask God to make them real to you, and the first thing you know you will find you are loving God without trying.

Sincerely yours,

R.A. Torrey.

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## God's Keeping and How to Make Sure of It

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GOD'S KEEPING AND HOW TO MAKE SURE OF IT By R. A. Torrey OUR subject this morning is God's keeping and how to make sure of it. How to enjoy or make sure of God's keeping will come out when we come to a consideration of whom God keeps. The Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is full of passages on this important subject of God's keeping and we shall look at quite a number of these passages this morning, but no one of them can properly be considered the text of the entire sermon. I am going to give you a Bible reading rather than a sermon. Let us look first at John 17:11 (This comes nearer being the text of the whole sermon than any other,) "And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in the name which Thou hast given me, that they may be one even as we are." This was Jesus prayer. I am glad He offered it; for the Father heareth Him always, and I am sure of God's keeping because the Lord Jesus asked that I might be kept. Most wonderfully does this prayer of our Lord and Saviour bring out the security of those who belong to Him. In the next verse He goes on to say that while He was with His disciples He kept them in the Father's name. Yes, He says more than that, He says, "I guarded them, and not one of them perished. The son of perdition perished and he was one of the apostolic company, but he was never really one of those who belonged to Christ, he was not one of those whom the Father had given to Jesus Christ. Christ Himself declares that Judas was a devil from the beginning (John 6:70). But now our Lord was leaving His disciples and He turned their keeping over to the Father, and it is now the Father who keeps us, and it is this keeping which we are to study this morning. What the Bible tells us of God's keeping can be classified under five main heads: (1) Whom God keeps; (2) What He keeps; (3) From what He keeps; (4) How He keeps; (5) Unto what He keeps.

### I. WHOM GOD KEEPS.

We look first at whom God keeps, and by discovering that we will discover how any one of us may be sure of His glorious keeping.

1. Whom He keeps we are told in the very verse that we have just been reading, John 17:11-12. Here the Lord Jesus prays to the Father to keep those whom the Father Himself hath given to Christ, and says that He himself during His earthly life had kept these whom His Father had given Him. Those whom God keeps then are those who belong to Christ, those whom the Father has given to Him. The clear teaching of these verses is that there is a body of persons who belonged in a peculiar way to God, and whom God gave to His Son. This company of people, and their security and privileges, are frequently mentioned in the Gospel of John. Those whom God keeps are those who belong to this company. The way then to be sure of God's keeping is to make sure that we belong to this company whom the Father has given to Christ. But who are these, and how can any one of us tell whether or not we belong to this privileged company?

(1) This question is answered in John 6:37 where Jesus is recorded as saying, "All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." From this it is clear that all those who come to Christ belong to that elect company whom the Father has

given unto Him. Every man who really comes to Christ, comes to Him as his Saviour, as his Master, as his Lord, and commits himself unreservedly to Him, for Christ to save and to rule, he is one of those whom God has given to Christ, and whom God therefore keeps. Are you one of this number? Have you come to Christ in this real way? If you are, God will keep you. If not, will you come to Christ to-day and thus make sure that you will be kept?

(2) We have still another description of those whom God has given to Christ, in John 17:6, He says, "I manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me out of the world: Thine they were and Thou gavest them to me; and they have kept Thy Word." Here we are told that those whom the Father gave to the Son were those who kept God's Word. Every one who keeps God's Word may be sure that he belongs to the elect company whom God the Father Himself will keep. Notice carefully Christ's description of them: "they have kept Thy Word." That is to say, they not only hear God's Word, not only obey it, they keep God's Word, i.e., they treasure it, they regard it as their most precious treasure and they will not give it up for any gain that may be offered them in place of it. These are those whom God keeps. If we keep God's Words God Himself will keep us. Are you keeping God's words?

2. Isaiah 26:3 also tells us whom God keeps. Here the prophet says in speaking to God, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." God keeps the one whose mind is stayed upon Him, the one who looks not at self but at God, looks not at circumstances, but at God; the one who puts confidence in God. The keeping of this passage is a different one from that which is spoken of in John 17. There it is a keeping from perishing, here it is a keeping from all anxiety and worry. We shall see this more clearly when we come to speak of from what God keeps us.

## II. WHAT GOD KEEPS.

Now let us look at what God keeps. Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 1:12 just what God keeps. He says, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep (guard) that which I have committed unto Him against that day." The word translated "keep" in this passage in the Revised Version is rendered "guard," but it is the same word that is used in John 17:2, though not the same word that is used in John 17:11. Here we are taught that God keeps (or guards) that which is committed unto Him. Some commit more unto God, some less, but what is committed unto Him He keeps. Some commit the keeping of their souls unto God (1 Peter 4:19), some commit their temporal affairs unto Him, some commit their health unto Him, some more, some less, but whatever is committed to Him He keeps. Dorothea Trudel, a German woman, tells how her mother was a woman of great faith in prayer, and though her father was a drinking man who made little or no provision for the family, and the children numbered eleven, and their straits were sometimes great, they always were saved from suffering. She says: "There were times when we had not a farthing left in the house. None but God knew of our condition, and He who feedeth the young ravens when they cry was not unmindful of the petitions of His faithful child. He ever helped us in our time of need. It was on this account that our mother's favorite motto, 'Pray, but do not beg!' has been so impressed upon our minds. When one of the children was asked on what her mother relied in her poverty, the child said, On God alone. She never tells us how God is going to help, but she is always certain His aid will come at the right time." The experience of this German woman could be duplicated in the experience of thousands in our own land and other lands. It was related

of Mrs. Jane C. Pithey, a member of the Centenary Methodist Church in Chicago, that for years she was disabled by the shaking palsy and received all her supplies in answer to prayer. When her husband died he left in his pocket-book two silver quarters. Besides the little cottage, this was all that she had to support herself and a bedridden mother of nearly ninety years of age. It is said "she went to God in prayer and day by day each want was met. Each needed article was asked for by name until her hired girl was astounded at the constant answers given. One morning as Mrs. Pithey was rising from her knees at the family worship, the girl burst out, You have forgotten to pray for coal and we are entirely out! So, as she stood, she added a petition for the coal. About an hour after, the bell rang, she went to the door and there was a load of coal sent by a man who knew nothing of her want, and who had never sent anything before, nor ever has since." Many other instances are related regarding her of God's keeping and supplying all her needs. Some commit their work to God, some commit everything. His keeping will be just in proportion to our committing.

### III. FROM WHAT GOD KEEPS.

1. First of all, God keeps those who belong to His Son Jesus Christ from perishing. This comes out very plainly in the passage with which we started, John 17:11-12. Our Lord prayed, "Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, which Thou hast given me, that they may be one even as we are." Then He goes on to say, "While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name which Thou hast given me : and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition." The one who truly comes to Christ, the one who enters with his whole heart in the fellowship of Christ, the one who fully receives Christ as his Saviour from the guilt and power of sin, the one who whole-heartedly and unreservedly surrenders to Christ as his Master, God keeps from ever perishing. No matter how numerous, how subtle, how mighty the assaults of Satan, of sin, and of error may be, God will keep him. As the Lord Jesus puts it in another place (John 10:28-29), "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father which hath given them unto me, is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." This is the position of the one who belongs to Christ, the almighty hand of Jesus Christ the Son underneath him, the almighty hand of God the Father over him, and there he is, in between those two almighty hands, perfectly sheltered, and no person and no power in heaven or earth or hell can ever get him.

2. But it is not only from perishing that God keeps, He also keeps from falling. As we read in Jude 24, He "is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." The word translated "falling" in this passage is translated "stumbling" in the Revised Version and this is the exact force of the word. One may fall without perishing, but one need not even fall, indeed he need not even stumble. God can keep us from even this, and will keep us from this if we look to Him and trust Him to do it. But when we get our eyes off from Him down we go, but He still keeps us from perishing. He sees to it that we get up again even if we do stumble. Though we stumble we are still kept, just as Peter was, from making utter shipwreck. Peter was in Satan's sieve, but nevertheless he was still kept by God in answer to Christ's intercessory prayer, and Christ always lives to make in tercession for us and so "is able to save to the uttermost" (Hebrews 7:25). "What comfort there is in this verse to the one who hesitates to begin the Christian life because he knows his weakness and is afraid that he will stumble and fall. If you will only put yourself wholly in God's hands He is able, no matter how weak you may be in

yourself, to keep you even from stumbling.

3. But it is not only from perishing and from stumbling that God keeps, He keeps the one whose mind is stayed upon Him in perfect peace. This glad gospel we find in that book in the Old Testament which is so full of the gospel, the prophecy of Isaiah. We read in Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." Then Isaiah goes on to say, "Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." God keeps from all anxiety those who may stay their minds upon Him. If we will only take our eyes off from ourselves and off from men, and off from circumstances, and stay our minds upon God and upon Him alone and upon His sure promises, He will keep us in perfect peace. These are precious words for such a time as that in which we live, where one does not know any morning when he takes up his paper what he may read. No matter how perilous our position may seem, no matter how unlooked for and how unwelcome our surroundings may be, if we stay our minds upon the Lord Jehovah He will keep us in perfect peace. We have an illustration of this in Caleb and Joshua in the Old Testament (Numbers 13:17, Numbers 13:26, Numbers 13:28-30; Numbers 14:1, Numbers 14:3, Numbers 14:7-9). The ten spies that accompanied Caleb and Joshua into the land looked at circumstances and were filled with dismay. Caleb and Joshua looked away from circumstances, they looked right over the heads of the giants, they looked at God and His Word. They stayed their minds on Him and He kept them in perfect peace. It was so with Paul also in the awful storm and impending shipwreck on the Mediterranean. The crew and soldiers were cowering with fear as they heard the howling of the wind and saw the fierceness and force of the dashing waves, but Paul looked over the waves and over the storm at God and His Word, and stayed His mind on Him, and God kept Him in perfect peace so that Paul could say to his cowering companions, "Sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God that it shall be even so as it has been spoken unto me" (Acts 27:25). Oh, we need men and women of just such imperturbable calm as that in such days of stress and storm as those in which we are now living. If we would only stay our minds upon God, if we would only really trust Him, if we would only really believe His Word that it will be even as it has been told us, we would never have a single ruffle of anxiety. There is one passage in the Word of God which taken alone would be able, if we would only bear it in mind and believe it, to banish all fears and all anxiety for ever, that passage is Romans 8:28, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Whatever comes to us must be one of the "all things" and if we believed this passage we would know that however threatening it may appear, and however bad in itself it may really be, that it must work together with the other things that God sends into our lives, for our highest good. How then can we ever have a moment's worry?

#### IV. HOW GOD KEEPS.

Now let us turn to the question of how God keeps.

1. We are told in Deuteronomy 32:9-10, that Jehovah keeps His people "as the apple of His eye." The eye is the most wonderfully protected portion of the body, and "the apple" or pupil of the eye is the most important part of the eye, the lens, and is especially provided for and protected. The mechanism of the eye and the provision for its welfare that God has made has always awakened the wonder and admiration of men of science. It is shielded and guarded in every conceivable way, and just so God guards His people with the utmost care, with every conceivable and inconceivable

safeguard against their injury. Each year brings into view some new provision God has made for our safety.

2. We are taught in Genesis 28:15 that God keeps those who trust and obey Him "in all places whithersoever they go." He kept Joseph in his father's house; He kept him in the pit in the wilderness; He kept him in Potiphar's house; He kept him in the Egyptian prison; He kept him in the palace. God kept David from the fury and power of the lion and the bear as he watched the sheep in the wilderness; He kept him in security through all the years that Saul hunted him like a partridge in the mountains (1 Samuel 26:20); He kept him in the face of the many foes that arose against him when he became king; He kept him everywhere, so that David could write, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." And so God keeps us if we trust and obey Him, in all places whithersoever we go.

3. In Psalms 121:3-4 we are taught God keeps His people at all times. He that keeps us never "slumbers nor sleeps." We are not only kept in all places, but also at all times. God is never off guard, He never sleeps at His post. Satan can never catch one of God's children when their watchman is sleeping. I am glad of this. You and I are often off guard. Satan can often catch us napping, but he can never catch us when our Watchman is napping.

4. But there is another thought about God's keeping which, if possible, is even more precious, and that is He keeps to all eternity. Here again we think of John 10:28, "I give unto them eternal life : and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." Those who trust in Christ shall "never perish." This is one of the most precious facts about God's keeping, it never ends. We may prove unfaithful but He ever abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself (2 Timothy 2:13). He keepeth to the end. We shall never perish, or, to translate more literally as well as more expressively, "in no wise (shall we) perish, for ever." We stand to-day and look forward into the never-ending future. If we know ourselves well and look at ourselves alone we may well tremble at the thought of how utterly we may fail some time in those ever rolling years; but, if we look up to God and know Him, we will not tremble, for He never faileth, and we have His Word for it that He will ever keep us. He keeps me to-day "as the apple of His eye," He will keep me in all places, He will keep me at all times, He will keep me to all eternity.

## V. UNTO WHAT GOD KEEPS.

We have seen whom God keeps ; we have seen what God keeps; we have seen from what God keeps; we have seen how God keeps; one thought remains, unto what does God keep? This question is answered in 1 Peter 1:5, We "are kept by the power of God unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Upon this we have no time to dwell. Simply let me say this, that the salvation that we have to-day, no matter how complete it may seem, even though we know not only the forgiveness of sins and adoption into the family of God, but also deliverance from sin's power, a life of daily victory, is not the whole of salvation. Completed salvation lies in the eternal future. It includes not merely the salvation of the spirit and the soul, it includes the salvation of the body, that "salvation ready to be revealed in the last times," is the salvation that we shall possess when the wondrous promises about our being transformed into the perfect likeness of Jesus Christ, not only spiritually and morally and mentally, but also physically, have their fulfilment, and unto that salvation God keeps us.

Beloved fellow believer in God and in Jesus Christ His Son, have you realized fully what God's keeping means? Have you enjoyed the security that is yours, and the rest of mind that might be yours? Have you put as much into His hands to keep as He is willing to keep? Are you letting Him keep you in perfect peace in the midst of the trial and uncertainty and travail and turmoil and storm and stress of these trying days? If not, will you do it to-day? And friends, you who are not Christians, do you not see how precious a thing God's keeping is? Is it not immeasurably better than anything this world has to give? Some trust in riches, some in their own abilities, some in powerful friends, some in national leaders and "preparedness," but better, infinitely better to trust in God, for "He will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon Him, because he trusteth in Him." Will you not put your trust in Him and have a share in this wondrous prayer of the Saviour, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me."

## Holding Him to the Scriptures

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### Holding Him to the Scriptures

By R. A. Torrey

(as told by Faris Daniel Whitesell)

One time I received a letter, a very heartbroken letter, from a father who was a Presbyterian minister. He wrote that he had a son who was in awful spiritual darkness. The son thought that he had committed the unpardonable sin, and he was plunged into absolute despair. Would I take him in at the Bible Institute? I replied that though I had every sympathy with him in his sorrow, the Bible Institute was not for the purpose of helping cases like these, but to train men and women for Christian service. The father continued to write, beseeching me to take his son, and got other friends to plead for him. Finally, I consented to take the young man. He was sent to me under guard, lest he might do some rash thing by the way.

When he was brought to my office, I showed him a seat. As soon as the others had left the room, he began the conversation by saying, "I am possessed of the devil."

"I think quite likely you are," I replied, "but Christ is able to cast out devils."

"You do not understand me," he said, "I mean that the devil has entered into me as he did into Judas Iscariot."

"That may be," I answered, "but Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. Now He says in John 6:37. 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' If you will come to Him, He will receive you and set you free from Satan's power."

The conversation went on in this way for some time: he constantly asserting the absolute hopelessness of his case, and I on my part constantly asserting the power of Jesus Christ and His promise, "'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'" After a while I sent the young man to his room. Days and weeks passed, and we had many conversations, always on the same line, and I always holding him to John 6:37.

One day I met him in the hall of the Institute, and made up my mind that the time had come to have the battle out. I told him to sit down, and I sat down beside him.

"Do you believe the Bible?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "I believe everything in it."

"Do you believe John 6:37?" I asked.

"Yes, I believe everything in the Bible."

“Do you believe that Jesus Christ told the truth when He said, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out’?”

“Yes, I do; I believe everything in the Bible.”

“Well, then, will you come?”

“I have committed the unpardonable sin.”

“I replied, ‘Jesus does not say, ‘Him that hath not committed the unpardonable sin that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in on wise cast out.’”

“But I have sinned willfully after I have received the knowledge of the truth.”

“Jesus does not say, ‘Him that has not sinned willfully after he received the knowledge of the truth that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast our.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’”

“But I have been once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have fallen away, and it is impossible to renew me again unto repentance.”

“Jesus does not say, ‘Him that has not tasted of the heavenly gift, and has not fallen away, if he cometh to me I will in no wise cast him out.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.’”

“But I am possessed of the devil,” he answered.

“Jesus does not say, ‘Him that is not possessed of the devil that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’”

“I mean that the devil is entered into me as he did into Judas Iscariot.”

“Jesus does not say, ‘Him that the devil has not entered into, as he did into Judas Iscariot, that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’”

“But my heart is hard as a millstone.”

“Jesus does not say, ‘If a man’s heart is soft and tender, and he come to Me, I will in no wise cast him out.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.’”

“But I do not know that I have any desire to come.”

“Jesus does not say, ‘Him that hath a desire to come, and comes unto Me, I will in no wise cast out. He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’”

”But I do not know that I can come in the right way.”

“Jesus does not say, ‘Him that cometh to Me in the right way, I will in no wise cast him out.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’”

“Well, I don’t know that I care to come.”

“Jesus does not say, ‘Him that careth to come to Me, and comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out.’ He says, ‘Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.’”

The man's excuses and subterfuges were exhausted. I looked him square in the face and said, "Now, will you come? Get down on your knees, and quit your nonsense."

He knelt and I knelt by his side.

"Now," I said, "Follow me in prayer."

"Lord Jesus," I said, and he repeated, "Lord Jesus."

"My heart is as hard as a millstone."

"My heart is as hard as a millstone," he repeated.

"I have no desire to come unto thee."

"I have no desire to come unto thee."

"But thou hast said in thy Word."

"But thou hast said in thy Word."

"Him that cometh to Me I will no wise cast out."

"Him that cometh to Me I will no wise cast out."

"Now the best I know how I come."

"Now the best I know how I come."

"Thou hast said, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'"

"Thou hast said, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'"

"I believe this statement of Thine."

"I believe this statement of Thine."

"Therefore, though I don't feel it, I believe thou hast received me."

"Therefore, though I don't feel it, I believe thou hast received me."

When he had finished, I said, "Did you really come?"

He replied, "I did."

"Has He received you?"

"I do not feel it," he replied.

"But what does He say?"

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

"Is this true? Does Jesus tell the truth, or does He lie?"

"He tells the truth."

“What then must He have done?”

“He must have received me.”

“Now,” I said, “go to your room: stand firmly upon this promise of Jesus Christ. The devil will give you an awful conflict, but just answer him every time with John 6:37, and stand right there, believing what Jesus says in spite of your feelings, in spite of what the devil may say, in spite of everything.”

He went to his room. The devil did give him an awful conflict, but he stood firmly on John 6:37, and came out of his room triumphant and radiant. Years have passed since then. Though the devil has tried again and again to plunge him into despair, he has stood firmly on John 6:37, and he is today being used of God to do larger work for Christ than almost any man I know.

## How God Guides

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How God Guides

by

R. A. Torrey

(1856-1928)

"Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.

You guide me with your counsel, and afterward

you will take me into glory."

Psalms 73:23-24

There are no promises in God's Word more precious to the man who wishes to do His will, and who realizes the goodness of His will, than the promises of God's guidance. What a cheering, gladdening, inspiring thought is that contained in the text, that we may have the guidance of infinite wisdom and love at every turn of life and that we have it to the end of our earthly pilgrimage.

There are few more precious words in the whole Book of Psalms, which is one of the most precious of all the books of the Bible, than these: "You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory." How the thoughtful and believing and obedient heart burns as it reads these wonderful words of the text! I wish we had time to dwell on the characteristics of God's guidance as they are set forth in so many places in the Word of God, but we must turn at once to consideration of the means God uses in guiding us.

### I. God Guides by His Word

First of all, God guides by His Word. We read in Psalms 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path," and in the 130th verse of this same Psalm we read, "The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." God's own written Word is the chief instrument that God uses in our guidance. God led the children of Israel by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The written Word, the Bible, is our pillar of cloud and pillar of fire. As it leads we follow. One of the main purposes of the Bible, the Word of God, is practical guidance in the affairs of everyday life. All other readings must be tested by the Word. Whatever promptings may come to us from any other source, whether it be by human counsel or by the prompting of some invisible spirit, or in whatever way it may come, we must test the promptings, or the guidance or the counsel, by the sure Word of God, "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn" (Isaiah 8:20).

Whatever spirit or impulse may move us, whatever dream or vision may come to us, or whatever apparently providential opening we may have, all must be tested by the Word of God. If the

impulse or leading, or prompting, or vision, or providential opening is not according to the Book, it is not of God. "Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream, but let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. For what has straw to do with grain?" declares the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:28). If Christians would only study the Word they would not be misled as they so often are by seducing spirits, or by impulses of any kind, that are not of God but of Satan or of their own deceitful hearts. How often people have said to me that the Spirit was leading them to do this or that, when the thing that they were being led to do was in direct contradiction to God's Word.

For example, a man once called on me to consult me about marrying a woman who he said was a beautiful Christian, that they had deep sympathy for the work of God, and that the Spirit of God was leading them to marry one another. "But," I said to the man, "you already have one wife." "Yes," he replied, "but you know we have not gotten along very well together." "Yes," I said, "I know that, and, furthermore, I have had a conversation with her and believe it is your fault more than hers. But, however that may be, if you should put her away and marry this other woman, Jesus Christ says that you would be an adulterer." "Oh, but," he replied, "the Spirit of God is leading us to one another." Now, whatever spirit may have been leading that man, it certainly was not the Spirit of God, for the Spirit of God cannot lead anyone to do that which is in direct contradiction to the Word of God. I replied to this man, "You are a liar and a blasphemer. How dare you attribute to the Spirit of God action that is directly contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ?"

Many, many times Christian people have promptings from various sources which they attribute to the Holy Spirit, but which are in plain and flat contradiction to the clear and definite teachings of God's Word. The truth is, many so neglect the Word that they are all in a maze regarding the impulses and readings that come to them, as to where they come from; whereas, if they studied the Word they would at once detect the real character of these readings.

But the Word itself must be used in a right way if we are to find the leading of God from it. We have no right to seek guidance from the Word of God by using it in any fantastic way, as some do. For example, there is no warrant whatever in the Word of God for trying to find out God's will by opening the Bible at random and putting a finger on some text without regard to its real meaning as made clear by the context. There is no warrant whatever in the Bible for any such use of it. The Bible is not a talisman, or a fortune-telling book, it is not in any sense a magic book; it is a revelation from an infinitely wise God, made in a reasonable way, to reasonable beings, and we obtain God's guidance from the Bible by taking the verse of Scripture in which the guidance is found, in the connection in which it is found in the Bible, and interpreting it, led by the Holy Spirit, in its context as found in the Bible. Many have fallen into all kinds of fanaticism by using their Bible in this irrational and fantastic way.

Some years ago a prediction was made by a somewhat prominent woman Bible teacher that on a certain date Oakland and Alameda and some other California cities, and I think also Chicago, were to be swallowed up in an earthquake. The definite date was set and many were in anticipation, and many in great dread. A friend of mine living in Chicago was somewhat disturbed over the matter and sought God's guidance by opening her Bible at random, and this was the passage to which she opened:

The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, tremble as you eat your food, and shudder in fear as you drink your water. Say to the people of the land: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says

about those living in Jerusalem and in the land of Israel: They will eat their food in anxiety and drink their water in despair, for their land will be stripped of everything in it because of the violence of all who live there. The inhabited towns will be laid waste and the land will be desolate. Then you will know that I am the LORD." The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, what is this proverb you have in the land of Israel: 'The days go by and every vision comes to nothing'? Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am going to put an end to this proverb, and they will no longer quote it in Israel.' Say to them, 'The days are near when every vision will be fulfilled. For there will be no more false visions or flattering divinations among the people of Israel. But I the LORD will speak what I will, and it shall be fulfilled without delay. For in your days, you rebellious house, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign LORD.'" The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision he sees is for many years from now, and he prophesies about the distant future.'" Therefore say to them, "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'None of my words will be delayed any longer; whatever I say will be fulfilled, declares the Sovereign LORD'" (Ezekiel 12:17-28).

Of course, this seemed like a direct answer, and, if it were a direct answer, it clearly meant that the prophecy of the destruction of Oakland, Alameda, and Chicago would be fulfilled at once, on the day predicted. The woman told me of this that very day, but I was not at all disturbed. As we all know, the prophecy was not fulfilled, and this would-be prophetess sank out of sight, and, so far as I know, has not been heard from since. Many years afterward an earthquake did come to San Francisco and work great destruction, but San Francisco was not in this woman's prophecy, and Oakland and Alameda were, and they were left practically untouched by the earthquake, and certainly did not sink out of sight as the woman had predicted. And, furthermore, the earthquake that came to an adjoining city was many years after the prophesied date. This is only one illustration among many that might be given of how utterly misleading is any guidance that we get in this fantastic and unwarranted way.

Furthermore, the fact that some text of Scripture comes into your mind at some time when you are trying to discover God's will is not by any means proof positive that it is just the Scripture for you at that time. The devil can suggest Scripture. He did this in tempting our Lord (Matthew 4:6), and he does it today. If the text suggested, taken in its real meaning as determined by the language used and by the context, applies to your present position, it is, of course, a message from God for you, but the mere fact that a text of Scripture comes to mind at some time, which by a distortion from its proper meaning might apply to our case, is no evidence whatever that it is the guidance of God. May I repeat once more than in getting guidance from God's Word we must take the words as they are found in their context, and interpret them according to the proper meaning of the words used and apply them to those to whom it is evident from the context that they were intended to apply. But with this word of warning against seeking God's guidance from the Word of God in fantastic and unwarranted ways, let me repeat that God's principal way of guiding us, and the way by which all other methods must be tested, is by His written Word.

## II. God Leads by His Spirit

God also leads us by His Spirit, that is, by the direct leading of the Spirit in the individual heart. Beyond question, there is such a thing as an "inner light." We read in Acts 8:29, "The Spirit told Philip, 'Go to that chariot and stay near it.'" In a similar way, we read in Acts 16:6-7, of the Apostle

Paul and his companions: "Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to." In one of these passages we see God by His Holy Spirit giving direct personal guidance to Philip as to what he should do, and in the other passage we see the Spirit restraining Paul and his companions from doing something they otherwise would have done. There is no reason why God should not lead us as directly as He led Philip and Paul in their day, and those who walk near God can testify that He does so lead.

I was once walking on South Clark Street, Chicago, near the corner of Adams, a very busy corner. I had passed by hundreds of people as I walked. Suddenly I met a man, a perfect stranger, and it seemed to me as if the Spirit of God said to me, "Speak to that man." I stopped a moment and stepped into a doorway and asked God to show me if the guidance was really from Him. It became instantly clear that it was. I turned around and followed the man, who had reached the corner and was crossing from one side of Clark Street to the other. I caught up to him in the middle of the street. Providentially, for a moment there was no traffic at that point. Even on that busy street we were alone in the middle of the street. I laid my hand on his shoulder as we crossed to the farther sidewalk, and said to him, "Are you a Christian?" He replied, "That is a strange thing to ask a perfect stranger on the street." I said, "I know it is, and I do not ask every man that I meet on the street that question, but I believe God told me to ask you." He stopped and hung his head. He said, "This is very strange. I am a graduate of Amherst College, but I am a perfect wreck through drink here in Chicago, and only yesterday my cousin, who is a minister in this city, was speaking to me about my soul, and for you, a perfect stranger, to put this question to me here on this busy street" I did not succeed in bringing the man to a decision there on the street, but shortly afterward he was led to a definite acceptance of Christ.

A friend of mine walking the busy streets of Toronto suddenly had a deep impression that he should go to the hospital and speak to someone there. He tried to think of someone he knew at the hospital and he could think of but one man. He took it for granted that he was the man he was to speak to, but when he reached the hospital and came to this man's bedside there was no reason why he should speak to him, and nothing came of the conversation. He was in great perplexity, and standing by his friend's bed he asked God to guide him. He saw a man lying on the bed right across the aisle. This man was a stranger, he had been brought to the hospital for an apparently minor trouble, some difficulty with his knee. His case did not seem at all urgent, but my friend turned and spoke to him and had the joy of leading him to Christ. To everybody's surprise, that man passed into eternity that very night. It was then or never.

So God often guides us today (if we are near Him and listening for His guidance), leading us to do things that otherwise we would not do, and restraining us from doing things we otherwise would do. But these inward readings must be always tested by the Word, and we do well when any prompting comes to look up to God and ask Him to make clear to us if this leading is of Him, otherwise we may be led to do things which are absurd and not at all according to the will of God.

But though it is oftentimes our privilege to be thus led by the Spirit of God, there is no warrant whatever in the Word of God for our refusing to act until we are thus led. Remember, this is not God's only method of guidance. Oftentimes we do not need this particular kind of guidance. Take

the cases of Philip and of Paul to which we have referred. God did not guide Philip and Paul in this way in every step they took. Philip had done many things in coming down through Samaria to the desert where he met the treasurer of Queen Candace, and it was not until the chariot of the treasurer appeared that God led Philip directly by His Spirit. And so with Paul, who in the missionary work to which God had called him had followed his own best judgment as God enlightened it until the moment came when he needed the special direct prohibition of the Holy Spirit of his going into a place where God would not have him go at that time.

There is no need for our having the Spirit's direction to do that which the Spirit has already told us to do in the Word. For example, many a man who has fanatical and unscriptural notions about the guidance of the Holy Spirit refuses to work in an after-meeting because, as he says, the Holy Spirit does not lead him to speak to anyone, and he is waiting until the Holy Spirit does. But as the Word of God plainly teaches him to be a fisher of men (Matthew 4:19; Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:4), if he is to obey God's word, whenever there is opportunity to work with men he should go to work, and there is no need of the Holy Spirit's special guidance. Paul would have gone into these places to preach the Gospel if the Holy Spirit had not forbidden him. He would not have waited for some direct command of the Spirit to preach, and when we have an opportunity to speak to lost souls we should speak, unless restrained. What we need is not some direct impulse of the Holy Spirit to make us speak, the Word already commands us to do that; what we need, if we are not to speak, is that the Spirit should directly forbid us to speak.

Furthermore, let me repeat again what we should bear in mind about the Spirit's guidance, that He will not lead us to do anything that is contrary to the Word of God. The Word of God is the Holy Spirit's book, and He never contradicts His own teaching. Many people do things that are strictly forbidden in the Word of God, and justify themselves in so doing by saying the Spirit of God guides them to do it; but any spirit that guides us to do something that is contrary to the Holy Spirit's own book cannot by any possibility be the Holy Spirit.

For example, some time ago, in reasoning with one of the leaders of the Tongues Movement about the utterly unscriptural character of their assemblies, I called his attention to the fact that in the 14th chapter of 1st Corinthians we have God's explicit command that not more than two, or, at the most, three, persons should be allowed to speak "in a tongue" in any one meeting, and that the two or three that did speak must not speak at the same time, but "in turn," and if there were no interpreter present, not even one should be allowed to speak in a tongue, that (while he might speak in private with himself in a tongue, even with no interpreter present) he must "keep silent in the church." I called this man's attention to the fact that in their assembly they disobeyed every one of these three things that God commanded. He defended himself and his companions by saying, "But we are led by the Spirit of God to do these things, and therefore are not subject to the Word." I called his attention to the fact that the Word of God in this passage was given by the Holy Spirit for the specific purpose of guiding the assembly in its conduct and that any spirit that led them to disobey these explicit commandments of the Holy Spirit Himself, given through His Apostle Paul and recorded in His Word, could not by any possibility be the Holy Spirit. Here, again, we should always bear in mind that there are spirits other than the Holy Spirit, and we should "test the spirits to see whether they are of God," and we should try them by the Word. One of the gravest mistakes that anyone can make in his Christian life is that of being so anxious for spirit guidance that he is willing to open his soul to any spirit who may come along and try to lead him.

Furthermore, we should always bear in mind that there is absolutely no warrant in the Word of God for supposing that the Holy Spirit leads into strange and absurd ways, or does strange and absurd things. For example, some have certain signs by which they discern, as they say, the Holy Spirit's guidance. For example, some look for a peculiar twitching of the face, or for some other physical impulse. With some the test is a shudder, or cold sensation down the back. When this comes they take it as clear evidence that the Holy Spirit is present. In a former day, and to a certain extent today, some judge the Spirit's presence by what they call "the jerks," that is, a peculiar jerking that takes possession of a person, which they suppose to be the work of the Holy Spirit. All this is absolutely unwarranted by the Word of God and dishonoring to the Holy Spirit. We are told distinctly and emphatically in 2 Timothy 1:7 that the Holy Spirit is a spirit "of power, of love and of self-discipline." The word translated "self-discipline" really means "sound sense," and, therefore, any spirit that leads us to do ridiculous things, cannot be the Holy Spirit.

There are some who defend the most outrageous improprieties and even indecencies in public assemblies, saying that the Holy Spirit prompts them to these things. By this claim they make flies directly in the face of God's own Word, which teaches us specifically in 1 Corinthians 14:32-33 "The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace." And in the 40th verse we are told that "everything" in a Spirit-governed assembly should be "done in a fitting and orderly way." The word translated "fitting" in this passage means "in a becoming [or respectable] way," which certainly does not permit the disorders and immodesties, and confusions and indecencies and absurdities that occur in many assemblies that claim to be Spirit led, but which, tested by the Word of God, certainly are not led by the Holy Spirit.

### III. God Guides Us by Enlightening Our Judgment

In the third place, God guides us by enlightening our judgment. We see an illustration of this in the case of the Apostle Paul in Acts 16:10. God had been guiding Paul by a direct impression produced in his heart by the Holy Spirit, keeping him from going to certain places which otherwise he would have gone. Then God gives to Paul in the night a vision, and, having received the vision, Paul, by his own enlightened judgment, concludes from it what God has called him to do. This is God's ordinary method of guidance when His Word does not specifically tell us what to do. We go to God for wisdom, we make sure that our wills are completely surrendered to Him, and that we realize our dependence on Him for guidance, then God clears up our judgment and makes it clear to us what we should do. Here again we should always bear in mind that "God is light and in him is no darkness at all," and that, therefore, God's guidance is clear guidance, and we should not act until things are made perfectly plain.

Many miss God's guidance by doing things too soon. Had they waited until God had enabled them to see clearly, under the illumination of His Holy Spirit, they would have avoided disastrous mistakes. The principle that "the one who trusts will never be dismayed," (Isaiah 28:16) applies right here. On the other hand, when any duty is made clear we should do it at once. If we hesitate to act when the way is made clear, then we soon get into doubt and perplexity and are all confused as to what God would have us do. Many, many a man has seen the path of duty as clear as day before him, and, instead of stepping out at once, has hesitated even when the will of God has become perfectly clear, and before long was plunged into absolute uncertainty as to what God would have him do.

#### IV. God May Guide by Visions and Dreams

In Acts 16:9-10, we are told how God guided Paul by a vision, and there are other instances of such guidance, not only before Pentecost, but after. God may so guide people today. However, that was not God's usual method of guiding men, even in Bible times, and it is even less His usual way since the giving of His Word and the giving of the Holy Spirit. We do not need that mode of guidance as the Old Testament saints needed it, for we now have the complete Word and we also have the Spirit in a sense and in a fullness that the Old Testament saints did not have. God does lead by dreams today.

When I was a boy, sleeping in a room in our old home in Geneva, N. Y., I dreamed I was sleeping in that room and that my mother, who I dreamed was dead (though she was really living at the time) came and stood by my bed, with a face like an angel's, and begged me to enter the ministry, and in my sleep I promised her that I would. In a few moments I awoke and found it all a dream, but I never could get away from that promise. I never had rest in my soul until I did give up my plans for life and promise God that I would preach.

But the matter of dreams is one in which we should exercise the utmost care, and we should be very careful and prayerful and Scriptural in deciding that any dream is from God. Only the other day a brilliant and highly educated woman called at my office to tell me some wonderful dreams that she had and what these dreams proved. Her interpretation of the dreams was most extraordinary and fantastic. But while dreams are a very uncertain method of guidance, it will not do for us to say that God never so guides, but it is the height of folly to seek God's guidance in that way, and especially to dictate that God shall guide in that way.

#### V. God Does Not Guide by Casting Lots in This Dispensation

In Acts 1:24-26 we learn that the apostles sought guidance in choosing by lot one to take the place of Judas. This method of finding God's will was common in the Old Testament times, but it belongs entirely to the old dispensation. This is the last case on record. It was never used after Pentecost. We need today no such crude way of ascertaining the will of God, as we have the Word and the Spirit at our disposal. Neither should we seek signs. That belongs to the imperfect dispensation that is past, and even then it was a sign of unbelief.

#### VI. God Guides by His Providence

God has still another way of guiding us besides those already mentioned, and that is by His providences, that is, He so shapes the events of our lives that it becomes clear that He would have us go in a certain direction or do a certain thing. For example, God puts an unsaved man directly in our way so that we are alone with him and thus have an opportunity for conversation with him. In such a case we need no vision to tell us, and we need no mighty impulse of the Holy Spirit to tell us, that we ought to speak to this man about his soul. The very fact that we are alone with him and have an opportunity for conversation is of itself all the Divine guidance we need. We do need, however, to look to God to tell us what to say to him and how to say it, but God will not tell us by some supernatural revelation what to say, but by making clear to our own minds what we should say.

In a similar way, if a man needs work to support himself or family, and a position for honest employment opens to him, he needs no inner voice, no direct leading of the Holy Spirit, to tell him to take the work; the opening opportunity is of itself God's guidance by God's providence.

We must, however, be very careful and very prayerful in interpreting "the readings of providence." What some people call "the leading of providence" means no more than the easiest way. When Jonah was fleeing from God and went down to Joppa he found a ship just ready to start for Tarshish (Jonah 1:3). If he had been like many today he would have interpreted that as meaning it was God's will that he should go to Tarshish, as there was a ship just starting for Tarshish, instead of to Nineveh, to which city God had commanded him to go. In point of fact, Jonah did take the ship to Tarshish but he "was under no illusion in the matter, he knew perfectly well that he was not going where God wanted him to go, and he got into trouble for it. Oftentimes people seek guidance by providence by asking God to shut up a certain way that is opening to them, if it is not His will that they should go that way. There is no warrant whatever for doing that. God has given us our judgment and is ready to illuminate our judgment, and we have no right to act the part of children and to ask Him to shut up the way so we cannot possibly go that way if it is not His will.

Some fancy that the easy way is necessarily God's way, but oftentimes the hard way is God's way. Our Lord Himself said, as recorded in Matthew 16:24, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." That certainly is not the easy way. There are many who advise us to "follow the path of least resistance," but the path of least resistance is not always God's way by any means.

Some ask God to guide them providentially by removing all difficulties from the path in which He would have them go, but we have no right to offer such a prayer. God wishes us to be men and women of character and to surmount difficulties, and oftentimes He will allow difficulties to pile up in the very way in which we ought to go, and the fact that we see that a path is full of difficulties is no reason for deciding it is not the way God would have us go. Nevertheless, God does guide us by His providence, and we have no right to despise His providential guidance. For example, one may desire to go to China or to Africa as a missionary, and God does not give him the health requisite for going to China or to Africa. He should take that as clear providential guidance that he ought not to go, and seek some other opportunity for serving God.

Many people are asking God to open some door of opportunity, and God does open a door of opportunity right away, but it is not the kind of work they would especially like to do, so they decline to see in it a door of opportunity. The whole difficulty is that they are not wholly surrendered to the will of God.

Before we close this subject let us repeat again what cannot be emphasized too much or too often, that all readings, whether they be by the Spirit, by visions, by providences, by our own judgment, or by advice of friends, or in any other way, must be tested by the Word of God.

The main point in the whole matter of guidance is absolute surrender of the will to God, delighting in His will, and willingness to do joyfully the very things we would not like to do naturally, the very things in connection with which there may be many disagreeable circumstances, because, for example, of association with, or even subordination to, those that we do not altogether like, or difficulties of other kinds. It is to do joyfully what we are to do, simply because it is the will of God,

and the willingness to let God lead in any way He pleases, whether it be by His Word, or His Spirit, or by the enlightening of our judgment, or by His providence, or by whatever way He will. If only we will completely distrust our own judgment and have absolute confidence in God's judgment and God's willingness to guide us, and are absolutely surrendered to His will, whatever it may be, and are willing to let God choose His way of guidance, and will go on step by step as He does guide us, and if we are daily studying His Word to know His will, and are listening for the still small voice of the Spirit, going step by step as He leads, He will guide us with His eye; He will guide us with His counsel to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, and afterward receive us into glory.

## How to Be Inexpressibly Happy

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### How to be Inexpressibly Happy

by REUBEN ARCHER TORREY—1856-1928 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: — 1 Peter 1:8

I have here a beautiful text, a text that you all know, but I wonder how many of you have ever pondered it enough to take in all its wonderful wealth of meaning.

A young woman in England many years ago always wore a golden locket that she would not allow anyone to open or look into, and everyone thought there must be some romance connected with that locket and that in that locket must be the picture of the one she loved. The young woman died at an early age, and after her death the locket was opened, everyone wondering whose face he would find within. And in the locket was found simply a little slip of paper with these words written upon it, "Though I have not seen Him, I love." Her Lord Jesus was the only lover she knew and the only lover she longed for, and she had gone to be with Him, the one object of her whole heart's devotion, the unseen but beloved Savior.

But it is to the last part of the verse that I wish to call your particular attention tonight, "Even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy."

This text informs us (and many of us do not need to be informed of it, for we know it by blessed experience) that one who really believes on Jesus Christ, our unseen, but ever living Lord and Savior, rejoices with "inexpressible and glorious joy." The Greek word translated "joy" is a very strong word, describing extreme joy or jubilant joy. The word "inexpressible" declares that this jubilant joy is of such a character that we cannot, by any possibility, explain it adequately to others. Everyone who really believes on the Lord Jesus does rejoice with an jubilant joy that is beyond all description. And those who do truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are the only ones who rejoice this way. Others may have a certain amount of joy, a certain measure of gladness, but the only people who really know "inexpressible and glorious joy" are those who really believe on Jesus Christ.

Who is there among us who does not wish to be happy? Happiness is the one thing all men are seeking. One man seeks it in one way, and another man seeks it in another way, but all men are in pursuit of it. Even the man who is "happy only when he is miserable" is seeking happiness in this strange way of cultivating a delightful melancholy by always looking on the dark side of things. One man seeks money because he thinks that money will make a man happy. Another man seeks worldly pleasure because he thinks that worldly pleasure will make a man happy. Still another seeks learning, the knowledge of science, or philosophy, or history, or literature, because he thinks that learning brings the true joy; but they are all in pursuit of the one thing, happiness.

The vast majority of men who seek happiness do not find it. You may say what you please, but for the majority of men this is an unhappy world. I go down into the houses of the poor, I do not find

many happy people there. I go into the homes of the rich, I do not find many happy people even there. Study the faces of the people you meet on the street, at places of entertainment, or anywhere else, how many really radiant faces do you see? When you do see one it is so exceptional that you note it at once. But there is a way, and a very simple way, a very sure way, and a way that is open to all, not only to find happiness, but to be unspeakably happy. Our text tells us what that way is. Listen, "Even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy."

This statement of Peter's is true. How do I know it is true? In the first place, I know it is true because the Word of God says so. Whatever this book says is true. In the second place, I know it is true because I have put the matter to the test of personal experience, and found it true. A good many people say, "I do not believe the Bible." Well, I do. I believe the Bible for a good many sufficient reasons; but there is this one reason why I believe the Bible that I wish to mention tonight: I believe the Bible because I have personally tested scores and scores of its most astonishing and apparently most incredible statements and found every one of them true in my own experience. Don't you think that if I knew a man who made very many statements that I could test for myself, some of them apparently incredible, and I tested these statements one after another through a long period of years, and found every one of them true, and never one single statement failed, don't you think that I would believe that man after a while? Well, that is just my experience with the Bible, and I believe it. I would be a fool if I did not. The statement of the text is one of those that I have tested, and I have found it true.

I was not always happy. Indeed, I was once unspeakably miserable. I had sought happiness very earnestly. I had sought happiness in amusement and sin, and found, not joy, but wretchedness. In my pursuit of happiness I had tried study, the study of languages, science, philosophy and literature, but I did not find happiness in these things. At last I turned to Jesus Christ and believed on Him, and I found not merely happiness, but something better, joy, "inexpressible and glorious joy." Whatever heaven may be or may not be, I know that on this earth he who really believes on Jesus Christ, who puts himself in Christ's hands, to be led, and taught, and guided, and strengthened, puts himself in the hands of Jesus Christ for Jesus Christ to do all He will with him, I know that such a person finds "inexpressible and glorious joy."

#### Why Those Who Believe in Jesus Christ Have Inexpressible and Glorious Joy

First of all, those who believe on Jesus Christ have "inexpressible and glorious joy" because they know that their sins are all forgiven. It is a wonderful thing to know that your sins are all forgiven, to know that there is not one single, slightest cloud between you and God, to know that no matter how many, or how great your sins may have been, that they are all blotted out; to know that God has put them all behind His back, where no one can ever get at them; to know that God has sunk all your sins in the depths of the sea, from which they can never be raised; that they are all gone. A little boy once asked his mother, "Mother, where are our sins after they are blotted out?" His mother replied, "My boy, where are those figures that you erased from your paper yesterday?" He answered, "I rubbed them out." Then she asked, "Where are they now?" he replied, "They are nowhere." "Well," she said, "that is just the same with your sins when God has blotted them out. They are nowhere. They have ceased to be."

Oh, friends, what a joy it is to know that there is not one single tiny cloud between you and the Holy God whom we call Father and who rules this universe. Suppose that you had offended the laws of the nation and had been sent to prison on a life sentence, and a pardon were brought to you, do you not think you would be happy? But that is nothing compared with the joy of knowing that your every sin is blotted out. Some years ago Governor Stuart of Pennsylvania determined to pardon one of the prisoners in the Pennsylvania State prison, so he sent for Mr. Moody and said to him, "I have determined to pardon one of the prisoners in our state's prison, and I want you to go and take the pardon to him. You can preach to the prisoners if you want to while you are doing it." So Mr. Moody went, carrying the pardon with him, and before he began to preach he said, "I have a pardon for one of you men that the Governor has sent by me." He did not intend to tell who it was who was pardoned until the sermon was over, but as he looked around on his audience and saw how anxious they all were, how eager they were, how a very agony of suspense was in their faces, Mr. Moody thought, "This will never do, I can't keep these men in this suspense," so he said, "I will tell you now who the man is," and he read his name from the pardon. Do you not think that, that was a glad moment for that one man out of those hundreds of prisoners, a glad moment for the one man who had the Governor's pardon, and who could walk out of prison a free man? Yes, but that is nothing to knowing that the eternal God has eternally pardoned your sins. Every true Christian knows that, he knows that every one of his sins is forgiven. How does he know it? Because the Bible says so in many places.

For example, it says in Acts 13:39, "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." so we know it because God says so. But no one but the believer in Jesus Christ knows that his sins are all forgiven. If anyone who is not a believer in Jesus Christ says, "I know my sins are all forgiven," he says what is not true; for he does not know it, and cannot know it, for it is not a fact; but a Christian knows it because the Word of God says so.

The Christian knows his sins are all forgiven for another reason, that is, because the Holy Spirit bears witness in his own heart to the fact. One day, when the Apostle Peter was preaching to Cornelius, the Roman officer, and to his household, he said, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10:43), and everyone in his audience believed it. The Spirit of God descended right then and there and filled their hearts with the knowledge of sins forgiven, and they "began to magnify God" with jubilant hearts and jubilant voices. I tell you that was a joyful meeting.

A king, a great king, once wrote one of the greatest songs that ever was written. That song has lasted through the ages. It has been sung and is still being sung by thousands. It has been sung by millions, and though it was written many centuries ago, it is just as sweet today as the day the king wrote it. The man who wrote this song was a great king, the greatest king of his day, he was also one of the greatest generals of his day, one of the greatest generals of any day. He had great armies, the all-conquering armies of the day. He had a magnificent palace. I do not suppose that any other earthly king was ever so beloved as he was. His song was about joy and about happiness. He does not say in that song, "How happy is the man who is a great king," or, "How happy is the man who is a great general." What does he say? "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered" (Psalms 32:1, translated literally from the Hebrew): "There is no happiness like the joy of knowing your sins are all forgiven." Oh, what a joy

thrills the heart when a man knows that his sins are fully, freely, and forever forgiven. That is one reason why he who believes on Jesus Christ is inexpressibly happy, and you can have that inexpressible happiness today. I do not care how black your life may have been in the past; I do not care how far you may have wandered from God; I do not care how old you may have grown in sin; if you take Jesus Christ today for your Savior and your Lord, and believe on Him, your every sin will be blotted out, and it will be your privilege to know it.

In the second place, those who believe on Jesus Christ rejoice with "inexpressible and glorious joy" because they are free from the most grinding and crushing of all forms of slavery, the slavery of sin. There is many a slave in this audience tonight. Some of you are slaves of strong drink. Some of you men and some of you women are slaves of drink. You know you are slaves of drink. Some of you are slaves of drugs. Some of you are slaves of an uncontrollable temper. Some of you are slaves of acts of impurity or impurity of thought. Some of you are slaves of other sins. The grossest, vilest, most degrading slavery in the universe is the slavery of sin. Yes, many of you here tonight are slaves. But the Lord Jesus says in John 8:31-32, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He says again in the thirty-sixth verse, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." There is not a slave in this building tonight who cannot have his chains snapped in a moment, yes, in a moment, by the mighty Son of God, if only he will believe on Jesus and trust Him to do it. How many a man and how many a woman I have known who once were slaves of sin in its most degrading and hopeless forms, who now are free.

One of the dearest and most honored and most useful friends I ever had was Sam Hadley of New York City. Sam Hadley was once hopelessly enslaved by sin. Strong drink had utterly mastered him and undermined his character. He had committed 138 forgeries, and was being sought for by the police. One night, after having spent the night before in a New York jail with the "shakes," in a mission meeting a few blocks away from the jail he cried to Jesus to save him, and Jesus saved him right then and there; and I have often heard him say that never from that night had he ever had the slightest desire for that which had enslaved him more than anything else, intoxicating drink. My, what a happy man he became! All who knew him testified that he had "inexpressible and glorious joy." I wish you could have looked in Sam Hadley's face and seen the joy in that redeemed and radiant countenance. But we do not need to call Sam Hadley back from heaven to testify, for there are hundreds of people right here in this building tonight who once were complete slaves, who now are God's free men and free women, and who could testify to the fact. That is one reason why we are inexpressibly happy, because we are free. How the Southern Blacks rejoiced when they came to understand they were set free. They shouted and sang, "Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!" Why? Because once they were slaves, but now were free. No wonder, then, that we rejoice with "inexpressible and glorious joy" because we know that we are free, and free forever.

In the third place, those who believe on Jesus Christ rejoice with "inexpressible and glorious joy," because they are delivered from all fear. There is nothing that darkens the human heart more and robs it of all joy and fills it with gloom than fear in some of its many forms.

Those who truly believe on Jesus Christ are saved from all fear. They are delivered from all fear of misfortune; they are delivered from all fear of man; they are delivered from all fear of death; they are delivered from all fear of eternity. Do you know, friends, that to a true believer in Jesus Christ

"eternity" is one of the sweetest words in the English language? Oh, how it makes our hearts swell, that word, "eternity." But "eternity" is not a sweet word to the unsaved. Write these words, "Where will you spend eternity?" on a card and hand it to a man who is not a Christian, and they will make him mad; write these same words, "Where will you spend eternity?" on a card and hand it to a Christian, and they will make him glad. Why is it? Simply because a true believer on Jesus Christ is not afraid of but delights in thoughts of eternity. Why, to him who believes on Jesus Christ eternity is glory.

In the fourth place, he who believes on Jesus Christ rejoices with "inexpressible and glorious joy" because he knows he will live forever. Is not that something to rejoice over? Is it not wonderful? We read in 1 John 2:17, "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. We all know that it is true that "the world passes away." We certainly ought to know it by this time; but it is equally true that "he who does the will of God lives forever."

Sometimes as we ride along our beautiful roads we see the stately mansions of our multimillionaires, and one will think, "It must be very pleasant to live there." Well, I suppose it must be, but think a moment. How long will these people live there? Perhaps the father of the household may live there ten years, possibly twenty years. Then where does he live? Some of the children may live there twenty, thirty, possibly, forty years, then what? The grave. I tell you it is not worth much after all. But the Christian looks on, and on, and on, to a life that has no end, to a life that is eternal. Glory!

In the fifth place, those who truly believe on Jesus Christ rejoice greatly with "inexpressible and glorious joy" because they know they are children of God. It is a great thing to know that you are a child of God. How does the Christian know it? He knows it because God says so in John 1:12, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:" A child of God, think of it! Sometimes as I have traveled around the world someone would point out to me some man, and say, "That man is the son of such and such a man, naming some king. Would you not like to be the son of a great king? Just look at that young man. He is the son of a king." In one country many years ago, when the king business was better than it is today, I was taken up and introduced to the son of one of the reigning monarchs of Europe, and the man who introduced me whispered to me, "He is the son of So-and-So" (naming the king). Well, what of it? He was a fine man in himself, but what if he was the son of a king? I am a son of God, and that is far greater, and every believer in Jesus Christ in this building tonight is a child of God, the child of "the King of kings." And any one of you here tonight, if you are not already a child of God, can become one in an instant by receiving the Lord Jesus.

In the sixth place, and very closely connected with the last, true believers in Jesus Christ rejoice with "inexpressible and glorious joy" because they are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Is that not wonderful? We are so familiar with it we do not stop to take in the meaning of it. One of England's dukes lay dying. He called his brother to him, the one who would succeed to the title, and said, "Brother, in a few hours now you will be a duke and—and I will be a king." He was already a child of the King and in a few hours he himself would be a king. I, too, will be a king in a few days. You may say, "It may be many years." Well, many years are only a few days on the scale of eternity. And, if you really are a believer in Christ Jesus, if you have a real living faith in Him, you, too, will be a king in a few days.

There was never a royal pageant sweeping through the streets of London at any coronation comparable in glory to the glory that awaits you and me just over yonder. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:4). We may be poor today. That does not matter. This life will be over in a moment and the other life begun, and that life is eternal.

In the seventh place, those who truly believe on Jesus Christ, those who throw their hearts wide open to Him, is those who surrender absolutely to Him, rejoice with "inexpressible and glorious joy" because God gives them the Holy Spirit, and there is no other joy in the present life like the joy of the Holy Spirit. One Monday morning, in Chicago, my front doorbell rang. I kept Monday in those days for my rest day, and had a notice above the doorbell, "Mr. Torrey does not see anyone on Monday." The maid went to the door, and there stood a poor woman. The maid said, "Mr. Torrey does not see anyone on Monday. Did you not see the notice over the doorbell?" She said, "I knew that, but I have got to see him and you just go and tell him a member of his church must see him." So the maid brought her into the reception room. She was a washerwoman. The maid showed the washerwoman a seat and came upstairs and said to me, "There is a woman downstairs who is a member of your church and says she has got to see you." So down I went.

As I entered the room she arose and hurried toward me, and said, "Mr. Torrey, I knew you did not see anybody on Monday, but I had to see you. Last night after I went to bed I was filled with the Holy Spirit right there in my bed, and I was so happy I could not sleep all night, and this morning I had to come and tell somebody. I could not afford to give up a day's work to come around and tell you about it, but I knew I must tell somebody and I did not know anybody I would so like to tell as you. I know you won't be angry." Indeed, I was not angry. I was glad she had come, and rejoiced with her, that old washerwoman filled with the Holy Spirit and so full of joy that, poor as she was, she had to give up a day's work to go and tell somebody she loved all about it.

Before I came to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ I was one of the bluest men who ever lived. I would sit down by the hour and brood. I have never known what the blues mean since the day I really became a Christian, absolutely surrendered to God. I have had troubles. I have had losses. There have been times in my life when I have lost pretty much everything the world holds dear. I know what it is to have a wife and four children, and to lose everything of a financial kind I had in the world, and not know from meal to meal where the next meal was coming from. I was absolutely without resources, living from hand to mouth—from God's hand to my mouth. I have known what it is to be with a wife and child in a foreign country where they spoke a strange language, and for some reason or other supplies did not come, and I did not know anyone in the city well enough to turn to for help; but I did not worry. I knew it was all in God's hands, that it would all come out right somehow, and of course it did come out right.

The first time I ever visited London, thirty-nine years ago last September, I was planning to spend two weeks in England, and then start for America. I expected to find money waiting for me I when I reached London, and I reached London with a wife and child, and not a letter and no money. But I said, "The letter and the money will come tomorrow or the next day." My wife made some purchases, taking it for granted we would have money when the purchases came home; but the money did not come. Day after day passed, and the dresses came home and it was about time for the landlady to come with her board bill. It came to be the very last day before our boat started,

and not a penny in sight. I went down to the bank. I did not know a soul in London. There were three or four million people there then—a stranger amid three or four millions of people, money absolutely gone, three thousand miles from friends. I did not worry. I knew the money would come. I did not know how it would come, for the source I expected to receive it from seemed utterly cut off; but yet I was happy. Why? Because I was a child of God; I had the promises of the Bible; I knew they were absolutely certain. I never lost an hour's sleep. I never worried. I just trusted. It seemed as though I would have to be fed somewhat as Elijah was, but I knew I would be fed. I knew my wife and child would be provided for. The money came, and I sailed on the steamer I expected to sail on, with every penny due paid, and money in my pocket. Friends, a Christian is happy at all times and under all circumstances. We rejoice with "inexpressible and glorious joy" every one of the twenty-four hours of the day that we are awake, and sometimes in our sleep. You, too, can have that joy.

## II. How to Get This Inexpressible and Glorious Joy

Now arises the question, "What must anyone here tonight who does not have this inexpressible and glorious joy do to get it?" I have really answered that question several times in what I have already said, but to be sure that we all really understand it, let me answer it again, or rather let my text answer it, "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy." The text tells us that the way to obtain this "inexpressible and glorious joy," the way to be inexpressibly happy at all times and under all circumstances, is just by believing on the unseen Christ Jesus. What does it mean to believe on Jesus Christ? There is no mystery at all about that. It simply means to put confidence in Jesus Christ to be what He claims to be and what He offers Himself to be to us, to put confidence in Him as the One who died in our place, the One who bore our sins in His own body on the cross, and to trust God to forgive us all our sins because Jesus Christ died in our place; to put confidence in Him as the One who was raised from the dead and who now has "all power in heaven and on earth," and therefore is able to keep us day by day, and give us victory over sin, and to trust this risen Christ to give us victory over sin day by day; and to put confidence in Him as our absolute Lord and Master, and therefore to surrender our thoughts and wills and lives entirely to His control, believing everything He says, even though every scholar on earth denies it, obeying everything He commands, whatever it may cost; and to put confidence in Him as our Divine Lord, and confess Him as Lord before the world, and worship and adore Him. It is wonderful the joy that comes to him who thus believes on Jesus Christ. But one must really believe on Jesus Christ to have this joy.

Merely being a member of a church is not enough. Merely being baptized is not enough. Merely reading your Bible is not enough. Merely praying is not enough. Merely going to church is not enough. Merely going to the Lord's table and partaking of the Lord's Supper is not enough. But if you are a real believer on Jesus Christ, if you have put all your trust in the Lord Jesus as your atoning Savior and your risen Savior, and your risen Lord and Master, and surrendered your thoughts and life to Him utterly as your Lord and Master, and are confessing Him as such before the world, if you have thrown your heart's door wide open for the Lord Jesus to come in, and live, and rule, and reign there, you will have "inexpressible and glorious joy" at all times and under all circumstances.

All anyone has to do, then, to be inexpressibly happy at all times and under all circumstances, is to believe on Jesus Christ. It does not make any difference what his circumstances may be: he may be rich or he may be poor; he may be highly educated, or he may be ignorant; he may be in good health or he may be a hopeless invalid; he may have been a moral, clean, upright man, or he may have been the vilest of sinners, it matters not. Everyone who believes on the unseen but living Christ will find "inexpressible and glorious joy." I can bring scores, hundreds, thousands of witnesses to prove that. You cannot bring a single witness on the other side. Col. Robert Ingersoll delighted to say, "It doesn't make one happy to be a Christian." How did he know? He never tried it. You can search the earth through and you cannot find me one single man or woman who was ever an out-and-out believer in Jesus Christ, a real wholehearted believer in Jesus Christ, one who had surrendered all to Jesus Christ; I say you cannot find me even one such man or woman who will deny that Jesus Christ gives "inexpressible and glorious joy" to those who thus believe on Him. Here, then, is the way the case stands: Every single competent witness, that is, every witness who has ever tried it, testifies that believing in Jesus Christ does bring "inexpressible and glorious joy," and these witnesses number thousands, tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands, people from every rank of society and culture, and not one witness on the other side. Is it demonstrated or not? It certainly is.

I take it that I am speaking tonight to reasonable men and women. You desire "inexpressible and glorious joy." I have told you how to get it. There can be no doubt about it. The evidence is overwhelmingly convincing. There is, then, but one rational thing for you to do, believe on Jesus Christ tonight. Will you do it?

Once a man who was utterly miserable came to me. He was a rarely gifted man, a brilliant scholar, but utterly miserable. If ever I saw a man in hell he was the man. He had attempted suicide at least four times. He had been so near succeeding in his attempts that on two occasions it had been necessary to pump out of him the poison he had taken and thus bring him back to life. I urged him to believe on Jesus Christ. He replied, "I cannot, I have sinned away the Day of Grace." Day after day I talked with the man and always I had but one message, and that was, "Come to Jesus Christ. Believe on Jesus Christ." At last, one day the man did come to Jesus Christ. He found "inexpressible and glorious joy." Sometimes I have seen that man when his face was radiant. Out of hell into heaven by just believing on Jesus Christ! Will you take that same step now?

## How to Pray So As to Get What You Ask

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How to Pray So As to Get What You Ask

by

R. A. Torrey

(1856-1928)

“The church was earnestly praying to God for him.” Acts 12:5

Our Subject is, “How to Pray So As to Get What You Ask.” I can think of nothing more important that I could tell you. Suppose it had been announced that I was to tell the business men of this city how they could go to any bank here and get all the financial accommodation they desired any day in the year, and suppose, also, that I knew that secret and could really tell it, do you think that the business men of this city would consider the information important? It would be difficult to think of anything that they would consider more important. But praying is going to the bank, going to the bank that has the largest capital of any bank in the universe, the Bank of Heaven, a bank whose capital is absolutely unlimited. And if I can show you this morning how you can go to the Bank of Heaven any day in the year, and any hour of the day or night, and get from that bank all that you desire, that will certainly be of incalculable importance.

Now, the Bible tells us that very thing. It tells us how we can go to the Bank of Heaven, how we can go to God in prayer any day of the year and any hour of the day or night, and get from God the very things that we ask. What the Bible teaches along this line has been put to the test of practical experiment by tens of thousands of people, and has been found in their own experience to be absolutely true. And that is what we are to discover from a study of God’s own Word.

In the twelfth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we have the record of a most remarkable prayer, remarkable because of what was asked for and remarkable because of the results of the asking. King Herod had killed James, the brother of John. This greatly “pleased the Jews,” so he proceeded further to arrest the leader of the whole apostolic company, the Apostle Peter, with the intention of killing him also. But the arrest was during Passover Week, the Holy Week of the Jews; and, while the Jews were perfectly willing to have Peter assassinated, eager to have him assassinated, they were not willing to have their Holy Week desecrated by his violent death. So Peter was cast into prison to be kept until the Passover week was over, and then to be executed. The Passover week was nearly over, it was the last night of the Passover week, and early the next morning Peter was to be taken out and beheaded.

There seemed to be little hope for Peter, indeed, no hope at all. He was in a secure dungeon, in an impregnable fortress, guarded by sixteen soldiers, and chained by each wrist to a soldier who slept on either side of him. There appeared to be no hope whatever for Peter. But the Christians in Jerusalem undertook to get Peter out of his perilous position, to completely deliver him. How did they go at it? Did they organize a mob and storm the castle? No, there was no hope whatever of

success that way. The castle was impregnable against any mob, and, furthermore, it was garrisoned by trained Roman soldiers who would be more than a match for any mob. Did the Christians circulate a petition and get the names of the leading Christians in Jerusalem signed to it to present to Herod, asking that he would release Peter? No. That might have had weight, for the Christians in Jerusalem at that time were numbered by the thousands and among them were not a few influential persons, and a petition signed by so many people, and by some people of such weight, would have had influence with a wily politician such as Herod was. But the Christians did not attempt that method of deliverance. Did they take up a collection and gather a large amount of money from the believers in Jerusalem to bribe Herod to release Peter? Quite likely that might have proved successful, for Herod was open to that method of approachment. But they did not do that.

What did they do? They held a prayer meeting to pray Peter out of prison. Was anything apparently more futile and ridiculous ever undertaken by a company of fanatics? Praying a man so securely incarcerated, and so near his execution, out of prison? If the enemies of Peter and the church had known of that attempt they doubtless would have been greatly amused, and have laughed at the thought of these fanatical Christians praying Peter out of prison, and doubtless would have said to one another, "We'll see what will become of the prayers of these fool Christians."

But the attempt to pray Peter out of prison was entirely successful. Apparently Peter himself had no fears, but was calmly resting in God; for he was fast asleep on the very eve of his proposed execution. While Peter was sound asleep, guarded by the six teen soldiers, chained to a soldier sleeping on either side of him, suddenly there shone in the prison a light, a light from heaven; and "an angel of the Lord" could have been seen standing by Peter. The angel struck Peter on the side as he slept, and woke him, and said, "Quick, get up!" Instantly Peter's chains fell from his hands and he arose to his feet. The angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and your sandals." Peter did so, and then the angel said, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." Peter, dazed and wondering, thought he was dreaming; but he was wise enough to obey God even in his sleep and he went out and followed the angel, though he "thought he was seeing a vision." The soldiers were all asleep, and, unhindered, the angel and Peter passed the first guard and the second guard and came to the strong iron gate that led into the city. Moved by the finger of God, the gate "opened for them by itself." They went out and silently passed through one street.

Now Peter was safe, and the angel left him. Standing there in the cold night air, Peter came to himself, and realized that he was not dreaming, and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were anticipating." Stopping a few moments to reflect, he may have said to himself, "There is a prayer meeting going on. It must be at Mark's mother's house; I will go there." And soon those who are praying are startled by a heavy pounding at the outside gate of Mark's mother's home. A little servant girl named Rhoda must have been kneeling among those praying. Instantly she sprang to her feet and rushed to the gate, "When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, 'Peter is at the door!'" "Oh, Rhoda, you are crazy," cried the unbelieving company. "No," Rhoda said, "I am not crazy. It is Peter. God has answered our prayers. I know his voice. I knew he would come and he is here." Then they all cried, "It is not Peter, it is his angel." But Peter kept on knocking, and they opened the door, and there stood

Peter, the living evidence that God has answered their prayer.

Now, if we can find out how these people prayed, then we shall know just how we, too, can pray so as to get what we ask. In the fifth verse we are told exactly how they prayed. Let me read it to you. "The church was earnestly praying to God for him." The whole secret of prevailing prayer, the prayer that gets what it asks, is found in four phrases in this brief description of their prayer. The first phrase is, "earnestly." The second, "the Church." The third, "to God." The fourth, "for him."

### I. To God

Let us take up these four phrases and study them. We take up first the third phrase, for it is really the most important one, "to God." The prayer that gets what it asks is the prayer that is to God. But someone will say, "Is not all prayer to God?" No. Comparatively few of the prayers that go up from this earth today are really to God. I sometimes think that not one prayer in a hundred is really "to God." You ask, "What do you mean?" I mean exactly what I say, that not one prayer in a hundred is really to God. "Oh," you say, "I know what you mean. You are talking about the prayers of the heathen to their idols and their false gods." No, I mean the prayers of people who call themselves Christians. I do not think that one in a hundred of them is really unto God. "Oh," you say, "I know what you mean. You are talking of the prayers of the Roman Catholics to the Virgin Mary and to the saints." No, I mean the prayers of people who call themselves Protestants. I do not believe that one in a hundred of the prayers of Protestant believers is really to God. "What do you mean?" you ask. I mean exactly what I say.

Stop a moment and think. Is it not often the case, when men stand up to pray in public, or kneel down to pray in private, that they are thinking far more of what they are asking for than they are of the great God who made heaven and earth, and who has all power? Is it not often the case that in our prayers we are not thinking much of either what we are asking for or of Him from whom we are asking it, but, instead, our thoughts are wandering off everywhere? We take the name of God on our lips, but there is no real conscious approach to God in our hearts.

We are really taking the name of God in vain when we fancy we are praying to Him. If there is to be any power in our prayer, if our prayer is to get anything, the first thing to be sure of when we pray is that we really have come into the presence of God, and are really speaking to Him. We should never utter one syllable of prayer, either in public or in private, until we are definitely conscious that we have come into the presence of God and are actually praying to Him. Oh, let those two words, "to God," "to God," "to God," sink deep into your heart; and from this time on never pray, never utter one syllable of prayer, until you are sure that you have come into the presence of God and are really talking to Him.

Some years ago in our church in Chicago, before we began the great Saturday night prayer meetings to pray for a world-wide revival, a little group of us used to meet every Saturday night for prayer, to pray for God's blessing on tomorrow's work. Never more than a handful of people came, but we had wonderful times of blessing. One night, after we had gathered together, I rose to open the meeting and said to those gathered there, "Now we are going to kneel in prayer and every one of you feel at perfect liberty to ask for what God puts into your heart to ask for; but be sure that you do not utter a word of prayer until you have really come into the presence of God, and know that you are talking to Him." Then we knelt in prayer. A friend of mine, a business man, had come in

just before I said that. One day the following week I met him and he said to me, "Mr. Torrey, I ought to be ashamed to confess it, but do you know that that thought you threw out last Saturday night just before we knelt in prayer, that not one of us should utter a syllable of prayer until we had really come into the presence of God and knew that we were talking to Him, was an entirely new thought to me and it has transformed my prayer life?" I could easily understand that, for I can remember when that thought transformed my prayer life. I was brought up to pray. I was taught to pray so early in life that I have not the slightest recollection of who taught me to pray. I have no doubt it was my mother, but I have no recollection of it. In my earliest days the habit of prayer was so thoroughly ingrained into me that there has never been a single night of my life as far back as my memory goes, that I have not prayed; with the exception of one night when I was carried home unconscious and did not regain consciousness until the next morning.

Even when I had wandered far from God, and had definitely decided that I would not accept Jesus Christ, I still prayed every night. Even when I had come to a place where I doubted that the Bible was the Word of God, and that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and even doubted that there was a personal God, nevertheless, I prayed every night. I am glad that I was brought up that way, and that the habit of prayer was so instilled into me that it became permanent, for it was through that habit that I came back out of the darkness of agnosticism into the clear light of an intelligent faith in God and His Word. Nevertheless, prayer was largely a mere matter of form. There was little real thought of God, and no real approach to God. And even after I was converted, yes, even after I had entered the ministry, prayer was largely a matter of form. But the day came when I realized what real prayer meant, realized that prayer was having an audience with God, actually coming into the presence of God and asking and getting things from Him. And the realization of that fact transformed my prayer life. Before that, prayer had been a mere duty, and sometimes a very irksome duty, but from that time on prayer has been not merely a duty but a privilege, one of the most highly esteemed privileges of life. Before that, the thought I had was, "How much time must I spend in prayer?" The thought that now possesses me is, "How much time may I spend in prayer without neglecting the other privileges and duties of life?"

Suppose some Englishman were summoned to Buckingham Palace to meet King George. He answers the summons and is waiting in the outer room to be ushered into the presence of the King. What do you think that man would say to himself while he waited to be brought into the presence of the King? Do you think he would say, "I wonder how much time I have to spend with the King?" No, indeed; he would think, "I wonder how much time the King will give me." But prayer is having an audience with the King of kings, that eternal, omnipotent King, in comparison with, all earthly kings are as nothing; and would any intelligent person who realizes that fact ever ask himself, "How much time must I spend in prayer?" No, our thought will be, "How much time may I spend in prayer, how much time will the King give me?" So let these two words, "to God," sink deep into your heart and govern your prayer life from this day on. Whenever you kneel in prayer, or stand in prayer, whether it be in public or in private, be absolutely sure before you utter a syllable of prayer that you have actually come into the presence of God and are really speaking to Him. Oh, it is a wondrous secret.

But at this point a question arises. How can we come into the presence of God, and how can we be sure that we have come into the presence of God, and that we are really talking to Him? Some years ago I was speaking on this verse of Scripture in Chicago, and at the close of the address a

very intelligent Christian woman, one of the most intelligent and deeply spiritual women I ever knew, came to me and said, "Mr. Torrey, I like that thought of 'to God,' but how can we come into the presence of God and how can we be absolutely sure that we have come into the presence of God, and that we are really talking to Him?" It was a wise question and a question of great importance; and it is clearly answered in the Word of God. There are two parts to the answer.

1. You will find the first part of the answer in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter ten, verse nineteen, "We have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus." That is the first part of the answer. We come into the presence of God "by the blood of Jesus"; and we can come into the presence of God in no other way. Just what does that mean? It means this: You and I are sinners, the best of us are great sinners, and God is infinitely holy, so holy that even the seraphim, those wonderful "burning ones" (for that is what seraphim means, burning ones), burning in their own intense holiness, must veil their faces and their feet in His presence (Isaiah 6:2). But our sins have been laid on another; they were laid on the Lord Jesus when He died on the cross of Calvary and made a perfect atonement for our sins. When He died there He took our place, the place of rejection by God, the place of the "curse," and the moment we accept Him and believe God's testimony concerning His blood, that by His shed blood He made perfect atonement for our sin, and trust God to forgive and justify us because the Lord Jesus died in our place, that moment our sins are forgiven and we are reckoned righteous and enter into a place above the seraphim, the place of God's only and perfect Son, Jesus Christ. And we do not need to veil our faces or our feet when we come into His presence, for we are made perfectly "in the One he loves" (Ephesians 1:6).

To "enter into the holiest," then, to come into the very presence of God, "by the blood of Jesus," means that when we draw near to God we should give up any and every thought that we have any acceptability before God in ourselves, realize that we are miserable sinners, and also believe that every sin of ours has been atoned for by the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and therefore come "with boldness" into the very presence of God, "into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus." The best man or woman on earth cannot come into the presence of God on the ground of any merit of his own, not for one moment; nor get anything from God on the ground of his own goodness, not even the smallest blessing. But on the ground of the shed blood of Jesus Christ the vilest sinner who ever walked this earth, who has turned from his sin and accepted Jesus Christ and trusts in the shed blood as the ground of his acceptance before God, can come into the presence of God any day of the year, and any hour of the day or night, and with perfect boldness speak out every longing of his heart and get what he asks from God. Isn't that wonderful? Yes, and, thank God, it is true.

Christian Scientists cannot really pray. What they call prayer is simply meditation or concentration of thought. It is not asking a personal God for a definite blessing; indeed, Mrs. Eddy denies the existence of a personal God, and she denies the atoning efficacy of the blood. She said that when the blood of Jesus Christ was shed on the cross of Calvary it did no more good than when it was running in His veins. So a Christian Scientist cannot really pray; he is not on praying ground.

Neither can a Unitarian really pray. Oh, he can take the name of God on his lips and call Him Father, and say beautiful words, but there is no real approach to God. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Some years ago in Chicago I was on a committee of three persons, one of whom was one of

the leading Unitarian ministers of the city. He was a charming man in many ways. One day, at the close of our committee meeting, this Unitarian minister turned to me and said, "Brother Torrey, I often come over to your church to hear you." I replied, "I am very glad to hear it." Then he continued, "I especially love to go to your prayer meetings. Often on Friday nights I drop into your prayer meeting and sit down by the door, and I greatly enjoy it." I replied, "I am glad that you do. But tell me something. Why don't you have a prayer meeting in your own church?" "Well," he said, "you have asked me an honest question and I will give you an honest answer. Because I can't. I have tried it and it has failed every time." Of course it failed, they had no ground of approach to God--they denied the atoning blood.

But there is many a supposedly orthodox Christian, and often in these days even supposedly orthodox ministers, who deny the atoning blood. They do not believe that the forgiveness of our sins is solely and entirely on the ground of the shedding of Jesus' blood as an atonement for sin on our behalf on the cross of Calvary, and, therefore, they cannot really pray. There are not a few who call the theology that insists on the truth so very clearly taught in the Word of God, the doctrine of the substitutionary character of Christ's death and that we are saved by the shedding of His blood, a "theology of the shambles" (that is, of the butcher shop).

Mr. Alexander and I were holding meetings in the Royal Albert Hall in London. I received through the mail one day one of our hymnbooks that some man had taken from the meeting. He had gone through it and cut out every reference to the blood of Christ. With the hymnbook was an accompanying letter, in which the man said, "I have gone through your hymnbook and cut out every reference to the blood in every place where it is found, and I am sending this hymnbook back to you. Now sing your hymns this way, with the blood left out, and there will be some sense in them." I took the hymnbook to the meeting with me that afternoon and displayed it; it was a sadly mutilated book. I read the man's letter, and then I said, "No, I will not cut the blood out of my hymnology, and I will not cut the blood out of my theology, for when I cut the blood out of my hymnology and my theology I will have to cut all access to God out of my experience." No, men and women, you cannot approach God on any other ground than the shed blood, and until you believe in the blood of Jesus Christ as a perfect atonement for your sins, and as the only ground on which you can find forgiveness and Justification, real prayer is an impossibility.

2. You will find the second part of the answer to the question, How can we come into the presence of God and how can we be sure that we have come into His presence? In Ephesians 2:18, "For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit." Here we have the same thought that we have already had, that we have just been presenting, that it is "through him," that is, through Jesus Christ, that we have our access to the Father. But we have an additional thought, the thought that when we come into the presence of God through Jesus Christ, we come "in" the One Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit. Just what does that mean? It means this: It is the work of the Holy Spirit, when you and I pray, to take us by the hand as it were and lead us into the very presence of God and introduce us to Him, and to make God real to us as we pray. The Greek word translated "access" is the exact equivalent in its etymology of the word "introduction," which is really a Latin word transliterated into English. As I say, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to introduce us to God, that is, to lead us into God's presence, and to make God real to us as we pray (or return thanks, or worship). And in order that we may really come into the presence of God and be sure that we have come into His presence when we pray, we must look to the Holy Spirit to make

God real to us while we are praying.

Have you ever had this experience, that when you knelt to pray it seemed as if there were no one there, as if you were just talking into the air, or into empty space? What shall we do at such a time as that? Shall we stop praying and wait until some time when we feel like praying? No, when we least feel like praying, and when God is least real to us, that is the time we most need to pray. What shall we do, then? Simply be quiet and look up to God and ask Him to fulfill His promise and send His Holy Spirit to lead us into His presence and to make Him real to us, and then wait and expect. And the Holy Spirit will come, and He will take us into God's presence, and He will make God real to us. I can testify today that some of the most wonderful seasons of prayer I have ever had, have been times when as I first knelt to pray I had no real sense of God. It seemed that no one was there, it seemed as if I were talking into empty space; and then I have just looked up to God and asked Him and trusted Him to send His Holy Spirit to teach me to pray, to lead me into His presence, and to make Him real to me, and the Spirit has come, and He has made God so real to me that it almost seemed that if I opened my eyes I could see Him; in fact, I did see Him with the eyes of my soul.

One night at the close of a sermon in one of the churches on the South Side in Chicago, I went down the aisle to speak to some of the people. I stepped up to a middle-aged man and said to him, "Are you a Christian?" "No," he replied, "I am an infidel. Did you ever see God?" I quickly replied, "Yes, I have seen God." The man was startled and silenced. Did I mean that I had seen God with these eyes of my body? No. But, thank God, I have two pair of eyes; not only does my body have eyes, but my soul also has eyes. I pity the person who has only one pair of eyes, no matter how good those eyes are. I thank God I have two pairs of eyes, these bodily eyes with which I see you, and the eyes of my soul, with which I see God. God has given me wonderful eyes for my body, that at sixty-seven years of age I have never had to wear glasses and do not know what it means to have my eyes weary or painful under any circumstances. But I will gladly give up these eyes rather than those other eyes that God has given me, the eyes with which I see God.

This, then, is the way to come into the presence of God and to be sure that we have come into His presence: first, to come by the blood; second, to come in the Holy Spirit, looking to the Holy Spirit to lead us into the presence of God, and to make God real to us.

In passing, let me call your attention to the great practical importance of the doctrine of the Trinity. Many think that the doctrine of the Trinity is a purely abstract, metaphysical, and utterly impractical doctrine. Not at all. It involves our whole spiritual life, and it is of the highest importance in the very practical matter of praying. We need God the Father to pray to; we need Jesus Christ the Son to pray through; and we need the Holy Spirit to pray in. It is the prayer that is to God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son, under the guidance and in the power of the Holy Spirit, that God the Father answers.

## II. With Intense Earnestness

Now let us consider another of the four words/phrases used in Acts 12:5 that contain the whole secret of prevailing prayer, the word "earnestly"--"The church was earnestly praying to God for him." The word "earnestly" comes far nearer giving the force of the original language but even "earnestly" does not give the full force of the Greek word used. The Greek word is "ektenos," which

means, literally, “stretched-out-edly.” The King James translators came to translate it “without ceasing”: they thought of the prayer as stretched out a long time--unceasing prayer. But that is not the thought at all. The Greek word is never used in that sense anywhere in the New Testament, and I do not know of a place in Greek literature outside of the Bible where it is so used. The word is a pictorial word, as so many words are. It represents the soul stretched out in the intensity of its earnestness toward God.

Did you ever see a foot race? The racers are all toeing the mark waiting for the starter to say “Go,” or to fire the revolver as a signal to start. As the critical moment approaches, the runners become more and more tense, until when the word “Go” comes, or the revolver cracks, they go racing down the track with every nerve and muscle stretched toward their goal, and sometimes the veins stand out on the forehead like whipcords--every runner would be the winner! That is the picture, the soul stretched out in intense earnestness toward God in intense earnestness of desire.

It is the same word that is used in the comparative mood in Luke 22:44, which reads, “Being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.” The thought is, as I have said, of the soul being stretched out toward God in intense earnestness of desire. Probably the most accurate translation that could be given in a single word would be “intensely”: “The church was intensely praying to God for him.” In fact, the word “intensely” is from the same root, but has a different prefix. In the 1911 Bible the passage is translated, “Instant and earnest prayer was made of the church unto God for him,” which is not a bad paraphrase, though it is not a translation. And “Intensely earnest prayer was made of the church unto God for him” would be an even better rendering.

It is the intensely earnest prayer to which God pays attention, and which He answers. This thought comes out again and again in the Bible. We find it even in the Old Testament, in Jeremiah 29:13, “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” We here discover the reason why so many of our prayers are unheard of God. There is so little heart in them, so little intensity of desire for the thing asked, that there is no reason why God should pay any attention to them. Suppose I should ask all of you if you prayed this morning. Doubtless almost every one of you would reply, “Yes, I did.” Then suppose I should ask you again, “For what did you pray this morning?” I fear that some of you would hesitate and ponder and then have to say, “Really, I forget for what I did pray this morning.” Well, then, God will forget to answer. But if I should ask some of you if you prayed this morning you would say, “Yes.” Then if I asked you for what you prayed you could tell me at once, for you always pray for the same thing. You have just a little rote of prayer that you go through each morning or each night. You fall on your knees, go through your little prayer automatically, scarcely thinking of what you are saying, in fact, oftentimes you do not think of what you are saying but think of a dozen other things while you are repeating your prayer. Such prayer is profanity, taking the name of God in vain.

When Mrs. Torrey and I were in India, she went up to Darjeeling, in the Himalayas, on the borders of Tibet. I was unable to go because of being so busy with meetings in Calcutta. When she came back she brought with her a Tibetan praying wheel. Did you ever see one? A little round brass cup on the top of a stick; the cup revolves when the stick is whirled. The Tibetan writes out his prayers, drops them into the cup, and then whirls the stick and the wheel goes round and the prayers are said. That is just the way a great many Americans pray, except that the wheel is in their head

instead of being on the top of a stick. They kneel down and rattle through a rote of prayer, day after day the same thing, with scarcely any thought of what they are praying for. That kind of prayer is profanity, "taking the name of God in vain," and it has no power whatever with God. It is a pure waste of time, or worse than a waste of time.

But if I should ask some of you what you prayed for this morning you could tell me, for as you were in prayer the Spirit of God came on you, and with a great heartache of intensity of desire you cried to God for that thing you must have. Well, God will hear your prayer and give you what you asked. If we are to pray with power we must pray with intense earnestness, throw our whole soul into the prayer. This thought comes out again and again in the Bible. For example, we find it in Romans 15:30, "I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me." The word translated "struggle" in this verse is "sunagonizo" (Greek). "Agonizo" (Greek) means to "contend" or "strive" or "wrestle" or "fight."

We hear a great deal these days about "the rest of faith," by which men usually mean that we should take things very calmly in our Christian life, and when we pray we simply come into God's presence like a little child and quietly and trustfully ask Him for the thing desired and count it ours, and go away very calmly, and consider the thing ours. Now, there is a truth in that, a great truth; but it is only one side of the truth, and a truth usually has two sides. And the other side of the truth is this, that there is not only the "rest of faith" but there is also the "fight of faith," and my Bible has more to say about "the fight of faith" than it has about "the rest of faith." The thought of wrestling or fighting in prayer is not the thought that we have to wrestle with God to make God willing to grant our prayers. No, "our wrestling is . . . against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:12), against the devil and all his mighty forces, and there is no place where the devil so resists us as when we pray. Sometimes when we pray it seems as if all the forces of hell sweep in between us and God. What shall we do? Give up? No! A thousand times, no! Fight the thing through on your knees, wrestle in your prayer to God, and win.

Some years ago I was attending a Bible conference in Dr. James H. Brooks' old church in St. Louis. On the program was one of the most distinguished and most gifted Bible teachers that America ever produced, and he was speaking this day on "The Rest of Faith." He said, "I challenge anybody to show me a single passage in the Bible where we are told to wrestle in prayer." Now one speaker does not like to contradict another, but here was a challenge, and I was sitting on the platform, and I was obliged to take it up. So I said in a low tone of voice, "Romans 15:30, brother." He was a good enough Greek scholar to know that I had him, and what is more rare, he was honest enough to own it up on the spot. Yes, the Bible bids us "wrestle in prayer," and it is the prayer in which we actually wrestle in the power of the Holy Spirit that wins with God. The root of the word translated "struggle" is "agone" (Greek), from which our word "agony" comes. Oh that we might have more agonizing prayer.

Turn now to Colossians 4:12-13, and you will find the same thought again, put in other words, "Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. I vouch for him that he is working hard for you." The words translated "working hard" is a very strong word; it means intense toil, or, painful labor. Do you know what it means to toil in prayer, to labor

with painful toil in prayer? Oh, how easily most of us take our praying, how little heart we put into it, and how little it takes out of us, and how little it counts with God.

The mighty men of God who throughout the centuries have wrought great things by prayer are the men who have had much painful toil in prayer. Take, for example, David Brainerd, that physically feeble but spiritual mighty man of God. Trembling for years on the verge of consumption (TB), from which he ultimately died at an early age, David Brainerd felt led of God to labor among the North American Indians in the early days, in the primeval forests of northern Pennsylvania, and sometimes on a winter night he would go out into the forest and kneel in the cold snow when it was a foot deep and so labor with God in prayer that he would be wringing wet with perspiration even out in the cold winter-night hours. And God heard David Brainerd and sent such a mighty revival among the North American Indians as had never been heard of before, as, indeed, had never been dreamed of.

And not only did God send an answer to David Brainerd's prayers this mighty revival among the North American Indians, but also in answer to David Brainerd's prayers he transformed David Brainerd's father-in-law, Jonathan Edwards, that mighty prince of metaphysicians, probably the mightiest thinker that America has ever produced (the only American metaphysician whose name is in the American Hall of Fame), into Jonathan Edwards the flaming evangelist, who so preached on the subject of "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," in the church at Enfield, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that the strong men in the audience felt as if the very floor of the church were falling out and they were sinking into hell, and they sprang to their feet and threw their arms around the pillars of the church and cried to God for mercy. Oh that we had more men who could pray like David Brainerd, then we would have more men that could preach like Jonathan Edwards.

I once used this illustration of David Brainerd at a conference in New York State. Dr. Park, the grandson and biographer of Jonathan Edwards, who was in my audience, came to me at the close and said, "I have always felt that there was something abnormal about David Brainerd." I replied, "Doctor Park, it would be a good thing for you and a good thing for me if we had a little more of that kind of abnormality." Indeed it would, and it would be a good thing if many of us who are here this morning had that kind of so-called "abnormality" that bows a man down with intensity of longing for the power of God, that would make us pray in the way that David Brainerd prayed.

But a very practical question arises at this point. How can we get this intense earnestness in prayer? The Bible answers the question very plainly and simply. There are two ways of having earnestness in prayer, a right way and a wrong way. The wrong way is to work it up in the energy of the flesh. Have you never seen it done? A man kneels down by a chair to pray; he begins very calmly and then he begins to work himself up and begins to shout and scream and pound the chair, and sometimes he spits foam, and he screams until your head is almost splitting with the loud uproar. That is the wrong way, that is false fire; that is the energy of the flesh, which is an abomination to God. If possible, that is even worse than the careless, thoughtless prayers of which I have spoken.

But there is a right way to obtain real, heart-stirring, heart-wringing, and God-moving earnestness in prayer. What the right way is the Bible tells us. It tells us in Romans 8:26-27, "The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the

Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." That is the right way--look to the Spirit to create the earnestness. The earnestness that counts with God is not the earnestness that you or I work up; it is the earnestness that the Holy Spirit creates in our hearts. Have you never gone to God in prayer and there was no earnestness in your prayer at all, it was just words, words, words, a mere matter of form, when it seemed there was no real prayer in your heart? What shall we do at such a time as that? Stop praying and wait until we feel more like praying? No. If there is ever a time when one needs to pray it is when he does not feel like praying. What shall we do? Be silent and look up to God to send His Holy Spirit, according to His promise, to move your heart to prayer and to awaken and create real earnestness in your heart in prayer: and God will send Him and you will pray with intense earnestness, very likely "with groanings which cannot be uttered."

I wish to testify right here that some of the times of deepest earnestness that I have ever known in prayer came when at the outset I seemed to have no prayer in my heart at all, and all attempt to pray was mere words, words, empty form. And then I looked up to God to send His Spirit according to His promise to teach me to pray, and I waited and the Spirit of God came on me in mighty power and I cried to God, sometimes with groanings which could not be uttered.

I shall never forget a night in Chicago. After the general prayer meetings for a world-wide revival had been going on for some time, the man who was most closely associated with me in the conduct of the meetings came over to my house one night after the meeting was over and said, "Brother Torrey, what do you say to our having a time alone with God every Saturday night after the other meetings are over? I do not mean," he continued, "that we will actually promise to come together every Saturday night; but let us have it tonight, anyway." Oh, such a night of prayer as we had that night. I shall never forget that, but it was not that night that I am especially thinking of now. After we had been meeting some weeks, he suggested that we invite in a few others, which we did; and every Saturday night after the general prayer meeting was closed at ten o'clock we few would gather in some secluded place where we would not disturb others to pray together. There were never more than a dozen persons present; usually there were six or seven. One night, before kneeling in prayer, we told one another the things we desired especially to ask of God that night, and then we knelt to pray and a long silence followed. No one prayed. And one of the little company looked up and said, "I cannot pray, there seems to be something resisting me." Then another raised his head and said, "Neither can I pray, something seems to be resisting me." We went around the whole circle, and each one had the same story.

What did we do? Break up the prayer meeting? No. If ever we felt the need of prayer it was then, and quietly we all bowed before God and looked to Him to send His Holy Spirit to enable us to pray to victory. And soon the Spirit of God came on one and another, and I have seldom heard such praying as I heard that night. And then the Spirit of God came on me and led me out in such a prayer as I had never dreamed of praying. I was led to ask God that He would send me around the world preaching the Gospel, and give me to see thousands saved in China, in Japan, in Australia, in New Zealand, in Tasmania, in India, in England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France, and Switzerland; and when I finished praying that night I knew I was going, and I knew what I would see as well as I knew afterward when the actual report came of the mighty things that God had wrought. That prayer meeting sent me around the world preaching the Gospel. Oh, that is how we must pray if we would get what we ask in prayer--pray with the intense earnestness that the Holy

Spirit alone can inspire.

### III. The Church

Now let us look briefly at another one of the four phrases, the phrase “the church.” The prayer that God particularly delights to answer is united prayer. There is power in the prayer of a single individual, and the prayer of individuals has wrought great things, but there is far greater power in united prayer. Our Lord Jesus taught this same great truth in Matthew 18:19-20, “I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” God delights in the unity of His people, and He does everything in His power to promote that unity, and so He especially honors unity in prayer. There is power in the prayer of one true believer: there is far more power in the united prayer of two, and greater power in the united prayer of still more.

But it must be real unity. This comes out in the exact words our Lord uses. He says, “If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” It is one of the most frequently misquoted and most constantly abused promises in the whole Bible. It is often quoted as if it read this way, “If two of you on earth agree to ask anything, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” But it actually reads, “If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” Someone may say, “I do not see any essential difference.” Let me explain it to you. Someone else has a burden on his heart, he comes to you and asks you to unite with him in praying for deliverance and you consent, and you both pray for it. Now you are “agreed” in praying, but you are not agreed at all “about anything” you ask. He asks for it because he intensely desires it; you ask for it simply because he asks you to ask for it. You are not at all agreed “about anything” you ask. But when God, by His Holy Spirit, puts the same burden on two hearts, and they thus in the unity of the Spirit pray for the same thing, there is not power enough on earth or in hell to keep them from getting it. Our Heavenly Father will do for them the thing that they ask.

### IV. For Him

Now let us look at the fourth phrase, “for him.” The prayer was definite prayer for a definite person; and that is the kind of prayer God answers, definite prayer. Oh how general and vague many of our prayers are. They are very pretty, they sound nice, they are charmingly phrased, but they ask no definite, specific thing, and they get no definite, specific answer. When you pray to God, have a very definite, clear-cut idea of just exactly what it is you want of God, and ask Him for that definite and specific thing; and, if you meet the other conditions of prevailing prayer, you will get that definite, specific thing which you asked. God’s answer will be just as definite as your prayer.

In closing, let me call your attention to our dependence on the Holy Spirit in all our praying if we are to accomplish anything by our prayers. It is the Holy Spirit, as we saw in our study of the first phrase, who enables us really to pray “to God,” who leads us into the presence of God and makes God real to us. It is the Holy Spirit, again, who gives us the intense earnestness in prayer that prevails with God. Still again, it is the Holy Spirit who brings us into unity so that we know the power of really united prayer. And it is the Holy Spirit who shows us the definite things for which we should definitely pray.

To sum it all up, the prayer that God answers is the prayer that is to God the Father, that is on the ground of the atoning blood of God the Son, and that is under the direction and in the power of God the Holy Spirit.

## Looking To Jesus

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Looking To Jesus

by

R. A. Torrey

(1856-1928)

If we are to run with patience the race that is set before us, we must always keep looking to Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-3). One of the simplest and yet one of the mightiest secrets of abiding joy and victory is to never lose sight of Jesus.

1. First of all, we must keep looking at Jesus as the ground of our acceptance before God. Over and over again, Satan will make an attempt to discourage us by bringing up our sins and failures and thus try to convince us that we are not children of God, or not saved. If he succeeds in getting us to keep looking at and brooding sins, he will soon get us discouraged, and discouragement means failure. But if we will keep looking at what God looks at, the death of Jesus Christ in our place that completely atones for every sin that we ever committed, we will never be discouraged because of the greatest of our sins. We shall see that while our sins are great, very great, indeed they have all been atoned for. Every time Satan brings up one of our sins, we shall see that Jesus Christ has redeemed us from its curse by being made a curse in our place (Galatians 3:13). We shall see that while in ourselves we are full of unrighteousness, nevertheless in Christ we are made the righteousness of God, because Christ was made to be sin in our place (2 Corinthians 5:21). We will see that every sin that Satan taunts us about has been borne and settled forever (1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6). We shall always be able to sing,

Jesus paid my debt,

All the debt I owe;

Sin had left a crimson stain,

He washed it white as snow.

If you are this moment troubled about any sin that you have ever committed, either in the past or in the present, just look at Jesus on the cross; believe what God tells you about Him, that this sin which troubles you was laid upon Him (Isaiah 53:6). Thank God that the sin is all settled, be full of gratitude to Jesus, who bore it in your place, and worry about it no more. It is an act of base ingratitude to God to brood over sins that He in His infinite love has canceled. Keep looking at Christ on the cross and walk always in the sunlight of God's favor. This favor of God has been purchased for you at great cost. Gratitude demands that you should always believe in it and walk in the light of it.

2. In the second place, we must keep looking at Jesus as our risen Savior, who has all power in heaven and on earth and is able to keep us every day and every hour. Are you tempted to do some wrong at this moment? If you are, remember that Jesus rose from the dead, remember that at this moment He is living at the right hand of God in the glory; remember that He has all power in heaven and on earth, and that, therefore, He can give you victory right now. Believe what God tells you in His Word, that Jesus has power to save you this moment "completely" (Hebrews 7:25). Believe that He has power to give you victory over that sin that now besets you. Ask Him to give you victory; expect Him to do it. In this way, by looking unto the risen Christ for victory, you may have victory over sin every day, every hour, every moment. "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead" (2 Timothy 2:8).

God has called every one of us to a victorious life, and the secret of this victorious life is always looking to the risen Christ for victory. Through looking to Christ crucified we obtain pardon and enjoy peace. Through looking to the risen Christ we obtain present victory over the power of sin. If you have lost sight of the risen Christ and have yielded to temptation, confess your sin and know that it is forgiven because God says so (1 John 1:9), and look to Jesus, the risen One, again to give you victory now, and keep looking to Him.

3. In the third place, we must keep looking to Jesus as the One whom we should follow in our daily conduct. Our Lord Jesus says to us, His disciples today, as He said to His early disciples, "Follow me." The whole secret of true Christian conduct can be summed up in these two words "Follow me." "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did" (1 John 2:6). One of the commonest causes of failure in Christian life is found in the attempt to follow some good man whom we greatly admire. No man and no woman, no matter how good, can be safely followed. If we follow any man or woman, we are bound to go astray. There has been but one absolutely perfect Man on this earth--the Man Christ Jesus. If we try to follow any other man we are surer to imitate his faults than his excellencies. Look to Jesus and Jesus only as your Guide.

If at any time you are in any perplexity as to what to do, simply ask the question, What would Jesus do? Ask God by His Holy Spirit to show you what Jesus would do. Study your Bible to find out what Jesus did do, and follow Him. Even though no one else seems to be following Jesus, be sure that you follow Him. Do not spend your time or thought in criticizing others because they do not follow Jesus. See that you follow Him yourself. When you are wasting your time criticizing others for not following Jesus, Jesus is always saying to you, "What is that to you? You must follow me" (John 21:22). The question for you is not what following Jesus may involve for other people. The question is, What does following Jesus mean for you?

This is the really simple life, the life of simply following Jesus. Many perplexing questions will come to you, but the most perplexing question will soon become as clear as day if you determine with all your heart to follow Jesus in everything. Satan will always be ready to whisper to you, "Such and such a good man does it," but all you need to do is to answer, "It matters not to me what this or that man may do or not do. The only question to me is, What would Jesus do?" There is wonderful freedom in this life of simply following Jesus. This path is straight and plain. But the path of him who tries to shape his conduct by observing the conduct of others is full of twists and turns and pitfalls. Keep looking at Jesus. Follow on trustingly where He leads. This is the path of the righteous, shining ever brighter till the full light of day (Proverbs 4:18). He is the Light of the world;

anyone who follows Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life all along the way (John 8:12).

## Love Contrasted, Described, Exalted (1 Corinthians 13)

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### LOVE CONTRASTED, DESCRIBED, EXALTED

(1 COR. 13) By R. A. Torrey OUR subject this morning is Love Contrasted, Love Described, Love Exalted. Our text is the whole of the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. This chapter, which we are to study this morning is not only one of the most familiar, but also one of the most important and remarkable in the whole Bible. If there were no other proof of Paul's inspiration, this chapter would go far toward establishing it. The translation of the chapter found in the Revised Version is far better than that found in the Authorized Version, but by far the best translation of all is the translation into life. Every Christian should read and re-read this chapter until mind and heart and will are saturated with it, until its fragrance distils itself in our every act and word and thought. The chapter naturally divides itself into three parts; the first part, verses 1-3, Love Contrasted, or the Absolute Indispensability of Love; the second part, verses 4-7, Love Described, or the Everyday Manifestations of Love ; the third part, verses 8 - 13, Love Exalted, or the Peerless Pre-eminence of Love.

#### I. LOVE CONTRASTED OR THE ABSOLUTE INDISPENSABILITY OF LOVE.

Let us first look at Love Contrasted, or the Indispensability of Love. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. 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." Here love is contrasted with five things in succession, each of which was held in great esteem in Corinth, and each of which is held in great esteem to-day. But Paul says no one of them, nor all of them together, will supply the lack of love.

1. The first thing that Paul contrasts with love is the gift of tongues, and the gift of tongues in its highest conceivable form: " Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels. How the world would admire and applaud a man who could do that. A man upon whom the Spirit fell in such mighty power that not only the Pentecostal wonder would be repeated and Parthians and Medes and Elamites and Libyans and Romans and Cretes and Arabians hear men talking in their own tongues, but also the man would talk with the tongue of angels as well as the tongues of men. That would be great and marvellous in the eyes of the world, but Paul says that even though that should happen, if that man had not love he would after all be only sounding brass or a clanging cymbal, just a brazen noise. The world looks at the eloquence on a man's lips. God looks at the love in his heart. The gifts of the Spirit are greatly to be desired; but the graces of the Spirit are far more to be desired, especially the grace of love (1 Corinthians 12:31). We look oftentimes in wonder and admiration at the eloquent preacher, but God looks down into his heart and sees no love there, and says, "nothing but noise sounding brass and a clanging cymbal."

2. The second thing Paul contrasts with love is the gift of prophecy. He describes this gift in the very highest form of its manifestation, "If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge." Surely this is something to be much coveted and greatly admired. Surely this will win

God's applause. The man of great theological learning and perfect spiritual vision must occupy a very high place in God's estimation. Listen to what God says, "even if a man have all this and have not love, he is NOTHING." Think of it, just nothing. How the world applauds the seer irrespective of what he is in heart, but God asks, "Is he also a lover?" If not, he is nothing, absolutely nothing.

3. Now Paul brings forward a third thing and contrasts it with love faith, miracle-working faith: miracle-working faith in the highest conceivable form, faith so as to remove mountains. Surely this will count for something with God. Surely this will give a man eminence in His sight. Even though a man is very faulty in character, if he can do wonders by the power of faith, he must stand high not only in the estimation of man but God. Listen to what God says, "If I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love I am NOTHING." Think of that nothing! There are those in these days who are counting upon their gifts of healing and their extraordinary manifestations of faith to commend them to God. They would better ask themselves, "Have I love?" Some of them do not seem to have according to the description given in verses 4-7.

4. Paul next brings forward a fourth thing that men count much on as commending them to God magnificent giving, "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor." Surely a man who does that is a great man in God's sight. Surely he will get rich reward. But the inspired Apostle shakes his head, "not necessarily," he says, "you can give all you have, every dollar, every cent, and that too for the most philanthropic purpose, to feed the poor; but if you have not love, you will gain by it just nothing. How many false hopes that annihilates. Men with hearts full of selfishness are building great hopes for time and eternity upon the fact that they have given so much to the poor and to various charitable enterprises. But God puts the very searching question to you, "Have you love?" If not, your gifts will do you no more good than squandering your goods in riot and folly would. It will all profit you nothing.

5. And now Paul takes up a fifth thing, and that which above all others is supposed to entitle one to a crown martyrdom, "If I give my body to be burned." Surely we have at last found one for whom God will have words of unstinting commendation the brave martyr who marches to the stake for convictions, for truth, for right. For him there must be a sure and great reward, the martyr's crown. Listen, "and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love it profiteth me NOTHING." Oh, you who think so much and talk so much of what you have suffered for Christ, think of that. It all counts for nothing if you have not love.

There is nothing then, absolutely nothing, that will take the place of love. Gifts of speech, great knowledge of the deep things of God, miracle working faith, the greatest possible giving, extreme martyrdom, will not take the place of love. Nay, further, they count for nothing if love is lacking. One question then is driven home with tremendous emphasis to each one of our hearts, Have you love? This brings us to the second division of the chapter.

## II. LOVE DESCRIBED OR THE EVERYDAY MANIFESTATIONS OF LOVE.

God will not leave us in any self-deception or any doubt as to whether we have love or not. He gives a very plain description by which love can be known, wherever it exists, and by which its absence can be known wherever love is lacking. Love has fifteen marks, not one of which is ever wanting where love exists. We cannot dwell at great length upon each one, nor do we need to.

1. The first mark of love is that it "suffereth long." Love endures injury after injury, insult after insult, wrong after wrong, slander after slander, and still keeps right on loving and forgiving and forgetting. It wastes itself in vainly trying to help the unworthy and ungrateful, and still it loves on. That is the first mark of love. Do you show it?
2. The second mark of love is, it "is kind." It knows no harshness. It may be severe even as Jesus Himself was on occasion, but its necessary severity is shot through with gentleness and tenderness and pity. That is love.
3. The third mark of love is, "love envieth not." Love knows no envy. How could it? He that really loves is as much interested in the welfare of others as in his own. How then can he envy? Does a mother ever envy the prosperity of her child? Is it not her chief delight? Love never envies, never. Do you love? Do you ever secretly grieve over and try to discount another's progress, temporal or spiritual? Then you have not love. You may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, you may have the gift of prophecy, know all knowledge, you may have all faith so that mountains are disappearing before your onward march, you may be giving all your goods to feed the poor, you may be ready to die at the stake for your convictions, but you have not love, and you are nothing. Oh, friends, how often when we hear of another's prosperity or the great work of another Christian or Church, how often we say, "Yes, but ah er." Or if we do not say it, we think it, and try to make the progress of the person or church not so much greater than our own after all. Why is this? Because we envy. And why do we envy? Because we have not love, and not having love we are ciphers in God's sight.
4. The fourth mark of love is that it "vaunteth not itself." There is no surer mark of the absence of love and the dominance of selfishness than that we talk about ourselves and our achievements. If we really love, the achievements of others will be more important to us than our own, and it is about them we will talk, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.
5. The fifth mark of love is that it is "not puffed up." It is quite possible for one to have good sense enough not to vaunt himself, and yet in his heart be puffed up over his own virtues or victories. But love is not even puffed up. Love is so much taken up with the excellencies of others that it will not even dream of being inflated over its own.
6. The sixth mark of love is that it "doth not behave itself unseemly," i.e. doth not do rude, ill-mannered, boorish things. Love is considerate of the feelings of others and therefore avoids all that might offend or shock them. Nothing else will teach good manners and true etiquette as love will. Those professed Christians who delight in trampling all conventionalities under foot and playing the boor are utterly lacking in one essential thing, love.
7. "Love seeketh not its own." These words need little comment. They demand exemplification rather than elucidation. It does, however, suggest a question. The question is a personal one: Are you seeking your own, or others good? You haven't time to think it out now, but I hope you will get your Bible and think it out when you get home.
8. "Love is not provoked." The translators of the King James Version seem to have staggered at this statement, and so inserted a qualifying word, "love is not easily provoked." But that is not what God said. "Love is not provoked" was the statement. Love knows no irritation. It is often grieved, deeply grieved, but never irritated. How searching these words are! We get so hot over the unkind

words that are spoken to us. I think some of us, as we read these words, will ask, "Have I any love? Am I not sounding brass or a clanging cymbal?"

9. "Love taketh no account of evil." Love never puts the wrong done it down in its books or in its memory. Some of us do. Some one does us an injustice or a wrong of some kind and we store it away in mind, and whenever we think of that person we think of the wrong they did us. That is not love. Love takes those pages of memory on which the wrongs done us are written and tears them up. If wrong is done it, it keeps no account of it.

10. Love "rejoiceth not in unrighteousness." It is not for ever telling and glorying in the wrong that exists in individuals and church and state. Brethren, why is it that some of us are so fond of dwelling on the evil that exists in church and state? I will tell you, we do not love.

11. Love "rejoiceth with the truth." Oh, if we love how our hearts will bound when we discover truth in others. How gladly we will call attention to it. This is a sure mark of love. Let me ask a question, Are you much given to that sort of thing? Some of you come and tell me this wrong and that wrong that you see in others. Don't you think it would be well to come occasionally and tell me of this excellence or that that you have discovered in others? Paul says that is the way love behaves.

12. "Love beareth all things." The word translated "beareth" means primarily "covereth" and may mean so here, though the New Testament usage is against it. That, however, will be quite true, love is always covering evil up. We are told in 1 Peter 4:8 that "love covereth a multitude of sins." The word translated covereth in this case is an entirely different one, however, from the one used in the passage before us. Love does not go round telling all the sin it has discovered in men, it hides it. That is a manifestation of love greatly needed in our day. But the words before us seem to mean more than that. They seem to mean that no matter what evil is done love, love bears it without revenge or complaint or bitterness or resentment.

13. "Love believeth all things." How proud some of us are of our powers to see through men and of the impossibility of gulling us. But that is not love, that is selfish shrewdness. Love is far greater than shrewdness. Love is very easily gulled. Indeed love would rather be gulled a hundred times than to misjudge once. "Love believeth all things," and when love has been deceived once it goes right on believing next time. We have heard it said of some men that they were forever being taken in by designing persons. Well, that speaks well for them, for "love believeth all things."

14. "Love hopeth all things." When it gets beyond believing, when one has proved a deceiver so often and is so manifestly a deceiver still that believing is simply impossible, then love hopes for the future. Love does not look at the bad as they now are, but as they may become by the transforming grace of God. When love looks at a drunkard, it does not see that poor, bloated, vile, enslaved thing that now is. It sees the clean, upright, intelligent, Christ-like man of God that is to be. When love looks at the troublesome Sunday School scholar it does not see the shameless, vicious, unreasonable, almost idiotic boy that now is, but the attentive, obedient, gentlemanly boy that is to be. I tell you, friends, love is a great thing, but I fear it is a rare commodity.

15. Now comes the fifteenth and last mark of all, "Love endureth all things." When believing is impossible, when even hoping seems utterly out of the question, love endures. It does not get angry, it does not give up, it loves on, works on, endures on. Let Jesus serve as an illustration. How long Jesus has borne with men, but for love He has gotten back only reproach and sneers

and spitting and blows and crucifixion. Reproach has broken His heart, and He is fast dying, but He summons all His waning strength, and cries, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:24). That was love.

Friends, let me ask you a question again. Examined in the light of the fifteen marks of love Paul gives, have you much love? Have you any? If not, whatever else you may have, you are nothing.

### III. LOVE EXALTED, OR THE PEERLESS PRE-EMINENCE OF LOVE.

We have no time left for the third division of the chapter, Love Exalted, or the Peerless Pre-eminence of Love. To sum it all up in a few words, prophecies, tongues, knowledge, have their day, love is eternal. God is love, and love partakes of His eternal nature. "Love never faileth." If you want something that will last, get love. All other things are partial, love is complete, perfect. There are three abiding things, faith, hope and love, but even of these three, the greatest is love.

## Principles of Biblical Interpretation

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### Principles of Biblical Interpretation

from Dr. R. A. Torrey's

The Importance and Value of Proper Bible Study

(New York: George H. Doran Co., 1921), pp. 55-90.

1. Get absolutely right with God yourself by the absolute surrender of your will to Him.
2. Be determined to find out just what God intended to teach and not what you wish Him to teach.
3. Get the most accurate text.
4. Find the most exact and literal meaning of the text.
5. Note the exact force of each word used.
6. Interpret the words used in any verse according to Bible usage.
7. Interpret the words of each author in the Bible with a regard to the particular usage of that author.
8. Interpret individual verses with a regard to the context.
9. Interpret individual passages in the light of parallel or related passages.
10. Interpret obscure passages in the light of passages that are perfectly plain.
11. Interpret any passage in the Bible as those who were addressed would have understood it.
12. Interpret what belongs to the Christian as belonging to the Christian; what belongs to the Jew, as belonging to the Jew, and what belongs to the Gentiles, as belonging to the Gentiles.
13. Interpret each writer with a view to the opinions the writer opposed.
14. Interpret poetry as poetry and interpret prose as prose.
15. The Holy Spirit is the best interpreter of the Bible.

## Profitable Bible Study

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Profitable Bible Study

by

R. A. Torrey

(1856-1928)

There are many profitable methods of Bible Study. There is something, however, in Bible study more important than the best methods, that is, the fundamental conditions of profitable study. He who meets these conditions will get more out of the Bible, while pursuing the poorest method, than will he who does not meet them, while pursuing the best method. Many a one who is eagerly asking, "What method shall I pursue in my Bible study?" needs something that goes far deeper than a new and better method.

1. The first of the fundamental conditions of the most profitable Bible study is that the student must be born again.

The Bible is a spiritual book, it "expresses spiritual truths in spiritual words" (1 Corinthians 2:13), and only a spiritual man can understand its deepest and most characteristic and most precious teachings. "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). Spiritual discernment can be obtained in but one way, by being born again. "No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (John 3:3).

No mere knowledge of the human languages in which the Bible was written, however extensive and accurate it may be, will qualify one to understand and appreciate it. One must understand the divine language in which it was written as well, the language of the Holy Spirit. A person who understands the language of the Holy Spirit, but who does not understand a word of Greek or Hebrew or Aramaic, will get more out of the Bible than one who knows all about Greek and Hebrew and cognate languages, but is not born again, and, consequently, does not understand the language of the Holy Spirit. It is a well-demonstrated fact that many common men and women who are entirely ignorant of any knowledge of the original tongues in which the Bible was written have a knowledge of the real contents of the Bible, its actual teaching, in its depth and fullness and beauty, that surpasses that of many learned professors in theological faculties.

One of the greatest follies of the day, is to get unregenerate men to teach the Bible because of their rare knowledge of the human forms of speech in which the book was written. It would be as reasonable to set a man to teach art because he had an accurate technical knowledge of paints. It requires esthetic sense to make a man a competent teacher of art. It requires spiritual sense to make a man a competent teacher of the Bible. The man who has esthetic discernment but little or no technical knowledge of paint would be a far more competent critic of works of art than a man who has a great technical knowledge of paint but no esthetic discernment; and so the man who

has no technical knowledge of Greek and Hebrew but has spiritual discernment is a far more competent critic of the Bible than he who has a rare technical knowledge of Greek and Hebrew but no spiritual discernment. It is exceedingly unfortunate that, in some quarters, more emphasis is laid on a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew in training for the ministry than is laid on spiritual life and its consequent spiritual discernment.

Unregenerate men should not be forbidden to study the Bible, for the Word of God is the instrument the Holy Spirit uses in the New Birth (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18); but it should be distinctly understood that, while there are teachings in the Bible that the natural man can understand, and beauties which he can see, its most distinctive and characteristic teachings are beyond his grasp, and its highest beauties belong to a world in which he has no vision. The first fundamental condition of the most profitable Bible study is, then, "You must be born again." You cannot study the Bible to the greatest profit if you have not been born again. Its best treasures are sealed to you.

2. The second condition of the most profitable study is a love for the Bible.

A man who eats with an appetite will get far more good out of his meal than one who eats from a sense of duty. It is good when a student of the Bible can say with Job, "I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my daily bread" (Job 23:12), or with Jeremiah, "When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty" (Jeremiah 15:16). Many come to the table God has spread in His Word with no appetite for spiritual food, and go mincing here and there and grumbling about everything. Spiritual indigestion lies at the bottom of much modern criticism of the Bible.

But how can one get a love for the Bible? First of all, by being born again. Where there is life there is likely to be appetite. A dead man never hungers. This brings us back to the first condition. But going beyond this, the more there is of vitality, the more there is of hunger. Abounding life means abounding hunger for the Word. Study of the Word stimulates love for the Word. The author can well remember the time when he had more appetite for books about the Bible than he had for the Bible itself, but with increasing study there has come increasing love for the Book. Bearing in mind who the author of the Book is, what its purpose is, what its power is, what the riches of its contents are, will go far toward stimulating love and appetite for the Book.

3. The third condition is willingness to do hard work.

Solomon has given a graphic picture of the Bible student who gets the most profit out of his study, "My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God" (Proverbs 2:1-5). Now, seeking for silver and searching for hidden treasure means hard work, and he who wishes to get not only the silver but the gold as well out of the Bible, and find its "hidden treasure," must make up his mind to dig. It is not glancing at the Word, or reading the Word, but studying the Word, meditating on the Word, pondering the Word, that brings the richest yields.

The reason why many get so little out of their Bible reading is simply because they are not willing to think. Intellectual laziness lies at the bottom of a large percent of fruitless Bible reading. People

are constantly crying for new methods of Bible study, but what many of them wish is simply some method of Bible study by which they can get all the good out of the Bible without work. If someone could tell lazy Christians some method of Bible study whereby they could put the sleepest ten minutes of the day, just before they go to bed, into Bible study, and get the profit out of it that God intends His children shall get out of the study of His Word, that would be just what they desire. But it can't be done. Men must be willing to work, and work hard, if they wish to dig out the treasures of infinite wisdom and knowledge and blessing which God has stored up in His Word.

A business friend once asked me in a hurried call to tell him "in a word" how to study his Bible. I replied, "Think." The Psalmist pronounces that man "blessed" whose "delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night" (Psalms 1:2). The Lord commanded Joshua to meditate on it day and night, and assured him that as a result of this meditation, "you will be prosperous and successful" (Joshua 1:8).

Of Mary, the mother of Jesus, we read, "Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). In this way alone can one study the Bible to the greatest profit. One pound of beef well chewed and digested and assimilated will give more strength than tons of beef merely glanced at; and one verse of Scripture chewed and digested and assimilated will give more strength than whole chapters simply skimmed. Weigh every word you read in the Bible. Look at it. Turn it over and over. The most familiar passages get a new meaning in this way. Spend fifteen minutes on each word in Psalms 23:1 ("The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want."), or Php\_4:19 ("My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."), and see if it is not so.

4. The fourth condition is a will wholly surrendered to God.

Jesus said, "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own" (John 7:17). A surrendered will gives that clearness of spiritual vision which is necessary to understand God's Book. Many of the difficulties and obscurities of the Bible rise wholly from the fact that the will of the student is not surrendered to the will of the author of the Book. It is remarkable how clear and simple and beautiful passages that once puzzled us become when we are brought to that place where we say to God, "I surrender my will unconditionally to You. I have no will but Yours. Teach me Your will." A surrendered will will do more to make the Bible an open book than a university education. It is simply impossible to get the largest profit out of your Bible study until you do surrender your will to God. You must be very definite about this.

There are many who say, "Oh, yes, my will, I think, is surrendered to God," and yet it is not. They have never gotten alone with God and said intelligently and definitely to him, "O God, I here and now give myself up to You, for You to command me, and lead me, and shape me, and send me, and do with me, absolutely as You will." Such an act is a wonderful key to unlock the treasure house of God's Word. The Bible becomes a new book when a man does that. Doing that brought a complete transformation in the author's theology and life and ministry.

5. The fifth condition is very closely related to the fourth. The student of the Bible who would get the greatest profit out of his studies must be obedient to its teachings as soon as he sees them.

It was good advice James gave to early Christians, and to us, "Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says" (James 1:22). There are a good many who consider themselves Bible students who are deceiving themselves in this way today. They see what the Bible teaches, but they do not follow it, and they soon lose their power to see it. Truth obeyed leads to more truth. Truth disobeyed destroys the capacity for discovering truth. There must be not only a general surrender of the will, but specific, practical obedience to each new Word of God discovered. There is no place where the law, "Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him," is more gloriously certain on the one hand and more sternly unavoidable on the other than in the matter of using or refusing the truth revealed in the Bible.

Use, and you get more; refuse, and you lose all. Do not study the Bible for the mere gratification of intellectual curiosity, but to find out how to live and please God. Whatever duty you find commanded in the Bible, do it at once. Whatever good you see in any Bible character, imitate it immediately. Whatever mistake you note in the actions of Bible men and women, scrutinize your own life to see if you are making the same mistake, and if you find you are, correct it immediately. James compares the Bible to a mirror (James 1:23-24). The chief good of a mirror is to show you if there is anything out of order about you; if you find there is, you can set it right. Use the Bible in that way. Obeying the truth you already see will solve the mysteries in the verses you do not yet understand. Disobeying the truth you see darkens the whole world of truth. This is the secret of much of the skepticism and error of the day. Men see the truth, but do not follow it--then it is gone.

I knew a bright and promising young minister. He made rapid advancement in the truth. He took very advanced ground on one point especially, and the storm came. One day he said to his wife, "It is very nice to believe this, but we need not speak too much about it." They began, or he, at least, to hide their testimony. The wife died and he drifted. The Bible became to him a sealed book. Faith reeled. He publicly renounced his faith in some of the fundamental truths of the Bible. He seemed to lose his grip even on the doctrine of immortality. What was the cause of it all? Truth not lived and stood for flees. Today that man is much admired and applauded by some, but daylight has given place to darkness in his soul.

6. The sixth condition is a childlike mind.

God reveals His deepest truths to babes. No age needs more than our own to lay to heart the words of Jesus, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children" (Matthew 11:25). We must be babes if God is to reveal His truth to us, and we are to understand His Word. A child is not full of its own wisdom. It recognizes its ignorance and is ready to be taught. It does not oppose the ideas of its teachers to those of its own. It is in that spirit we should come to the Bible if we are to get the most profit out of our study.

Do not come to the Bible full of your own ideas, and seeking from it a confirmation of them. Come rather to find out what are God's ideas as He has revealed them there. Come not to find a confirmation of your own opinion, but to be taught what God may be pleased to teach. If a man comes to the Bible just to find his ideas taught there, he will find them; but if he comes recognizing his own ignorance, just as a little child to be taught, he will find something infinitely better than his own ideas, even the mind of God. We see why it is that many persons cannot see things which are

plainly taught in the Bible. The doctrine taught is not their idea, of which they are so full that there is no room left for that which the Bible actually teaches.

We have an illustration of this in the apostles themselves at one stage in their training. In Mark 9:31, we read, "He was teaching his disciples. He said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.'" Now, that is as plain and definite as language can make it, but it was utterly contrary to the ideas of the apostles as to what was to happen to the Christ. So we read in the next verse, "But they did not understand what he meant." Isn't that amazing? But is it any more amazing than our own inability to comprehend plain statements in the Bible when they run counter to our preconceived ideas?

Problems many Christians find with portions of the Sermon on the Mount would be plain enough if we just came to Christ like a child to be taught what to believe and do, rather than coming as full-grown men who already know it all, and who must find some interpretations of Christ's words that will fit into our mature and infallible philosophy. Many a man is so full of an unbiblical theology he has been taught that it takes him a lifetime to get rid of it and understand the clear teaching of the Bible.

"Oh, what can this verse mean?" many a bewildered man cries. Why, it means what it plainly says; but what you are after is not the meaning God has manifestly put into it, but the meaning you can by some ingenious trick of exegesis twist out of it and make it fit into your scheme. Don't come to the Bible to find out what you can make it mean, but to find out what God intended it to mean. Men often miss the real truth of a verse by saying, "But that can be interpreted this way." Oh, yes, so it can, but is that the way God intended it to be interpreted? We all need to pray often if we would get the most profit out of our Bible study, "Oh, God, make me a little child. Empty me of my own ideas. Teach me Your own mind. Make me ready like a little child to receive all that You have to say, no matter how contrary it is to what I have thought before." How the Bible opens up to one who approaches it in that way! How it closes up to the wise fool, who thinks he knows everything, and imagines he can give points to Peter and Paul, and even to Jesus Christ and to God Himself! Someone has well said the best method of Bible study is "the baby method."

I was once talking with a minister friend about what seemed to be the clear teaching of a certain passage. "Yes," he replied, "but that doesn't agree with my philosophy." This man was sincere, yet he did not have the childlike spirit, which is an essential condition of the most profitable Bible study. But there are many who approach the Bible in the same way. It is a great point gained in Bible study when we are brought to realize that an infinite God knows more than we, that, indeed, our highest wisdom is less than the knowledge of the most ignorant babe compared with His. But we so easily and so constantly forget this that every time we open our Bibles we would do well to get down humbly before God and say, "Father, I am but a child, teach me."

7. The seventh condition of studying the Bible to the greatest profit is that we study it as the Word of God.

The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Church of the Thessalonians, thanked God without ceasing that when they received the Word of God they "accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the Word of God" (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Well might he thank God for that, and well may we thank God when we get to the place where we receive the Word of God as the Word of God. Not

that one who does not believe the Bible is the Word of God should be discouraged from studying it. Indeed, one of the best things that one who does not believe that the Bible is the Word of God can do, if he is honest, is to study it. The author of this book once doubted utterly that the Bible was the Word of God, and the firm confidence that he has today that the Bible is the Word of God has come more from the study of the Book itself than from anything else. Those who doubt it are more usually those who study about the Book, than those who dig into the actual teachings of the Book itself. But while the best book of Christian evidences is the Bible, and while the most utter skeptic should be encouraged to study it, we will not get the largest measure of profit out of that study until we reach the point where we become convinced that the Bible is God's Word, and when we study it as such.

There is a great difference between believing theoretically that the Bible is God's Word and studying it as God's Word. Thousands would tell you that they believe the Bible is God's Word who do not study it as God's Word. Studying the Bible as the Word of God involves four things.

(1) First, it involves the unquestioning acceptance of its teachings when definitely ascertained, even when they may appear unreasonable or impossible.

Reason demands that we submit our judgment and reasonings to the statements of infinite wisdom. There is nothing more irrational than rationalism, which makes the finite wisdom the test of infinite wisdom, and submits the teachings of God's omniscience to the approval of man's judgment. It is the sublimest and absurdest conceit that says, "This cannot be true, though God says it, for it does not agree with my reason." "But who are you, O man, to talk back to God?" (Romans 9:20). Real human wisdom, when it finds infinite wisdom, bows before it and says, "Speak what You will and I will believe." When we have once become convinced that the Bible is God's Word its teachings must be the end of all controversy and discussion. A "thus says the Lord" will settle every question. Yet there are many who profess to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, and if you show them what the Bible clearly teaches on some disputed point, they will shake their heads and say, "Yes, but I think so and so," or "Doctor -----, or Professor this, our church doesn't teach that way." There is little profit in that sort of Bible study.

(2) Studying the Bible as the Word of God involves, in the second place, absolute reliance on all its promises in all their length and breadth.

He who studies the Bible as the Word of God will not discount any one of its promises one iota. He who studies the Bible as the Word of God will say, "God, who cannot lie, has promised," and will not attempt to make God a liar by trying to make one of His promises mean less than it says. He who studies the Bible as the Word of God will be on the lookout for promises, and as soon as he finds one he will seek to ascertain just what it means, and as soon as he discovers what it means, he will step right out on that promise and risk everything on its full meaning. That is one of the secrets of profitable Bible study.

Search for promises and appropriate them as fast as you find them, which is done by meeting the conditions and risking all on them. That is the way to make your own all the fullness of blessing God has for you. This is the key to all the treasures of God's grace. Happy is the man who has so learned to study the Bible as God's Word that he is ready to claim for himself every new promise as it appears, and to risk everything on it.

(3) Studying the Bible as the Word of God involves, in the third place, obedience--prompt, exact obedience, without asking any questions to its every precept.

Obedience may seem hard, it may seem impossible, but God has commanded it and I have nothing to do but to obey and leave the results with God. If you would get the very most profit out of your Bible study resolve that from this time you will claim every clear promise and obey every plain command, and that as to the promises and commands whose intent is not yet clear you will try to get their meaning made clear.

(4) Studying the Bible as the Word of God involves, in the fourth place, studying it in God's presence.

When you read a verse of Scripture hear the voice of the living God speaking directly to you in these written words. There is new power and attractiveness in the Bible when you have learned to hear a living, present Person, God our Father, Himself talking directly to you in these words. One of the most fascinating and inspiring statements in the Bible is, "Enoch walked with God" (Genesis 5:24). We can have God's glorious companionship any moment we please by simply opening His Word and letting the living and ever-present God speak to us through it. With what holy awe and strange and unutterable joy one studies the Bible if he studies it in this way! It is heaven come down to earth.

8. The eighth and last condition of the most profitable Bible study is prayerfulness.

The Psalmist prayed, "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law" (Psalms 119:18). Every one who desires to get the greatest profit out of his Bible study needs to offer that or a similar prayer every time he undertakes the study of the Word. Few keys open so many strong boxes that contain hidden treasure as prayer. Few clues unravel so many difficulties. Few microscopes will disclose so many beauties hidden from the eye of the ordinary observer. What new light often shines from an old familiar text as you bend over it in prayer! I believe in studying the Bible a good deal on your knees. When one reads an entire book through on his knees--and this is easily done--that book has a new meaning and becomes a new book. One ought never to open the Bible to read it without at least lifting the heart to God in silent prayer that He will interpret it, illumine its pages by the light of His Spirit.

It is a rare privilege to study any book under the immediate guidance and instruction of its author, and this is the privilege of us all in studying the Bible. When one comes to a passage that is difficult to understand or difficult to interpret, instead of giving it up, or rushing to some learned friend, or to some commentary, he should lay that passage before God, and ask Him to explain it to him, pleading God's promise, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt" (James 1:5-6). It is simply wonderful how the seemingly most difficult passages become plain by this treatment.

Harry Morehouse, one of the most remarkable Bible scholars among unlearned men, used to say that whenever he came to a passage in the Bible which he could not understand, he would search through the Bible for some other passage that threw light on it, and lay it before God in prayer, and that he had never found a passage that did not yield to this treatment. The author of this book has had a quite similar experience. Some years ago, accompanied by a friend, I was making a tour of

Franconian Switzerland, and visiting some of the more famous zoolithic caves. One day a rural letter carrier stopped us and asked if we would like to see a cave of rare beauty and interest, away from the beaten tracks of travel. Of course, we said, yes. He led us through the woods and underbrush to the mouth of the cave, and we entered. All was dark and uncanny. He discussed greatly on the beauty of the cave, telling us of altars and fantastic formations, but we could see absolutely nothing. Now and then lie uttered a note to warn us to have a care, as near our feet lay a gulf the bottom of which had never been discovered. We began to fear that we might be the first discoverers of the bottom. There was nothing pleasant about the whole affair.

But as soon as a magnesium taper was lighted, all became different. There were the stalagmites rising from the floor to meet the stalactites as they came down from the ceiling. There were the beautiful and fantastic formations on every hand, and all glistening in fairy like beauty in the brilliant light. So I have often thought it was with many a passage of Scripture. Others tell you of its beauty, but you cannot see it. It looks dark and intricate and forbidding and dangerous, but when God's own light is kindled there by prayer how different all becomes in an instant. You see a beauty that language cannot express, and that only those can appreciate who have stood there in the same light. He who would understand and love his Bible must be much in prayer. Prayer will do more than a college education to make the Bible an open and a glorious book. Perhaps the best lesson I learned in a German university, where I had the privilege of receiving the instruction of one of the most noted and most gifted Bible teachers of any age, was that which came through the statement of one who knew him that Professor Dehtzsch worked out much of his teaching on his knees.

## Resurrection of Jesus

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### THE CERTAINTY AND IMPORTANCE OF THE PHYSICAL RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

FROM THE DEAD BY R. A. TORREY, D. D. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the corner-stone of Christian doctrine. It is mentioned directly one hundred and four or more times in the New Testament. It was the most prominent and cardinal point in the apostolic testimony. When the apostolic company, after the apostasy of Judas Iscariot, felt it necessary to complete their number again by the addition of one to take the place Of Judas Iscariot, it was in order that he might "be a witness with us of His resurrection" (Acts 1:21-22). The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the one point that Peter emphasized in his great sermon on the Day of Pentecost. His whole sermon centered in that fact. Its key-note was, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32, cf. Acts 2:24-31). When the Apostles were filled again with the Holy Spirit some days later, the one central result was that "with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." The central doctrine that the Apostle Paul preached to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on Mars Hill was Jesus and the resurrection. (Acts 17:18, cf. Acts 23:6; 1 Corinthians 15:15). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the two fundamental truths of the Gospel, the other being His atoning death. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:1, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." This was the glad tidings, first, that Christ died for our sins and made atonement; and second, that He rose again. The crucifixion loses its meaning without the resurrection. Without the resurrection, the death of Christ was only the heroic death of a noble martyr. With the resurrection, it is the atoning death of the Son of God. It shows that death to be of sufficient value to cover all our sins, for it was the sacrifice of the Son of God. In it we have an all-sufficient ground for knowing that the blackest sin is atoned for. Disprove the resurrection of Jesus Christ and Christian faith is vain. "If Christ be not risen," cries Paul, "then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14). And later he adds, "If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain. You are yet in your sins." Paul, as the context clearly shows, is talking about the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. The doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the one doctrine that has power to save any one who believes it with the heart. As we read in Romans 10:9, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." To know the power of Christ's resurrection is one of the highest ambitions of the intelligent believer, to attain which he sacrifices all things and counts them but refuse (Php\_3:8-10 R. V.). While the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is the corner-stone of Christian doctrine, it is also the Gibraltar of Christian evidence, and the Waterloo of infidelity and rationalism. If the Scriptural assertions of Christ's resurrection can be established as historic certainties, the claims and doctrines Of Christianity rest upon an impregnable foundation. On the other hand, if the

resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead cannot be established, Christianity must go. It was a true instinct that led a leading and brilliant agnostic in England to say, that there is no use wasting time discussing the other miracles. The essential question is, Did Jesus Christ rise from the dead? adding, that if He did, it was easy enough to believe the other miracles; but, if not, the other miracles must go. Are the statements contained in the four Gospels regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ statements of fact or are they fiction, fables, myths? There are three separate lines of proof that the statements contained in the four Gospels regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ are exact statements of historic fact.

1. THE EXTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE AUTHENTICITY AND TRUTHFULNESS OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES This is an altogether satisfactory argument. The external proofs of the authenticity and truthfulness of the Gospel narratives are overwhelming, but the argument is long and intricate and it would take a volume to discuss it satisfactorily. The other arguments are so completely sufficient and overwhelming and convincing to a candid mind that we can do without this, good as it is in its place. The next argument is from 2. THE INTERNAL PROOFS OF THE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE GOSPEL RECORDS This argument is thoroughly conclusive, and we shall state it briefly in the pages which follow. We shall not assume anything whatever. We shall not assume that the four Gospel records are true history; we shall not assume that the four Gospels were written by the men whose names they bear, though it could be easily proven that they were; we shall not even assume that they were written in the century in which Jesus is alleged to have lived and died and risen again, nor in the next century, nor in the next. We will assume absolutely nothing. We will start out with a fact which we all know to be a fact, namely, that we have the four Gospels today, whoever wrote them and whenever they were written. We shall place these four Gospels side by side, and see if we can discern in them the marks of truth or of fiction.

1. The first thing that strikes us as we compare these Gospels one with another is that they are four separate and independent accounts. This appears plainly from the apparent discrepancies in the four different accounts. These apparent discrepancies are marked and many. It would have been impossible for these four accounts to have been made up in collusion with one another, or to have been derived from One another and so many and so marked discrepancies to be found in them. There is harmony between the four accounts, but the harmony does not lie upon the surface; it comes out only by protracted and thorough study. It is precisely such a harmony as would exist between accounts written or related by several different persons, each looking at the events recorded from his own standpoint. It is precisely such a harmony as would not exist in four accounts manufactured in collusion, or derived one from the other. In four accounts manufactured in collusion, whatever of harmony there might be would appear on the surface. Whatever discrepancy there might be would only come out by minute and careful study. But with the four Gospels the case is just the opposite. Harmony comes out by minute and careful study, and the apparent discrepancy lies upon the surface. Whether true or false, these four accounts are separate and independent from one another. (The four accounts also supplement one another, the third account sometimes reconciling apparent discrepancies between two).

These accounts must be either a record of facts that actually occurred or else fictions. If fictions, they must have been fabricated in one of two ways — either independently of one another, or in collusion with one another. They cannot have been fabricated independently of one another; the

agreements are too marked and too many. It is absolutely incredible that four persons sitting down to write an account of what never occurred independently of one another should have made their stories agree to the extent that these do. On the other hand, they cannot have been made up, as we have already seen, in collusion with one another; the apparent discrepancies are too numerous and too noticeable. It is proven they were not made up independently of one another; it is proven they were not made up in collusion with one another, so we are driven to the conclusion that they were not made up at all, that they are a true relation of facts as they actually occurred. We might rest the argument here and reasonably call the case settled, but we will go on still further:

2. The next thing we notice is that each of these accounts bears striking indications of having been derived from eye witnesses. The account of an eye-witness is readily distinguishable from the account of one who is merely retailing what others have told him. Any one who is accustomed to weigh evidence in court or in historical study soon learns how to distinguish the report of an eye witness from mere hearsay evidence. Any careful student of the Gospel records of the resurrection will readily detect many marks of the eye witness.

Some years ago when lecturing at an American university, a gentleman was introduced to me as being a skeptic. I asked him, "What line of study are you pursuing?" He replied that he was pursuing a post graduate course in history with a view to a professorship in history. I said, "Then you know that the account of an eye witness differs in marked respects from the account of one who is simply telling what he has heard from others?" "Yes," he replied. I next asked, "Have you carefully read the four Gospel accounts of the resurrection of Christ?" He replied, "I have." "Tell me, have you not noticed clear indications that they were derived from eye witnesses?" "Yes," he replied, "I have been greatly struck by this in reading the accounts." Any one who carefully and intelligently reads them will be struck with the same fact.

3. The third thing that we notice about these Gospel narratives is their naturalness, straightforwardness, artlessness and simplicity. The accounts, it is true, have to do with the supernatural, but the accounts themselves are most natural. There is a remarkable absence of all attempt at coloring and effect. There is nothing but the simple, straightforward telling of facts as they actually occurred. It frequently happens that when a witness is on the witness stand, the story he tells is so artless, so straightforward, so natural, there is such an entire absence of any attempt at coloring or effect that his testimony bears weight independently of anything we may know of the character or previous history of the witness. As we listen to his story, we say to ourselves, "This man is telling the truth." The weight of this kind of evidence is greatly increased and reaches practical certainty when we have several independent witnesses of this sort, all bearing testimony to the same essential facts, but with varieties of detail, one omitting what another tells, and the third unconsciously reconciling apparent discrepancies between the two. This is the precise case with the four Gospel narratives of the resurrection of Christ. The Gospel writers do not seem to have reflected at all upon the meaning or bearing of many of the facts which they relate. They simply tell right out what they saw in all simplicity and straightforwardness, leaving the philosophizing to others.

Dr. William Furness, the great Unitarian scholar and critic, who certainly was not over-much disposed in favor of the supernatural, says, "Nothing can exceed in artlessness and simplicity' the four accounts of the first appearance of Jesus after His crucifixion. If these qualities are not

discernible here, we must despair of ever being able to discern them anywhere."

Suppose we should find four accounts of the battle of Monmouth. Suppose, furthermore, that nothing decisive was known as to the authorship of these four accounts, but, when we laid them side by side, we found that they were manifestly independent accounts. We found, furthermore, striking indications that they were from eye witnesses. We found them all marked by that artlessness, straightforwardness and simplicity that always carries conviction; we found that, while apparently disagreeing in minor details, they agreed substantially in their account of the battle — even though we had no knowledge of the authorship or date of these accounts, would we not, in the absence of any other accounts, say, "Here is a true account of the battle of Monmouth?" Now this is exactly the case with the four Gospel narratives. Manifestly separate and independent from one another, bearing the clear marks of having been derived from eye witnesses, characterized by an unparalleled artlessness, simplicity and straightforwardness, apparently disagreeing in minor details, but in perfect agreement as to the great central facts related. If we are fair and honest, if we follow the canons of evidence followed in court, if we follow any sound and sane law of literary and historical criticism, are we not logically driven to say, "Here is a true account of the resurrection of Jesus." Here again we might rest our case and call the resurrection of Jesus from the dead proven, but we go on still further:

4. The next thing we notice is the unintentional evidence of words, phrases, and accidental details.

It oftentimes happens that when a witness is on the stand, the unintentional evidence that he bears by words and phrases which he uses, and by accidental details which he introduces, is more convincing than his direct testimony, because it is not the testimony of the witness, but a testimony of the truth to itself. The Gospel accounts abound in evidence of this sort. Take, as the first instance, the fact that in all the Gospel records of the resurrection, we are given to understand that Jesus was not at first recognized by His disciples when He appeared to them after His resurrection, e.g., Luke 24:16; John 21:4. We are not told why this was so, but if we will think awhile over it, we will soon discover why it was so. But the Gospel narratives simply record the fact without attempting to explain it. If the stories were fictitious, they certainly would never have been made up in this way, for the writer would have seen at once the objection that would arise in the minds of those who did not wish to believe in His resurrection, that is, that it was not really Jesus Whom the disciples saw. Why, then, is the story told in this way? For the self-evident reason that the evangelists were not making up a story for effect, but simply recording events precisely as they occurred. This is the way in which it occurred, therefore this is the way in which they told it. It is not a fabrication of imaginary incidents, but an exact record of facts carefully observed and accurately recorded.

Take a second instance: In all the Gospel records of the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection, there is not a single recorded appearance to an enemy or opponent of Christ. All His appearances were to those who were already believers. Why this was so we can easily see by a little thought, but nowhere in the Gospels are we told why it was so. If the stories had been fabricated, they certainly would never have been made up in this way. If the Gospels were, as some would have us believe, fabrications constructed one hundred, two hundred, or three hundred years after the alleged events recorded, when all the actors were dead and gone and no one could gainsay any lies told, Jesus would have been represented as appearing to Caiaphas, and Annas,

and Pilate, and Herod, and confounding them by His re-appearance from the dead. But there is no suggestion even of anything of this kind in the Gospel stories. Every appearance is to one who is already a believer. Why is this so? For the self-evident reason that this was the way that things occurred, and the Gospel narratives are not concerned with producing a story for effect, but simply with recording events precisely as they occurred and as they were observed.

We find still another instance in the fact that the recorded appearances of Jesus after His resurrection were only occasional. He would appear in the midst of His disciples and disappear, and not be seen again perhaps for several days. Why this was so, we can easily think out for ourselves — He was evidently seeking to wean His disciples from their old-time communion with Him in the body, and to prepare them for the communion with Himself in the Spirit that was to follow in the days that were to come.

We are not, however, told this in the Gospel narratives. We are left to discover it for ourselves, and this is all the more significant for that reason. It is doubtful if the disciples themselves realized the meaning of the facts. If they had been making up the story to produce effect, they would have represented Jesus as being with them constantly, as living with them, eating and drinking with them, day after day. Why then is the story told as recorded in the four Gospels? Because this is the way in which it had all occurred. The Gospel writers are simply concerned with giving the exact representation of the facts as witnessed by themselves and others.

We find another very striking instance in what is recorded concerning the words of Jesus to Mary at their first meeting. (John 20:17). Jesus is recorded as saying to Mary, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father." We are not told why Jesus said this to Mary. We are left to discover the reason for it if we can, and the commentators have had a great deal of trouble in discovering it. Their explanations vary widely one from another. I have a reason of my own which I have never seen in any commentary, but which I am persuaded is the true reason, but it would probably be difficult to persuade others that it was the true reason. Why then is this little utterance of Jesus put in the Gospel record without a word of explanation, and which it has taken eighteen centuries to explain, and which is not altogether satisfactorily explained yet? Certainly a writer making up a story would not put in a little detail like that without apparent meaning and without an attempt at an explanation of it. Stories that are made up are made up for a purpose; details that are inserted are inserted for a purpose, a purpose more or less evident, but eighteen centuries of study have not been able to find out the purpose why this was inserted.

Why then do we find it here? Because this is exactly what happened. This is what Jesus said; this is what Mary heard Jesus say; this is what Mary told, and therefore this is what John recorded. We cannot have a fiction here, but an accurate record of words spoken by Jesus after His resurrection.

We find still another instance in John 20:4-6: "So they ran both together; and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen Clothes lie." This is all in striking keeping with what we know of the men from other sources. Mary, returning hurriedly from the tomb, bursts in upon the two disciples and cries, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid Him." John and Peter sprang to their feet and ran at the top of their speed to the tomb. John, the younger of the two disciples (it is all the more striking that the narrative does not tell us here

that he was the younger of the two disciples), was fleet of foot and outran Peter and reached the tomb first, but man of retiring and reverent disposition that he was (we are not told this here but we know it from a study of his personality as revealed elsewhere) he did not enter the tomb, but simply stooped down and looked in. Impetuous but older Peter comes stumbling on behind as fast as he can, but when once he reaches the tomb, he never waits a moment outside but plunges headlong in. Is this made up, or, is it life? He was indeed a literary artist of consummate ability who had the skill to make this up if it did not occur just so. There is incidentally a touch of local coloring in the report. When one visits today the tomb which scholars now accept as the real burial place of Jesus, he will find himself unconsciously obliged to stoop down in order to look in.

Still another instance is found in John 21:7: "Therefore, that disciple whom Jesus loved saith to Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea." Here again we have the unmistakable marks of truth and life. The Apostles had gone at Jesus' command into Galilee to meet Him there, but Jesus does not at once appear. Simon Peter, with the fisherman's passion still stirring in his bosom says, "I go a-fishing." The others replied, "We also go with thee." They fished all night, and, with characteristic fishermen's luck, caught nothing. In the early dawn Jesus stands upon the shore, but the disciples did not recognize Him in the dim light. Jesus calls to them, "Children, have ye any meat?" And they answer, "No." He bids them cast the net on the right side of the ship and they will find. When the cast was made, they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. In an instant, John, the man of quick spiritual perception, says, "It is the Lord." No sooner does Peter, the man of impulsive action, hear it than he grasps his fisher's coat, casts it about his naked form and throws himself overboard and strikes out for shore to reach his Lord. Is this made up, or, is it life? This is not fiction. If some unknown author of the fourth Gospel made this up, he is the master literary artist of the ages, and we should take down every other name from our literary pantheon and place him above them all.

We find a still more touching instance in John 20:15: "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Here is surely a touch that surpasses the art of any man of that day or any other day. Mary had gone into the city and notified John and Peter that she had found the sepulcher empty. They start on a run for the sepulcher. As Mary has already made the journey twice, they easily far outstrip her, but with heavy heart and slow and weary feet, she makes her way back to the tomb. Peter and John have long gone when she reaches it, broken-hearted, thinking that not only has her beloved Lord been slain, but that His tomb has been desecrated. She stands without weeping. There are two angels sitting in the tomb, one at the head and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain. But the grief-stricken woman has no eye for angels. They say unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She replies, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." A rustle in the leaves at her back and she turns around to see who is coming. She sees Jesus standing there, but, blinded by tears and despair, she does not recognize her Lord. Jesus also says to her, "Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" She, supposing it to be the gardener who is talking to her, says, "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him and I will take Him away." Now remember who it is that makes the offer, and what she offers to do; a weak woman offers to carry a full grown man away. Of course, she could not do it, but how true to

a woman's love that always forgets its weakness and never stops at impossibilities. There is something to be done and she says, "I will do it," "Tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Is this made up? Never! This is life; this is reality; this is truth.

We find another instance in Mark 16:7: "But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you," What I would have you notice here are the two words, "and Peter." Why "and Peter?" Was not Peter one of the disciples? Surely he was, the very head of the apostolic company. Why then, "and Peter?" No explanation is given in the text, but reflection shows it was the utterance of love toward the despondent, despairing disciple who had thrice denied his Lord. If the message had been simply to the disciples Peter would have said, "Yes, I was once a disciple, but I can no longer be counted such. I thrice denied my Lord on that awful night with oaths and curses. It does not mean me." But our tender compassionate Lord through His angelic messenger sends the message, "Go tell His disciples, and whoever you tell, be sure you tell poor, weak, faltering, backslidden, broken-hearted Peter." Is this made up, or is this a real picture of our Lord? I pity the man who is so dull that he can imagine this is fiction. Incidentally let it be noted that this is recorded only in the Gospel of Mark, which, as is well known, is Peter's Gospel. As Peter dictated to Mark one day what he should record, with tearful eyes and grateful heart he would turn to him and say, "Mark, be sure you put that in, "Tell His disciples and Peter."

Take still another instance in John 20:27-29: "Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Note here two things; the action of Thomas and the rebuke of Jesus. Each is too characteristic to be attributed to the art of some master of fiction. Thomas had not been with the disciples at the first appearance of our Lord. A week had passed by. Another Lord's Day had come. This time Thomas makes sure of being present; if the Lord is to appear, he will be there. If he had been like some of our modern doubters, he would have taken pains to be away, but, doubter though he was, he was an honest doubter and wanted to know. Suddenly Jesus stands in the midst. He says to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands, and reach thither thy hand; and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless but believing." At last Thomas' eyes are opened. His faith long dammed back bursts every barrier and sweeping onward carries Thomas to a higher height than any other disciple had as yet reached — exultingly and adoringly he cries, as he looks up into the face of Jesus, "My Lord and My God!" Then Jesus tenderly, but searchingly, rebukes him. "Thomas," He says, "because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they [who are so eager to find and so quick to see, and so ready to accept the truth, that they do not wait for actual visible demonstration but are ready to take truth on sufficient testimony] that have not seen and yet have believed." Is this made up, or is this life? Is it a record of facts as they occurred, or a fictitious production of some master artist?

Take still another instance: In John 21:15-17 we read: "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son

of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep." Note especially here the words, "Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me?" Why did Jesus ask Peter three times, "Lovest thou Me?" And why was Peter grieved because Jesus did ask him three times? We are not told in the text, but, if we read it in the light of Peter's thrice repeated denial of his Lord, we will understand it. As Peter had denied his Lord thrice, Jesus three times gave Peter an opportunity to reassert his love. But this, tender as it was, brings back to Peter that awful night when in the courtyard of Annas and Caiaphas, he thrice denied his Lord, and "Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me." Is this made up? Did the writer make it up with this fact in view? If he did, he surely would have mentioned it. It cannot have been made up. It is not fiction. It is simply reporting what actually occurred. The accurate truthfulness of the record comes out even more strikingly in the Greek than in the English version. Two different words are used for "love." Jesus, in asking Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" uses a strong word denoting the higher form of love. Peter, replying, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," uses a weaker word, but one denoting a more tender form of love. Jesus, the second time uses the stronger word, and the second time in his reply Peter uses the weaker word. In His third question, Jesus comes down to Peter's level and uses the weaker word that Peter had used from the beginning. Then Peter replies, "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee," using the same weaker word. This cannot be fiction. It is accurately reported fact.

Take still another instance: In John 20:16 we read, "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master." What a delicate touch of nature we have here! Mary is standing outside the tomb overcome with grief. She has not recognized her Lord, though He has spoken to her. She has mistaken Him for the gardener: She has said, "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Then Jesus utters just one word. He says, "Mary." As that name came trembling on the morning air, uttered with the old familiar tone, spoken as no one else had ever spoken it but He, in an instant her eyes were opened. She falls at His feet and tries to clasp them, and looks up into His face, and cries, "Rabboni, my Master." Is this made up? Impossible! This is life. This is Jesus, and this is the woman who loved Him. No unknown author of the second, third, or fourth century, could have produced such a masterpiece as this. We stand here unquestionably face to face with reality, with life, with Jesus and Mary as they actually were.

One more important illustration: In John 20:7 we read, "And the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." How strange that such a little detail as this should be added to the story with absolutely no attempt at explaining. But how deeply significant this little unexplained detail is. Recall the circumstances. Jesus is dead. For three days and three nights his body is lying cold and silent in the sepulcher, as truly dead as any body was ever dead, but at last the appointed hour has come, the breath of God sweeps through the sleeping and silent clay, and in that supreme moment of His own earthly life, that supreme moment of human history, when Jesus rises triumphant over death and grave and Satan, there is no excitement upon His part, but with that same majestic self-composure and serenity that marked His whole career, that same Divine calm that He displayed upon storm-tossed Galilee, when His affrighted disciples shook Him from His slumbers and said, "Lord, carest thou not that we perish?"

and He arose serenely on the deck of the tossing vessel and said to the wild, tempestuous waves and winds, "Be still," and there was a great calm: so now again in this sublime, this awful moment, He does not excitedly tear the napkin from His face and fling it aside, but absolutely without human haste or flurry, or disorder, He unties it calmly from His head, rolls it up and lays it away in an orderly manner in a place by itself. Was that made up? Never! We do not behold here an exquisite masterpiece of the romancer's art; we read here the simple narrative of a matchless detail in a unique life that was actually lived here upon earth, a life so beautiful that one cannot read it with an honest and open mind without feeling the tears coming into his eyes. But someone will say, all these are little things. True, and it is from that very fact that they gain much of their significance. It is just in such little things that fiction would disclose itself. Fiction displays itself different from fact in the minute; in the great outstanding outlines you can make fiction look like truth, but when you come to examine it minutely and microscopically, you will soon detect that it is not reality but fabrication. But the more microscopically we examine the Gospel narratives, the more we become impressed with their truthfulness. There is an artlessness and naturalness and self-evident truthfulness in the narratives, down to the minutest detail, that surpasses all the possibilities of art. The third line of proof that the statements contained in the four Gospels regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ are exact statements of historic fact, is:

3. THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST There are certain proven and admitted facts that demand the resurrection of Christ to account for them.

1. Beyond a question, the foundation truth preached in the early years of the Church's history was the resurrection. This was the one doctrine upon which the Apostles were ever ringing the changes. Whether Jesus did actually rise from the dead or not, it is certain that the one thing that the Apostles constantly proclaimed was that He had risen. Why should the Apostles use this as the very corner-stone of their creed, if not well attested and firmly believed? But this is not all: They laid down their lives for this doctrine. Men never lay down their lives for a doctrine which they do not firmly believe. They stated that they had seen Jesus after His resurrection, and rather than give up their statement, they laid down their lives for it. Of course, men may die for error and often have, but it was for error that they firmly believed. In this case they would have known whether they had seen Jesus or not, and they would not merely have been dying for error but dying for a statement which they knew to be false. This is not only incredible but impossible. Furthermore, if the Apostles really firmly believed, as is admitted, that Jesus rose from the dead, they had some facts upon which they founded their belief. These would have been the facts that they would have related in recounting the story. They certainly would not have made up a story out of imaginary incidents when they had real facts upon which they founded their belief. But if the facts were as recounted in the Gospels, there is no possible escaping the conclusion that Jesus actually arose. Still further, if Jesus had not arisen, there would have been evidence that He had not. His enemies would have sought and found this evidence, but the Apostles went up and down the very city where He had been crucified and proclaimed right to the faces of His slayers that He had been raised and no one could produce evidence to the contrary. The very best they could do was to say the guards went to sleep and the disciples stole the body while the guards slept. Men who bear evidence of what happens while they are asleep are not usually regarded as credible witnesses. Further still, if the Apostles had stolen the body, they would have known it themselves and would not have been ready to die for what they knew to be a fraud.

2. Another known fact is the change in the day of rest. The early church came from among the Jews. From time immemorial the Jews had celebrated the seventh day of the week as their day of rest and worship, but we find the early Christians in the Acts of the Apostles, and also in early Christian writings, assembling on the first day of the week. Nothing is more difficult of accomplishment than the change in a holy day that has been celebrated for centuries and is one of the most cherished customs of the people. What is especially significant about the change is that it was changed by no express decree but by general consent. Something tremendous must have occurred that led to this change. The Apostles asserted that what had occurred on that day was the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and that is the most rational explanation. In fact it is the only reasonable explanation of the change.

3. But the most significant fact of all is the change in the disciples themselves, the moral transformation. At the time of the crucifixion of Christ, we find the whole apostolic company filled with blank and utter despair. We see Peter, the leader of the apostolic company, denying his Lord three times with oaths and cursings, but a few days later we see this same man, filled with a courage that nothing could shake. We see him standing before the council that had condemned Jesus to death and saying to them, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand before you whole" (Acts 4:10). A little further on when commanded by the council not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus, we hear Peter and John answering, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). A little later still after arrest and imprisonment, in peril of death, when sternly arraigned by the council, we hear Peter and the Apostles answering their demand that they should be silent regarding Jesus, with the words, "We ought to obey God rather than man. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things" (Acts 5:29-32). Something tremendous must have occurred to account for such a radical and astounding moral transformation as this. Nothing short of the fact of the resurrection and of their having seen the risen Lord will explain it.

These unquestionable facts are so impressive and so conclusive that even infidel and Jewish scholars now admit that the Apostles believed that Jesus rose from the dead. Even Ferdinand Baur, father of the Tubigen School, admitted this. Even David Strauss, who wrote the most masterly "Life of Jesus" from the rationalistic standpoint that was ever written, said, "Only this much need be acknowledged that the Apostles firmly believed that Jesus had arisen." Strauss evidently did not wish to admit any more than he had to but he felt compelled to admit this much. Schenkel went even further and said, "It is an indisputable fact that in the early morning of the first day of the week following the crucifixion, the grave of Jesus was found empty. It is a second fact that the disciples and other members of the apostolic communion were convinced that Jesus was seen after the crucifixion." These admissions are fatal to the rationalists who make them. The question at once arises, "Whence these convictions and belief?" Renan attempted an answer by saying that "the passion of a hallucinated woman (Mary) gives to the world a resurrected God." (Renan's "Life of Jesus," page 357). By this, Renan means that Mary was in love with Jesus; that after His crucifixion, brooding over it, in the passion of her love, she dreamed herself into a

condition where she had a hallucination that she had seen Jesus risen from the dead. She reported her dream as a fact, and thus the passion of a hallucinated woman gave to the world a resurrected God. But the reply to all this is self-evident, namely, the passion of a hallucinated woman was not competent to this task. Remember the make-up of the apostolic company; in the apostolic company were a Matthew and a Thomas to be convinced, outside was a Saul of Tarsus to be converted. The passion of a hallucinated woman will not convince a stubborn unbeliever like Thomas, nor a Jewish tax-gatherer like Matthew. Whoever heard of a taxgatherer, and most of all of a Jewish tax-gatherer, who could be imposed upon by the passion of a hallucinated woman? Neither will the passion of a hallucinated woman convince a fierce and conscientious enemy like Saul of Tarsus. We must look for some saner explanation than this. Strauss tried to account for it by inquiring whether the appearance might not have been visionary. Strauss has had, and still has, many followers in this theory. But to this we reply, first of all, there was no subjective starting point for such visions. The Apostles, so far from expecting to see the Lord, would scarcely believe their own eyes when they did see Him. Furthermore, whoever heard of eleven men having the same vision at the same time, to say nothing of five hundred men (1 Corinthians 15:6) having the same vision at the same time. Strauss demands of us that we give up one reasonable miracle and substitute five hundred impossible miracles in its place. Nothing can surpass the credulity of unbelief. The third attempt at an explanation is that Jesus was not really dead when they took Him from the cross, that His friends worked over Him and brought Him back to life, and what was supposed to be the appearance of the raised Lord was the appearance of one who never had been really dead and was now merely resuscitated. This theory of Paulus has been brought forward and revamped by various rationalistic writers in our own time and seems to be a favorite theory of those who today would deny the reality of our Lord's resurrection. To sustain this view, appeal has been made to the short time Jesus hung upon the cross and to the fact that history tells us of one in the time of Josephus taken down from the cross and nursed back to life. But to this we answer:

(1). Remember the events preceding the crucifixion; the agony in the garden of Gethsemane; the awful ordeal of the four trials; the scourging and the consequent physical condition in which all this left Jesus. Remember too the water and the blood that poured from His pierced side.

(2). In the second place, we reply, His enemies would have taken, and did take, all necessary precautions against such a thing as this happening. (John 19:34).

(3). We reply, in the third place, if Jesus had been merely resuscitated, He would have been so weak, such an utter physical wreck, that His reappearance would have been measured at its real value, and the moral transformation in the disciples, for which we are trying to account, would still remain unaccounted for. The officer in the time of Josephus, who is cited in proof, though brought back to life, was an utter physical wreck.

(4). We reply in the fourth place, if brought back to life, the Apostles and friends of Jesus, who are the ones who are supposed to have brought Him back to life, would have known how they brought Him back to life, and that it was not a case of resurrection but of resuscitation, and the main fact to be accounted for, namely, the change in themselves would remain unaccounted for. The attempted explanation is an explanation that does not explain.

(5). In the fifth place, we reply, that the moral difficulty is the greatest of all, for if it was really a case of resuscitation, then Jesus tried to palm Himself off as one risen from the dead, when in reality He was nothing of the sort. In that case, He would be an arch-impostor, and the whole Christian system rests on a fraud as its ultimate foundation. Is it possible to believe that such a system of religion as that of Jesus Christ, embodying such exalted principles and precepts of truth, purity and love, "originated in a sincere heart is not cankered by fraud and trickery can believe Jesus to have been an impostor, and His religion to have been founded upon fraud. A leader of the rationalistic forces in England has recently tried to prove the theory that Jesus was only apparently dead by appealing to the fact that when the side of Jesus was pierced blood came forth and asks, "Can a dead man bleed?" To this the sufficient reply is that when a man dies of What is called in popular language, a broken heart, the blood escapes into the pericardium, and after standing there for a short time it separates into serum (the water) and clot (the red corpuscles, blood), and thus if a man were dead, if his side were pierced by a spear, and the point of the spear entered the pericardium, "blood and water" would flow out just as the record states it did, and what is brought forth as a proof that Jesus was not really dead, is in reality a proof that He was, and an illustration of the minute accuracy of the story. It could not have been made up in this way, if it were not actual fact.

We have eliminated all other possible suppositions. We have but one left, namely, Jesus really was raised from the dead the third day as recorded in the four Gospels. The desperate straits to which those who attempt to deny it are driven are themselves proof of the fact. We have then several independent lines of argument pointing decisively and conclusively to the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Some of them taken separately prove the fact, but taken together they constitute an argument that makes doubt of the resurrection of Christ impossible to the candid mind. Of course, if one is determined not to believe, no amount of proof will convince him. Such a man must be left to his own deliberate choice of error and falsehood; but any man who really desires to know the truth and is willing to obey it at any cost must accept the resurrection of Christ as an historically proven fact. A brilliant lawyer in New York City some time ago spoke to a prominent minister of that city asking him if he really believed that Christ rose from the dead. The minister replied that he did, and asked the privilege of presenting the proof to the lawyer. The lawyer took the material offered in proof away and studied it. He returned to the minister, and said, "I am convinced that Jesus really did rise from the dead. But," he then added, "I am no nearer being a Christian than I was before. I thought that the difficulty was with my head. I find that it is really with my heart."

There is really but one weighty objection to the doctrine that Jesus arose from the dead, and that is, "There is no conclusive evidence that any other ever arose." To this a sufficient answer would be, even if it were certain that no other ever arose, it would not at all prove that Jesus did not arise, for the life of Jesus was unique, His nature was unique, His character was unique, His mission was unique, His history was unique, and it is not to be wondered at, but rather to be expected, that the issue of such a life should also be unique. However, all this objection is simply David Hume's exploded argument against the possibility of the miraculous revamped. According to this argument, no amount of evidence can prove a miracle, because miracles are contrary to all experience. But are miracles contrary to all experience? To start out by saying that they are is to beg the very question at issue. They may be outside of your experience and mine, they may be

outside the experience of this entire generation, but your experience and mine and the experience of this entire generation is not "all experience." Every student of geology and astronomy knows that things have occurred in the past which are entirely outside of the experience of the present generation. Things have occurred within the last ten years that are entirely outside of the experience of the fifty years preceding it. True science does not start with an a priori hypothesis that certain things are impossible, but simply examines the evidence to find out what has actually occurred. It does not twist its observed facts to make them accord with a priori theories, but seeks to make its theories accord with the facts as observed. To say that miracles are impossible, and that no amount of evidence can prove a miracle, is to be supremely unscientific. Within the past few years, in the domain of chemistry for example, discoveries have been made regarding radium which seemed to run counter to all previous observations regarding chemical elements and to well established chemical theories. But the scientist has not therefore said that these discoveries about radium cannot be true; he has rather gone to work to find out where the trouble was in his previous theories. The observed and recorded facts in the case before us prove to a demonstration that Jesus rose from the dead, and true science must accept this conclusion and conform its theories to this observed fact. The fact of the actual and literal resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead cannot be denied by any man who Will study the evidence in the case with a candid desire to find what the fact is, and not merely to support an a priori theory.

## The Christian Conception of God

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The Christian Conception of God

by R.A. Torrey (1856-1928)

God is light.

1 John 1:5

God is love.

1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:16

With God all things are possible.

Matthew 19:26

His understanding has no limit.

Psalms 147:5

We are to consider again today the Christian conception of God. We have seen that God is spirit, that God is a Person and that God has a personal interest and an active hand in the affairs of men today, that He sustains, governs and cares for the world He has created, and that He shapes the whole present history of the world.

### I. The Infinite Perfection of God

The next thing to be noted about the Christian conception of God is that God is perfect and infinite in all His intellectual and moral attributes and in power.

1. First of all, fix your attention on our first text: "God is light." These three words form a marvelously beautiful and overwhelmingly impressive statement of the truth. They set forth the Absolute Holiness and Perfect Wisdom of God. The words need rather to be meditated on than to be expounded. "In Him there is no darkness at all." That is to say, in Him there is no darkness of error, no darkness of ignorance, no darkness of sin, no darkness of moral imperfection or of intellectual imperfection of any kind. The three words, "God is light," form one of the most beautiful, one of the most striking, and one of the most stupendous statements of truth that ever was penned.

2. To come to things more specific, the God of the Bible is omnipotent. This great truth comes out again and again in the Word of God. One direct statement of this great truth especially, striking because of the connection in which it is found, occurs in Jeremiah 32:17, Jeremiah 32:27, "Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you." Here it is Jeremiah who makes the statement, but in the 27th verse it is the LORD Himself who says: "I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is

anything too hard for me?"

In Job 42:2, we read these words of Job, when at last he has been brought to see and to recognize the true nature of the LORD: "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted." In Matthew 19:26, our Lord Jesus says: "With God all things are possible." Taking these passages together, we are plainly taught by our Lord Himself, and by others, that God can do all things, that nothing is too hard for Him, that all things are possible with Him. In a word, that God is omnipotent. A very impressive passage setting forth this same great truth is Psalms 33:6-9, "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm."

Here we see God by the mere utterance of His voice bringing to pass anything that He desires to be brought to pass. We find this same lofty conception of God in the very first chapter of the Bible, that chapter that so many people who imagine themselves scholarly are telling us is outgrown and not up to date, yet which contains some of the sublimest utterances that ever were written, unmatched by anything that any philosopher or scientist or platform orator is saying today. The very first words of that chapter read: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1), a description of the origin of things that has never been matched for simplicity, excellency and depth; and two verses farther down, in the third verse, we read: "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." These words need no comment.

There is here a excellency of thought in the setting forth of the omnipotence of God's mere word before which any truly intelligent and alert soul will stand in wonder and awe. There is nothing in poetry or in philosophical dissertation, ancient or modern, that for one moment can be put in comparison with these sublime words. Over and over again, it is brought out in the Word of God that all nature is absolutely subject to His will. For example, we see this in Psalms 107:25-29, "For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves. They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away. They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end. Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress. He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed."

Another description of a similar character is found in Nahum 1:3-6, "The LORD is slow to anger and great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebukes the sea and dries it up; he makes all the rivers run dry. Bashan and Carmel wither and the blossoms of Lebanon fade. The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away. The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who live in it. Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him." What a picture we have here of the omnipotence and awful majesty of God!

Not only is nature represented as being absolutely subject to God's will and word, but men also are represented as being absolutely subject to His will and word. For example, we read in James 4:12-15, "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you--who are you to judge your neighbor? Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go

to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'"

Happy is the man who voluntarily subjects himself to God's will and Word, but whether we voluntarily subject ourselves to God's will and Word or not, we are subject to His will and Word whether we believe it or not. The angels also are subject to His will and Word (Hebrews 1:13-14), and even Satan himself, although entirely against his own will, is absolutely subject to the will and Word of God, as is evident from Job 1:12 and Job 2:6.

The exercise of God's omnipotence is limited by His own wise and holy and loving will. God can do anything, but will do only that which infinite wisdom and holiness and love dictate. This comes out, for example, in Isaiah 59:1-2, "Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear."

3. The God of the Bible is also omniscient. In 1 John 3:20, we read, "He [God] knows everything." Turning to the Old Testament, in Psalms 147:5, we read, "Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit." The literal translation of the last clause of this passage is, "Of his understanding there is no number." In these passages it is plainly declared that "God knows everything" and that "His understanding is infinite." In Job 37:16, Elihu, the messenger of God, is represented as saying that the LORD is "perfect in knowledge." In Acts 15:18, we read that God knows all His works and all things from the beginning of the world. Known to Him is everything from the vastest to the minutest detail. In Psalms 147:4, we are told, "He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name." While in Matthew 10:29, we are told that not one sparrow will fall to the ground apart from the will of God. The stars in all their stupendous magnitude and the sparrows in all their insignificance are all equally in His mind.

We are told further that everything has a part in His purpose and plan. In Acts 3:17-18, the Apostle Peter says of the crucifixion of our Lord, the wickedest act in all the history of the human race: "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer." In Acts 2:23, Peter declared on the day of Pentecost (although the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus was the wickedest act in all history) that, nevertheless, the Lord Jesus was "handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge." According to the Psalmist (Psalms 76:10), God takes the acts of the wickedest men into His plans and makes the wrath of men praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restrains. Even the present war [World War I] with all its horrors, with all its atrocities, with all its abominations and all its nameless wickednesses, was foreknown of God and taken into His own gracious plan of the ages; and He will make every event in this war, even the most shocking things designed by the vilest conspiracy of unprincipled men, utterly inhuman and beastly and devil-inspired men, work together for good to those who love God, for those who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

The whole plan of the ages, not merely of the centuries, but of the immeasurable ages of God, and every man's part in it, has been known to God from all eternity. This is made very clear in Ephesians 1:9-12,

He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

And in Ephesians 3:4-9, we read,

In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

God has no after-thoughts. Everything is seen, known, purposed, and planned from the outset. Well may we exclaim: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!" (Romans 11:33). God knows from all eternity what He will do through all eternity.

4. God is also absolutely and infinitely holy. This is a point of central and fundamental importance in the Bible conception of God. It comes out in our first text: "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all." When he wrote these words John gave them as the summary of "This is the message we have heard from Him [God]" (1 John 1:5). In Isaiah 6:3, in the vision of the LORD which was given to Isaiah in the year that King Uzziah died, the "seraphim," or "burning ones," burning in their own intense holiness, are represented as standing before the LORD with covered faces and covered feet, and constantly crying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD Almighty." And in 1 Peter 1:16, God cries to us, "Be holy, because I am holy."

This thought of the infinite and awe-inspiring holiness of God pervades the entire Bible. It underlies everything in the Bible. The entire Mosaic system is built on and about this fundamental and central truth. Its system of washings; the divisions of the tabernacle; the divisions of the people into ordinary Israelites, Levites, priests and high priests, who were permitted different degrees of approach to God under strictly defined conditions; insistence on sacrifices of blood as the necessary medium of approach to God; God's directions to Moses in Exodus 3:5, to Joshua in Joshua 5:15; the punishment of Uzziah in 2 Chronicles 26:16-26; the strict orders to Israel in regard to approaching Sinai when the LORD came down on it; the doom of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Numbers 16:1-33; and the destruction of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10:1-3--all these were intended to teach, emphasize, and burn into the minds and hearts of the Israelites the fundamental truth that God is holy, unapproachably holy.

The truth that God is holy is the fundamental truth of the Bible, of the Old Testament and the New Testament, of both the Jewish religion and the Christian religion. It is the preeminent factor in the Christian conception of God. There is no fact in the Christian conception of God that needs more

to be emphasized in our day than the fact of the absolute, unqualified, and uncompromising holiness of God. That is the chief note lacking in Christian Science, Occultism, Buddhism, New Thought, the New Theology, and all the base but boasted cults of the day. That great truth underlies those fundamental doctrines of the Bible--the Atonement by Shed Blood, and Justification by Faith. The doctrine of the holiness of God is the keystone in the arch of Christian truth.

5. God is also love. This truth is declared in one of our texts. The words, "God is love," are found twice in the same chapter (1 John 4:8, 1 John 4:16). This truth is essentially the same truth as that "God is light" and "God is holy," for the very essence of true holiness is love, and "light" is "love" and "love" is "light."

6. Furthermore, God is not only perfect in His intellectual and moral attributes and in power, He is also omnipresent. This thought of God comes out in both the Old Testament and the New. In Psalms 139:7-10, we read: "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast." There is no place where one can flee from God's presence, for God is everywhere. This great truth is set forth in a remarkable way in Jeremiah 23:23-24, "'Am I only a God nearby,' declares the LORD, 'and not a God far away? Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?' declares the LORD. 'Do not I fill heaven and earth?' declares the LORD."

We have seen that God has a local habitation, that there is a place where He exists and manifests Himself in a way in which He does not manifest Himself everywhere; but while we insist on that clearly revealed truth, we must also never lose sight of the fact that God is everywhere. We find this same truth set forth by Paul in his sermon to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on Mars Hill, Acts 17:24-28,

The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for 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 some of your own poets have said, "We are his offspring."

From these passages we see that God is everywhere. He is in all parts of the universe and near each individual. In Him each individual lives and moves and has his being.

7. There is one other thought in the Christian conception of God that needs to be placed alongside of His omnipresence, and that is His eternity. God is eternal. His existence had no beginning and will have no ending; He always was, always is, and always shall be. God is not only everywhere present in space, He is everywhere present in time. This conception of God appears constantly in the Bible. We are told in Genesis 21:33 that Abraham called "upon the name of the LORD, the Eternal God." In Isaiah 40:28 we read this description of the LORD: "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow

tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom." Here again He is called "The everlasting God." Habakkuk 1:12, sets forth the same conception of God. He says, "O LORD, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One."

The Psalmist gives us the same representation of God in Psalms 90:2, Psalms 90:4, "Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night." We have the same representation of God in Psalms 102:24-27, "I said: 'Do not take me away, O my God, in the midst of my days; your years go on through all generations. In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.'"

The very name of God, His covenant name, LORD, sets forth His eternity. He is the eternal "I am," the One who is, was, and ever shall be (Exodus 3:14-15).

## II. There Is One God

One more fact about the Christian conception of God remains to be mentioned, and that is: There is but one God. The unity of God comes out again and again in both the Old Testament and the New. For example, we read in Deuteronomy 4:35, "the LORD is God; besides Him there is no other." And in Deuteronomy 6:4 we read, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." Turning to the New Testament in 1 Timothy 2:5, we read, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." And in Mark 12:29 our Lord Jesus Himself says, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."

But we must bear in mind the character of the Divine Unity. It is clearly revealed in the Bible that in this Divine Unity, in this one Godhead, there is a multiplicity of persons. This comes out in a variety of ways.

1. First of all, the Hebrew word translated "one" in these various passages denotes a compound unity, not a simple unity (1 Corinthians 3:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:13; John 17:22-23; Galatians 3:28).

2. In the second place, the Old Testament word most frequently used for God is a plural noun. The Hebrew grammarians and lexicographers tried to explain this by saying that it was the "pluralis majestatis," (Greek) but the very simple explanation is that the Hebrews, in spite of their intense monotheism, used a plural name for God because there is a plurality of persons in the one Godhead.

3. More striking yet, as a proof of the plurality of persons in the one Godhead, is the fact that God Himself uses plural pronouns in speaking of Himself. For example, in the first chapter of the Bible, Genesis 1:26, we read that God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness." And in Genesis 11:7, He is further recorded as saying: "Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." In Genesis 3:22, we read: "And the LORD God said, 'The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.'" And in that wonderful vision to which reference has already been made, in which Isaiah saw the LORD, we read this statement of Isaiah's, Isaiah 6:8, "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"

4. Another illustration of the plurality of persons in the one Godhead in the Old Testament conception of God is found in Zechariah 2:10-11, where the LORD speaks of Himself as sent by the LORD in these words: "'Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you,' declares the LORD. 'Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you.'" Here the LORD clearly speaks of Himself as sent by the LORD, thus clearly indicating two persons in the Deity.

5. Another indication of the plurality of persons in the Godhead in the Old Testament conception of God is found in the fact that "the Angel of the LORD" in the Old Testament is at the same time distinguished from, and identified with, the LORD.

6. This same thought of the plurality of persons in the one Godhead is brought out in John 1:1, where we reach the very climax of this thought. Here we are told in so many words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." When we study the Deity of Christ and the Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit, we shall see that the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit are clearly designated as Divine beings and at the same time distinguished from one another, and from God the Father. So it is clear that in the Christian conception of God, while there is but one God, there is a multiplicity of persons in the one Godhead.

This conception of God runs through the whole Bible, is from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation. It is one of the many marvelous illustrations of the Divine unity of the Book. How wonderful is this Book, in that the unity of thought on this very profound doctrine pervades it throughout! It is a clear indication that the Bible is the Word of God. It contains a profounder philosophy than is found in any human philosophy, ancient or modern, and the only way to account for it is that God Himself is the author of this incomparable philosophy. What a wondrous God we have! How we ought to meditate on His Person! With what awe, and, at the same time, with what delight we should come into His presence and bow before Him in adoring contemplation of the wonder and beauty and majesty and glory of His being!

## The Complete and Symmetrical Life

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THE COMPLETE AND SYMMETRICAL LIFE, AND HOW TO ATTAIN TO IT By R. A. Torrey

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness (kindness), goodness, faith (faithfulness), meekness, temperance." Galatians 5:22-23. THE average life is a very partial life. Even the life of the average Christian is a very partial life, a one-sided life, it is a life in which there is much lacking. There may be many admirable things about it, but there is a deplorable lack of other things the life is incomplete, it is devoid of balance and symmetry, strong in some directions, perhaps amazingly strong in those directions, but lacking, perhaps amazingly lacking, in other directions. It is like an imperfect rose, perfectly formed and beautifully tinted in one part, but blasted and withered in another part. What each one of us needs is a full life, a well-rounded life, a well-balanced life, a symmetrical life. There is a passage in the Word of God that wonderfully pictures such a life, complete in all its parts and symmetrical in its every detail. This passage not only pictures this life, but tells us how to attain to it. The passage is Galatians 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Some years ago during attendance at a Bible Conference in St. Louis, I was entertained at a private home. When I awoke in the morning the first thing that I saw as I opened my eyes was these words looped around the room in large and beautifully coloured letters, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." They brought a blessing to my heart that morning and set me to thinking deeply upon the words. From that day to this I have had a longing to preach on this text but have never done it until this hour. The text presents to us two main thoughts, the complete and symmetrical life described, and how to attain to this complete and symmetrical life.

### I. THE COMPLETE AND SYMMETRICAL LIFE DESCRIBED.

1. The first characteristic in this life is "LOVE." "The fruit of the Spirit is love." Paul does not say whether he has in mind love to God or love to man, he just says "LOVE," without definition as to its objects, so love as here spoken of includes all objects. The complete life is characterized by love to both God and man, and love to all classes and conditions of men. It obeys the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and it also obeys the second command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Yes, it goes beyond the second commandment and obeys the new commandment which the Lord gave to His disciples, that they love one another, even as He loved us (John 13:34). In moral attributes, "love" is the one preeminently Divine thing, God is love " ( 1 John 4:8). If love is lacking, all else counts for nothing, and the life is not only incomplete, it is worthless. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. 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 though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). "The old time religion," as the song goes, "makes me love

everybody," and the complete life is the life of the one who "loves everybody." There is absolutely no man whom the Spirit-filled man does not love. No matter how grievously one may have wronged us, no matter how grossly they may have slandered us, no matter how gravely they have injured us, if we are filled with the Spirit we will love them.

2. But while "LOVE" is the first thing and the supreme thing in the complete life, it is not the only thing. Following "Love" comes "JOY." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy." A life that is not a radiantly joyful life is an incomplete life and un-symmetrical life, it is lacking in one of the principal elements that go to make up the complete life, it is not a life after God's pattern. Even if our lives were given up wholly to serving God and our fellow men with utter devotion and utter forgetfulness of self, if they were not joyful lives, they would dishonour God. Jesus was called upon to be a propitiation for sins, to be a substitute Saviour, to take our sins and their penalty upon Himself, and He was, therefore, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," nevertheless, He was a joy-full man. On the night before His crucifixion, only an hour or so before the agonies of Gethsemane, He said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be filled full" (John 15:11). To have His joy then is to have fullness of joy, and, if our joy is to be "filled full" by having His joy, He must Himself have been a joy-full man. Constant joy is the commanded duty as well as the promised privilege of a child of God, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Rejoice in the Lord always," the Holy Spirit commands us in Php\_4:4, then adds, "again I say, Rejoice." When Paul wrote these words he was a prisoner under most distressing circumstances, and awaiting possible sentence of execution, yet the whole epistle that he wrote is jubilant from start to finish. The Spirit-filled life will always be joyful and jubilant, nothing can disturb its joy. No matter how adverse its circumstances, its joy abideth ; for its joy is not in circumstances but in Him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The Holy Spirit is called, in Hebrews 1:9, "The oil of gladness," and when God pours out His Holy Spirit upon us, "He anoints us with the oil of gladness," and the oil of gladness flows down over us and suffuses the whole person.

3. But even "LOVE" and "JOY" together, wonderful as they are, do not constitute all that there is of the complete and symmetrical life. Following "LOVE" and "JOY" comes "PEACE." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace." Paul does not say whether he means peace in our own hearts or peace with others. The reason that he does not say which he means is because he means both. The Holy Spirit brings peace into the heart in which He rules, and He brings peace with others to the one in whose heart He rules. In the verse almost immediately following the command to "rejoice always," the Spirit of God goes on to say, "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). Oh, how wonderful is the deep, serene, unruffled peace with which the Holy Spirit fills the heart. Some years ago a minister at a Bible Conference at Grove City came to me and said, "Two young men, college students, from my church were at the Northfield Conference this summer, and when they returned from the Conference they called on me and said, Pastor, we think we have heard of something that you do not know!" This was a rather presumptuous thing for two young college students to say to a pastor over sixty years of age who was well known for his knowledge of the Word of God and the faithfulness of his ministry, but the minister showed the real depth of his earnestness and spirituality by his reply. He said, "Well, young men, if you have something good that I haven't I want to know about it." The pastor continued, "They told me of an

address they had heard on the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and how the baptism with the Holy Spirit was to be obtained. When they left my study," the pastor continued, "I took my hat and went out into the woods and sat down upon a log that had fallen and thought over what they had said, and then I looked up to God and I said, Oh, God, if these young men have something that I have not, I want it. Now, oh, God, the best I know how, I absolutely surrender my will to Thee, to be whatever thou wishest me to be, to go wherever thou wishest me to go, to do whatever thou wishest me to do. Immediately after I had done this," he continued, "there came into my heart such a wonderful peace and rest as I had never known." What was the explanation? The pastor had fulfilled the conditions of receiving the Holy Spirit and He had come to do His work, and part of His fruit is "PEACE." But the Holy Spirit brings us into peace with others as well as bringing peace into us. He saves us from contentiousness. I knew a man who was naturally a man of war, he was a born fighter; he delighted in a scrap from early boyhood as in almost nothing else, but the Spirit of God got control of his life, and in so far as the Holy Spirit did gain control of his life he became a man of peace. Many and many a time he was able to keep peace under most aggravating circumstances without even a struggle. Yes, the Holy Spirit brings peace between men, especially peace between brethren. This is the immediate thought of the context in which we find our text. Going back in the chapter to the 14th and 15th verses (Galatians 5:14-15), we read, "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Then going down to the 19th verse we read, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Then comes our text, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, etc." Two lives are placed in vivid contrast to one another, the life of the flesh, full of contention and strife and quarrelling, and the life in the Spirit, full of peace, long-suffering, etc. The perfect man keeps out of war, even under great provocation. As the Holy Spirit puts it through the Apostle James in James 3:14-18, "But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for them that make peace." Oh, that the Holy Spirit ruled among nations as well as in individuals to-day, the war would end in five minutes, and when the Holy Spirit rules in a church, church quarrels cease instantly.

4. But "LOVE," "JOY," "PEACE," as beautiful as they are, do not constitute the whole of the complete and symmetrical life. Following "LOVE," "Joy," and "PEACE" come "LONG-SUFFERING." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering." This fourth characteristic of the complete and symmetrical life, the Spirit-filled life, is closely connected with the third. The truly strong man does not quickly resent injuries done by others. He is never suspicious nor sensitive. No matter how great and strong a man may be in other respects, if he is quick to imagine that others are wronging him, or quick to resent the insult or injury which is not imaginary but very real, he is not a truly strong man, and he surely is not a Spirit-governed man, he is governed by the flesh and not by the Spirit. Oh, how beautiful is the attitude of long-suffering in an individual or a nation, what a mark it is of real strength. The nation that is not quick to take

umbrage nor "defend its honour" is not dishonoured, but great and strong.

5. The fifth characteristic of the complete and symmetrical life is "GENTLENESS." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness." The primary meaning of the adjective from which the noun translated "gentleness" is derived is "fit for use," or "useful," then it comes to mean "mild," "pleasant," as opposed to "harsh," "hard," "sharp," "bitter." Then it comes to mean gentle, "pleasant," "kind," "benevolent," "benign." How beautiful it is when a great man is also a gentle man, a gentleman in the true sense, a kindly man. The great example of gentleness or kindness is Jesus Himself. So many leading men in the church in our day, gifted men, go pushing through the common crowd regardless of the slow and dull, regardless of whose toes they step on; they are brusque and pushing. Not so was Jesus, "The bruised reed" He would "not break" and "the smoking flax" He would "not quench," and not so is the Spirit-filled man, he is "kindly." The Revised Version translated the word here "kindness" but I like "kindliness" better than either "gentleness" or "kindness." Are you a kindly man? Jesus was. Are you a kindly woman? If not, you have not entered into the complete and symmetrical life, not yet.

6. The sixth characteristic of the complete and symmetrical life is "GOODNESS." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness." The word so translated is a word of wide meaning and is difficult of exact definition, but the thought here, as determined by the setting, is that attribute that leads men to be always looking for and improving opportunities for doing any kind of good to anybody and everybody, in every possible place, and at every possible time. The tenth verse of the following chapter gives the thought, "So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men."

7. The seventh characteristic of the complete and symmetrical life is "FAITH." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." The Revised Version reads "faithfulness," but without any warrant whatever either in usage or context. The word is the same word which is translated "faith" 238 times out of the 242 times that it is used in the New Testament, and in the four remaining instances it is translated "belief" or "believe," and never once is it translated "faithfulness." True faith will inevitably lead to faithfulness, and thus implies faithfulness, but "faith" is what Paul wrote, or rather the Holy Ghost wrote through Paul, and the Holy Ghost meant just what He wrote. A life without "FAITH," faith in God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is a sadly incomplete and altogether unsymmetrical life. The Holy Spirit begets simple, childlike, imperturbable faith in the heart He rules, faith in God, faith in Jesus Christ, faith in the Word of God. Jesus says in John 7:17, "If any man willeth to do His (God's) will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself." He here makes obedience the condition of faith in the Word of God, but in Acts 5:32 we are told that God gives the Holy Spirit to them that obey Him. Oh, when a man submits his life to the absolute control of the Holy Spirit, his whole thought and feeling and will are irradiated with faith, and because he has faith in God and faith in God's Word he has great expectations, he is never discouraged, he is never pessimistic, never despondent, he marches forth confidently every day to victory. He is sure he will win, and win he will.

8. The eighth characteristic of the complete and symmetrical life is "MEEKNESS." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness." The exact meaning of the word rendered "meekness" in this passage is that attitude of mind that is opposed

to harshness and contentiousness, and that shows itself in gentleness and tenderness in dealing with others. The man who has attained to the complete life is never harsh. Stern and severe he may sometimes have to be out of regard to the best interests of the offender himself, but his sternness and severity are aflame with gentleness. Read the first verse of the next chapter and you will get the exact thought, "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass (the thought is of a man caught in the act of wrong-doing, wrong-doing even of the grossest kind), ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

9. The ninth and last characteristic of the complete and symmetrical life is "TEMPERANCE." "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The Revised Version says "SELF-CONTROL," and that gives the thought, though it is not really self-control, but Holy Spirit control, but it is self that is controlled. It does not mean temperance in the narrow sense we have given it in modern parlance, as applying to only one kind of excess, excess in alcoholic drinks, it means mastery of self along all lines. The highest form of mastery in the world is self-mastery. "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs 16:32). This then is the complete life, a life manifesting love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-mastery. You will note that our text says that these things are "the fruit of the Spirit," not the fruits of the Spirit. They are the many delicious flavours of the one fruit. Wherever the Holy Spirit is given control, not some, but all of these will be seen.

## II. HOW TO OBTAIN THE COMPLETE AND SYMMETRICAL LIFE.

We come now to the very practical question how to obtain this life, or how to attain to it. We have but a few minutes to answer the question, and we need but a few minutes. The verse makes the way of attainment as clear as day. We are told that these things are "the fruit of the Spirit." They are set over against "the works of the flesh" described in the verses that immediately precede. In other words, the things described under "the works of the flesh" are the things that are natural to us; these things are what the Holy Spirit works supernaturally in us. They are the fruit the Holy Spirit bears in us, and all that we need to do is to come to the end of ourselves and realize our own utter inability to attain to the complete and symmetrical life here pictured, and having first received the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and through receiving Him as our Saviour, having received the Holy Spirit to dwell in us (for He does dwell in every believer) just surrender the entire control of our lives to His dominion for Him to work in us what He will, and when the Holy Spirit is thus given complete control, the result will be that His fruit will appear on the tree of our own lives. There will be love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. Wonderful indeed is the privilege of the Spirit-filled life. Will you to-day give up your fruitless struggles after holiness, your self efforts to lead a "life well pleasing to God," come to the end of yourself and realizing that in you, that is in your flesh, dwelleth no good thing, surrender your whole life to the control of the Holy Spirit, then on your life will hang this "sun-kist" fruit, "love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, faith, meekness, self-mastery.

## The Day of Golden Opportunity

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### The Day of Golden Opportunity

by REUBEN ARCHER TORREY—1856-1928

"The Holy Spirit says, Today" — Hebrews 3:7

THE DAY OF GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY is today. Golden opportunities, opportunities of priceless worth, are open to every one of us today. But "tomorrow" has no sure promise for any one of us. "The Holy Spirit says, Today," and Conscience also cries, "Today," and the voice of Reason and the voice of History and the voice of Experience unite in one loud chorus and shout, "Today." Only the voices of indifference and laziness and folly murmur, "Tomorrow." The Holy Spirit is ever calling, "Today." Men in their folly are forever saying, "Tomorrow."

When the frightful plague of frogs came on Pharaoh of old and on his people, Pharaoh, in his terror, sent for Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray to the LORD to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the LORD" (Exodus 8:8). Moses replied, "I leave to you the honor of setting the time for me to pray for you and your officials and your people that you and your houses may be rid of the frogs, except for those that remain in the Nile." One would naturally suppose Pharaoh would have answered, "At once," but Pharaoh, like many another king, played the fool and answered, "Tomorrow" (Exodus 8:9-10). Men show a similar folly and often a greater folly in these days. When urged to forsake sin with its miseries and degradation and perils and turn to Christ with the joy and peace, and elevation of our character and tranquility that He gives, they answer, "Yes, I think I will." "When?" "Oh, tomorrow." But "the Holy Spirit says, Today."

A poor wretch came into my office one day. He had been drinking, and drinking had brought misery into his heart and ruin into his life. I asked, "Will you quit drinking and turn to Jesus Christ?" "Oh," he exclaimed, "there is nothing else that I can do, I will." "Will you do it now?" He hung his head, and murmured, "Not now, tomorrow." But "the Holy Spirit says, Today." Tomorrow is the devil's day and the fool's day. Today is God's day, and the wise man's day.

I wish to give you tonight some conclusive and unanswerable reasons why every man and woman in this auditorium who makes any pretensions to intelligence and common sense should not only accept the Lord Jesus as his Lord and Savior, but should accept Him here before he leaves this building tonight, if he has not already done it. What I want to get is action, immediate action, intelligent and wise action. And the only action that is intelligent and wise for anyone who has not already accepted Jesus Christ is to accept Him right here tonight. Resolutions to do the right thing and the wise thing at some indefinite time in the future are of no value whatever. God's time is now. "The Holy Spirit says, Today."

Because the Lord Jesus Brings Peace to the Tormenting Conscience

The first reason why every man and woman in this auditorium who has not already accepted Jesus Christ should not only accept Him but accept Him now is because the Lord Jesus brings peace to the tormenting conscience as soon as He is accepted, and the really wise man will not only desire that peace but desire it just as soon as he can get it. Wherever there is sin there will be an accusing conscience. And we "all have sinned." If any man has sinned and his conscience does not accuse him and torment him he has sunk very low, very low. There are, of course, different degrees of torment of conscience and different kinds of torment of conscience. With some the pain is sharp and piercing, with some it is dull and grinding, but there is pain, there is unrest, there is no peace in the heart where sin has entered until that sin has been forgiven. But Jesus Christ gives peace to the most agonized conscience. Men and women have come to me in all degrees of misery over the memory of some sin they have committed, and I have pointed them to the Lord Jesus, and everyone who has really gone to Him has found rest. I could not tell how many men and women have come to me who were driven to the very verge of hopeless despair by the accusations of their conscience and were contemplating self-destruction in the hope of thus getting away from their mental agony. But I led them to Jesus Christ, and now they have rest and the peace of God that passes all understanding.

A young man came to me one Sunday morning in Chicago in awful agony. He had sinned grievously and was reaping the harvest. He was contemplating all sorts of sinful actions to escape the inevitable consequences of his sin. I pointed him to the Son of God and the young man accepted Him. Afterward he brought to me his companion in sin. She was fully determined to commit a very wicked and desperate action that was likely to land her in prison or in the cemetery. I pleaded with her and pointed her to the real cure, to the Savior. When she left me she was still undecided as to what she would do. She afterward decided and decided right. One night a long time afterward, as I was going down the back stairs of the Moody Church to the inquiry room, a young, happy-faced woman stopped me and said, "I want to thank you for what you did for me, and for my husband and for my child." I did not recognize her for a moment, and she said, "I am the young woman who came to you," and she explained the circumstances. It was the woman who had contemplated the destruction of her child, and her own destruction for time and for eternity. But she had found peace in Jesus Christ. Men and women with tormenting consciences, and with uneasy, restless hearts, there is rest for you in Jesus Christ. If you are wise you will not only find it, but you will find it now. "The Holy Spirit says, Today." You need not spend even one more day or one more hour in the agony of your accusing, tormenting conscience.

#### Because Jesus Christ Brings Inexpressible and Glorious Joy to Those Who Accept Him

The second reason why every man and woman who have not already accepted Jesus Christ should not only accept Him but accept Him now is because Jesus Christ brings inexpressible and glorious joy, a joy to which the joy of this world is as nothing in comparison, to all as soon as they really accept and confess Him. Any really wise man will not only desire this joy but desire it at once. I for one not only wish the best I can get, but I wish it as quickly as I can get it. The joy that is in Jesus Christ is the very best joy one can get. There is not a particle of doubt about that. Ask anyone who has ever tried the world and has then really tried Jesus Christ. You cannot find one single man or woman who has really tried the joy that there is in Christ, anyone who has really put his trust in Him as his personal Savior and unreservedly surrendered to Him as his Lord and Master, who will not tell you that the world has no joy for a moment comparable with that joy which

is found in Jesus Christ. No matter how rare their opportunities may have been for enjoying the world, they will tell you without the slightest hesitation that the joy that one finds in Christ is incomparably greater and finer and more satisfying than any joy the world can give. There are millions of witnesses to this fact, and their testimony is absolutely unanimous.

I know the joy that comes from wealth, I know the joy that comes from the theater, I know the joy that comes from the dance, from the card table, and the joy that comes from the race track, and the joy that comes from the wine supper, and so on down to the end of the catalog of this world's joys. I know also the joy that comes from literature and from art, the joy that comes from music, from science, from philosophy and from travel. I know practically every joy that this world has to give, but I say to you that the joy of all these put together is nothing to the inexpressible and glorious joy that comes from a genuine acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Savior, and a wholehearted surrender to Him as our Lord, and a constant and open confession of Him before the world, and from receiving the Holy Spirit whom He gives to those who do thus accept Him and fully surrender to Him and confess Him. Men and women, if you wish the highest, deepest, purest, and most abounding joy, immeasurably the most satisfying joy that is to be known, not only in the life which is to come, but in the life which now is, not only come to Jesus Christ but come now. "The Holy Spirit says, Today."

#### Because Jesus Christ Brings Deliverance from the Power of Sin

The third reason why every man and woman in this auditorium who has not already accepted Jesus Christ should not only accept Him but accept Him tonight is because Jesus Christ brings deliverance from the power of sin, and any wise man or woman not only wishes deliverance from the power of sin but wishes it as soon as he or she can get it. There is no other form of slavery known to man so degrading and so wretched as the slavery of sin. Better far be the poor black slave of the most brutal slave driver the South ever knew than to be the slave of rum, or the slave of lust, or the slave of bad temper, or the slave of drugs, or the slave of an impure imagination, or the slave of greed for gold, or the slave of any other form of sin. Poor old Uncle Tom, groaning in his cabin after the cruel blows of the brutal master, is not so pitiable an object as the wretch, poor or rich, who is under the whip of appetite or of lust or of drugs or of any other sin. But there is freedom right at hand, right now. Jesus Christ sets men free from sin in all its forms. He sets free men who have been slaves for years. He sets them free in a moment. Any sinner can find deliverance in Christ from any sin, can find it now. What Jesus said when He was here on earth is just as true today. "Everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (John 8:34). But, thank God, it is also as true today as when He said it that, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). Any man or woman who has a spark of intelligence left will not only wish deliverance from sin and its awful bondage, but wish it at once.

What would you have thought of any old time black slave of a vile and cruel master who had been offered freedom and answered, "Yes, I wish liberty. My bondage has been awful. But I don't want the freedom just yet. I will wait until next year. I will wait until next month. I will wait until next week. I will wait until tomorrow." You would exclaim, "What a fool!" But he would not be so colossal a fool as you are when you say, "Yes, I do wish deliverance from the power of sin," and then add, "but not tonight-tomorrow." Oh, men, listen, "The Holy Spirit says, Today."

#### Because Jesus Christ Brings Beauty of Character

The fourth reason why every man and woman who has not already accepted Jesus Christ should not only accept Him but accept Him tonight is because Jesus Christ brings beauty of character, and every wise man and woman will not only desire beauty of character, but desire it just as soon as they can get it. I sometimes notice advertisements in the papers that read, "The Secret of Beauty." I can tell you the secret of beauty, men and women, the secret of permanent, indestructible beauty. It is Jesus Christ in the heart. He not only beautifies the face, He beautifies the soul. He makes over the soul that trusts in Him into His own glorious likeness. I have seen some of the foulest men and women I ever knew made over into the fairest, and it was Jesus Christ who did it.

Sam Hadley of the Water Street Mission, New York, was the friend of all men who were down and out. He was always on the lookout for an opportunity to help some man who was about as bad as they make them onto his feet, and to lead him to Christ and to thus get the man saved. A man said to Mr. Hadley one day, "I have a friend whom I wish you would take an interest in." Sam Hadley asked, "Who is he?" "He is Bowery Ike." "Well," said Hadley, "what is he, anyhow?" The man replied, "He is a crook. He makes his living by stealing and picking pockets and all that sort of thing. Presently he is on Blackwell's Island, serving a term there. You can find him more easily now than usual." Sam Hadley went over to Blackwell's Island and looked up Bowery Ike, and found him; for he could not get away, he was behind bars. Bowery Ike had no use for Sam Hadley, except that when he got out he came around to Sam to get a little money to get a new suit of clothes. But he was soon off to the Island again. Every time he would come out of confinement he would go around to see Hadley, but as soon as he got on his feet again he would go back to his crooked work.

Sam Hadley followed Bowery Ike for seven long years, and one day at the end of the seventh year Bowery Ike was thoroughly sick and tired of sin, and this time not only came to Sam Hadley, but came to Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ opened His arms and took Bowery Ike in. After Bowery Ike had been saved about a year, Sam wrote me, saying, "Mr. Torrey, I have a man who wants to study at your school. They used to call him Bowery Ike. His right name is Ira Snyder. We believe in him. He has been a tough customer. He has been a hard case. But he is saved and we believe God wants to use him. Will you take him?" "Dear Sam," I replied, "I will take anybody you recommend." He wrote back, "I recommend him." Then I wrote, "Send him on." And Bowery Ike (Ira Snyder) came. Listen, men, though that man had been a crook from his boyhood, for he commenced picking pockets when a little lad; though he had been a crook nearly all his life, he became one of the most beautiful Christians I have ever met in all my life. And I say I have known thieves who have come to Christ, burglars who have come to Christ, train robbers and bank robbers who have come to Christ; I have known harlots, and murderers and people guilty of every kind of crime I ever heard of, who have come to Christ and have become some of the loveliest Christians I have ever known. Yes, some of the men and women who were once down in the deepest depths of sin.

But to come back to Ira Snyder, Bowery Ike. He came on to Chicago. He stayed with us about a year, a little over a year. One night he said to me, "I want to walk home with you and have a little talk with you." On the way to my home he said, "I made a little visit down in New York a few weeks ago. I think they need me in New York. I have loved it in Chicago, I would like to stay on, but I believe they need me in New York. I have written Mr. Hadley that I am ready to go back to New

York and help in the work." A few days after this Ira Snyder was taken down with influenza, a slight attack, not a very serious case, but he went to bed with it. They did not think he was very ill. But as I was leaving the dining table one night the maid told me that Mr. Hunter, who was one of my assistants there at that time, as he is now here, wished to see me. I met Mr. Hunter and he said, "Mr. Torrey, Ira Snyder is dead." I said, "What, John? You don't mean Ira Snyder?" We had another man at the Institute at the same time whose name was much the same, and who was very ill at that time, too, and I thought Mr. Hunter must mean him. "You don't mean Ira Snyder?" I said. "You must mean So-and-So," naming the other man. "No," Mr. Hunter said. "Mr. Torrey, Ira Snyder is dead. He died very suddenly." I asked, "Where is he, John?" "He is over at the undertaker's. They have prepared him for his burial and have placed him in his coffin. They are going to have the services tomorrow, and I thought I should come to tell you tonight." "That was right, John," I replied, "let us go over." We went to the undertaker's, which was not far away, and walked into the parlors. And there in a beautiful coffin lay Ira Snyder. When I looked down into that face, one of the noblest faces I have ever looked into in my life, I will tell you what I did, I could not help it, I broke down, and, leaning over, I kissed Ira Snyder's beautiful face as he lay there in his coffin. Yes, friends, Bowery Ike had been a crook before he became a Christian, but by the power of Jesus Christ in his heart he became one of the loveliest Christians I ever knew in my life. I don't think my heart ever ached over anybody outside my own family as it did over Ira Snyder, who was formerly a pickpocket, a burglar, and everything that was bad, but who in his lost and ruined condition came to Jesus, and the heart of Jesus was big enough to take him in, and Jesus came into his heart and transformed him into His own likeness. The Lord Jesus is doing that sort of thing every day.

And the Lord Jesus is also taking others who are not so foul, who, indeed, the world thinks good, and He is making them immeasurably better. It is Jesus and Jesus only who makes truly lovely characters. Yes, men and women, do you not wish to be good? Not only good in the eyes of man, but good in the eyes of God? You may be. It is Jesus' work to make you so. Let Him begin it at once. Let Him begin it now, "The Holy Spirit says, Today." What do you say? "Tomorrow?" No, not if you have a particle of sense left, and I believe you have. You will say, "Tonight. Right now."

#### Because Jesus Christ Fills Our Lives with Highest Usefulness

The fifth reason why every man and woman who has not already accepted Jesus Christ should not only accept Him but accept Him now is because Jesus Christ fills our lives with highest usefulness; and every wise man and every wise woman desires not only to be useful but desires to begin being useful as soon as possible. The Christian life is the only really useful life. We look at the life of many a one who is not a Christian, and say, "There is a useful life"; but God looks at it and looks through it, looks at it in all its directions, and writes this verdict on it, "Useless." Whether you and I see it or not, the man or woman who is not with Christ is against Him (Matthew 12:30), and the man who is against Jesus Christ is against God and against humanity. His life is useless and worse than useless. But the life that is fully surrendered to Jesus Christ becomes at once a useful life. It may be the mere wreck of a life, but it becomes at once a useful life.

A friend of mine found one of the most hopeless wrecks of womanhood in New York City and brought her to Jesus Christ. I think this poor creature lived less than two years after her conversion and many months of that time were spent on a sick bed. But that woman was used to the eternal

salvation of more than a hundred persons while she lay there dying, and the story of the transformed life of "the Bluebird of Mulberry Bend" has gone around the world and saved thousands.

Come to Christ. Really come to Him. He will make you useful. Come at once, that your usefulness may begin at once. I am glad I came to the Lord Jesus when I did, but oh! if only I had come sooner. How many precious years were wasted! How many golden opportunities were lost, opportunities that will never return! Come, men and women. Come now. "The Holy Spirit says, Today."

Because the Sooner We Come to Christ, the Fuller and Richer Will Be Our Eternity

The sixth reason why every man and woman in this auditorium who has not already accepted Jesus Christ should not only accept Him but accept Him tonight is because the sooner we come to Christ, the fuller and richer will be our eternity. The eternity of each one of us will be just what we make it in the life that now is. You are constructing your eternity every day. Every day of true service for Christ makes our reward so much the greater and our eternity so much the fuller and richer. Come to Christ next Sunday and you will be behind for all eternity by as much as you might have accomplished this week. You may cry in coming years, "Backward, turn backward, O Time, in your flight," but Time will not turn backward in its flight. Time cannot turn backward. Time is flying by every moment and never returns. Today is hurrying by us at express speed. Tomorrow will soon follow. And as I turn around and peer after Yesterday and Today as they plunge into the unfathomable depths of the Past, I cry, "Yesterday, where are you?" Out from the fathomless abyss of bygone days comes the answer, "Gone forever." And I hear the Holy Spirit crying, "Today! Today! Today!" "The Holy Spirit says, Today."

Because If We Do Not Come to Jesus Christ Today We May Never Come At All

I will give you one more reason why every man and woman who has not already accepted Jesus Christ should not only accept Him but accept Him at once, and that is because if we do not come to Jesus Christ today we may never come at all. That is not at all a remote possibility. Thousands and tens of thousands have been as near to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as you are this moment and have said, "Not tonight," and now they have passed without Christ into that world in which there is no hope for repentance, no matter how "diligently with tears" they may seek it, into that world in which there is no opportunity to change their mind or their eternal destiny.

A man came into one of our tents one night in Chicago. It was the first time he had ever been in a meeting of that kind in his life. The words of Mr. Schiverea, who spoke that night, made a deep impression on him, and after the meeting was over he lingered with a friend and talked personally with Mr. Schiverea. His friend accepted Christ and he was on the very verge of accepting Him. Mr. Schiverea said to him, "Will you accept Jesus Christ right now?" "No," the man said, "this is the first time in my life that I was ever in a meeting of this kind. I cannot decide tonight, but I promise you that I will come back Sunday night and accept Christ." It was Friday night and there was to be no meeting on Saturday. Mr. Schiverea replied that he did not question at all the honesty of the man's intention or the sincerity of his promise to return Sunday night and settle it; but added, "We have no guarantee whatever that you will live until Sunday night." "Oh," the man said, with a laugh, "you don't suppose that God is going to cut me off after the first meeting of this kind that I ever

attended in my life and not give me another opportunity?" Mr. Schiverea replied, "I do not know. But I do know you are taking a great risk in waiting until Sunday night. I greatly fear that if you do not accept Jesus Christ now you will never accept Him and be lost forever." "No," the man said, "I give you my word that I will be back here Sunday night and accept Christ." Mr. Schiverea continued to plead with him, but the man would not yield. He went out of the tent with his friend. They got into a carriage and turned toward home. And as they drove up the street they passed a saloon. The man said to his friend, "Let's stop and have one more drink and then we will both stop drinking permanently." "No," said his friend, "I have settled it already. I have accepted Christ and I will never take another drink." "Well," said the other, "I'm going to have one more drink, anyhow. You drive up the street and then come back for me and I will be waiting for you outside." He entered the saloon. His friend drove up the street, and after a few minutes returned to pick up the man. He was nowhere to be seen. The friend went into the saloon to look for him. He was not there. The friend went into the street again and looked up and down it for the man, but he was nowhere in sight. Passing a high board fence, he heard a groan, and passing swiftly around behind it, he discovered his friend lying behind it stabbed, with an awful gash in his body, unconscious and dying. He was taken to the Presbyterian Hospital and lived until Monday morning, but never regained consciousness and passed into eternity unsaved, lost forever. Why? Because when "the Holy Spirit said, Today," the man said, "Tomorrow." So he passed unprepared into the presence of God, and so will some of you if you do not listen to the Holy Spirit now as He says, "Today."

One night when I was preaching in Bradford, England, a man and his wife sat side by side in the meeting and were deeply moved, but they made no decision. As they walked away from the meeting the wife said to her husband, "Would it not have been nice if you and I both had accepted Christ?" He answered, "Yes, it would." They reached home and retired. About two o'clock the following morning his wife awakened him and said, "I feel so strange." In a few minutes from that time she had passed into eternity. After he had laid his wife's body away in the cemetery, he came back to the meeting and told us this story and accepted Christ, but he came alone. Oh, men and women, listen! Do you not hear the Holy Spirit crying, "Today"?

There are so many things besides death that may make this the last opportunity you will ever have and make a refusal now final and fatal. Loss of opportunity may come. The Holy Spirit is here in power now. It is a great opportunity, the Day of Golden Opportunity. A like opportunity may never come again. It never will come again for some of you. "The Holy Spirit says, Today."

A hardened heart may seal your doom. When a human heart is moved on by the Spirit of God, as some of your hearts are, and the heart continues to resist the Holy Spirit, it is likely to become very soon hardened and hopeless.

One night in our church in Chicago, after the meeting in which many had accepted Christ, I remained talking with a young man. He was under deep conviction, within one step of a decision. I urged on him an immediate acceptance and confession of Christ. "No," he said, "I cannot do it tonight. But I will give you my word of honor that I will come back tomorrow night and do it." I told him I did not question his word or his intention; but I said, "I have no guarantee whatever that you will keep your word. I have a feeling in my heart that if you do not settle it tonight you will never come back." "Why," he replied, "my mother is here every night. We live within a block of this place.

I give you my word of honor I will come tomorrow night and settle it." Again I said, "I do question your word, but the Spirit of God is working mightily with you tonight, and if you go out of here resisting the Spirit of God, I believe your heart will be so hardened that your eternal destiny will be sealed and you will never come back." "No," he said, "I cannot accept tonight, but I will come tomorrow night and settle it." He walked away. I watched him with a heavy heart as he passed out of the door. I said to myself, "He will never come back," and he never did. Quite a while later I asked his mother about him and she told me he had never come back into the church from that night.

Men and women, listen! You cannot trifle with God, and you cannot trifle with your own souls, and you cannot trifle with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not only saying in our text, but He is saying in your hearts, "Today! Accept Christ right now." Will you listen to the mighty, gracious Spirit of God? Will you do as He bids you? Will you listen right now and harden not your heart, but accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, surrender to Him as your Lord and Master, and begin to confess to Him as such before the world, and be saved, and get right here and now the wonderful blessings that He gives and that He alone can give?

## The Deity of Jesus Christ

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### The Deity of Jesus Christ

by R. A. Torrey

"While the Pharisees were gathered together,

Jesus asked them, Saying,

What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?..."

Matthew 22:41-42

The question that our Lord Jesus puts here to the Pharisees is the most fundamental question concerning Christian thought and faith that can be put to anybody in any age. Jesus Christ Himself is the center of Christianity, so the most fundamental questions of faith are those that concern the Person of Christ. If a man really holds to right views concerning the Person of Jesus Christ, he will sooner or later get right views on every other question. If he holds a wrong view concerning the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is pretty sure to go wrong on everything else sooner or later. "What think ye of Christ?" That is the great central question; that is the vital question.

And the most fundamental question concerning the Person of Christ is — is Jesus Christ really God? Not merely, is He Divine, but, is He actually God? When I was a boy, to say you believed in the Divinity of Christ meant that you believed in the real Deity of Christ, that you believed that Jesus was actually a Divine Person, that He was God. It no longer means that. The Devil is wise, shrewd, and subtle, and he knows that the most effectual way to instill error into the minds of the inexperienced and unwary is to use old and precious words and put a new meaning into them. So when his messengers masquerading as "ministers of righteousness" seek to lead, if possible, the elect astray, they use the old precious words, but with an entirely new and entirely different and entirely false meaning. They talk about the Divinity of Christ, but they do not mean at all what intelligent Christians in former days meant by it. Likewise, they talk of the atonement, but they do not mean at all the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ in our place by which eternal life is secured for us. And oftentimes when they talk about Christ, they do not mean at all our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the actual historic Jesus of the four gospels; they mean an ideal Christ, or a Christ principle.

So our subject is not the Divinity of Christ, but the Deity of Christ; and our question is not, is Jesus Christ Divine, but rather, is Jesus Christ God? Was that Person Who was born in Bethlehem nineteen hundred and twenty-one years ago, and Who lived thirty-three or thirty-four years here upon earth as recorded in the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Who was crucified on Calvary's cross, Who rose from the dead the third day, and was exalted from earth to heaven to the right hand of the Father — was He God manifest in the flesh, was He God embodied in a human being? Was He, and is He, a Being worthy of our absolute faith and supreme love and our unhesitating obedience and our wholehearted worship, just as God the Father is worthy of our

absolute faith and supreme love and unhesitating obedience and our wholehearted worship? Should all men honour Jesus Christ even as they honour God the Father (John 5:23). Not merely is He an example that we can wisely follow, or a Master whom we can wisely serve, but is He a God Whom we can rightly worship? I presume that most of us do believe that He was God manifest in the flesh and that He is God today at the right hand of the Father, but why do you believe so? Are you so intelligent in your faith, and therefore, so well-grounded in your faith that no glib talker or reasoner, no Unitarian or Russellite (JW) or Christian Scientist or Theosophist, or other errorist can confuse you and upset you and lead you astray?

It is important that we be thoroughly sound in our faith at this point and thoroughly well-informed, wherever else we may be in ignorance or error, for we are distinctly told in John 20:31 that "these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." It is evident from these words of the inspired apostle John that this question is not merely a matter of theoretical opinion, but that it is a matter that concerns our salvation. It is to confirm and instruct you in your blessed faith, your saving faith in Jesus Christ as a Divine Person.

When I studied the subject of the Divinity of Christ in the theological seminary, I got the impression that there were a few texts in the Bible that conclusively proved that He was Divine. Years later I found that there were not merely a few proof texts that proved this, but that the Bible in many ways and in countless passages clearly taught that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh. Indeed, I found that the Doctrine of the Deity of Jesus Christ formed the very warp and woof of the Bible.

#### Divine Names

The first line of proof of the absolute Deity of our Lord Jesus is that many names and titles clearly implying Deity are used of Jesus Christ in the Bible, some of them over and over again, the total number of passages reaching far into the hundreds. Of course, I can only give you a few illustrations at this time. Turn with me first of all to Revelation 1:17, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last." The text shows clearly that our Lord Jesus was the speaker, and here our Lord Jesus distinctly calls Himself "The First and the Last." Now this, beyond a question, is a Divine name, for in Isaiah 44:6 we read, "Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." In Revelation 22:12-13, our Lord Jesus says that He is the Alpha and Omega. His words are, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Now in this same book in the first chapter and the eighth verse the Lord God declared that He is the Alpha and the Omega. His words are, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." In 1 Corinthians 2:8, the apostle Paul speaks of our crucified Lord Jesus as "The Lord of glory." His exact words are, "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." There can be no question that "The Lord of glory" is Jehovah God, for we read in Psalms 24:8-10, "Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah." And we are told in the passage

already referred to that our crucified Lord Jesus was the King of glory; therefore, He must be Jehovah.

In John 20:28 Thomas addressed the Lord Jesus as his Lord and his God: "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." Unitarians have endeavored to get around the force of this utterance made by Thomas by saying that Thomas was excited and that he was not addressing the Lord Jesus, but was saying "my Lord and my God" as an ejaculation of astonishment, just the way that profane people sometimes use these exclamations today. But this interpretation is impossible and shows to what desperate straits the Unitarians are driven, for Jesus Himself commended Thomas for seeing it and saying it. Our Lord Jesus' words immediately following those of Thomas are, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

In Titus 2:13 our Lord Jesus is spoken of as our "great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." In Romans 9:5 Paul tells us that "Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." The Unitarians have made desperate efforts to overcome the force of these words, but the only fair translation and interpretation of these words are found in our Authorized Version. There can be no honest doubt to one who goes to the Bible to find out what it actually teaches, and not to read his own thought into it, that Jesus is spoken of by various names and titles that beyond a question imply deity, and that He in so many words is called God. In Hebrews 1:8 it is said in so many words, of the Son, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." If we should go no further it is evidently the clear and often repeated teaching of the Bible that Jesus is really God.

#### Divine Attributes

But there is a second line of proof that Jesus Christ is God, a proof equally convincing, and that is, all the five distinctively Divine attributes are ascribed to Jesus Christ, and "all the fulness of the Godhead" is said to dwell in Him. There are five distinctively Divine attributes, that is, five attributes that God alone possesses. These are Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Eternity and Immutability. Each one of these distinctively Divine attributes are ascribed to Jesus Christ.

First of all, omnipotence is ascribed to Jesus Christ. Not only are we taught that Jesus had power over diseases and death and winds and sea and demons, that they were all subject to His word, and that He is far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come (Ephesians 1:20-23), but in Hebrews 1:3 it is said in so many words that He "[upholdeth] all things by the word of his power."

Omniscience is also ascribed to Him. We are taught in the Bible that Jesus knew men's lives, even their secret history (John 4:16-19), that He knew the secret thoughts of men, knew all men, knew what was in man (Mark 2:8; Luke 5:22; John 2:24-25), which knowledge we are distinctly told in 2 Chronicles 6:30 and Jeremiah 17:9-10, that God alone possesses. We are told in so many words in John 16:30 that Jesus knew "all things," and in Colossians 2:3 we find that in Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Omnipresence is also ascribed to Him. We are told in Matthew 18:20 that where two or three are gathered together in His Name, that He is in the midst of them, and in Matthew 28:20 that wherever His obedient disciples should go, He would be with them, even unto the end of the age,

and in John 14:20 and 2 Corinthians 13:5 we are told that He dwells in each believer, in all the millions of believers scattered over the earth. In Ephesians 1:23 we are told that He "filleteth all in all."

Eternity is also ascribed to Him. We are told in John 1:1 that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In John 8:58 Jesus Himself said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." Note that the Lord Jesus did not merely say that "before Abraham was I was," but that "before Abraham was, I AM," thus declaring Himself to be the eternal "I AM." Even in the Old Testament we have a declaration of the eternity of the Christ who was to be born in Bethlehem. In Micah 5:2 we read, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." And in Isaiah 9:6 we are told of the child that is to be born, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." And in Hebrews 13:8 we are told, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

His immutability is also taught in the passage just quoted from Hebrews, and in the first chapter of the same book, in verses eleven and twelve, we find that while even the heavens change, the Lord Jesus does not change. The exact words are, "They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as cloth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

Each one of the five distinctively Divine attributes were ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ. And in Colossians 2:9 we are told in so many words, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily [in a bodily form]." Here again we might rest our case, for what has been said under this heading, even if taken alone, clearly proves the absolute Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. It shows that He possesses every perfection of nature and character that God the Father possesses.

#### Divine Offices

But we do not need to rest the case here. There is a third unanswerable line of proof that Jesus Christ is God, namely, all the distinctively Divine offices are predicated of Jesus Christ. There are seven distinctively Divine offices. That is to say, there are seven things that God alone can do, and each one of these seven distinctively Divine offices is ascribed to Jesus Christ. The seven distinctively Divine offices are: Creation, Preservation, Forgiveness of Sin, the Raising of the Dead, the Transformation of Bodies, Judgment and the Bestowal of Eternal Life, and each of these is ascribed to Jesus Christ.

Creation is ascribed to Him. In Hebrews 1:10 these words are spoken of our Lord: "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands." The context clearly shows that the Lord addressed is the Lord Jesus. In John 1:3 we are told that "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Preservation of the universe and of everything is also ascribed to Him in Hebrews 1:3 where it is said of the Lord Jesus, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person [God's], and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

The forgiveness of sin is ascribed to Him. He Himself says in Mark 2:5-10 when His power to forgive sins was questioned, because that was recognized as a Divine power, "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins."

The future raising of the dead is distinctly ascribed to him in John 6:39, John 6:44, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

The transformation of our bodies is ascribed to Him in Php\_3:21. In 2 Timothy 4:1 judgment is ascribed to Him. We are told that He shall "judge the quick and the dead." Jesus Himself declared that He would be the judge of all mankind and emphasized the fact of the Divine character of that office. In John 5:22-23 He said, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." The bestowal of eternal life is ascribed to Him time and time again. In John 10:28 He Himself says, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," and in John 17:1-2, He says, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Here then, we have the seven distinctively Divine offices all predicated of Jesus Christ. This alone would prove that He is God, and we might rest the case here, but there are still other proofs of His absolute Deity.

Statements Which in the Old Testament Are Made Distinctly of Jehovah, God, Taken in the New Testament to Refer to the Lord Jesus Christ

The fourth line of proof of the absolute Deity of Jesus Christ is found in the fact that over and over again statements which in the Old Testament are made distinctly of Jehovah, God, are taken in the New Testament to refer to Jesus Christ. We have not time to illustrate this at length, but will give but one illustration where many might be given. In Jeremiah 11:20 the prophet says, "But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause." Here the prophet distinctly says that it is Jehovah of Hosts Who judgest and triest the reins and the heart. And in the 17th chapter and the tenth verse Jeremiah represents Jehovah Himself as saying the same thing in these words, "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." But in the New Testament in Revelation 2:23 the Lord Jesus says, "...I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." We are distinctly told in the context that it is "The Son of God" who is speaking here. So Jesus claims for Himself in the New Testament what the Lord in the Old Testament says is true of Himself and of Himself alone. In very many other instances, statements which in the Old Testament are made distinctly of God the Father, are taken to refer to Jesus Christ. That is to say, in New Testament thought and doctrine, Jesus Christ occupies the place that God the Father occupies in Old Testament thought and doctrine.

The Way the Name of God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son Are Coupled Together

The fifth line of proof of the absolute Deity of our Lord is found in the way in which the name of Jesus Christ is coupled with that of God the Father. In numerous passages His name is coupled

with the name of God the Father in a way in which it would be impossible to couple the name of any finite being with that of the Deity. We have time for but a few of the many illustrations that might be given. A striking instance is in the words of our Lord Himself in John 14:23 where we read, "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Here our Lord Jesus does not hesitate to couple Himself with the Father in such a way as to say "We," that is, God the Father and I, will come and make our abode with him. In John 14:1 He said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." If Jesus Christ was not God, this is shocking blasphemy. There is absolutely no middle ground between admitting the Deity of Jesus Christ and charging Christ with the most daring and appalling blasphemy of which any man was ever guilty.

#### Divine Worship to be Given to Jesus Christ

There is a sixth line of proof of the absolute Deity of our Lord Jesus. Those already given have been decisive, each one of the five have been decisive, but this, if possible, is the most decisive of them all, and that is that we are taught in so many words that Jesus Christ should be worshipped as God, both by angels and men. In numerous places in the gospels we see Jesus Christ accepting without hesitation a worship which good men and angels declined with fear and which He Himself taught should be rendered only to God (Matthew 28:9; Luke 24:52; Matthew 1:1; Acts 10:25-26; Revelation 22:8-9; Matthew 4:9-10). A curious and very misleading comment is made in the margin of the American Standard Revision upon the meaning of the word translated "worship" in these passages, and that is that "the Greek word translated worship denotes an act of reverence, whether paid to a 'creature' or to the 'Creator.'"

Now this is true, but it is utterly misleading; for while this word is used to denote "an act of reverence paid to a creature" by idolaters, our Lord Jesus Himself distinctly says, using exactly the same Greek word, "thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," and on the other hand he says in John 5:23 that "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the father."

And in Revelation 5:8-13 the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders are represented as falling down before the Lamb and offering worship to Him just as worship is offered to Him that sitteth upon the throne, that is, God the Father. In Hebrews 1:6 we are told in so many words, "And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."

One night in the inquiry room in Chicago I stepped up to an intelligent looking man at the back of the room and said to him, "Are you a Christian?" He replied, "I do not suppose you would consider me a Christian." I said, "Why not?" He said, "I am a Unitarian." I said, "What you mean then is that you do not think that Jesus Christ is a person that should be worshipped." He replied, "That is exactly what I think," and added, "the Bible nowhere says we ought to worship Him." I said, "Who told you that?" He replied, "My pastor," mentioning a prominent Unitarian minister in the city of Boston. I said, "Let me show you something," and I opened my Bible to Hebrews 1:6 and read, "And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." And he said, "Does it say that?" I handed him the Bible and said, "Read it for yourself," and he read it and said, "I did not know that was in the Bible." I said, "Well it is there, isn't it?" "Yes it is there." Language could not make it plainer. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus, the

Son of God, is to be worshipped as God by angels and men, even as God the Father is worshipped.

#### Incidental Proofs of the Deity of Jesus Christ

The six lines of proof of the Deity of Jesus Christ which I have given you leave no possibility of doubting that Jesus Christ is God, that Jesus of Nazareth is God manifest in a human person, that He is a being to be worshipped, even as God the Father is worshipped. But there are also incidental proofs of His absolute Deity which, if possible, are in some ways even more convincing than the direct assertions of His Deity.

1. Our Lord Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Now any one that makes a promise like that must either be God, or a lunatic, or an impostor. No one can give rest to all who labor and are heavy laden who come to him unless he is God, and yet Jesus Christ offers to do it. If He offers to do it and fails to do it when men come to Him, then He is either a lunatic or an impostor. If He actually does it, then beyond a question, He is God. And thousands can testify that He really does it. Thousands and tens of thousands who have labored and were heavy laden and crushed, and for whom there was no help in man, have come to Jesus Christ and He actually has given them rest. Surely then He is not merely a great man, but He is in fact God.

2. Again in John 14:1 Jesus Christ demands that we put the same faith in Him that we put in God the Father and promises that in such faith we will find a cure for all trouble and anxiety of heart. His words are, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." It is clear that He demands the same absolute faith to be put in Himself that is to be put in God Almighty. Now in Jeremiah 17:5, Scripture with which our Lord Jesus was perfectly familiar, we read "Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man," and yet with this clear curse pronounced upon all who trust in man, Jesus Christ demands that we put trust in Him just as we put trust in God. It is the strongest possible assertion of Deity on His part. No one but God has a right to make such a demand, and Jesus Christ, when He makes this demand, must either be God or an impostor; but thousands and tens of thousands have found that when they did believe in Him just as they believe in God, their hearts were delivered from trouble no matter what their bereavement or circumstances might be.

3. Again, the Lord Jesus demanded supreme and absolute love for Himself. It is clear as day that no one but God has a right to demand such a love, but there can be no question that Jesus did demand it. In Matthew 10:37 He said to His disciples, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me," and in Luke 14:26, Luke 14:33, he says. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." There can be no question that this is a demand on Jesus' part of supreme and absolute love to Himself, a love that puts even the dearest relations of life in an entirely secondary place. No one but God has a right to make any such demand, but our Lord Jesus made it, and therefore, He must be God.

4. In John 10:30 the Lord Jesus claimed absolute equality with the Father. He said, "I and my Father are one."

5. In John 14:9 our Lord Jesus went so far as to say, "...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He claims here to be so absolutely God that to see Him is to see the Father Who dwelleth in Him.

6. In John 17:3 He says, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." In other words, He claims that the knowledge of Himself is as essential a part of eternal life as knowledge of God the Father.

#### Conclusion

There is no room left to doubt the absolute Deity of Jesus Christ. It is a glorious truth. The Saviour in Whom we believe is God, a Saviour for Whom nothing is too hard, a Saviour Who can save from the uttermost and save to the uttermost. Oh, how we should rejoice that we have no merely human Saviour, but a Saviour Who is absolutely God in all of His fulness and perfection.

On the other hand, how black is the guilt of rejecting such a Saviour as this! Whoever refuses to accept Jesus as his Divine Saviour and Lord is guilty of the enormous sin of rejecting a Saviour Who is God. Many a man thinks he is good because he never stole, or committed murder, or cheated. "Of what great sin am I guilty?" he complacently asks. Have you ever accepted Jesus Christ? "No." Well, then, you are guilty of the awful and damning sin of rejecting a Saviour Who is God.

"But," you answer, "I do not believe that He is God." That does not change the fact nor lessen your guilt before God. Questioning a fact or denying a fact never changes it, regardless of what Mary Baker Eddy may say to the contrary.

Suppose a man had a wife who was one of the noblest, purest, truest women that ever lived, would her husband's questioning her purity and nobility change the fact? It would not. It would simply make that husband guilty of awful slander; it would simply prove that man to be an outrageous scoundrel.

So, denying the Deity of Jesus Christ does not make His Deity any less a fact, but it does make the denier of His Deity guilty of awful, incredible blasphemous slander against the Lord God of Heaven. It also proves that you who deny His Deity to be \_\_\_\_\_. I leave your own conscience to finish the sentence thus begun.

## The Fool's Creed

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THE FOOL'S CREED By R. A. Torrey "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Psalms 14:1. OUR subject to-night is The Fool's Creed. Every intelligent man has a creed. You hear men in our days inveighing against creeds, but every man who thinks has a creed. A man's creed is what a man believes, and every man who thinks at all must believe something. The only man who believes nothing is the man whose mind is a perfect blank the utter idiot. If any man says, "I believe nothing," he is either mistaken or deliberately lying. If he believes what he says to be true, when he says "I believe nothing," then he must at least believe that he believes nothing, and in that case he is, of course, mistaken when he says that he believes nothing. But if he is not mistaken when he says "I believe nothing," then it cannot be that he believes that he believes nothing, and in saying "I believe nothing," he is saying what he does not believe; in plain English, he is lying. To think is to believe, and the only man of whom it can be truly said he does not believe any thing is the idiot. Our subject, however, to-night is not creeds in general, but a specific creed, The Fool's Creed. You will find a brief and plain statement of The Fool's Creed in Psalms 14:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." The fool's creed has at least the merit of brevity, you can put it in two words, "no God." There is a great cry in our day for short creeds. The fool's creed ought to satisfy this demand. He has reduced his creed to two short words, to five letters, "no God." Why is the one who says in his heart "no God" a fool, or rather, why is he not merely a fool but "the fool," the fool of fools, the one consummate fool?

I. THE MAN WHO SAYS THERE IS NO GOD IS A FOOL, BECAUSE THERE IS A GOD. The first reason why the man who says there is no God is a fool is because there is a God. The proofs of the existence of a God, of an intelligent and beneficent Creator and Governor of the physical and moral universe are manifold and conclusive.

1. First of all, the observed facts of the physical universe point conclusively to the existence of an intelligent and beneficent creator and governor of that universe. There are four kingdoms in the universe as modern science investigates and knows it: (1) the inorganic kingdom, i.e., the non-living world with its mechanical and chemical forces; (2) the vegetable kingdom; (3) the animal kingdom; (4) man. The inorganic kingdom is the least wonderful of all, yet how wonderful even it is in its vastness, in its conformity to law, in its structure and its operations, in the mechanical and chemical forces, ever working out such beneficent results. But when we come to the vegetable kingdom we take a great step upward into a kingdom whose unveiled mysteries fill the soul with increasing admiration and astonishment the more we explore them. The laws of nutrition, of growth and reproduction, how marvellous they are. Even the smallest of the plants, the plants that can be seen only with the aid of the microscope present models of symmetry, proportion and beauty that man can only try to imitate but cannot succeed in imitating. When we come to the animal kingdom we see superadded to the wonders of nutrition, growth and reproduction the still greater wonders of sensation and instinct. But take the last step upward to man, and we have superadded to these wonders the wonders of man's intellectual, moral and spiritual powers. Now all these things must be accounted for. We live in a wonderful world. The more we study it the

more wonderful it appears, until it leads us on and out into the infinite, and until we see new meaning in the words of Psalms 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork," and in the words of Paul in Romans 1:20, "For the invisible things of Him (i.e., God) since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived from the things that are made, even His everlasting power and Divinity; that they may be without excuse." More and more as our knowledge enlarges do we find that everything has its use, even down to the house fly, or the infusoria in the brook. Everything performs its functions according to law, from the sun one million two hundred and eighty-three thousand times as large as the earth and moving through space with incredible rapidity, down to the microscopic cilia of some simple form of life that sway lazily to and fro. Even the seeming monstrosities of nature are in accordance with law. It takes no profound knowledge of nature to see manifold adaptations to intelligent purpose. Take for example, the eye, the most marvellous camera obscura that was ever constructed, with its wonderful chemical and mechanical and sensory arrangement for vision, protection, and voluntary and involuntary use. Take the bird, with its hollow bones, its light feathers rendered waterproof by oil secretions. A scientific acquaintance with nature enlarges our view. The telescope can find no spaces so vast that order and law cease, nor can the microscope discover particles so small that they lack in symmetry, beauty and adaptation to their end. We live in a universe of law, beauty and utility. Now comes the question, how did this universe come to be as it is to-day. There are four possible suppositions about it :

(1) First, that it was always as it is now.

(2) Second, that it came to be as it is by chance, that the atoms that constitute the universe, in their eternal dance, have at last assumed their present associations and relations.

(3) Third, that there existed from all eternity certain material atoms containing in themselves the power of uniting and acting upon one another and developing into the present condition of the universe.

(4) Fourth, that the universe is the work of God. This covers all the possible suppositions. Which is the true one? The first we know to be false. We know that the universe was not always as it is. The second is easily seen to be false. There is a chance that the atoms that constitute the universe in their eternal dance might assume the present associations and relations displayed in such marvellous orderliness, obedience to law, perfection of construction, and adaptation to intelligent ends. I say there may be a chance that that is true, but while there is one chance that it might be so, there is an infinite number of chances against it. The bringing in of infinite ages in which it might happen does not help the theory, for while there might be one chance of our living in that particular age in which it did happen, there would be an infinite number of chances against it. Now the man who chooses to believe that in favour of which there is one chance, and against which there are an infinite number of chances can be justly characterized as in our text, "a fool." What would you call a man who believed that Webster's dictionary was not the intelligent product of a reasonable being, or a number of reasonable beings, but that the letters that constitute it were thrown down by chance and happened to fall into the shape we find them in the dictionary? There is only one word in the English language by which you would dream of characterizing such a man, you would call him a fool. But the theory that Webster's dictionary came to be in that way would not be a fractional part so foolish as the theory that the atoms that constitute this universe in their

eternal dance at last assumed their present associations and relations displayed in such marvellous orderliness, obedience to law, and perfection of construction, and adaptation to intelligent ends, as we now find in the physical universe. The third theory, viz., that there existed from all eternity certain material atoms containing in themselves the power of uniting and acting upon one another and developing into the present condition of the universe, is untenable :

First, because if the atoms had existed from all eternity with the inherent power of combining into the present universe, they would have combined into it ages ago.

Second, because, while we have abundant experience of the construction of works exhibiting design by intelligent agents, we have absolutely no experience of unintelligent atoms having power of combining themselves into works exhibiting the marks of intelligence. Suppose one should attempt to throw a thousand dice and have them all turn up sixes, and succeed, what would you say? Every intelligent man would say the dice were loaded. But who loaded the dice of the universe? It is evident the third theory will not hold.

We have only the fourth theory remaining, viz., that the universe is the work of an intelligent and beneficent Creator. There is a God. The theory of evolution does not in the least affect the argument. If the theory of evolution were true it would only show the wonderful method by which this intelligent and beneficent Creator worked out His plans.

2. Not only do the observed facts of the physical universe point conclusively to the existence of God, the facts of history point to the same thing. The hand of an intelligent, beneficent, just governor of the destinies of men is clearly seen in history, not only in Bible history but in all secular history as well. Anyone who carefully studies history will see that throughout the whole history of the race, as Coleridge puts it, "one increasing purpose runs." We see that above the human actors, kings, generals, statesmen, and commoners trying to carry out their own ambitions and purposes, there has been the guiding hand of One who has made even the wrath of men to praise Him, and who has worked out good from the lowest ambitions and vilest passions of men. Cities, kings, dynasties, and empires fall, but history marches right on to the goal that God has set for it the kingdom of God on earth.

3. The Bible as it lies before us proves that there is a God. Here is a book altogether unique to be accounted for. It must have an author. It is entirely different from any book, or all books, men have written it differs from them in its fulfilled prophecies, it differs from them in its indestructibility and invulnerability against all assaults ; it differs from them in the purity and loftiness and comprehensiveness of its teachings; it differs from them in its power to save men and nations; it differs from them in its inexhaustible depths of wisdom and truth. This book, to anyone who will study it deeply and thoroughly and candidly, is manifestly not man's book. Whose book then is it? The more I study this book the more overwhelmingly convinced I am that there must be a God back of it.

4. Individual experience proves that there is a God.

(1) Individual experience regarding answered prayer proves this. If I should go to a hole in the wall and order beefsteak rare, and beefsteak rare should be passed out, and then order mutton chops and mutton chops should be passed out, and some other time should order turkey and cranberry sauce, and turkey and cranberry sauce should be passed out, and if this should go on day after

day, and what I ordered was passed out, I should certainly soon conclude that there was some intelligent person there attending to my orders, even though I saw no one. This is my exact experience with God. There have been many things that I have needed, that I have gone to God alone about and have told him of the need, and no human being knew of the need, and He has supplied the need, supplied it oftentimes in such a way that the connection between the prayer and the thing obtained was of such a character that it was clear that the prayer brought the gift. There have been times in my life when I have risked everything that men hold dear upon there being a God who answered prayer on the conditions laid down in the Bible. I have staked my health and that of my family, my temporal needs, my reputation, everything that men hold dear for time and eternity, on God's answering prayer on the conditions laid down in the Bible, and I have won. For sixty years George Mueller housed and fed orphans by the thousand and secured the supplies for the work entirely by prayer. No one was ever told of the need, no one but God, and not one penny of debt was ever incurred; and money and supplies came, oftentimes came only at the last moment, sometimes came when it would seem impossible that they should come on time, but there was never a day nor a meal in which God failed to answer prayer.

(2) Individual experience in regard to salvation proves that there is a God. Lost men, men utterly lost, men with,, whom every human effort to save has failed, have at last cast themselves upon God, the God of the Bible, the God who could only be approached through Jesus Christ, God in Christ, and have found salvation, such a salvation as God alone could work. They have been recreated, made new creatures, they have been raised from the dead. The man who in anything proceeds upon the supposition that there is a God, just such a God as the Bible pictures, will always find this supposition works well in practice. To sum up thus far, the observed facts of the physical universe, the facts of history, the absolutely unique and undeniable character of the Bible, and individual experience all prove to a demonstration that there is a God. Therefore, he that says "no God" is a fool.

II. THE MAN WHO SAYS THERE IS NO GOD IS A FOOL BECAUSE NOT ONLY IS THERE A GOD, BUT IT IS WELL THAT THERE IS. In the second place, the man who says in his heart that there is no God is a fool, not only because there is a God but also because it is well that there is a God.

Please notice that it is "in his heart" that the fool says, "no God" ; i.e., he denies the existence of God because he does not wish to believe that there is a God. For a man to wish that there were no God shows him to be a fool because there not only is a God, but it is well that there is, and to wish that there were not is a mark of consummate folly. If there is a God, a God such as the Bible describes, the present life and the future life is full of brightness and hope to anyone who will take the right attitude toward that God; but if there is no God, then the sun has gone out of the heavens and a darkness that can be felt broods over the universe. If there is no God we know nothing of what is in store for us, the present apparent harmony and orderliness of the universe may cease any moment, and all plunge into chaos. If there is no God history has no guiding hand and no certain destiny. If there is no God, reason and thought, conscience and right, purity and love have no certain and eternal basis. If there is no God we have no security for a moment that blind fate that rules all may not seize, and rend and crush us and plunge us into dark, unutterable, eternal misery. This is a true picture of our position in the universe if there is no God. What intelligent man would wish to live in a universe without a God? Surely it is the fool, the fool of fools, the

consummate fool of the ages, who says in his heart, "no God." There are many who do not say with their lips, "no God," but who say it in their "heart." They are not theoretical atheists, but they are practical atheists. Anyone who does not surrender his will to God is a practical atheist. Anyone in this building to-night who has not surrendered to God is practically saying in his heart, "there is no God," and is, therefore, a fool. To sum up there is a God. Thank God that there is. There is just such a God as the Bible reveals. There is then but one right thing, but one wise thing for any man here to-night to do, that is surrender to His will. The only path of wisdom in the face of the proven facts, is to give ourselves in utter obedience to Him, and to accept as our mediator Him whom God has set forth to be the mediator between us and Him self, accept Him whom He has provided to be a sin-bearer, as our sin-bearer, accept Him whom He has exalted to be both Lord and King, as our Lord and King to-night. Who will do it? Who will do it now?

## The Great Attraction - The Uplifted Christ

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The Great Attraction:

The Uplifted Christ

by REUBEN ARCHER TORREY—1856-1928

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself — John 12:32.

IN A RECENT ADVERTISEMENT OF A Sunday evening service in one of our American cities it was stated that there would be three attractions: a high-class movie show, a popular gospel pianist and his wife, rendered by a well-known prima donna. It is somewhat startling when an unusually gifted and popular preacher, or his advertising committee, thinks of the gospel of the Son of God as having so lost its power to draw, that it must be bolstered up by putting on a selection from a very questionable opera, rendered by a professional opera singer, as an additional attraction to help out our once crucified and now glorified Savior and Lord.

This advertisement set me to thinking as to what really was the great attraction to men in this day as well as in former days? At once there came to my mind the words of our text containing God's answer to this question: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." There is nothing else that draws like the uplifted Christ. Movies may get a crowd of empty-headed and empty-hearted young men and maidens, and even middle-aged folks without brains or moral earnestness, for a time, but nothing really draws and holds the men and women who are worthwhile like Jesus Christ lifted up. Nineteen centuries of Christian history prove the drawing power of Jesus when He is properly presented to men. I have seen some wonderful verification of the assertion of our text as to the marvelous drawing power of the uplifted Christ.

In London, for two continuous months, six afternoons and evenings each week, I saw the great Royal Albert Hall filled and even jammed, and sometimes as many turned away as got in, though it would seat 10,000 people by actual count and stand 2,000 more in the dome. On the opening night of these meetings a leading reporter of the city of London came to me before the service began and said, "You have taken this building for two consecutive months?" "Yes." "And you expect to fill it every day?" "Yes." "Why," he said, "no one has ever attempted to hold two weeks' consecutive meetings here of any kind. Gladstone himself could not fill it for two weeks. And you really expect to fill it for two months?" I replied, "Come and see." He came and he saw.

On the last night, when the place was jammed to its utmost capacity and thousands outside clamored for admission, he came to me again and I said, "Has it been filled?" He smiled and said, "It has." But what filled it? No show on earth could have filled it once a day for many consecutive days. The preacher was no remarkable orator. He had no gift of wit and humor, and would not have exercised it if he had. The newspapers constantly called attention to the fact that he was no orator, but the crowds came and came and came. On both rainy days, and fine days they crowded in or stood outside, oftentimes in a downpour of rain, in the vain hope of getting in. WHAT DREW

THEM? The uplifted Christ preached and sung in the power of the Holy Spirit, given in answer to the daily prayers of 40,000 people scattered throughout the earth.

In Liverpool, the Tournament Hall, that was said to seat 20,000 people, and that by actual count seated 12,500 comfortably, located in a very out-of-the-way part of the city, several blocks from the nearest street-car line, and perhaps half a mile from all the regular street-car lines, was filled night after night for three months, and on the last night they crowded 15,000 people into the building at seven o'clock, and then emptied it, and crowded another 15,000 in who had been patiently waiting outside; 30,000 people drawn in a single night! By what? By whom? Not by the preacher, not by the singer, but by Him who had said nearly nineteen hundred years before, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."

### The Exact Meaning of the Text

Let us now look at the exact meaning of the text.

First, notice who is the speaker, and what were the circumstances under which He spoke? The Speaker was our Lord Jesus. Not the Christ of men's imaginings, but the Christ of reality, the Christ of actual historic fact. Not the Christ of Mary Baker Eddy's maudlin fancy, or of Madam Besant's mystical imaginings, but the Christ of actuality, who lived here among men and was seen, heard and handled by men, and who was soon to die a real death to save real sinners from a real hell and a real heaven.

The circumstances were these. Certain Greeks among those who went up to worship at the Jewish feast came to one of the apostles, Philip, and said, "We would see Jesus" (John 12:21). And Philip went to Andrew and told Andrew what these Greeks said. Andrew and Philip together came and told Jesus. In the heart-cry of these Greeks, "We would see Jesus," our Lord recognized the yearning of the universal heart, the heart of Greek, as well as Jew, for a satisfying Savior. The Greeks had their philosophers and sages, their would-be satisfiers and saviors, the greatest the world has ever known-Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Epictetus, Epimenides, and many others-but they did not save, and they did not satisfy, and the Greeks cried, "We would see JESUS." In their eager coming Jesus foresaw the millions of all nations who would flock to Him when He had been crucified as the universal Savior, meeting all the needs of all mankind, and so He cried, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."

In the second place, notice the words, "If I be lifted up." To what does Jesus refer? The next verse answers the question. "But this he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die" (John 12:33). Jesus referred to His lifting up on the cross, to die as an atoning Savior for all mankind. This verse is often quoted as if it meant that, if we lifted up Christ in our preaching, He would draw men. That is true, and it is a crying shame that we do not hold just Him up more in our preaching, and we would draw far more people if we did; but that is not our Lord's meaning. The lifting up clearly referred not to His not being lifted up by His enemies on the cross, to expose Him to awful shame and to an agonizing death. It is Christ crucified who draws; it is Christ crucified who meets the deepest needs of the heart of all mankind. It is an atoning Savior, a Savior who atones for the sins of men by His death, and thus saves from the holy wrath of an infinitely holy God, who meets the needs of men, and thus draws all men, for all men are sinners. Preach any Christ but a crucified Christ, and you will not draw men for long. Preach any gospel but a gospel of atoning

blood, and it will not draw for long.

Unitarianism does not draw men. Unitarian churches are born only to die. Their corpses strew New England today. Many of their ministers have been intellectually among the most brilliant our country has ever known, but their churches even under scholarly and brilliant ministers die, die, die. Why? Because Unitarianism presents a gospel without atoning blood, and Jesus has said and history has proven it true, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself"

"Christian Science," strangely so called, for as has been often truly said, "is neither Christian nor scientific," draws crowds of men and women of a certain type, men and women who have or imagine that they have physical ailments, and who will follow anything no matter how absurd, that promises them a little surcease from their real or imagined pains. It also draws crowds who wish to fancy that they have some religion without paying the price of true religion, genuine love, real self-sacrifice, and costly sympathy. But Christian Science does not draw all men, that is, all kinds and conditions and ranks of men. In fact for the most part it does not draw men at all, but women, and the alleged men it draws are for the most part women in trousers, and men who see any easy way to make a living by preying upon the credulity of luckless females. No, a bloodless gospel, a gospel with a Christ but not a Christ lifted up on a cross, does not meet the universal needs of men, and so does not draw all men.

Congregationalism of late years has been sadly tainted with Unitarianism. In spite of the fact that it has been an eye-witness to Unitarianism's steady decay and death, Congregationalism has largely dropped the atoning blood out of its theology, and consequently it is rapidly going to the wall. Its once great Andover Seminary, still great in the size of its endowment that was given for the teaching of Bible orthodoxy, but which the conscienceless teachers of a bloodless theology have deliberately taken for the exploitation of their "damnable heresies" (2 Peter 2:1), and which is still great in the number of its professors, graduated at their annual graduating exercises last spring just three men, one a Japanese, one a Hindu, and one an American. A theology without a crucified Savior, without the atoning blood, won't draw. It does not meet the need. No, no, the words of our Lord are still true, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."

Note, in the third place, the words, "Draw all men." Does "all men" mean all individuals or men of all races? Did Jesus mean that every man and woman who lived on this earth would be drawn to Him, or did He mean that men of all races would be drawn to Him? The context answers the question. The Greeks, as we have seen, came to one of the apostles, Philip, and said, "We would see Jesus," and Philip had gone and told Andrew, and Andrew and Philip had gone and told Jesus. Our Lord's ministry during His earthly life was to Jews only, and in the coming of these Greeks so soon before His death, our Lord saw the presage of the coming days when by His death on the cross the barrier between Jews and Gentiles would be broken down and all nations would have their opportunity equally with the Jews, when by His atoning death on the cross men of all nations would be drawn to Him. He did not say that He would draw every individual, but that all races of men: Greeks as well as Jews, Romans, Scythians, French, English, Germans, Japanese, Americans, and men of all nations. He is a universal Savior, and true Christianity is a universal religion. Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and all other religions, but Christianity, are religions of a restricted application. Christianity, with a crucified Christ as its center, is a universal religion that meets the needs of all mankind. It meets the needs of the European as well as the

needs of the Asiatic, the needs of the Occident as well as the needs of the Orient, the needs of the American Indian and the needs of the African Negro; and so our Lord said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."

No race has ever been found anywhere on this earth to which the gospel did not appeal and whose deepest need the crucified Christ did not meet. Many years ago, when Charles Darwin, the eminent English scientist, came in contact with the Terre del Fuegians in their gross degradation, he publicly declared that here was a people to whom it was vain to send missionaries, as the gospel could not do anything for them. But brave men of God went there and took the gospel to them in the power of the Holy Spirit, and demonstrated that it met the need of the Terre del Fuegians, with such grave results that Charles Darwin publicly admitted his mistake and became a regular subscriber to the work.

The gospel, with a crucified Christ as its center, meets the needs of all conditions and classes of men as well as of all races. It meets the need of the millionaire and the need of the pauper; it meets the need of great men of science like James D. Dana our Lord Kelvin, and the need of the man or woman who cannot read nor write; it meets the need of the king on the throne and the need of the laborer in the ditch. I myself have seen with my own eyes noblemen and servant girls, university deans and men who could scarcely read, prisoners in penitentiaries and leaders in moral uplift, brilliant lawyers and dull plodding workingmen, come under its attraction, and be saved by its power. But it was only because I made "Christ crucified," His atoning work, the center of my preaching.

Notice in the fourth place, the words "Unto me." "I will draw all men unto me." The Revised Version reads "Unto myself," and that was just what Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." It is not to a creed or a system of doctrine that Jesus draws men, but to a Person, to Himself. That is what we need, a Person, Jesus Himself. As He Himself once said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Creeds and confessions of faith are all right in their place, they are of great value; the organized church is of great value, it is indispensable, and it is the most important institution in the world today; society would soon go to rack and ruin without it. We are all under solemn obligation to God and to our fellow-man to support the church and belong to it, but creeds and confessions of faith cannot save. The church cannot save. A Divine Person can save, Jesus Christ, and He alone. So He says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."

#### Why Christ Lifted Up on the Cross Draws All Men Unto Himself

But why does Christ lifted up on the cross, the crucified Christ, draw all men unto Himself? There are two reasons why Christ lifted up, and Christ crucified draws all men unto Himself.

First, Christ crucified draws all men unto Himself because Christ crucified meets the first, the deepest, the greatest and most fundamental need of man. What is man's first, greatest, deepest, most fundamental need? A Savior? A Savior from what? First of all, and underlying all else, a Savior from the guilt of sin. Every man of every race has sinned. As Paul put it in Romans 3:22-23, "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, at this point, nor is there any difference between English and German at this point, there is no difference between American and Japanese at this point, no

difference between the European and Asiatic, no difference between the American and the African. "There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Every man of every race is a sinner, "there is no difference" at this point. And every man shall have to answer for his sin to the infinitely holy God who rules this universe. Therefore, all men need an atoning Savior who can by His atoning death make propitiation for, and so cover up, our sins—thus reconciling us to this holy God, delivering us from His awful wrath, and bringing us out into the glorious sunlight of His favor. And Jesus lifted up is the only atoning Savior in the universe. He who alone was at the same time God and man, He alone can make atonement for sin. He has made it, has made a perfect atonement, and God has accepted His atonement and, testified to His acceptance of His atonement by raising Him from the dead. The Lord Jesus actually meets our need. He actually meets every man's first, greatest, deepest, most fundamental need, and He alone.

In all the universe there is no other religion but Christianity that even offers an atoning Savior. Mohammedanism offers Mohammed, "The Prophet," a teacher, but not a Savior. Buddhism offers Buddha, supposedly at least a wonderful teacher, "The Light of Asia," but not an atoning Savior. Confucianism offers Confucius, a marvelous teacher far ahead of his time, but not an atoning Savior. No religion offers an atoning Savior, offers an atonement of any real character, but Christianity. This is the radical point of difference between Christianity and every other religion in the world, yet some fool preachers are trying to eliminate from Christianity this, its very point of radical difference from all other religions. But such an emasculated Christianity will not reach the needs of men and will not draw men. It never has and it never will.

The Bible and history are at one at this point. Jesus Christ offers Himself lifted up on the cross to redeem us from the curse of the law, by "becoming a curse in our behalf." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is, every one that hangeth on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). Men know their need; they may try to forget it, they may try to deny it, they may try to drown their sense of it by drink and dissipation or by wild pleasure-seeking or wild money-getting, or by listening to fake preachers in supposedly orthodox pulpits, like one who in this city declared recently that, "the old sense of sin is fast disappearing," and added, "the change is for the better not for the worse." He spoke also of "imaginary and artificial sins like "the sin of unbelief," and then went on to say, "In this we agree with Christ," apparently not knowing enough about the Bible to know that Jesus Himself was the very one who said in John 16:8-9, "And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me." But in spite of all our attempts to drown or stupefy or silence our sense of sin, our consciousness of guilt before a Holy God, we all have it, and like Banquo's Ghost, it will not down. Nothing gives the guilty conscience abiding peace but the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. And so, Christ lifted up draws all men unto Him, and even wicked ministers of Satan, like the preacher I have just referred to, sometimes come to their senses and flee to the real Christ, Christ crucified, as I hope this one may. Yes, Jesus, Jesus only, Jesus lifted up on the cross, Jesus crucified for our sins, making full atonement for our sins, He and He alone meets the deepest need of us all, and so His cross draws us all unto Himself. Happy the man or the woman who yields to that drawing; woe be to the man or woman who resists that drawing; final gloom, despondency, and despair are their lot. Oh, how many men and women who have gotten their eyes opened to see the facts, to see their awful guilt, and who have been

plunged into deepest consequent despair, have come to me, and I have pointed them to Jesus on the cross and have shown them by God's Word all their sins laid upon Him and thus settled. They have come to Him and believed God's testimony about Him, that He, had borne all their sins in His own body on the cross, and they have found perfect peace and boundless joy. And that is the only way to find perfect peace and boundless joy.

Will you set out to find peace? If you do not, great gloom and utter despair, await you some day, in this world or in the world to come. In my first pastorate I tried to get a man to come to Christ lifted up to meet his need of pardon. Though this was many years ago, he held to the theology that is preached as "new theology" today. He sought to still the voice of conscience and stupefy his sense of sin by denying his guilt and his need of an atoning Savior. He did not wish to listen to me nor to see me. But the, hour came when death drew nigh. A cancer was eating its way through scalp and skull into his brain; then he cried to those about his dying bed, "Send for Mr. Torrey." I hurried to his side. He was in despair. "Oh!" he said, "Dr. Tidhall tells me that I have but a short time to live, that as soon as this cancer gets a little further and eats through the thin film of skull and touches the brain I am a dead man. Tell me how to be saved."

I tried to make as plain as I knew how the way of salvation through the uplifted Christ, Christ uplifted on the cross, and I think I know how to make it plain, but he had waited too long, he could not grasp it. I stayed with him. Night came on. I said to his family, "You have been up night after night with him, I will sit with him tonight." They instructed me what to do, how to minister to him. Time after time during the night I had to go to another room to get some nourishment for him, and as I would come back into the room where he lay, from his bed in the corner there would rise the constant cry, "Oh, I wish I were a Christian. Oh, I wish I were a Christian. Oh, I wish I were a Christian." And thus he died.

In the second place, Christ lifted up on the cross, Christ crucified draws all men unto Him, because lifted up there to die for us He reveals His wonderful love, and the wondrous love of the Father for us. "Hereby know we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16), and "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6, Romans 5:8). There is nothing that draws men like love. Love draws all men in every clime. But no other love draws like the love of God. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," has broken thousands of hard hearts.

One night, preaching in my own church in Minneapolis, the whole choir stayed for the after-meeting. The leading soprano was an intelligent young woman, but she was living a worldly life. She remained with the rest. In the after-meeting, her mother arose in the back of the church and said, "I wish you would pray for the conversion of my daughter." I did not look around but knew instinctively that her cheeks were flushing, and her eyes were flashing with anger. As soon as the meeting was dismissed, I hurried down so that I would meet her before she got out of the church. As she came toward me I held out my hand to her. She stamped her foot, and with flashing eyes cried, "Mr. Torrey, my mother knows better than to do that. She knows it will only make me worse." I said, "Sit down, Cora." She sat down, and without any argument I opened my Bible to Isaiah 53:5, and began to read, "But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." She

burst into tears, and the next night accepted Jesus Christ. I had to go to Duluth for a few days, and when I returned I found that she was seriously ill. One morning her brother came hurrying up to my home and said that she was apparently dying, that she was unconscious and white from the loss of blood. I hastened down. As I entered the room, she lay there with her eyes closed, with the whitest face I ever saw on one who was not actually dead. She was apparently unconscious, scarcely breathing. I knelt by her side to pray, more for the sake of the mother who stood beside the bed than for her, for I supposed that she was beyond help or hearing. But no sooner had I finished my prayer, than in a clear, full, richly musical tone she began to pray. These were about her words, "Heavenly Father, if it be Thy will, raise me up that as I have used my voice for myself and only to please myself, I may use my voice for Thy glory, but if in Thy wisdom Thou seest that it is best for me not to live, I shall be glad to go to be with Christ," and she went to be with Christ. Oh, I have seen thousands melted as I have repeated to them and shown them the picture of Christ on the cross, as told in Isaiah 53:5, "But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

A few days ago I received a missionary magazine containing a testimony from one who was going to Egypt under the Egypt General Mission. This young missionary said, "When I was twelve years old, during the Torrey-Alexander meetings, in 1904, I gave my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Torrey was speaking on the text, Isaiah 53:5, and he asked us to repeat the words with him, but changing the word "our" into the word "my." While repeating the text in this way I suddenly realized, as if for the first time, that Jesus had really suffered all this for me, and there and then I gave my life to Him."

Oh! men and women, look now! See Jesus Christ lifted up on the cross, see Him hanging on that awful cross, see Him wounded for your transgressions, bruised for your iniquities, and the chastisement of your peace laid on Him. Oh, men and women living in sin, men and women rejecting Christ for the world, men and women who have looked to the lies of Christian Science, Unitarianism and other systems that deny His atoning blood, Listen! "But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Won't you yield to that love, won't you give up your sin, give up your worldly pleasures, give up your willful errors, and accept the Savior who loves you and died for you, who was "Wounded for your transgressions; bruised for your iniquities" and upon whom the chastisement of your peace was laid? Accept Him right now.

## The Importance of Personal Soul Winning

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### The Importance of Personal Soul Winning

By Dr. R. A. Torrey

"He first findeth his own brother Simon.... And he brought him to Jesus."—John 1:41-42.

The one who brought his brother to Jesus was Andrew. We are not told that Andrew ever preached a sermon. If he did, the Holy Spirit did not think it worth putting on record. But this brother whom he brought to Jesus preached a sermon that led three thousand people to Jesus in one day.

Where would Simon Peter's sermon have been if it had not been for Andrew's personal work? The most important kind of Christian work is personal work. We envy the men who stand on the platform and speak to great crowds, but God pays more attention to the man who sits down with a single soul.

A blind woman came to my office in Chicago and said, "You don't think my blindness will keep me from doing Christian work, do you?"

I replied, "On the contrary. It might be a great help. A great many people, seeing your blindness, will come and sit down with you; then you can talk with them about the Saviour."

"That is not what I mean. When a woman can talk to five or six hundred, she doesn't want to spend time talking to one."

I answered, "Your Master could talk to five thousand at once, for we have it on record; but He didn't think it beneath His dignity to talk to one at a time."

Have you ever thought of the tremendous power there is in personal, hand-to-hand work?

One day a man in Boston had in his Sunday school class a boy fresh from the country. This dull boy knew almost nothing about the Bible. He didn't even know where to look to find the Gospel of John. He was very much put out because the other boys were bright boys and knew their Bibles, while he was just a green country boy.

But that Sunday school teacher had a heart full of love to Christ and perishing souls. One day he went down into the boot shop where that boy worked and asked him, "Would you like to be a Christian?"

The boy had never been approached that way before. Nobody had ever spoken to him about his soul. He said, "Yes, I would like to be a Christian."

And that Sunday school teacher explained what it meant to be a Christian, then said, "Let us pray."

They knelt down in the back of that boot shop, and the boy became a Christian. That boy was Dwight L. Moody.

If it had not been for Edward Kimball's faithful personal work, where would Dwight L. Moody and his great work throughout the world have been?

Who knows who there is in that little class of yours? Who knows what your ignorant little ragged boy may become? Teacher, make up your mind that you will at least make an honest effort to lead everyone in your Sunday school class to Christ. This world could soon be evangelized by personal work.

Let us suppose there are two thousand people in this audience this morning. Suppose every one of you became a personal worker. And suppose, by your very best effort, you only succeeded in leading one to Christ in a year, and that one led one to Christ the next year, and so on. What would be the result?

At the end of the year there would be 4,000; at the end of two years, 8,000; at the end of three years, 16,000; at the end of four years, 32,000; at the end of five years, 64,000; at the end of six years, 128,000; at the end of seven years, 256,000; and at the end of eight years your whole city would be won for Christ. At the end of thirty-five years every man, woman and child on the face of the earth would have heard the Gospel.

There is not one who cannot lead at least one to Christ this year. You can instruct everyone whom you lead to Christ to go out and be a soul winner. After you get hold of him, send him out, when converted, to lead another; and he bringing one, and that one bringing in another—you will soon touch the whole city.

I want to talk about the advantages of personal work.

The first advantage:

Anybody Can Do It

You cannot all preach. I am glad you can't. What an institution this world would be if we were all preachers!

You cannot all sing like Charles Alexander. I am glad you can't, for if you could, he would be no curiosity; and you would not come to hear him sing and give me a chance to preach to you!

You cannot all teach Sunday school classes. Some have an idea that any converted person can teach a Sunday school class. I don't believe it. I think we are making a great mistake in setting the unqualified to teaching.

But there is not a child of God who cannot do personal work. A mother with a large family knows she is not called to be a preacher (at least I hope she does); but she can do personal work better than anybody else in her home.

A lady came to me—she had five children—and said (I think she had been reading the life of Frances Willard), "I wish I could do some work like that for Christ."

I said, "You can work for Christ among all the people you are surrounded by."

I watched that woman. Every one of her children was brought to Christ—every one! Every maid who came to work in that home was dealt with about her soul. Every grocer's boy who came around to the door was dealt with about his soul. Every time she went out shopping, she made it a point to talk with the one behind the counter. And when, one dark day, death came into the home and took away a sweet little child, she did not forget to speak to the undertaker who came to do the last offices for the dead, about his soul. He told me that nothing had ever impressed him as that woman, in the midst of her sorrow, being interested in his soul.

An invalid can do personal work. I have a friend in New York City who has left a life of wealth and fashion to go out to work among the outcast.

One day she got hold of a poor outcast girl. The girl didn't live much over a year after that lady had led her to Christ. My friend took her to her home to die. As Delia was dying, she wrote to her friends, some in Sing Sing Prison, some in the Tombs of New York City—all her friends were among the criminal class—about Christ. Those who were not behind prison bars she invited to come and see her.

My friend told me, "There was a constant procession up the stairway to the outcast—women and men who came to see Delia. Before Delia died, one hundred of the most hopeless men and women in New York City she had led to Christ."

That puts us to shame! Suppose God kindled a fire right here in your hearts and you received the anointing of the Spirit of Christ, and every one of you should start out to do personal work; you would not need any evangelist to come from abroad.

We have come to stir you up to do it.

The second advantage:

You Can Do It in Any Place

You cannot preach in every place. You can preach in the churches two or three times a week; you can preach in the town hall occasionally; you can preach in the streets sometimes; but you cannot go down in the factories and preach often. You cannot go there and hold services, but you can go there and do personal work, if you press the point enough.

One man who came to our meetings in Liverpool from Hudson's dry soap factory was converted. Every once in awhile I get a letter telling me of meetings there in the factory. Now they conduct meetings outside the building.

In Bradley's foundry a workman got a card announcing the meetings. He could not come, so he handed it over to the most wicked man in the shop. That man was grateful for the invitation and thought he would go. He did and was converted at the very first meeting. He went back and told his companions, resulting in a revival in the foundry.

A telegraph messenger was converted in Manchester. Before we were through, seventy messenger boys were converted there. There is not a hotel or a factory or a public house where you cannot do personal work.

The third advantage:

## You Can Do It at Any Time

Certainly you cannot preach every hour of the day, but there is not an hour of the day or night when you cannot do personal work. You can go out on the streets at any time and find some poor wanderer.

When I lived in Minneapolis, I employed a woman missionary to go out on the streets to speak to the drunkards, to the outcast women, and to night workers. Some of the best conversions were among these people. She had been an outcast herself at one time; now she was leading others to Christ.

Soon after Mr. Moody was converted, he made up his mind that he would not let a day go by without speaking to someone about his soul.

One night he came home late—it was nearly ten o'clock. He realized he hadn't spoken to any man that day. He thought, I guess I have lost my chance. But looking out he saw a man standing in the lamplight. He thought, There's my chance. He hurried up to him and asked, "Are you a Christian?"

"It's none of your business. And if you were not sort of a preacher, I would knock you into the gutter."

"Well," Mr. Moody said, "I just wanted to lead you to Christ."

The next day this same man went to a friend of Mr. Moody's and said, "That man Moody has zeal without knowledge. He spoke to me on the street last night. He asked me if I were a Christian. It was none of his business. If he had not been sort of a preacher, I would have knocked him down. He is doing more harm than good."

Moody's friend came to Moody and said, "Moody, it is all right to be in earnest; but you have zeal without knowledge. You are doing more harm than good." (Let me say here, it is better to have zeal without knowledge than knowledge without zeal.)

Mr. Moody went away feeling rather cheap and crestfallen.

A few weeks passed. One night there was a pounding at his door. Moody got up and opened the door. There stood this very man he had witnessed to. He said, "Mr. Moody, I have not had a night's peace since you spoke to me that night under the lamp-post. I have come to ask you to show me how to be a Christian."

Mr. Moody took him in and showed him the way of life, and he was saved.

When the Civil War broke out, that man laid down his life for his country.

Another time the thought came to Moody after he was in bed, You have not spoken to your man today. But he argued with himself: I am in bed. I can't get up and go out now.

He could not rest, so he got up, dressed and opened the door. It was pouring rain. He thought, There is no use going out on the street this awful night. Not a soul will be out in this pouring rain.

Just then he heard the patter of a man's feet. As he came close, Mr. Moody rushed out and said, "Can I have the shelter of your umbrella?"

"Certainly."

"Have you a shelter in the time of storm?"—and he pointed the man to Jesus.

The fourth advantage:

It Reaches All Classes

In preaching, one has to be more or less general. In personal work, you have just one person to talk to, and you can hit the mark every time.

Henry Ward Beecher went out shooting with his father. He had often gone before, but he had never shot anything.

Way down yonder was a squirrel. His father said, "Henry, do you see that squirrel?"

"Yes, Father."

"Would you like to hit it?"

"Yes, Father; but I never hit anything in my life."

"You lay the barrel of your gun across the top rail down here and look right down along the barrel. Henry, do you see the squirrel?"

"Yes, Father."

"Well, pull the trigger."

He pulled the trigger, and the squirrel fell at the first shot—the first thing he ever shot in his life. Why? Because it was the first thing he had ever aimed at.

That is the trouble with a good deal of our preaching: we aim at nothing and hit it every time. This is the advantage of personal work: we aim at one definite person.

But in our preaching, as Mr. Moody used to say, "I speak to this lady on the front seat, and she passes it over her shoulder to the man back of her; he passes it to the woman back of him; she passes it to the man back of her. They keep passing it on till they pass it out the back door."

We have a wonderful power of applying the good points of a sermon to somebody else. When it comes to personal work, there is nobody else to apply it to.

I try to be personal in my preaching; but be as personal as I can, I can still miss my mark.

A man came to my church one morning who had been talking about "the deeper life." He had all the phraseology of the deepest Christian experience. He talked about being filled with the Spirit, yet cheated others in business. When I saw him coming in, I said to myself, I am glad you have come. I will hit you this morning. I have a sermon just adapted to you.

While I was preaching, I looked right at him so he would know I meant him. He sat there beaming up at me.

When the sermon was over, he came down to me rubbing his hands. He said, "Oh, Brother Torrey, I came eight miles to hear you this morning. I have so enjoyed it."

That was just what I did not want to hear: I wanted to make him miserable. But I had him now face-to-face, and he didn't enjoy it.

That is the advantage of personal work. You can aim right square at the mark and hit it.

The minister can preach all he pleases, but when he looks you right in the eye, you know it means you. It aims right straight at the mark and hits it.

The fifth advantage:

#### It Is Effective

Personal work succeeds where every other kind of work fails. I don't care who the preacher is, how good a preacher he may be; one not affected by the sermon will be reached by some very ordinary person with the love of God and of souls in his heart.

Take Mr. Moody, for example. I think he was as good a preacher as I ever heard. I would rather hear Mr. Moody preach a sermon that I had heard a dozen times than to hear any other man preach a sermon I had never heard. But as good a preacher as Mr. Moody was, thousands would go out utterly unmoved by his message.

I have seen uneducated, very ordinary working people with the love of Christ and of souls in their hearts get hold of a person who had gone out of Mr. Moody's meeting utterly untouched and in ten or fifteen minutes lead him to the Lord.

The sixth advantage:

#### It Meets the Specific Need of the Individual

After a man comes to Christ, he still may have difficulties and doubts, troubles and questions. He cannot ask them of the preacher. How often a man sits down in the audience and says to himself, I wish I could speak to that preacher alone.

In this personal, hand-to-hand work, a man can ask all the questions he wants to, and you can meet his difficulties. I am getting letters from people all over the world who have difficulties.

My father used to tell a story (he did not vouch for its truth) of a physician in the village who kept a certain jug. He took a little of every kind of medicine he had in his shop and put it in that jug, and then shook it up. When one came to him and he did not know just what his ailment was, he would give him a spoonful out of that jug, thinking, There is something in it that will meet his case anyhow.

We do that in our preaching. We take a little comfort and put it in the sermon, a little bit of conviction, a little bit to show the way of life, shake it all up and give it to the people.

If I were going to be doctored, I would want the doctor to find out my specific need.

In personal work you give specific passages of Scripture for specific difficulties.

The seventh advantage:

#### It Produces Abundant Results

In great services where the ministers may speak to 500 or 1,000 or 5,000, they do not produce as abundant results.

Suppose a man were pastor of a church of a hundred members; suppose he were a very faithful minister, and as a result of his preaching there were added fifty to his church each year on confession of faith. That would be a pretty good record.

Now suppose that pastor said, "I am going to train my people to do personal work," and he trained his people to do personal work. Suppose only one-half of them would consent to do it. Suppose these fifty trained workers only succeeded in winning one a month apiece to Christ. That would mean six hundred a year!

Friends, some of us think we pay the minister to do personal work. You do nothing of the kind. Your minister is your leader, and you are supposed to work under his leadership.

One reason why the church of which I am pastor always has a revival is that the people are trained to do personal work. We have had a revival ever since I have been pastor. There have been ten years of revival. There has never been a month that we have not received new members. We would not know what to make of it if there were a Sunday without conversions.

I do not think there has been any day in the week of all this time—3,650 days in all—that someone has not been won to Christ in or about the building.

The preacher who will preach in my absence will see conversions. In the Sunday school there will be conversions, as well as in the evening meeting tonight. Why? Because our people believe in and do personal work. Every Sunday while I preach, I know the unsaved are right near someone in that church who knows how to lead a soul to Christ. Workers are in every section of the church. I like it in Chicago, because just as surely as somebody gets up and leaves, I know at least one person will speak to him that night. Someone will drop down the stairs behind the one leaving and perhaps follow him a block or two before he speaks to that one.

Go to the people and ask God to give you power. The Holy Spirit is for every one of us. I do thank God that the great gift of the Holy Ghost is for every saved person. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Just ask; then go out. Of course, you need to know something about the Bible in order to do personal work, but you only need one or two texts to start with.

When Mr. Moody first came to New Haven, we thought we would go out and hear this strange, uneducated man. I was in the senior class in the theological department of the university, and was just about to take my B.D. degree. I knew more then than I will ever know in my life again! We thought we would patronize Mr. Moody a little bit.

He did not seem at all honored by our presence.

As we heard that untutored man, we thought, He may be uneducated, but he knows some things we don't. Some of us had sense enough to go to him and say, "Mr. Moody, we wish you would tell us how to do it." He told us to come round early the next night and he would tell us.

We theologues went up to the meeting. He said a few words to us, gave us a few texts of Scripture, then said, "You go at it!"

The best way to learn how to do it is to do it. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

If, however, you make a stupid blunder the first time, go at it again. But if you never start until you are sure you will not make a blunder, you will make the biggest blunder of your life.

Get alone with God first, and see if you are right with Him; put away every known sin out of your life, surrender absolutely to God, ask for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and then pitch in.

## The Most Important Question

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The Most Important Question by

R. A. Torrey

(1856-1928)

"What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" Matthew 27:22

If I should put to this audience tonight the question, What is the most important question of the day, I presume I would get a great variety of answers. Some of you would say that the disarmament question or the Four Power Treaty question was the most important question of the day. Some would say that the labor question was the most important question of the day. And still others would say that the Prohibition question was the most important question of the day, and so on. But all these answers would be wrong. There is another question of vastly more importance than any one of these, a question of the right decision on which immeasurably more depends than on the decision of any of these questions. That question is this, "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?"

It is not a new question. Pontius Pilate asked it nearly nineteen hundred years ago, and answered it wrong, and his earthly life went out in darkness, and his eternity was endless torment. Thousands on thousands have asked it since. A right decision to that question hangs everything that is really worth having for time and for eternity for each one of us. If you do the right thing with Jesus, the Christ of God, you will get everything that is really worth having for time as well as for eternity, whether a right decision is given on these various other questions or not. If you do the wrong thing with Jesus, the Christ of God, you will lose everything that is worth having for time as well as for eternity, even though all these other questions are answered correctly.

### I. What We Will Get if We Do the Right Thing with Jesus Christ

Let us look at some of the things that we will get if we do the right thing with Jesus Christ.

1. In the first place, if you do the right thing with Jesus you will get the forgiveness of all your sins. Peter says in Acts 10:43, "All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." Now this statement is as plain as day, and in it God's inspired apostle declares that "everyone who believes in" Jesus Christ "receives forgiveness of [his] sins." If the vilest sinner on earth would come in here tonight and would put his trust in Jesus Christ, the moment he did it all his sins would be forgiven, blotted out.

The forgiveness of our sins depends solely on what we do with Jesus Christ. It does not depend on our prayers or on our penances or on our good works. If you do the right thing with Jesus Christ you get forgiveness of all your sins, whatever else you may do or not do. If you do the wrong thing with Jesus Christ you will not get forgiveness of sins, whatever else you may do or not do. The same truth is put in a different way in John 3:18, "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but

whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

What an unspeakable blessing the forgiveness of all your sins is. Wealth, honors, pleasures, are not so eagerly to be desired as the forgiveness of our sins. All of them together are not to be compared with the forgiveness of our sins. Forgiveness of sin brings joy anywhere it comes, whether it be into the palace or into the prison cell. King David had wealth, honor, power, pleasures, and privileges without number, but he was not happy. Indeed, he was perfectly miserable. His own description of his condition is found in the Thirty-second Psalm, the third and fourth verses; "When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer." Then he found forgiveness of sin and in his joy he shouted, "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit" (Psalms 32:1-2).

Down in a wretched cell in Sing Sing Prison there was a man under a fifteen- year sentence for manslaughter. He was, of course, a very unhappy man. But there in his cell he got hold of a Bible and read it, and through the Bible the Holy Spirit showed him the Lord Jesus as his Savior who died in his place, and he accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior. It was in the middle of the night when he finally found the Savior through meditating on what he had read in the Word of God, and though it was in the middle of the night and in a prison cell, such joy came into his soul that he began to shout. The guard came along and rapped on his door and told him to keep still. "I can't keep still," he shouted back, "my sins are forgiven." Yes, there is a more wonderful joy in knowing that our sins are all forgiven than there is in anything that this world has to give.

And we get this forgiveness of sin by simply believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. In the second place, you will get peace of conscience by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. It is a blessed thing to have a conscience that does not accuse you, a conscience that has found perfect peace. It is an awful thing to have a conscience that accuses. It is the greatest misery on earth. It drives many men and many women to suicide. Oh, in what agony of mind men and women have come to me from different ranks of society because of an accusing conscience. And there are many who never unburden their hearts to others who are in misery from the same cause. There are men and women here tonight who spend days and nights of misery because of an accusing conscience. You try to drown the voice of conscience in many ways, but you fail utterly. You try to drown the voice of conscience in pleasure and indulgence. You try to drown the voice of conscience in business. You try to drown the voice of conscience in drink and in drugs, and in other ways; but you do not succeed. You never will succeed.

One who perhaps knows as much about the life of the movie colony in Hollywood as anyone else told a friend of mine a few weeks ago of two of the leading stars in the movie world, two women whose names are constantly in the daily papers and who are admired and envied by thousands, that they were the hopeless slaves of drugs, and all over this land people who are counted gifted, and on whom others look in envy, are trying to silence the voice of conscience by drugs. But no one ever yet found real peace in that way, and no one ever will. Jesus Christ alone can give the guilty conscience peace. In Romans 5:1, God put it through the Apostle Paul in this way, "Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Do

the right thing with Jesus Christ and you will get true peace of conscience, deep, abiding peace, perfect peace. As Isaiah puts it, "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you" (Isaiah 26:3). But do the wrong thing with Jesus Christ, and you cannot find peace of conscience in this world or in the next, no matter what else you may do to get peace.

I was dealing once in my office with a woman who told me that she had been in a perfect hell for fourteen years because of an accusing conscience. I pointed her to Jesus Christ. I showed her from God's Word how all her sins had been laid on Jesus Christ. She believed it. She took God's Word for it, put her trust in Him as her atoning Savior. After fourteen years of agony, of hell on earth, she went out from my office that day with a radiant countenance, for she had found peace of conscience in the only way in which peace of conscience can ever be found by anybody, through her Lord Jesus Christ. And that joy continues until this day.

3. In the third place, you will get deliverance from the power of sin by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. It is a dreadful thing to be in the power of sin. There is no other slavery so binding, so degrading, and so crushing as the slavery of sin. We all know what a dreadful thing it is to be in the power of some sins. We all know, for example, what an awful thing it is to be in the power of strong drink. We know what an awful thing it is to be in the power of morphine, or cocaine, or some other kind of drug. Many of us know through stories, distressing and agonizing, that have been poured into our ears, what an awful thing it is to be in the power of lust. How many men have come to me in despair this past year and told the story of their dreadful slavery. It is an awful thing to be in the power of sin of any kind.

There is, however, a way to get free. There is a way by which any man or woman who is the slave of any sin of any kind can get instantaneous and complete deliverance from the power of that sin. There is, however, only one way. That way is by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul was once in the power of sin. He was once helplessly and hopelessly enslaved. With all the power of an unusually strong will he tried to break away from the power of sin, but the more he tried to break away, the more completely he seemed to be in sin's grip forever, until at last, in utter despair, he cried, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24). And then he found Christ and took Him as his Deliverer from the power of sin, and he found perfect freedom and cried again, "Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord!" You cannot get out of sin's power unless you do the right thing with Jesus Christ. You may get free from some bad habits. You may, for example, give up drinking without the help of Christ, though very few do; but whether you do or do not, you will not get out of sin's grip, you will simply turn from one sin to another. Christ alone can save you from sin's power. I could stand here by the hour and tell you of men and women I have personally known, men and women as completely enslaved by sin in one form or another as any man or woman who ever walked the earth, whom the Lord Jesus Christ has set free when they did the right thing with Him.

4. In the fourth place, you will get great joy by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. The Apostle Peter says "Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy," by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. You cannot get inexpressible and glorious joy in any other Way. You know happy people, of course, who are not Christians, but you do not know anyone who is not a Christian who has "inexpressible and glorious joy." You do not know anyone who is not a Christian

who has the deep, constant, satisfying, and overflowing joy, that those men and women have who are not merely nominal Christians but real Christians, those men and women who have fully accepted Christ as their personal Savior and are really trusting God for the forgiveness of all their sins because they fully believe God's testimony concerning Jesus Christ having borne every one of their sins when He died on the cross, thus fully settling their sins forever, and who have without reservation surrendered the entire control of their thoughts and lives to Jesus Christ, and who are confessing Jesus Christ as their Lord before the world every reasonable opportunity they get, and who are watching for every opportunity to lead others to Christ, and who are serving Jesus Christ with all their strength every day.

Do the right thing with Jesus Christ and you get this wonderful joy. Reject Jesus Christ and you lose it. How foolish men and women are! There are many men in this audience tonight who are rejecting Christ because they think they will lose joy if they take Christ. Are you blind, men? Do you not see that those who have taken Christ really are happier than you are? Do you not see that many Christians are happier in poverty than skeptics and worldly people are in wealth? Are you deaf, women? Have you not heard many whose word you must believe, and from all ranks of society, testify that they have found a joy since they took Christ that they never dreamed of in the world?

I do not think that many of you could tell me much that I do not know about this world's joys. I have tasted pretty much all of them, but I never knew "inexpressible and glorious joy," until I took Jesus Christ. I do now. My every day is full of joy. I have perplexities, I have annoyances, I have experiences that could easily prove exasperating. I have burdens of many kinds, I have what may appear to be great losses, I have things said to me and written to me, and said and printed about me, that would cut to the quick if I did not know the Lord Jesus; but, through it all, every day is inexpressibly happy. Not so long ago I had more things come to me that might have caused grief and anxiety and worry and heartache and deep sorrow than in almost any other week of my life, but it was a radiantly happy week. Why? Simply because of what Jesus Christ is to me, and what He is to me, just because I have done the right thing with Him.

5. In the fifth place, if you do the right thing with Jesus Christ you will get eternal life. Eternal Life! What a wonderful phrase that is, eternal life. Life that never ends! Life that knows no death! Life of unutterable beauty and dignity and honor and glory and rapture! Life that is endless in its duration and perfect in its quality! Life like the life of God Himself. Eternal life! What has the world to put in comparison with that? What is the wealth of a millionaire compared with eternal life? I would rather be a penniless pauper all my days, living in destitution and hunger and rags and cold, and have eternal life, than to roll in wealth all my days and have all that wealth can buy, and not have eternal life. I have no envy of the rich. No, I know their lives and hearts too well. I have often a greater pity for them than for the poor, for often they are more to be pitied than the poor. The life of the average millionaire is a sad, sad life.

What is the wisdom of the world's greatest scientist or philosopher compared with eternal life? What are the honors of a great general or a mighty ruler of men compared with eternal life? What are the pleasures of the most devoted seeker of pleasure compared with eternal life? Put all the world has, absolutely everything the world can give, into one pan of the scales. Put eternal life into the other scale. See the world's side go up. It is lighter than the smallest dust in the balance in

comparison with eternal life. Eternal life! Oh, who can fathom all the depth of meaning that there is in these two wondrous words?

And you get it by simply doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. Do the right thing with Jesus Christ and you get eternal life. Do the wrong thing with Jesus Christ and you lose eternal life. Listen to God's own Word about that, John 3:36, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." Listen to God's Word again, "This is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1 John 5:11-12).

Are you going to do the right thing with Jesus Christ now and get eternal life, or are you going to do the wrong thing with Jesus Christ and forever lose eternal life?

6. But there is something better even than eternal life that you get by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. By doing the right thing with Jesus Christ you become a child of God, an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ. We read in God's own Word, in John 1:12, "To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." And in Romans 8:17 we read, "Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ." Just think of that a moment, a child of God, and an heir of God, and a joint heir (or fellow heir) with Jesus Christ. We have heard these words very often but have we ever stopped to weigh their meaning and to take in their wondrous meaning? A child of God! Think of it! God the Infinite One, God the Creator of all things, God to whom the whole race of men and the whole company of angels is as nothing, less than a speck of dust is in comparison to the whole earth; God in comparison with whom the greatest of philosophers, the mightiest of monarchs, and the purest of saints is less than the most ignorant idiot is in comparison with the greatest philosopher--and we to become His children and His heirs! Heirs of all this Infinite God is and all this Infinite God has. It staggers the mind to try to think of it. That is what is open to each one of us. That is what is open to you and open to me by just doing the right thing with Jesus Christ.

One day, years ago, I met the son and heir of one of the richest men in the whole world, and he invited me to dinner. As I sat and talked with him it seemed to me as if it might be in some respects a fine thing to be the son and heir of the richest millionaire on earth. But that is nothing, just nothing at all, to being a child of God, an heir of God and fellow heir with Jesus Christ. That is what is open to us, to each one of us; but it can be obtained in only one way, and that is by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ. Do the right thing with Jesus Christ and in a moment you become a child of God, an heir of God and fellow heir with Jesus Christ. Listen to God's own statement about it again, "To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Do the wrong thing with Jesus Christ and you lose forever your chance of becoming a child of God, an heir of God and fellow heir with Jesus Christ. Oh, what a loss that is! The loss of untold wealth, the loss of earth's greatest honors, the loss of dearest friends, is nothing in comparison with the loss of becoming a child of God, an heir of God and fellow heir with Jesus Christ. That is the awful cost of doing the wrong thing with Jesus Christ. We see, then, something of what we gain by doing the right thing with Jesus Christ, and something of what we lose by doing the wrong thing with Jesus Christ. By doing the right thing with Jesus Christ we gain forgiveness of all our sins. By doing the right thing with Jesus Christ we gain peace of conscience. By doing the right

thing with Jesus Christ we gain deliverance from sin's power. By doing the right thing with Jesus Christ we gain joy inexpressible and glorious. By doing the right thing with Jesus Christ we gain eternal life. By doing the right thing with Jesus Christ we become children of God, heirs of God, and fellow heirs with Jesus Christ. Is it not evident, then, that the most important question of this day and of all days is, "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?"

But what will you do with Him? Will you do the right thing with Him, or will you do the wrong thing with Him? Will you do the right thing and gain all, or will you do the wrong thing and lose all? I put the question to each individual reader. What will you do with Jesus? It does not matter whether you are a church member or not, I put the question to you, What will you do with Jesus? I put the question to the most worldly man or woman here as well as to the most religious, "What will you do with Jesus who is called Christ?" I put the question to the one who is most sunken in sin, for there is hope for you of getting all these things if you do the right thing with Jesus Christ, just as much as there is for the most moral and upright and highly respected man or woman here. "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" I ask each one of you, Will you do the right thing with Jesus Christ, or will you do the wrong thing with Jesus Christ?

7. But there is something better than anything I have mentioned yet that depends entirely on what you do with Jesus Christ. If you do the right thing with Jesus Christ, then some day you will become just like Him. Listen to what God says, "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:1-2). "What," someone will say, "can I become like Jesus Christ?" Yes, even you can become just like Jesus Christ. Think of it! You and I, with all our present failings, with all our shortcomings, meannesses and pettinesses, some of which we do not see but others see very clearly, for they stick out all over us and generally they stick out most conspicuously on those of us who have the best opinion of ourselves--even we can become just like Him, be like Him in every perfection and glory of His matchless, faultless, glorious, Divine character. Yes, and we can be like Him in the glory of His outward appearance too; for it is written in the Word of God, "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Php\_3:20-21). And how can we become just like Him? By doing the right thing with Jesus Christ.

## II. What Is the Right Thing to Do with Jesus Christ?

1. First of all, the right thing to do with Jesus Christ is to receive Him, to receive Him as your Savior. This is evident from the verse that we have quoted already a number of times, John 1:12, "To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." He died for your sins. "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). Will you accept Him as your sin-bearer? Will you say, "Oh, God, I believe what Your Word says about Jesus Christ. I believe He bore my sins in His own body on the cross. I believe every one of my sins was laid on Him and settled fully and forever when He died on the cross in my place. And I now take Him as my sin-bearer. Forgive all my sins for Jesus Christ's sake"?

Take Him not only as your Savior from the guilt of sin but also as your Savior from the power of sin. He not only died to make atonement for your sins, He also rose again, and He lives today to set you free from the power of sin and to make intercession for you (Hebrews 7:25). Will you take Him now as your Deliverer from the power of sin? Will you come to this risen and mighty Lord Jesus with all your weakness and sins and trust Him to set you free? That is the right thing to do with Jesus Christ: Just take Him as your Savior, your crucified Savior, from the guilt of sin and your risen Savior from the power of sin.

2. The next right thing to do with Jesus is to let Him into your heart. He says, "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). Jesus is standing at the door of every heart. He is knocking at the door of every heart. Will you open the door and let Him in? Who will? Who will say, "Lord Jesus, come in; come in and reign"?

3. The next right thing to do with Jesus is to enthrone Him in your heart. He is the Christ, God's anointed King, because God has made Him so. As Peter said on the day of Pentecost, "God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Will you enthrone Him as King in your heart? Will you say honestly to Him, "Lord Jesus, take the throne of my heart and live and reign there supreme"? Who will do it?

4. Once more, the right thing to do with Jesus Christ is to confess Him before the world as your Lord and Master. He Himself says in Matthew 10:32-33, "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven."

## The Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit

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### THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BY R. A. TORREY, D. D.

### IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE

One of the most characteristic and distinctive doctrines of the Christian faith is that of the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit is of the highest importance from the standpoint of worship. If the Holy Spirit is a divine person, worthy to receive our adoration, our faith and our love, and we do not know and recognize Him as such, then we are robbing a divine Being of the adoration and love and confidence which are His due. The doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit is also of the highest importance from the practical standpoint. If we think of the Holy Spirit only as an impersonal power or influence, then our thought will constantly be, how can I get hold of and use the Holy Spirit; but if we think of Him in the Biblical way as a divine Person, infinitely wise, infinitely holy, infinitely tender, then our thought will constantly be, "How can the Holy Spirit get hold of and use me?" Is there no difference between the thought of the worm using God to thrash the mountain, or God using the worm to thrash the mountain? The former conception is low and heathenish, not differing essentially from the thought of the African fetich worshipper who uses his god to do his will. The latter conception is lofty and Christian. If we think of the Holy Spirit merely as a power or influence, our thought will be, "How can I get more of the Holy Spirit?"; but if we think of Him as a divine Person, our thought will be, "How can the Holy Spirit get more of me?" The former conception leads to self-exaltation; the latter conception to self-humiliation, self-emptyings and self-renunciation. If we think of the Holy Spirit merely as a Divine power or influence and then imagine that we have received the Holy Spirit, there will be the temptation to feel as if we belonged to a superior order of Christians. A woman once came to me to ask a question and began by saying, "Before I ask the question, I want you to understand that I am a Holy Ghost woman." The words and the manner of uttering them made me shudder. I could not believe that they were true. But if we think of the Holy Spirit in the Biblical way as a divine Being of infinite majesty, condescending to dwell in our hearts and take possession of our lives, it will put us in the dust, and make us walk very softly before God.

It is of the highest importance from an experimental standpoint that we know the Holy Spirit as a person. Many can testify of the blessing that has come into their own lives from coming to know the Holy Spirit, as an ever-present, living divine Friend and Helper. There are four lines of proof in the Bible that the Holy Spirit is a person.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. All the distinctive characteristics of personality are ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Bible. What are the distinctive characteristics or marks of personality? Knowledge, feeling and will. Any being who knows and feels and wills is a person. When you say that the Holy Spirit is a person, some understand you to mean that the Holy Spirit has hands and feet and eyes and nose, and so on, but

these are the marks, not of personality, but of corporeity, When we say that the Holy Spirit is a person, we mean that He is not a mere influence or power that God sends into our lives but that He is a Being who knows and feels and wills, These three characteristics of personality, knowledge, feeling and will, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit over and over again in the Scriptures.

**KNOWLEDGE** In 1 Corinthians 2:10-11 we read, "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Here "knowledge" is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not merely an illumination that comes into our minds, but He is a Being who Himself knows the deep things of God and who teaches us what He Himself knows. **WILL**

We read again in 1 Corinthians 12:11, R.V., "But all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally as He will." Here "will" is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a mere influence or power which we are to use according to our wills, but a Divine Person who uses us according to His will. This is a thought of fundamental importance in getting into right relations with the Holy Spirit. Many a Christian misses entirely the fullness of blessing that there is for him because he is trying to get the Holy Spirit to use Him according to his own foolish will, instead of surrendering himself to the Holy Spirit to be used according to His infinitely wise will. I rejoice that there is no divine power that can get hold of and use according to my ignorant will. But how greatly do I rejoice that there is a Being of infinite wisdom who is willing to come into my heart and take possession of my life and use me according to His infinitely wise will.

#### **MIND**

We read in Romans 8:27, "And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Here "mind" is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The word here translated "mind" is a comprehensive word, including the ideas of thought, feeling and purpose. It is the same word used in Romans 8:7, where we read, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God. neither indeed can be." So then, in the passage quoted we have personality in the fullest sense ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

#### **LOVE**

We read still further in Romans 15:30, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me." Here "love" is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a mere blind, unfeeling influence or power that comes into our lives. The Holy Spirit is a person who loves as tenderly as God, the Father, or Jesus Christ, the Son. Very few of us meditate as we ought upon the love of the Spirit. Every day of our lives we think of the love of God, the Father, and the love of Christ, the Son, but weeks and months go by, with some of us, without our thinking of the love of the Holy Spirit. Every day of our lives we kneel down and look up into the face of God, the Father and say, "I thank Thee, Father, for Thy great love that led Thee to send Thy only begotten Son down into this world to die an atoning sacrifice upon the cross of Calvary for me." Every day of our lives we kneel down and look up into the face of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and say, "I thank Thee, Thou blessed Son of God, for that great love of Thine that led Thee to turn Thy back upon all the glory of heaven

and to come down to all the shame and suffering of earth to bear my sins in Thine own body upon the cross." But how often do we kneel down and say to the Spirit, "I thank Thee, Thou infinite and eternal Spirit of God for Thy great love that led Thee in obedience to the Father and the Son to come into this world and seek me out in my lost estate, and to follow me day after day and week after week and year after year until Thou hadst brought me to see my need of a Saviour, and hadst revealed to me Jesus Christ as just the Saviour I needed, and hadst brought me to a saving knowledge of Him." Yet we owe our salvation just as truly to the love of the Spirit as we do to the love of the Father and the love of the Son.

If it had not been for the love of God, the Father, looking down upon me in my lost condition, yes, anticipating my fall and ruin, and sending His only begotten Son to make full atonement for my sin, I should have been a lost man today. If it had not been for the love of the eternal Word of God, coming down into this world in obedience to the Father's commandment and laying down His life as an atoning sacrifice for my sin on the cross of Calvary, I should have been a lost man today. But just as truly, if it had not been for the love of the Holy Spirit, coming into this world in obedience to the Father and the Son and seeking me out in all my ruin and following me with never-wearying patience and love day after day and week after week and month after month and year after year, following me into places that it must have been agony for Him to go, wooing me though I resisted Him and insulted Him and persistently turned my back upon Him, following me and never giving me up until at last He had opened my eyes to see that I was utterly lost and then revealed Jesus Christ to me as an all-sufficient Saviour, and then imparted to me power to make this Saviour mine; if it had not been for this long-suffering, patient, never-wearying, yearning and unspeakably tender love of the Spirit to me, I should have been a lost man today.

#### INTELLIGENCE AND GOODNESS

Again we read in Nehemiah 9:20, R. V., "Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not Thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst." Here "intelligence" and "goodness" are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. This does not add any new thought to the passages already considered, but we bring it in here because it is from the Old Testament. There are those who tell us that the personality of the Holy Spirit is not found in the Old Testament. This passage of itself, to say nothing of others, shows us that this is a mistake. While the truth of the personality of the Holy Spirit naturally is not as fully developed in the Old Testament as in the New, none the less the thought is there and distinctly there.

#### GRIEF

We read again in Ephesians 4:30, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." In this passage "grief" is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a mere impersonal influence or power that God sends into our lives. He is a person who comes to dwell in our hearts, observing all that we do and say and think. And if there is anything in act or word or thought, or fleeting imagination that is impure, unkind, selfish, or evil in any way, He is deeply grieved by it. This thought once fully comprehended becomes one of the mightiest motives to a holy life and a careful walk. How many a young man, who has gone from a holy, Christian home to the great city with its many temptations, has been kept back from doing things that he would otherwise do by the thought that if he did them his mother might hear of it and that it would grieve her beyond description. But there is One who dwells in our hearts, if we are believers

in Christ, who goes with us wherever we go, sees everything that we do, hears everything that we say, observes every thought, even the most fleeting fancy, and this One is purer than the holiest mother that ever lived, more sensitive against sin, One who recoils from the slightest sin as the purest woman who ever lived upon this earth never recoiled from sin in its most hideous forms; and, if there is anything in act, or word, or thought, that has the slightest taint of evil in it, He is grieved beyond description How often some evil thought is suggested to us and we are about to give entertainment to it and then the thought, "The Holy Spirit sees that and is deeply grieved by it," leads us to banish it forever from our mind. THE ACTS OF THE SPIRIT

2. The second line of proof in the Bible of the personality of the Holy Spirit is that many acts that only a person can perform are ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

SEARCHING, SPEAKING AND PRAYING For example, we read in 1 Corinthians 2:10 that the Holy Spirit searcheth the deep things of God. Here He is represented not merely as an illumination that enables us to understand the deep things of God, but a person who Himself searches into the deep things of God and reveals to us the things which He discovers. In Revelation 2:7 and many other passages, the Holy Spirit is represented as speaking. In Galatians 4:6, He is represented as crying out. In Romans 8:26, R. V., we read, "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Here the Holy Spirit is represented to us as praying, not merely as an influence that leads us to pray, or an illumination that teaches us how to pray, but as a Person Who Himself prays in and through us. There is immeasurable comfort in the thought that every regenerate man or woman has two Divine Persons praying for him, Jesus Christ, the Son of God at the right hand of the Father praying for us (Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1); and the Holy Spirit praying through us down here. How secure and how blessed is the position of the believer with these two Divine Persons, whom the Father always hears, praying for him.

TEACHING AND GUIDING In John 15:26-27, we read, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." Here the Holy Spirit is very definitely set forth as a Person giving testimony, and a clear distinction is drawn between His testimony and the testimony which those in whom He dwells give. Again in John 14:26 we read, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." And again in John 16:12-14, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (cf. also Nehemiah 9:20). In these passages, the Holy Spirit is set forth as a teacher of the truth, not merely an illumination that enables our mind to see the truth, but One who personally comes to us and teaches us the truth. It is the privilege of the humblest believer to have a divine person as his daily teacher of the truth of God. (cf. 1 John 2:20, 1 John 2:27). In Romans 8:14 ("For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God") the Holy Spirit is represented as our personal guide, directing us what to do, taking us by the hand, as it were, and leading us into that line of action that is well-pleasing to God. In Acts 16:6-7 we read these deeply significant words, "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and

were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: But the Spirit suffered them not." Here the Holy Spirit is represented as taking command of the life and conduct of a servant of Jesus Christ. In Acts 13:2 and Acts 20:28, we see the Holy Spirit calling men to work and appointing them to office. Over and over again in the Scriptures actions are ascribed to the Holy Spirit which only a person could perform.

THE OFFICE OF THE SPIRIT

3. The third line of proof of the personality of the Holy Spirit is that an office is predicated to the Holy Spirit that could only be predicated of a person.

"ANOTHER COMFORTER."

We read in John 14:16-17, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Here we are told it is the office of the Holy Spirit to be "another Comforter" to take the place of our absent Saviour. Our Lord Jesus was about to leave His disciples. When He announced His departure to them, sorrow had filled their hearts (John 16:6). Jesus spoke words to comfort them. He told them that in the world to which He was going there was plenty of room for them also (John 14:2). He told them further that He was going to prepare that place for them (John 14:3) and that when He had thus prepared it, He was coming back for them; but He told them further that even during His absence, while He was preparing heaven for them, He would not leave them orphaned (John 14:18), but that He would pray the Father and the Father would send to them another Comforter to take His place. Is it possible that Jesus should have said this if that One Who was going to take His place after all was not a person, but only an influence or power, no matter how beneficent and divine? Still further, is inconceivable that He should have said what He does say in John 16:7, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but, if I depart, I will send Him unto you," if this other Comforter that was coming to take His place was only an influence or power?

ONE AT OUR SIDE This becomes clearer still when we bear in mind that the word translated "Comforter" means comforter plus a great deal more beside. The revisers found a great deal of difficulty in translating the Greek word. They have suggested "advocate," "helper" and a mere transference of the Greek word "Paraclete" into the English. The word so translated is Parakleatos, the same word that is translated "advocate" in 1 John 2:1; but "advocate" does not give the full force and significance of the word etymologically. Advocate means about the same as Parakleatos, but the word in usage has obtained restricted sense. "Advocate" is Latin; Parakleatos is Greek. The exact Latin word is "advocatus," which means one called to another. (That is, to help him or take his part or represent him). Parakleatos means one called alongside, that is, one who constantly stands by your side as your helper, counsellor, comforter, friend. It is very nearly the thought expressed in the familiar hymn, "Ever present, truest friend." Up to the time that Jesus had uttered these words, He Himself had been the Parakleatos to the disciples, the Friend at hand, the Friend who stood by their side. When they got into any trouble, they turned to Him. On one occasion they desired to know how to pray and they turned to Jesus and said, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). On another occasion Peter was sinking in the waves of Galilee and he cried, saying, "Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him," and

saved him (Matthew 14:30-31). In every extremity they turned to Him. Just so now that Jesus has gone to be with the Father, while we are awaiting His return, we have another Person just as divine as He, just as wise, just as strong, just as able to help, just as loving, always by our side and ready at any moment that we look to Him, to counsel us, to teach us, to help us, to give us victory, to take the entire control of our lives. A CURE FOR LONELINESS This is one of the most comforting thoughts in the New Testament for the present dispensation. Many of us, as we have read the story of how Jesus walked and talked with His disciples, have wished that we might have been there; but today we have a Person just as divine as Jesus, just as worthy of our confidence and our trust, right by our side to supply every need of our life. If this wonderful truth of the Bible once gets into our hearts and remains there, it will save us from all anxiety and worry. It is a cure for loneliness. Why need we ever be lonely, even though separated from the best of earthly friends, if we realize that a divine Friend is always by our side? It is a cure for breaking hearts. Many of us have been called upon to part with those earthly ones whom we most loved, and their going has left an aching void that it seemed no one and no thing could ever fill; but there is a divine Friend dwelling in the heart of the believer, who can, and who, if we look to Him to do it, will fill every nook and corner and every aching place in our hearts. It is a: cure from the fear of darkness and of danger. No matter how dark the night and how many foes we may fear are lurking on every hand, there is a divine One who walks by our side and who can and will protect us from every danger. He can make the darkest night bright by the glory of His presence. But it is in our service for Christ that this thought of the Holy Spirit comes to us with greatest helpfulness. Many of us do what service we do for the Master with fear and trembling. We are always afraid that we may say or do the wrong thing; and so we have no joy or liberty in our service. When we stand up to preach, there is an awful sense of responsibility upon us. We tremble with the thought that we are not competent to do the work that we are called to do, and there is the constant fear that we shall not do it as it ought to be done. But if we can only remember that the responsibility is not really upon us but upon another, the Holy Spirit, and that He knows just what ought to be done and just what ought to be said, and then if we will get just as far back out of sight as possible and let Him do the work which He is so perfectly competent to do, our fears and our cares will vanish. All sense of constraint will go and the proclamation of God's truth will become a joy unspeakable, not a worrying care.

#### PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Perhaps a word of personal testimony would be pardonable at this point. I entered the ministry because I was obliged to. My conversion turned upon my preaching. For years I refused to be a Christian because I was determined that I would not preach. The night I was converted, I did not say, "I will accept Christ," or anything of that sort. I said, "I will preach." But if any man was never fitted by natural temperament to preach, it was I. I was abnormally timid. I never even spoke in a public prayer meeting until after I had entered the theological seminary. My first attempt to do so was an agonizing experience. In my early ministry I wrote my sermons out and committed them to memory, and when the evening service would close and I had uttered the last word of the sermon, I would sink back with a sense of great relief that that was over for another week. Preaching was torture. But the glad day came when I got hold of the thought, and the thought got hold of me, that when I stood up to preach another stood by my side, and though the audience saw me, the responsibility was really upon Him and that He was perfectly competent to bear it, and all I had to

do was to stand back and get as far out of sight as possible and let Him do the work which the Father sent Him to do. From that day preaching has not been a burden nor a duty but a glad privilege. I have no anxiety nor care. I know that He is conducting the service and doing it just as it ought to be done, and even though things sometimes may not seem to go just as I think they ought, I know they have gone right. Often times when I get up to preach and the thought takes possession of me that He is there to do it all, such a joy fills my heart that I feel like shouting for very ecstasy.

#### TREATMENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

4. The fourth line of proof of the personality of the Holy Spirit is: a treatment is predicated of the Holy Spirit that could only be predicated of a person. We read in Isaiah 63:10, R. V., "But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and Himself fought against them." Here we see that the Holy Spirit is rebelled against and grieved. (Cf. Ephesians 4:30). You cannot rebel against a mere influence or power. You can only rebel against and grieve a person. Still further we read in Hebrews 10:29, "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith He was sanctified, all unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Here we are told that the Holy Spirit is "done despite unto," that is "treated with contumely." (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament). You cannot "treat with contumely" an influence or power, only a person. Whenever a truth is presented to our thought, it is the Holy Spirit who presents it. If we refuse to listen to that truth, then we turn our backs deliberately upon that divine Person who presents it; we insult Him.

Perhaps, at this present time, the Holy Spirit is trying to bring to the mind of the reader of these lines some truth that the reader is unwilling to accept and you are refusing to listen. Perhaps you are treating that truth, which in the bottom of your heart you know to be true, with contempt, speaking scornfully of it. If so, you are not merely treating abstract truth with contempt, you are scorning and insulting a Person, a divine Person.

**LYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT** In Acts 5:3, we read, "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" Here we are taught that the Holy Spirit can be lied to. You cannot tell lies to a blind, impersonal influence or power, only to a person. Not every lie is a lie to the Holy Spirit. It was a peculiar kind of lie that Ananias told. From the context we see that Ananias was making a profession of an entire consecration of everything. (See Acts 4:36-37 to Acts 5:1-11). As Barnabas had laid all at the apostles' feet for the use of Christ and His cause, so Ananias pretended to do the same, but in reality he kept back part; the pretended full consecration was only partial. Real consecration is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The profession of full consecration was to Him and the profession was false. Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit. How often in our consecration meetings today we profess a full consecration, when in reality there is something that we have held back. In doing this, we lie to the Holy Spirit.

**BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT** In Matthew 12:31-32, we read, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be

forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Here we are told that the Holy Spirit may be blasphemed. It is impossible to blaspheme an influence or power; only a Person can be blasphemed. We are still further told that the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is a more serious and decisive sin than even the blasphemy of the Son of Man Himself. Could anything make more clear that the Holy Spirit is a person and a divine person?

SUMMARY To sum it all up, THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON. The Scriptures make this plain beyond a question to any one who candidly goes to the Scriptures to find out what they really teach. Theoretically, most of us believe this, but do we in our real thought of Him, in our practical attitude toward Him, treat Him as a Person? Do we regard Him as indeed as real a Person as Jesus Christ, as loving, as wise, as strong, as worthy of our confidence and love and surrender as He? The Holy Spirit came into this world to be to the disciples and to us what Jesus Christ had been to them during the days of His personal companionship with them. (John 14:16-17). Is He that to us? Do we walk in conscious fellowship with Him? Do we realize that He walks by our side every day and hour? Yes, and better than that, that He dwells in our hearts and is ready to fill them and take complete possession of our lives? Do we know the "communion of the Holy Ghost?" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Communion means fellowship, partnership, comradeship. Do we know this personal fellowship, this partnership, this comradeship, this intimate friendship, of the Holy Spirit? Herein lies the secret of a real Christian life, a life of liberty and joy and power and fullness. To have as one's ever-present Friend, and to be conscious that one has as his ever-present Friend, the Holy Spirit, and to surrender one's life in all its departments entirely to His control, this is true Christian living.

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## The Personality of the Holy Spirit

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The Personality of the Holy Spirit

by

R. A. Torrey

(1856-1928)

From *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*

Before one can correctly understand the work of the Holy Spirit, he must first of all know the Spirit himself. A frequent source of error and fanaticism about the work of the Holy Spirit is the attempt to study and understand His work without, first of all, coming to know Him as a person.

It is of the highest importance from the standpoint of worship that we decide whether the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, worthy to receive our adoration, our faith, our love, and our entire surrender to Himself, or whether it is simply an influence emanating from God or a power or an illumination that God imparts to us. If the Holy Spirit is a person, and a Divine Person, and we do not know Him as such, then we are robbing a Divine Being of the worship and the faith and the love and the surrender to Himself which are His due.

It is also of the highest importance from the practical standpoint that we decide whether the Holy Spirit is merely some mysterious and wonderful power that we in our weakness and ignorance are, somehow, to get hold of and use, or whether the Holy Spirit is a real Person, infinitely holy, infinitely wise, infinitely mighty and infinitely tender, who is to get hold of and use us. The former conception is utterly heathenish, not essentially different from the thought of the African fetish worshiper who has his god whom he uses. The latter conception is sublime and Christian.

If we think of the Holy Spirit, as so many do, as merely a power of influence, our constant thought will be, "How can I get more of the Holy Spirit?" But if we think of Him in the Biblical way as a Divine Person, our thought will rather be, "How can the Holy Spirit have more of me?" The conception of the Holy Spirit as a Divine influence or power that somehow, we are to get hold of and use, leads to self-exaltation and self-sufficiency. One who so thinks of the Holy Spirit and who at the same time imagines that he has received the Holy Spirit will almost inevitably be full of spiritual pride and strut about as if he belonged to some superior order of Christians. One frequently hears such persons say, "I am a Holy Spirit man," or "I am a Holy Spirit woman." But if we once grasp the thought that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person of infinite majesty, glory and holiness and power, who in marvelous condescension has come into our hearts to make His abode there and take possession of our lives and make use of them, it will put us in the dust and keep us in the dust. I can think of no thought more humbling or more overwhelming than the thought that a person of Divine majesty and glory dwells in my heart and is ready to use even me.

It is of the highest importance from the standpoint of experience that we know the Holy Spirit as a person. Thousands and tens of thousands of men and women can testify to the blessing that has come into their own lives as they have come to know the Holy Spirit, not merely as a gracious influence (emanating, it is true, from God), but as a real Person, just as real as Jesus Christ Himself, an ever-present, loving Friend and mighty Helper, who is not only always by their side but dwells in their heart every day and every hour, and who is ready to undertake for them in every emergency of life. Thousands of ministers, Christian workers and Christians in the humblest spheres of life have spoken to me, or written to me, of the complete transformation of their Christian experience that came to them when they grasped the thought (not merely in a theological, but in an experimental way) that the Holy Spirit was a Person, and consequently came to know Him.

There are at least four distinct lines of proof in the Bible that the Holy Spirit is a person.

1. All the distinctive characteristics of personality are ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Bible.

What are the distinctive characteristics, or marks, of personality? Knowledge, feeling or emotion, and will. Any entity that thinks and feels and wills is a person. When we say that the Holy Spirit is a person, there are those who understand us to mean that the Holy Spirit has hands and feet and eyes and ears and mouth, and so on, but these are not the characteristics of personality but of bodily existence. All of these characteristics or marks of personality are repeatedly ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments. We read in 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, "But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God." Here knowledge is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. We are clearly taught that the Holy Spirit is not merely an influence that illuminates our minds to comprehend the truth but a Being who Himself knows the truth.

In 1 Corinthians 12:11, we read, "All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines." Here will is ascribed to the Spirit and we are taught that the Holy Spirit is not a power that we get hold of and use according to our will but a Person of sovereign majesty, who uses us according to His will. This distinction is of fundamental importance in getting into right relations with the Holy Spirit. It is at this very point that many honest seekers after power and efficiency in service go astray. They are reaching out after, and struggling to get, possession of some mysterious and mighty power that they can make use of in their work according to their own will. They will never get possession of the power they seek until they come to recognize that there is not some Divine power for them to get hold of and use in their blindness and ignorance, but that there is a Person, infinitely wise, as well as infinitely mighty, who is willing to take possession of them and use them according to His own perfect will.

When we stop to think of it, we must rejoice that there is no Divine power that beings so ignorant as we are, so liable to err, can get hold of and use. How appalling might be the results if there were. But what a holy joy must come into our hearts when we grasp the thought that there is a Divine Person, One who never errs, who is willing to take possession of us and impart to us such gifts as He sees best and to use us according to His wise and loving will.

We read in Romans 8:27, "He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." In this passage mind is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Greek word translated "mind" is a comprehensive word, including the ideas of thought, feeling, and purpose. It is the same that is used in Romans 8:7, where we read that "the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so." So, then, in this passage we have all the distinctive marks of personality ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

We find the personality of the Holy Spirit brought out in a most touching and suggestive way in Romans 15:30, "I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me." Here we have "love" ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The reader would do well to stop and ponder those five words, "the love of the Spirit." We dwell often on the love of God the Father. It is the subject of our daily and constant thought.

We dwell often on the love of Jesus Christ the Son. Who would think of calling himself a Christian who passed a day without meditating on the love of his Savior, but how often have we meditated on "the love of the Spirit"? Each day of our lives, if we are living as Christians ought, we kneel down in the presence of God the Father and look up into His face and say, "I thank You, Father, for Your great love that led You to give Your only Son to die on the cross of Calvary for me." Each day of our lives we also look up into the face of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and say, "Oh, glorious Lord and Savior, Jesus, Son of God, I thank You for Your great love that led You not to count it a thing to be grasped to be equal with God but to empty Yourself and, forsaking all the glory of heaven, come down to earth with all its shame and to take my sins upon Yourself and die in my place on the cross of Calvary."

But how often do we kneel and say to the Holy Spirit, "Oh, eternal and infinite Spirit of God, I thank You for Your great love that led You to come into this world of sin and darkness and to seek me out and to follow me so patiently until You brought me to see my utter ruin and need of a Savior and to reveal to me my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, as just the Savior whom I need"? Yet we owe our salvation just as truly to the love of the Spirit as to the love of the Father and the love of the Son. If it had not been for the love of God the Father looking down on me in my utter ruin and providing a perfect atonement for me in the death of His own Son on the cross of Calvary, I would have been in hell today.

If it had not been for the love of Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God, looking on me in my utter ruin and in obedience to the Father, putting aside all the glory of heaven for all the shame of earth and taking my place, the place of the curse on the cross of Calvary and pouring out His life utterly for me, I would have been in hell today. If it had not been for the love of the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in answer to the prayer of the Son (John 14:16), leading Him to seek me out in my utter blindness and ruin and to follow me day after day, week after week, and year after year, when I persistently turned a deaf ear to His pleadings, following me through paths of sin where it must have been agony for that Holy One to go, until at last I listened and He opened my eyes to see my utter ruin and then revealed Jesus to me as just the Savior that would meet my every need and then enabled me to receive this Jesus as my own Savior; if it had not been for this patient, long-suffering, never-tiring, infinitely tender love of the Holy Spirit, I would have been in hell today. Oh, the Holy Spirit is not merely an influence or a power or an illumination, but is a Person just as real as God the Father or Jesus Christ His Son.

The personality of the Holy Spirit comes out in the Old Testament as truly as in the New, for we read in Nehemiah 9:20, "You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst." Here both intelligence and goodness are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. There are some who tell us that while it is true the personality of the Holy Spirit is found in the New Testament, it is not found in the Old. But it is certainly found in this passage. As a matter of course, the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit is not so fully developed in the Old Testament as in the New. But the doctrine is there.

There is perhaps no passage in the entire Bible in which the personality of the Holy Spirit comes out more tenderly and touchingly than in Ephesians 4:30, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." Here grief is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a blind, impersonal influence or power that comes into our lives to illuminate, sanctify, and empower them. No, He is immeasurably more than that, He is a holy Person, who comes to dwell in our hearts, One who sees clearly every act we perform? every word we speak, every thought we entertain, even the most fleeting fancy that is allowed to pass through our minds; and if there is anything in act, or word or deed that is impure, unholy, unkind, selfish, mean, petty or untrue, this infinitely holy One is deeply grieved by it. I know of no thought that will help one more than this to lead a holy life and to walk softly in the presence of the holy One.

How often a young man is kept back from yielding to the temptations that surround young manhood by the thought that if he should yield to the temptation that now assails him, his holy mother might hear of it and would be grieved by it beyond expression. How often some young man has had his hand on the door of some place of sin that he is about to enter and the thought has come to him, "If I should enter there, my mother might hear of it and it would nearly kill her," and he has turned his back on that door and gone away to lead a pure life, that he might not grieve his mother. But there is One who is holier than any mother, One who is more sensitive against sin than the purest woman who ever walked this earth, and who loves us as even no mother ever loved. This One dwells in our hearts, if we are really Christians, and He sees every act we do by day or under cover of the night; He hears every word we utter in public or in private; He sees every thought we entertain, He beholds every fancy and imagination that is permitted even a momentary thoughts in our mind, and if there is anything unholy, impure, selfish, mean, petty, unkind, harsh, unjust, or any evil act or word or thought or fancy, He is grieved by it.

If we will allow those words, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," to sink into our hearts and become the motto of our lives they will keep us from many a sin. How often some thought or fancy has knocked for an entrance into my own mind and was about to find entertainment when the thought has come, "The Holy Spirit sees that thought and will be grieved by it," and that thought has gone.

2. Many acts that only a Person can perform are ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

If we deny the personality of the Holy Spirit, many passages of Scripture become meaningless and absurd. For example, we read in 1 Corinthians 2:10, "But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God." This passage sets before us the Holy Spirit, not merely as an illumination whereby we are enabled to grasp the deep things of God, but a Person who Himself searches the deep things of God and then reveals to us the precious discoveries which He has made.

We read in Revelation 2:7, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." Here the Holy Spirit is set before us, not merely as an impersonal enlightenment that comes to our mind but as a Person who speaks and out of the depths of His own wisdom whispers into the ear of His listening servant the precious truth of God.

In Galatians 4:6, we read, "Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.'" Here the Holy Spirit is represented as crying out in the heart of the individual believer. Not merely a Divine influence producing in our own hearts the assurance of our sonship, but one who cries out in our hearts, who bears witness together with our spirit that we are sons of God. (See also Romans 8:16)

The Holy Spirit is also represented in the Scripture as one who prays. We read in Romans 8:26, "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express." It is plain from this passage that the Holy Spirit is not merely an influence that moves us to pray, not merely an illumination that teaches us how to pray, but a Person who Himself prays in and through us. There is wondrous comfort in the thought that every true believer has two Divine Persons praying for him, Jesus Christ, the Son who was once on this earth, who knows all about our temptations, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and who is now ascended to the right hand of the Father and in that place of authority and power ever lives to make intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1); and another Person, just as Divine as the Son, who walks by our side each day, yes, who dwells in the innermost depths of our being and knows our needs, even as we do not know them ourselves, and from these depths makes intercession to the Father for us. The position of the believer is indeed one of perfect security with these two Divine Persons praying for him.

We read again in John 15:26, "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me." Here the Holy Spirit is set before us as a Person who gives His testimony to Jesus Christ, not merely as an illumination that enables the believer to testify of Christ, but as a Person who Himself testifies; and a clear distinction is drawn in this and the following verse between the testimony of the Holy Spirit and the testimony of the believer to whom He has borne His witness, for we read in the next verse, "And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning." So there are two witnesses, the Holy Spirit bearing witness to the believer, and the believer bearing witness to the world.

The Holy Spirit is also spoken of as a teacher. We read in John 14:26, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." And in a similar way, we read in John 16:12-14, "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." And in the Old Testament, Nehemiah 9:20, "You gave your good Spirit to instruct them." In all these passages it is perfectly clear that the Holy Spirit is not a mere illumination that enables us to apprehend the truth, but a Person who comes to us to teach us day by day the truth of God. It is the privilege of the humblest believer in Jesus Christ, not merely to have his mind illumined to

comprehend the truth of God, but to have a Divine Teacher to teach him daily the truth he needs to know (cf. 1 John 2:20, 1 John 2:27).

The Holy Spirit is also represented as the Leader and Guide of the children of God. We read in Romans 8:14, "Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." He is not merely an influence that enables us to see the way that God would have us go, nor merely a power that gives us strength to go that way, but a Person who takes us by the hand and gently leads us on in the paths in which God would have us walk.

The Holy Spirit is also represented as a Person who has authority to command men in their service of Jesus Christ. We read of the Apostle Paul and his companions in Acts 16:6-7, "Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to." Here it is a Person who takes the direction of the conduct of Paul and his companions and a Person whose authority they recognize and to whom they instantly submit.

Further still than this, the Holy Spirit is represented as the One who is the supreme authority in the church, who calls men to work and appoints them to office. We read in Acts 13:2, "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" And in Acts 20:28, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood." There can be no doubt to a candid seeker after truth that it is a Person, and a person of Divine majesty and sovereignty, who is here set before us.

From all the passages here quoted, it is evident that many acts that only a person can perform are ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

3. An office is predicated of the Holy Spirit that can be predicated only of a person.

Our Savior says in John 14:16-17, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." Our Lord had announced to the disciples that He was about to leave them. An awful sense of desolation took possession of them. Sorrow filled their hearts (John 16:6) at the contemplation of their loneliness and absolute helplessness when Jesus should thus leave them alone. To comfort them the Lord tells them that they shall not be left alone, that in leaving them He was going to the Father and that He would pray the Father, who would give them another Comforter to take the place of Himself during His absence. Is it possible that Jesus Christ could have used such language if the other Comforter who was coming to take His place was only an impersonal influence or power? Still more, is it possible that Jesus could have said as He did in John 16:7, "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you," if this Comforter whom He was to send was simply an impersonal influence or power? No, one Divine Person was going, another Person just as Divine was coming to take His place, and it was expedient for the disciples that the One go to represent them before the Father, for another just as Divine and sufficient was coming to take His place. This promise of our Lord and Savior of the coming of the other Comforter and of His abiding with us is the greatest

and best of all for the present dispensation. This is the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4), the promise of promises. We shall take it up again when we come to study the names of the Holy Spirit.

4. A treatment is predicated of the Holy Spirit that could be predicated only of a Person.

We read in Isaiah 63:10, "Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them." Here we are told that the Holy Spirit is rebelled against and grieved (cf. Ephesians 4:30). Only a person can be rebelled against and only a person of authority. Only a person can be grieved. You cannot grieve a mere influence or power. In Hebrews 10:29, we read, "How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?" Here we are told that the Holy Spirit is "insulted." There is but one kind of entity in the universe that can be insulted and that is a person. It is absurd to think of insulting an influence or a power or any kind of being except a person. We read again in Acts 5:3, "Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?'" Here we have the Holy Spirit represented as one who can be lied to. One cannot lie to anything but a person.

In Matthew 12:31-32, we read, "And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." Here we are told that the Holy Spirit is blasphemed against. It is impossible to blaspheme anything but a person. If the Holy Spirit is not a person, it certainly cannot be a more serious and decisive sin to blaspheme Him than it is to blaspheme the Son of man, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ Himself.

Here, then, we have four distinctive and decisive lines of proof that the Holy Spirit is a Person. Theoretically most of us believe this, but do we, in our real thoughts of Him and in our practical attitude toward Him, treat Him as if He were indeed a Person? At the close of an address on the Personality of the Holy Spirit at a Bible conference some years ago, one who had been a church member many years, a member of one of the most orthodox of our modern denominations, said to me, "I never thought of It before as a Person." Doubtless this Christian woman had often sung:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise Him all creatures here below,

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Doubtless she had often sung:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,

World without end, Amen.

But it is one thing to sing words; it is quite another thing to realize the meaning of what we sing. If this Christian woman had been questioned in regard to her doctrine, she would doubtless have said that she believed that there were three Persons in the Godhead--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--but a theological confession is one thing, a practical realization of the truth we confess is quite another. So the question is altogether necessary, no matter how orthodox you may be in your creedal statements, Do you regard the Holy Spirit as indeed as real a Person as Jesus Christ, as loving and wise and strong, as worthy of your confidence and love and surrender as Jesus Christ Himself?

The Holy Spirit came into this world to be to the disciples of our Lord after His departure, and to us, what Jesus Christ had been to them during the days of His personal companionship with them (John 14:16-17). Is He that to you? Do you know Him? Every week in your life you hear the apostolic benediction, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." (2 Corinthians 13:14), and while you hear it, do you take in the significance of it? Do you know the communion of the Holy Ghost? The fellowship of the Holy Ghost? The partnership of the Holy Ghost? The comradeship of the Holy Ghost? The intimate personal friendship of the Holy Ghost? Herein lies the whole secret of a real Christian life, a life of liberty and joy and power and fullness. To have as one's ever-present Friend, and to be conscious that one has as his ever-present Friend, the Holy Spirit, and to surrender one's life in all its departments entirely to His control, this is true Christian living. The doctrine of the Personality of the Holy Spirit is as distinctive of the religion that Jesus taught as the doctrines of the Deity and the atonement of Jesus Christ Himself. But it is not enough to believe the doctrine--one must know the Holy Spirit Himself. The whole purpose of this chapter (God help me to say it reverently) is to introduce you to my Friend, the Holy Spirit.

## The Place of Prayer in Evangelism

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THE PLACE OF PRAYER IN EVANGELISM BY R. A. TORREY, D. D., Dean Of The Bible Institute Of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California The most important human factor in effective evangelism is PRAYER, Every great awakening in the history of the Church from the time of the Apostles until today has been the result of prayer. There have been great awakenings without much preaching, and there have been great awakenings with absolutely no organization, but there has never been a true awakening without much prayer. The first great ingathering in human history had its origin, on the human side, in a ten days' prayer meeting. We read of the small company of early disciples: "These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer" (Acts 1:14). The result of that ten days' prayer meeting is recorded in the 2nd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles: "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4), and "there were added unto them in that day about 3,000 souls" (Acts 2:41). That awakening proved real and permanent; those who were gathered in on that greatest day in all Christian history, "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). "And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved" (Acts 2:47).

Every great awakening from that day to this has had its earthly origin in prayer. "The Great Awakening" in the 18th century, in which Jonathan Edwards was one of the central figures, began with his famous "Call to Prayer." The work of David Brainerd among the North American Indians, one of the most marvelous works in all history, had its origin in the days and nights that Brainerd spent before God in prayer for an enduement of power from on high for this work. In 1830 there was a revival in Rochester, New York, in which Charles G. Finney was the outstanding human agent. This revival spread throughout that region of the state and 100,000 persons were reported as having connected themselves with the churches as the result of this work. Mr. Finney himself attributed his success to the spirit of prayer which prevailed. He says in his autobiography:

"When I was on my way to Rochester, as we passed through a village some thirty miles east of Rochester, a brother minister whom I knew, seeing me on the canal boat, jumped aboard to have a little conversation with me, intending to ride but a little way and return. He, however, became interested in conversation, and upon finding where I was going, he made up his mind to keep on and go with me to Rochester. We had been there but a few days when this minister became so convicted that he could not help weeping aloud at one time as he passed along the street. The Lord gave him a powerful spirit of prayer, and his heart was broken. As he and I prayed together, I was struck with his faith in regard to what the Lord was going to do there. I recollect he would say, 'Lord, I do not know how it is; but I seem to know that Thou art going to do a great work in this city.' The spirit of prayer was poured out powerfully, so much so, that some persons stayed away from the public services to pray, being unable to restrain their feelings under preaching.

"And here I must introduce the name of a man, whom I shall have occasion to mention frequently, Mr. Abel Clary. He was the son of a very excellent man and an elder of the church where I was

converted. He was converted in the same revival in which I was. He had been licensed to preach; but his spirit of prayer was such he was so burdened with the souls of men that he was not able to preach much, his whole time and strength being given to prayer. The burden of his soul would frequently be so great that he was unable to stand, and he would writhe and groan in agony. I was well acquainted with him, and knew something of the wonderful spirit of prayer that was upon him. He was a very silent man, as almost all are who have that powerful spirit of prayer. "The first I knew of his being in Rochester, a gentleman who lived about a mile west of the city called on me one day, and asked me if I knew a Mr. Abel Clary, a minister, and I told him that I knew him well. 'Well,' said he, 'he is at my house, and has been there for some time, and I don't know what to think of him.' I said, 'I have not seen him at any of our meetings.' 'No,' he replied, 'he cannot go to meetings, he says. He prays nearly all the time day and night, and in such an agony of mind that I do not know what to make of it. Sometimes he cannot even stand on his knees, but will lie prostrate on the floor, and groan and pray in a manner that quite astonishes me.' I said to the brother, 'I understand it; please keep still. It will come out all right; he will surely prevail.'

"I knew at the time a considerable number of men who were exercised in the same way. A Deacon P — of Camden, Oneida County; a Deacon T — of Adams, in the same county; this Mr. Clary, and many others among the men, and a large number of women partook of the same spirit, and spent a great part of their time in prayer. Father Nash, as we called him, who in several of my fields of labor came to me and aided me, was another of those men that had such a powerful spirit of prevailing prayer. This Mr. Clary continued in Rochester as long as I did, and did not leave it until after I had left. He never, that I could learn, appeared in public, but gave himself wholly to prayer."

Perhaps the most remarkable awakening ever known in the United States was the great revival of 1857. As far as its human origin can be traced it began in the prayers of a humble city missionary in New York named Landfear. He not only prayed himself but organized a noon meeting for prayer. At first the attendance was very small; at one meeting there were only three present, at another two, and at one meeting he alone was present. But he and his associates persisted in prayer until a fire was kindled that spread throughout the whole city, until prayer meetings were being held at every hour of the day and night, not only in churches but in theaters. When this had gone on for some time, Dr. Gardner Spring, one of the most eminent Presbyterian ministers in America, said to a company of ministers, "It is evident that a revival has broken out among us, and we must preach." One of the ministers replied, "Well, if there is to be preaching, you must preach the first sermon," and Dr. Gardner Spring consented to preach. But no more people came out to hear him preach than had come out for prayer. So the dependence was put upon prayer and not preaching; the fire spread to Philadelphia, and then all over the land until it is said that there was no part of the country where prayer meetings were not going on, and the whole nation was moved and there were conversions and accessions to the Church everywhere by the hundreds and thousands. This awakening in America was followed by a similar awakening, though in some respects even more remarkable, in Ireland, Scotland and England, in 1859 and 1860. The most important human factors in the origin of the wonderful work seem to have been four young men who began to meet together in the old schoolhouse in the neighborhood of Kells in the north of Ireland. Here night after night they wrestled with God in prayer. About the spring of 1858 a work of power began to manifest itself. It spread from town to town and from county to county; congregations became too large for any building, meetings were held in the open air, oftentimes

attended by many thousands of people. Hundreds of persons were frequently convicted of sin in a single meeting; men were smitten down with conviction of sin while working in the field. In some places the criminal courts and jails were closed because there were no cases to try and no criminals to be incarcerated. The fruits of that wonderful work abide to this day. Many of the leading persons even in the churches of America were converted at that time in the North of Ireland. While men like Dr. Grattan Guinness and Brownlow North were greatly used at that time, the revival spread not so much through preachers as through prayer. The wonderful work of Mr. Moody in England, Scotland and Ireland in 1873, and the years that followed, beyond a question had its origin on the manward side in prayer. His going to England at all was in answer to the importunate prayers of a bedridden saint. The first demonstration of God's power through his preaching was in a church in the north of London a year before he went to England for this work. In this meeting 500 people definitely accepted Christ in a single night. This was the direct and immediate outcome of the prayers of this same bedridden saint. While the spirit of prayer continued,

Mr. Moody went on with power, but as is always the case, in the course of time less and less was made of prayer and his work fell off perceptibly in power. The great Welsh revival in 1904 and 1905 was unquestionably the outcome of prayer. A year before the writer began his work in Cardiff, it was announced that he was going to Cardiff, and for a year prayer went up from thousands of devoted Christians that there would be not only a revival in Cardiff but throughout Wales. When we reached Cardiff we found that early morning prayer meetings had been held in Penarth, one of the suburbs of Cardiff, for months. Yet at first the work went very slowly. There were great crowds, most enthusiastic singing, but little manifestation of real convicting and regenerating power. A day of fasting and prayer was appointed. This was observed not only in Cardiff but in different parts of Wales. There came an immediate turn of the tide; the power of God fell. On that day, at a meeting held in another part of Wales by a few devoted men of God, the power of God was manifested in a most remarkable way. For a whole year after our meetings closed in Cardiff, the work went on in that city, meetings every night with a very large number of conversions. The week following the meetings in Cardiff a minister associated with the work went up into one of the valleys of Wales, and there was a mighty manifestation of the power of God with large numbers of conversions, and all over Wales the work of God continued, largely without human instruments except in the way of prayer. 100,000 conversions were reported in a year. Of course, not all of these proved steadfast, and doubtless there were extravagances in some places, but after making all allowance, it was one of the most remarkable works of God in modern times, and from Wales there went forth a fire from God to the uttermost parts of the earth and only eternity will reveal the glorious results of that work. And not only has it been demonstrated over and over again in a large way that widespread revivals are the certain outcome of intelligent and prevailing prayer, but in smaller circles the power of prayer has been demonstrated over and over again. In a very obscure village in the state of Maine, where apparently nothing was being accomplished by the churches, a few earnest Christian men got together and organized a prayer band.

They selected apparently the most hopeless case in all the village and centered their prayers upon him, importuning God for his conversion. The man was a drunkard and a wreck. In a short time the man was thoroughly converted. Then the praying band centered its prayers upon another man, the

second hardest case in the village, and he was converted; and so the work went on until about 200 were converted in a single year. In a little village in the state of Michigan, way off from the railroad, a Presbyterian and a Methodist minister united in an effort to win the unsaved to Christ. They were backed by a faithful praying band. While the Presbyterian preached and the Methodist exhorted, this praying band were in the back room crying to God for His blessing on the work. They would select individuals in the community to pray for. In some instances these men would come into the meeting the very night they were being prayed for and be converted. The work grew to be so remarkable that ministers and multitudes of the people would drive for miles to witness the wonderful work. The history of foreign missions abounds in illustrations of the importance and power of prayer in world-wide evangelism. All will recall "the haystack" prayer meeting and its results, and the sending out of the 100 by the China Inland Mission in 1887. Illustrations of this character could easily be multiplied. The history of the Church demonstrates beyond a question that the most important human factor in the evangelism of the world is prayer. The great need of the present hour is prayer. In our work at home and abroad we are placing more and more dependence upon men, machinery, and methods, and less and less upon God. Evangelism at home is becoming more and more mechanical, and methods are being resorted to that are more and more revolting to all spiritually minded people; while evangelism abroad is becoming more and more merely educational and sociological. What is needed above everything else today is prayer, true prayer, prayer in the power of the Holy Ghost, and prayer that meets the conditions of prevailing prayer so plainly laid down in the Word of God.

All that is said thus far is more or less general, but if anything practical is to be accomplished we must be specific, in what directions should we put forth prayer, if we would see that effective evangelism for which so many are longing?

First of all, we should pray for individuals. Under God's guidance we should select individuals upon whom we should center our prayers. Every minister and every Christian should have a prayer list, i.e., he should write at the top of a sheet of paper the following words (or words to the same effect): "God helping me, I will pray earnestly and work persistently for the conversion of the following persons:" Then he should kneel before God and ask God definitely and in the most thoughtful earnestness and sincerity, to show him whom to put on that prayer list, and as God leads him to put different persons on that prayer list, he should write their names down.

Then each day he should go to God in very definite prayer with that prayer list and cry to God in the earnestness of the Holy Spirit for the conversion of these individuals and never cease to pray for them until they are definitely converted. If there were space we could record most marvelous instances of conversion in many lands as the outcome of such prayer lists.

Second, we should pray for the individual church and community. Pray definitely for a spiritual awakening, pray that the members of the church be brought onto a higher plane of Christian living, that the church be purged from its present compromise with the world, that the members of the church be clothed upon with power from on high and filled with a passion for the salvation of the lost. We should pray that through the church and its membership, many may be converted and that there be a genuine awakening in the church and community. Any church or community that is willing to pay the price can have a true revival. That price is not building a tabernacle and calling some widely-known evangelist and putting large sums of money into advertising and following

other modern methods.

These things may all be right in their place, but they are not the price of a revival. The price of a revival is honest, earnest prayer in the Holy Spirit, prayer that will not take no for an answer. Let a few people in any church or community get thoroughly right with God themselves, then let them band themselves together and cry to God for a revival until the revival comes, with a determination to pray through no matter how long it takes; then let them put themselves at God's disposal for Him to use them in any way He will, in personal work or testimony or anything else, then let them go out as God leads them, dealing in love and wisdom and persistence with the unsaved, and a genuine revival of God's work in the power of the Holy Ghost is bound to result. The writer has said substantially this around the world; time and again, the advice has been followed, and the result has always been the same, a real, effective, thorough-going work of God. In the church in Chicago of which he himself was pastor, during the eight years of his active pastorate there was a constant revival, and in all those eight years there was never a week without conversions. The great majority of those converted united with other churches, but the smallest number ever received into that church in any one year was 250. In the thirteen years that have elapsed since he left the active pastorate of that church, the work has continued to go on, at first under another pastor, and now for several years with no pastor at all. Many illustrations of the same thing could be given. A most notable instance is that of the Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh under the leadership of Joseph W. Kemp.

Third, we should pray for the work in foreign lands. The history of foreign missions proves that the most important factor in effective missionary work is prayer. Men and women are needed for foreign missions, money is needed, but what is needed most of all is prayer. We should pray very definitely for God's guidance upon the secretaries and other officers of our foreign missionary boards. The problems that confront them are beyond the wisdom of any man to solve; the secretaries need wisdom from above and that wisdom is given in answer to prayer. We should pray very definitely that laborers be thrust forth into the harvest which is so plenteous and so ripe at the present time. (Matthew 9:37-38). Not only should we pray that men and women be called into the foreign field, but we should pray for definite fields and for the definite thrusting forth of laborers into those fields. We should pray very specifically for the men and women who have gone into the field. Only one who has visited the foreign field can have any realization of how much the missionaries need our prayers. One feels when he gets to the foreign field as if the very atmosphere was taken possession of by "the prince of the power of the air." The burdens that the foreign missionary has to bear and the conflicts that he has to endure would be appalling if we did not believe in a God who answers prayer. But we have no right to leave the devoted men and women who have gone out to the foreign field to fight the battle alone. Realizing that their "wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenlies," we should with all prayer and supplication pray at all seasons in the Spirit, and watch thereunto in all perseverance, that God would give to these men and women victory in their personal conflict, and power in their efforts to win men from the delusions of the false religions that eternally destroy to the truth of the Gospel that eternally saves. We should pray too very definitely for the converts on the foreign fields, for their deliverance from error and delusion and sin, and that they may become intelligent, well-balanced, strong and useful members of the body of Christ. We should pray for the

churches as organizations that are formed as the outcome of missionary effort in foreign lands.

Finally, we should pray for the evangelization of the world in the present generation. The awful war now in progress emphasizes the need of prayer, especially in connection with our foreign work. The past few years have been years of marvelous opportunity in foreign missionary work. God has been calling the church as never before to the evangelization of the world, but the church as a whole has slept on and not responded to the call, and it almost seems as if the door was at last being closed and that our Lord was saying to us as He said to the disciples who slept in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Sleep on now, the opportunity I gave you and that you despised is now gone." We cannot have it so. Let us pray that God will give us one more opportunity. I believe He will, as dark as the present day seems. Let us pray just as earnestly that God will lead His church to improve the one more opportunity as it is given. Let us be very earnest, very persistent in our prayers. Let us determine that we will not take no for an answer, and we shall see world-wide evangelization, and that glad day for which we are longing above all other days will speedily come when "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God," and when His completed body, the church, will be caught up to meet Him in the air. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

## The Power of Prayer

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### The Power of Prayer

by Reuben Archer Torrey—1856-1928

Ye have not, because ye ask not (James 4:2).

I BRING YOU A MESSAGE FROM GOD contained in seven short words. Six of the seven words are monosyllables, and the remaining word has but two syllables and is one of the most familiar and most easily understood words in the English language. Yet there is so much in these seven short, simple words that they have transformed many a life and brought many an inefficient worker into a place of great power.

I spoke on these seven words some years ago at a Bible conference in central New York. Some months after the conference, I received a letter from the man who had presided at the conference, one of the best-known ministers of the gospel in America. He wrote me, "I have been unable to get away from the seven words on which you spoke at Lake Keuka, they have been with me day and night. They have transformed my ideas, transformed my methods, transformed my ministry." The man who wrote those words has since been the pastor of what is probably the most widely known of any evangelical church in the world. I trust that the words may sink into some of your hearts today as they did into his on that occasion and that some of you will be able to say in future months and years, "I have been unable to get away from those seven words, they have seen with me day and night. They have transformed my ideas, transformed my methods, transformed my life, and transformed my service for God."

You will find these seven words in James 4:2, the seven closing words of the verse, "Ye have not, because ye ask not. "

### The Secret of Christians Powerlessness

These seven words contain the secret of the poverty and powerlessness of the average Christian, of the average minister, and of the average church. "Why is it," many a Christian is asking, "that I make such poor progress in my Christian life? Why do I have so little victory over sin? Why do I win so few souls to Christ? Why do I grow so slowly into the likeness of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?" And God answers in the words of the text: "Neglect of prayer. You have not, because you ask not."

"Why is it," many a minister is asking, "that I see so little fruit from my ministry? Why are there so few conversions? Why does my church grow so slowly? Why are the members of my church so little helped by my ministry, and built up so little in Christian knowledge and life?" And again God replies: "Neglect of prayer. You have not, because you ask not."

"Why is it," both ministers and churches are asking, "that the church of Jesus Christ is making such slow progress in the world today? Why does it make so little headway against sin, against

unbelief, against error in all its forms? Why does it have so little victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil? Why is the average church member living on such a low plane of Christian living? Why does the Lord Jesus Christ get so little honor from the state of the church today?" And, again, God replies: "Neglect of prayer. You have not, because you ask not."

### The Early Church's Victory

When we read the only inspired church history that was ever written, the history of the church in the days of the apostles as it is recorded by Luke (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) in the Acts of the Apostles, what do we find? We find a story of constant victory, a story of perpetual progress. We read, for example, such statements as Acts 2:47: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" and Acts 4:4: "Many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand," and Acts 5:14: "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." In addition Luke in Acts 6:7 states: "And the word of God increased: and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

And so we go on, chapter after chapter, through the twenty-eight chapters of Acts, and in every one of the twenty-seven chapters after the first, we find the same note of victory. I once went through the Acts of the Apostles marking the note of victory in every chapter, and without one single exception the triumphant shout of victory rang out in every chapter. How different the history of the church as here recorded is from the history of the church of Jesus Christ today. Take, for example, that first statement, "The Lord added to the church daily [that is, every day] such as should be saved." Why, nowadays, if we have a revival once a year with an accession of fifty or sixty members and spend all the rest of the year slipping back to where we were before, we think we are doing pretty well. But in those days there was a revival all the time and accessions every day of those who not only "hit the trail" but "were [really] being saved."

Why this difference between the early church and the church of Jesus Christ today? Someone will answer, "Because there is so much opposition today." Ah, but there was opposition in those days, most bitter, most determined, most relentless opposition in comparison with which that which you and I meet today is but child's play. But the early church went right on beating down all opposition, surmounting every obstacle, conquering every foe, always victorious, right on without a setback from Jerusalem to Rome, in the face of the most firmly entrenched and most mighty heathenism and unbelief. I repeat the question, "Why was it?" If you will turn to the chapters from which I have already quoted, you will get your answer.

### Steadfast Prayer

Turn, for example, to Acts 2:42: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers." That is a picture very brief but very suggestive of the early church. It was a praying church. It was a church in which they prayed, not merely occasionally, but where they all "continued steadfastly . . . in prayers." They all prayed, not a select few, but the whole membership of the church; and all prayed continuously with steadfast determination. "They gave themselves to prayer," as the same Greek word is translated in Acts 6:4.

Now turn to Acts 6:4 and you will get the rest of your answer. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer." That is a picture of the apostolic ministry: it was a praying ministry, and a ministry that "gave themselves continually to prayer," or, to translate that Greek word as it is translated in former passage (Acts 2:42), "They continued steadfastly in prayer." A praying church and a praying ministry! Ah, such a church and such a ministry can achieve anything that ought to be achieved. It will go steadily on, beating down all opposition, surmounting every obstacle, conquering every foe, just as much today as it did in the days of the apostles.

#### Present-day Departure From Prayer

There is nothing else in which the church and the ministry of today or, to be more explicit, you and I have departed more notably and more lamentably from apostolic precedent than in this matter of prayer. We do not live in a praying age. A very considerable proportion of the membership of our evangelical churches today do not believe even theoretically in prayer. Many of them now believe in prayer as having a beneficial "reflex influence," that is, as benefitting the person who prays, a sort of lifting yourself up by your spiritual bootstraps. But as for prayer bringing anything to pass that would not have come to pass if we had not prayed, they do not believe in it, and many of them frankly say so, and even some of our "modern ministers" say so. I believe it is still the vast majority in our evangelical churches-even they do not make the use of this mighty instrument that God has put into our hands that one would naturally expect. As I said, we do not live in a praying age. We live in an age of hustle and bustle, of man's efforts and man's determination, of man's confidence in himself and in his own power to achieve things, an age of human organization and human machinery, human push and human scheming, and human achievement, which in the things of God means no real achievement at all.

I think it would be perfectly safe to say that the church of Christ was never in all its history so fully, so skillfully and so thoroughly and so perfectly organized as it is today. Our machinery is wonderful; it is just perfect, but, alas, it is machinery without power; and when things do not go right, instead of going to the real source of our failure, our neglect to depend on God and look to God for power, we look around to see if there is not some new organization we can get up, some new wheel that we can add to our machinery. We have altogether too many wheels already. What we need is not so much some new organization, some new wheel, but "the Spirit of the living creature in the wheels" we already possess.

I believe that the devil stands and looks at the church today and laughs in his sleeve as he sees how its members depend on their own scheming and powers of organization and skillfully devised machinery. "Ha, ha," he laughs, "you may have your Boy Scouts, your costly church edifices, your multi-thousand-dollar church organs, your brilliant university-bred preachers, your high-priced choirs, your gifted sopranos and altos and tenors and bases, your wonderful quartets, your immense men's Bible classes, yes, and your Bible conferences, and your Bible institutes, and your special evangelistic services, all you please of them; it does not in the least trouble me, if you will only leave out of them the power of the Lord God Almighty sought and obtained by the earnest, persistent, believing prayer that will not take no for an answer." But when the devil sees a man or woman who really believes in prayer, who knows how to pray, and who really does pray, and, above all, when he sees a whole church on its face before God in prayer, "he trembles" as much as he ever did, for he knows that his day in that church or community is at an end.

Prayer has as much power today, when men and women are themselves on praying ground and meeting the conditions of prevailing prayer, as it ever has had. God has not changed, and His ear is just as quick to hear the voice of real prayer and His hand is just as long and strong to save as they ever were. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save: neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But our iniquities may "have separated between us and our God, and "our sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2). Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God's infinite grace and power. All that God is, and all that God has, are at the disposal of player. But we must use the key. Prayer can do anything that God can do, and as God can do anything, prayer is omnipotent. No one can stand against the one who knows how to pray and who meets all the conditions of prevailing prayer and who really prays. "The Lord God Omnipotent" works from him and works through him.

Prayer Will Promote Our Personal Holiness as

Nothing Else, Except the Study of the Word of God

But what, specifically, will prayer do? We have been dealing in generalities; let us come down to the definite and specific. The Word of God very plainly answers the question.

In the first place, prayer will promote our personal piety, our individual holiness, our individual growth into the likeness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as almost nothing else, as nothing else but the study of the Word of God. These two things, prayer and study of the Word of God, always go hand-in-hand, for there is no true prayer without study of the Word of God, and there is no true study of the Word of God without prayer.

Other things being equal, your growth and mine into the likeness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be in exact proportion to the time and to the heart we put into prayer. Please note exactly what I say: "Your growth and mine into the likeness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be in exact proportion to the time and to the heart we put into prayer." I put it in that way because there are many who put a great deal of time but so little heart into their praying that they do very little praying in the long time they spend at it.

On the other hand, there are others who, perhaps, may not put so much time into praying but put so much heart into praying that they accomplish vastly more by their praying in a short time than the others accomplish by praying in a long time. God Himself has told us in Jeremiah 29:13: "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

We are told in Ephesians 1:3, that God "has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in -Christ." That is to say, Jesus Christ by His atoning death and by His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father has obtained for every believer in Jesus Christ every possible spiritual blessing. There is no spiritual blessing that any believer enjoys that may not be yours. It belongs to you now; Christ purchased it by His atoning death and God has provided it in Him. It is there for you; but it is your part to claim it, to put out your hand and take it. God's appointed way for claiming blessings by putting out your hand and appropriating to yourself the blessings that are procured for you by the atoning death of Jesus Christ is by prayer. Prayer is the hand that takes to ourselves the blessings that God has already provided in His Son.

Go through your Bible and you will find it definitely stated that every conceivable spiritual blessing is obtained by prayer. For example, it is in answer to prayer, as we learn from Psalms 139:23-24, that God searches us and knows our hearts, tries us and knows our thoughts, brings to light the sin that there is in us and delivers us from it. It is in answer to prayer, as we learn from Psalms 19:12-13, that we are cleansed from secret faults and that God keeps us back from presumptuous sins. It is in answer to prayer, as we learn from the 14th verse of the same Psalm, that the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart are made acceptable in God's sight. It is in answer to prayer, as we learn from Psalms 25:4-5, that God shows us His ways, teaches us His path, and guides us in His truth. It is in answer to prayer, as we learn from the prayer our Lord Himself taught us, that we are kept from temptation and delivered from the power of the wicked one (Matthew 6:13). It is in answer to prayer, as we learn from Luke 11:13, that God gives us His Holy Spirit. And so we might go on through the whole catalog of spiritual blessings and find that every one is obtained by asking for it. Indeed, our Lord Himself has said in Matthew 7:11: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him."

One of the most instructive and suggestive passages in the entire Bible as showing the mighty power of prayer to transform us into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Himself, is found in 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass [The English Revision reads better, "reflecting as a mirror"] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The thought is that the Lord is the sun, you and I are mirrors, and just as a mischievous boy on a bright sunshiny day will catch the rays of the sun in a piece of broken looking-glass and reflect them into your eyes and mine with almost blinding power, so we, as mirrors, when we commune with God, catch the rays of His moral glory and reflect them out on the world "from glory to glory." That is, each time we commune with Him we catch something new of His glory and reflect it out on the world.

I'm sure you remember the story of Moses, how he went up into the mount and tarried about forty days with God, gazing on that ineffable glory, and caught so much of the glory in his own face that when he came down from the mount, though he himself did not know it, his face so shone that he had to draw a veil over it to hide the blinding glory of it from his fellow Israelites.

Even so we, going up into the mount of prayer, away from the world, alone with God, catch the rays of His glory, so that when we come down to other people, it is not so much our faces that shine (though I do believe that sometimes even our faces shine), but our characters, with the glory that we have been beholding. We then reflect out on the world the moral glory of God from "glory to glory," each new time of communion with Him catching something new of His glory to reflect out on the world. Oh, here is the secret of becoming much like God by remaining long alone with God. If you won't stay long with Him, you won't be much like Him.

One of the most remarkable men in Scotland's history was John Welch, son-in-law of John Knox, the great Scotch reformer; he is as well-known as his famous father-in-law, but in some respects a far more remarkable man than John Knox himself. Most people have the idea that it was John Knox who prayed, "Give me Scotland or I die." It was not, it was John Welch, his son-in-law. John Welch put it on record before he died that he counted that day ill-spent that he did not put seven or eight hours into secret prayer. When John Welch came to die, an old Scotchman who had known

him from his boyhood said of him, "John Welch was a type of Christ." Of course, that was an inaccurate use of language, but what the old Scotchman meant was, that Jesus Christ had stamped the impress of His character on John Welch. When had Jesus Christ done it? In those seven or eight hours of daily communion with Himself. I do not suppose that God has called many of us, if any of us, to put seven or eight hours a day into prayer, but I am confident God has called most of us, if not every one of us, to put more time into prayer than we now do. That is one of the great secrets of holiness, indeed, the only way in which we can become really holy and continue holy.

Some years ago we often sang a hymn, "Take Time to Be Holy." I wish we sang it more in these days. It takes time to be holy, one cannot be holy in a hurry, and much of the time that it takes to be holy must go into secret prayer. Some people express surprise that professing Christians today are so little like their Lord, but when I stop to think how little time the average Christian today puts into secret prayer the thing that astonished me is, not that we are so little like the Lord, but that we are as much like the Lord as we are, when we take so little time for secret prayer.

#### Prayer Will Bring the Power of God Into Our Work

But not only will prayer promote as almost nothing else our personal holiness, but prayer will also bring the power of God into our work. We read in Isaiah 40:31: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk [plod right along day after day, which is far harder than running or flying], and not faint."

It is the privilege of every child of God to have the power of God in his service. And the verse just quoted tells us how to obtain it, and that is by "waiting upon the Lord." Sometimes you will hear people stand up in a meeting, not so frequently perhaps in these days as in former days, and say: "I am trying to serve God in my poor, weak way." Well, if you are trying to serve God in your poor, weak way, quit it; your duty is to serve God in His strong, triumphant way. But you say, "I have no natural ability." Then get supernatural ability.

The religion of Jesus Christ is a supernatural religion from start to finish, and we should live our lives in supernatural power, the power of God through Jesus Christ, and we should perform our service with supernatural power, the power of God ministered by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ. You say, "I have no natural gifts." Then get supernatural gifts. The Holy Spirit is promised to every believer in order that he may obtain the supernatural gifts which qualify him for the particular service to which God calls him. "He [The Holy Spirit] divideth to each one [that is, to each and every believer] severally even as he will" (1 Corinthians 12:11). It is ours to have the power of God if we will only seek it by prayer in any and every line of service to which God calls us.

Are you a mother or a father? Do you wish power from God to bring your own children up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord"? God commands you to do it and especially commands the father to do it. God says in Ephesians 6:4: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Now, God never commands the impossible, and as He commands us fathers, and the mothers also, to bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, it is possible for us to do it.

If any one of your children is not saved, the first blame lies at your own door. Paul said to the jailer in Philippi: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

Yes, it is the solemn duty of every father and mother to have every one of their children saved. But we can never accomplish it unless we are much in prayer to God for power to do it. In my first pastorate I had as a member of my church a most excellent Christian woman, but she had a little boy of six who was one of the most incorrigible youngsters I ever knew in my life. He was the terror of the community. One Sunday, at the close of the morning service, his mother came to me and said: "You know-?" (calling her boy by his first name).

"Yes," I replied, "I know him." Everybody in town knew him. "Yes," I replied, "I know he is not a very good boy." Indeed, that was a decidedly euphemistic way of putting it; in point of fact he was the terror of the neighborhood.

Then this heavy-hearted mother said, "What shall I do?"

I replied, "Have you ever tried prayer?"

"Why," she said, "of course I pray."

"Oh," I said, "that is not what I mean. Have you ever asked God definitely to regenerate your boy and expected Him to do it?"

"I do not think I have ever been as definite as that."

"Well," I said, "you go right home and be just as definite as that."

She went home and was just as definite as that, and I think it was from that very day, certainly from that week, that the boy was a transformed boy and grew up into fine young manhood.

Oh, mothers and fathers, it is your privilege to have every one of your children saved. But it costs something to have them saved. It costs your spending much time alone with God, to be much in prayer, and it costs also your making those sacrifices and straightening out those things in your life that are wrong; it costs the fulfilling the conditions of prevailing prayer. And if any of you have unsaved children, when you go home today get alone with God and ask God to show you what it is in your own life that is responsible for the present condition of your children. Straighten it out at once and then get down alone before God and hold to Him in earnest prayer for the definite conversion of each one of your children. Do not rest until, by prayer and by your putting forth every effort, you know beyond question that every one of your children is definitely and positively converted and born again.

Are you a Sunday school teacher? Do you wish to see every one of your Sunday school scholars converted? That is primarily what you are a Sunday school teacher for, not merely to teach Bible geography and Bible history, or even Bible doctrine, but to get the people in your class one and all saved. Do you want power from on high to enable you to save them? Ask God for it.

Examples of God's Power Evident in Prayer

When Mr. Alexander and I were holding meetings in Sydney, Australia, the meetings were held in the Town Hall, which seated about five thousand people. But the crowds were so great that some days we had to divide the crowds and have women only in the afternoon and men only at night. One Sunday afternoon the Sydney Town Hall was packed with women. When I gave the invitation for all who would accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, surrender to Him as their Lord and Master, begin to confess Him as such before the world, and strive to live from this time on to please Him in every way from day to day, over on my left a whole row of eighteen young women of, I should say, about twenty years of age, arose to their feet. As I saw them stand side by side, I said to myself, "That is someone's Bible class." Afterwards they came forward with the other women who came to make a public confession of their acceptance of Jesus Christ. When the meeting was over, a young lady came to me, her face wreathed in smiles, and she said, "That is my Bible class. I have been praying for their conversion, and every one of them has accepted Jesus Christ today.

When we were holding meetings in Bristol, England, a prominent manufacturer in Exeter had a Bible class of twenty-two men. He invited all of them to go to Bristol with him and hear me preach. Twenty-one of them consented to go. At that meeting twenty of them accepted Christ. That man was praying for the conversion of the members of his class and was willing to make the sacrifices necessary to get his prayers answered. Revival would quickly come here in this city if every Sunday school teacher would go to praying the way they ought for the conversion of every scholar in his or her class!

Are you in more public work, a preacher perhaps, or speaking from the public platform? Do you long for power in that work? Ask for it.

Oh, men and women, if we would spend more nights before God on our faces in prayer there would be more days of power when we faced our congregations!

## The Power of the Blood of Christ

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The Power of the Blood of Christ by R. A. Torrey (from How To Obtain Fullness Of Power by R.A. Torrey, ©1897, Fleming H. Revell Company)

"POWER BELONGETH unto God." It is therefore at man's disposal. But there is one thing that separates between man and God, that is, sin. We read in Isaiah, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2). Before we can know God's power in our lives and service,, sin must be put away from God and us. It is the blood that puts away sin (Hebrews 9:26). We must know the power of the blood if we are to know the power of God. Our knowing experimentally the power of the Word, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the power of prayer, is dependent upon our knowing the power of the blood of Christ. Let us see what the blood of Christ has power to do:

1. First of all, the blood of Christ is a propitiation for sin. In Romans 3:25, R.V., we read, Whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in His blood, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God." In the earlier verses of this chapter Paul has proven all men to be sinners, "every mouth is stopped," all the world is seen to be "guilty before God." But God is holy, a God who hates sin. God's hatred of sin is no play hatred. It is real, it is living, it is active. It must make itself manifest somehow. God's wrath at sin must strike somewhere. What hope then is there for any of us; for we "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"? In verse 25, God gives us His own answer to this tremendously important question. There is hope for us because God Himself has provided a propitiation, the shed blood of Christ. God has 'set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood.' The wrath of God at sin strikes on Him instead of striking on us. Of this great truth the Prophet Isaiah got a glimpse several hundred years before the birth of Christ. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid [literally, made to strike] on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). The first power of Christ's blood is the propitiation for sin, affording a mark for and satisfying God's holy wrath at sin. He is "our passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7) and when God sees His blood, He will pass over and spare us, sinners though we are. (Compare Exodus 12:13, Exodus 12:23.) This propitiation is chiefly for the believer, "a propitiation, through faith." All of God's wrath at the believer's sins is fully appeased or satisfied in the blood of Christ. What a wonderfully comforting thought it is, when we think how often and how greatly we have sinned, and then think how infinitely holy God is, how He hates sin, to think that God's wrath has already been fully appeased in the shed blood of His own Son, the propitiation which He Himself provided! The blood of Christ in a certain measure avails for all, for unbelievers as well as for believers, for the vilest sinner and the most stubborn unbeliever and blasphemer. In 1 John 2:2, R.V., we read, "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." By the shed blood of Christ a basis is provided upon which God can deal in mercy with the whole world. All of God's dealings in mercy with man are on the ground of the shed blood of Christ. God's dealings with those who ridicule the doctrine of the Atonement, God's dealings with Voltaire, Tom Paine and Colonel Ingersoll, are all on the ground of that shed blood. All of God's dealings in

mercy with any man since the fall of Adam are on the ground of that shed blood. if it had not been for the shed blood, God could never have dealt in mercy with a sinner, but must have at once cut him off in his sin.

If anyone asks, How then could God have dealt in mercy with sinners before Christ came and died?- the answer is simple. Jesus is the Lamb that hath been "slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). From the moment sin entered into the world, God had His eyes upon that sacrifice which He Himself had prepared from the foundation of the world. And in the very Garden of Eden the blood of sacrifices that pointed forward as types to the true sacrifice began to flow. It is the power of the blood which has secured to men all the merciful things God has wrought for them since sin entered. the most determined rejector of Christ owes all he has that is good to the blood of Christ.

2. Again in Ephesians 1:7, R.V., we read, "...We have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses...."

Through the blood of Christ we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins. forgiveness of sin is not something the believer in Christ is to look forward to in the future; it is something he already has. "We have," says Paul, "the forgiveness of our trespasses." The forgiveness of sin is not something we are to do something to secure. It is something which the blood of Christ has already secured, and which our faith simply appropriates and enjoys. Forgiveness has already been secured for every believer in Christ by the power of the blood.

You have heard of the old woman who lay dying. her rector heard of it and called upon her. "They tell me," he said, "that you are dying."

"Yes," she replied.

"And have you made your peace with God?"

"No," came the answer.

"And are you not afraid to meet God without making your peace with Him?"

"Not at all," was the answer and startled the minister. The minister grew earnest. "Woman, do you realize that you have but a short time to live and that you must soon meet a holy God?"

"Yes, I realize it perfectly."

"And you are not afraid?"

"Not at all."

"And you have not made your peace with God?"

"No."

"What do you mean?" cried the astonished rector. A smile passed over the features of the dying woman. "I have not made my peace with God because I do not need to. Christ made peace more than eighteen hundred years ago by the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20), and I am simply resting in the peace he made."

Oh, blessed is the one who has learned to rest in the peace Christ made, who counts his sins forgiven because Christ's blood was shed and God says so! "...We have our redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7, R.V.).

3. There is a third passage very akin to this, that brings out the power of Christ's blood. it is 1 John 1:7,

"But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." This brings out the completeness of the forgiveness we get through the blood. The blood of Christ has power to cleanse the believer from all sin. It continually "cleanseth," is cleansing, keeping him clean every day and hour, and every minute. The cleansing here is from the guilt of sin. When cleansing is mentioned in the Bible in connection with the blood, it is always cleansing from guilt. Cleansing from the power of sin and the presence of sin is by the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and the living and indwelling Christ, not the crucified Christ. Christ on the cross saves from the guilt of sin; Christ on the throne saves from the power of sin; and Christ coming again will save from the presence of sin. But the blood of Christ cleanses from all the guilt of sin, when one is walking in the light, submitting to the light, and walking in Christ who is the light. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. His past may be as bad as a past can be. There may have been countless enormous sins, but they are all, every one, the greatest and the smallest, washed away. His record is absolutely white in God's sight. As white as the record of Jesus Christ Himself. His sins which were as scarlet are as white as snow, though they were red like crimson, they are as wool (Isaiah 1:18). The blood of Christ has power to wash the blackest record white. Some of us may have had a black past. We all have had; for if we could see our past as God sees it before it is washed, the record of the best of us would be black, black, black. But if we are walking in the light, submitting to the truth of God, believing in the light, in Christ, our record today is white as Christ's garments were when the disciples saw Him on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2, Mark 9:3, Luke 9:29). No one can lay anything to the charge of God's elect (Romans 8:33): there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1).

4. Again in Romans 5:9, we read, "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." The blood of Christ has power to justify. Every believer in Christ is already justified in Christ's blood. Justified means more than forgiven and cleansed. Forgiveness, as glorious as it is, is a negative thing. It means merely that our sins are put away and we are regarded as if we had not sinned. But justification is positive. It means that we are reckoned positively righteous; that positive and perfect righteousness, even the perfect righteousness of Christ, is put to our account.

It is a good thing to be stripped of vile and filthy rags, but it is far better to be clothed with garments of glory and beauty. In forgiveness we are stripped of the vile and stinking rags of our sins; in justification we are clothed upon with the glory and beauty of Christ. It is the power of the blood which secures this. In shedding His blood as a penalty for sin, Christ took our place, and when we believed in Him, we step into His place. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21, R.V.).

5. Let us now look at Hebrews 9:14, R.V.,

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?" The blood of Christ has power to cleanse the consciences from dead works to serve the living God. Do you understand what that means? It is a glorious truth and I will try to make it plain. When a man is wakened up to the fact that he is a sinner and that God is holy, he feels that he must do something to please God and atone for sin. He must "do penances," "keep Lent," or give away money, or do something else, to atone for his sins. Now all these self efforts to please God and atone for sins are "dead works." they can never accomplish what they aim at, and can never bring peace.

How many weary years Martin Luther sought peace in this way and found it not. But when we see the power of the blood, how it has already perfectly atoned for sin, how it has already washed away our sins and justified us before God, how we are already pleasing and acceptable in God's sight by reason of that shed blood, then our consciences are not only relieved from the burden of guilt, but also from the burden of these self-efforts, and we are now at liberty to serve the living God, not in the slavery of fear, but in the liberty of the freedom and joy of those who know they are accepted and beloved sons. It is the blood that delivers us from the awful bondage of thinking we must do something to atone for sins and please God. The blood shows us that it is already done. A friend of mine once said to another who was seeking peace by doing, "You have a religion of two letters. My religion is a religion of four letters."

"How is that?" asked the other.

"Your religion is do. My religion is done. You are trying to rest in what you do. I am resting in what Christ has done."

There are many Christians today who have not permitted the blood of Christ to cleanse their consciences from dead works. They are constantly feeling they must do something to atone for sin. Oh, my brother, my sister, look at what God looks at, the blood, and see that it is all done, already done! God is satisfied, sin is atoned for, you are justified. Now don't do dead works to commend yourself to God; but, realizing that you are already commended by the blood, serve Him in the freedom of gratitude and love, and not in the bondage of fear.

There are three classes of men. First, those who are not burdened by sin, but love it. That is wholly bad. Second, those who are burdened by sin and seek to get rid of it by self-effort. That is better, but there is something infinitely better yet. Third, those who see the hideousness of sin, and were burdened for it, but who have been brought to see the power of the blood, settling sin forever, putting it away (Hebrews 9:26), and so are no longer burdened, but now work not to commend themselves to God, but out of joyous gratitude to Him who perfectly justifieth the ungodly through the shed blood.

6. In Acts 20:28, we read,

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." And in Revelation 5:9, R.V.,

"And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and

tongue, and people, and nation." The blood of Christ has power to purchase us unto God, to make us God's own. The blood of Christ makes me God's own property. That thought brings to me a feeling of responsibility. If I belong to God, I must serve Him wholly; body, soul, and spirit, must be surrendered wholly to Him. But the thought that I am God's property brings also a feeling of security. God can and will take care of His own property. The blood of Christ has power to make me eternally secure.

7. We learn still more about the power of the blood in Hebrews 10:19-20, R.V.,

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, the flesh." The blood of Christ has power to give the believer boldness to enter into the holy place, to approach into the very presence of God. In the old Jewish days of the tabernacle and temple God manifested Himself in the most holy place. This was the place to meet God. But into this holy place only one Jew in all the nation was allowed to enter, the high priest; and he only once a year, on the day of atonement; and then only with blood. God was teaching the Jews, and through them the world, three great truths-- God's unapproachable holiness, man's sinfulness, and that sinful man could approach a holy God only through atoning blood, that "without shedding of blood" there could be "no remission," and consequently no approach to God (Hebrews 9:22). But the blood of the Old Testament sacrifices was only a figure of the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ; and, by reason of His shed blood, the vilest sinner who believes on Him has the right to approach God-- come into His very presence, when he will, without fear, "in full assurance of faith," "with boldness."

Oh, the wondrous power of the blood of Christ to take all fear away when I draw near to that God who is holy and is a "consuming fire"! God is holy? Yes. And I am a sinner? Yes-- but by that wondrous offering of Christ "once and for all" my sin is forever put away, I am "perfected" and "justified," and, on the ground of that blood so precious and satisfying to God, I can march boldly into the very presence of God. But the blood of Christ has still further power. Read Revelation 22:14, R.V.,

"Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city." By comparing this verse with chapter 7 and verse 14, we see that it is in the blood of Christ that robes are washed. The blood of Christ then has power to give those who believe in Him a right to the tree of life and entrance into the city of God. Sin in the first place shut men away from the tree of life and out of Eden (Genesis 3:22-24). The shed blood of Christ opens to us again the way to the tree of life and to the New Jerusalem. The blood of Christ regains for us all that Adam lost by sin, and brings us much more than we lost.

We see something of the power of the blood of Christ. Have you appreciated that blood? Have you let it have power in your life that it ought to have? There are some today who are trying to devise a theology that leaves out the blood of Christ. Poor fools! Christianity without atoning blood is a Christianity without mercy for the sinner, without settled peace for the conscience, without genuine forgiveness, without justification, without cleansing, without boldness in approaching God, without power. It is not Christianity, but the devil's own counterfeit. If we would know fullness and power in Christian life and service, we must first of all know the power of the blood of Christ, for it is that which brings us pardon, justification, and boldness in our approach to God. We cannot know the power of the Spirit unless we first know the power of the blood. We certainly cannot know the

power of prayer unless we know the power of that blood by which alone we can approach unto God.

There are some teachers of "the higher life" who ignore the fundamental truth about the blood. They are trying to build a lofty superstructure without a firm foundation. It is bound to tumble. We must begin with the blood, if we are to go on to the "holy of holies." The brazen altar where blood was shed first met every priest who would enter into the holy place. There is no other way of entrance there. If we do not learn the lesson of this chapter, it is vain for us to try to learn the lessons of chapters 3 and 4. To everyone who wishes to know the power of the Spirit we first put the question, "Do you know the power of the blood?"

## The Power of the Holy Spirit

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The Power of the Holy Spirit by R. A. Torrey (from How To Obtain Fullness Of Power by R.A. Torrey, ©1897, Fleming H. Revell Company)

"Power belongeth unto God." The Holy Spirit is the person who imparts to the individual believer the power that belongs to God. This is the Holy Spirit's work in the believer, to take what belongs to God and make it ours. All the manifold power of God belongs to the children of God as their birthright in Christ. "All things are your's" (1 Corinthians 3:21). But all that belongs to us as our birthright in Christ becomes ours in actual and experimental possession through the Holy Spirit's work in us as individuals. To the extent that we understand and claim for ourselves the Holy Spirit's work, to that extent do we obtain for ourselves the fullness of power in Christian life and service that God has provided for us in Christ. A very large portion of the church knows and claims for itself a very small part of that which God has made possible for them in Christ, because they know so very little of what the Holy Spirit can do for us, and longs to do for us. Let us study the Word, then, to find out what the Holy Spirit has power to do in men.

We shall not go far before we discover that the same work which we see ascribed in one place to the power of the Word of God is in other places ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The explanation to this is simple. The Word of God is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit does his work. The Word of God is "the sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17). The Word of God is also the seed the Spirit sows and quickens (Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:23). The Word of God is the instrument of all the manifold operations of the Holy Spirit, as seen in Chapter 1.

If, therefore, we wish the Holy Spirit to do His work in our hearts, we must study the Word. If we wish Him to do His work in the hearts of others, we must give them the Word. But the bare Word will not do the work alone. The Spirit must Himself use the Word. It is when the Spirit Himself uses His own sword that it manifests its real temper, keenness and power. God's work is accomplished by the Word and the Spirit, or rather by the Spirit through the Word. The secret of effectual living is knowing the power of the Spirit through the Word. The secret of effectual service is using the Word in the power of the Spirit. There are some who seek to magnify the Spirit but neglect the Word. This will not do at all. Fanaticism, baseless enthusiasm, wildfire are the result. Others seek to magnify the Word, but largely ignore the Spirit. Neither will this do. It leads to dead orthodoxy, truth without life and power. The true course is to recognize the instrumental power of the Word through which the Holy Spirit works, and the living, personal power of the Holy Spirit who acts through the Word. But let us come directly to the consideration of our subject: What has the Holy Spirit power to do?

1. Turn to 1 Corinthians 12:3,

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, But by the Holy Ghost" The Holy Spirit has power to reveal Jesus Christ and His glory to man. When Jesus spoke of The Spirit's coming,

He said: "But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me" (John 15:26). And it is only as He does testify of Christ that men will ever come to a true knowledge of Christ. You send men to the Word to get a knowledge of Christ; but it is only as the Spirit takes the Word and illuminates it, that men ever get a real living knowledge of Christ. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." If you wish men to get a true knowledge of Jesus Christ, such a view that they will believe on Him and be saved, you must seek for them the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Neither your testimony nor that of the Word alone, will suffice, though it is your testimony, or that of the Word, which the Spirit uses. But unless your testimony is taken up by the Holy Spirit and He Himself testifies, they will not believe. It was not merely Peter's words about Christ that convinced the Jews at Pentecost. It was the Spirit Himself bearing witness. If you wish men to see the truth about Jesus, do not depend upon your own powers of exposition and persuasion, but cast yourself upon the Holy Ghost and seek His testimony. If you wish yourself to know Jesus with a true and living knowledge, seek the witness of the Spirit through the Word. Many a man has a correct doctrinal conception of Christ, through a study of the Word, long before he has a true personal knowledge of Christ through the testimony of the living Spirit.

2. Now let us turn to John 16:8-11:

"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on Me; Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." The Holy Spirit has power to convict the world of sin. This is closely connected with the preceding; for, it is by showing Jesus and His glory and His righteousness, that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment. Note the sin of which the Holy Spirit convicts, "Of sin, because they believe not on Me." It was so at Pentecost, as we see in Acts 2:36-37. You can never convict any man of sin because that is the work of the Holy Spirit. You can reason and reason, and you will fail. The Holy Spirit can do it very quickly. Did you never have this experience? You have shown a man passage after passage of Scripture, and he was unmoved, and you have wondered why the man did not break down. Suddenly it has occurred to you, "Why, I am not looking in my helplessness to the mighty Spirit of God to convict this man of sin, but I am trying the man of sin myself." Then you have cast yourself upon the Spirit of God for Him to do the work, and conviction came. The Spirit can convince the most careless, as experience has proven again and again. But it is through us that the Spirit produces conviction. In John 16:7-8, we read, "...I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." It was the Spirit who was sent to Peter and the rest, who convicted the three thousand through Peter and the others on the day of Pentecost. It is ours to preach the Word and to look to the Holy Spirit to produce conviction (See Acts 2:4-37).

3. In Titus 3:5, we read,

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit has power to renew men or to make men new, to regenerate. Regeneration is the Holy Spirit's work. He can take a man dead in trespasses and sins, and make him alive. He can take a man whose mind is blind to the truth of God, whose will is at enmity with God and set on sin, whose affections are corrupt and

vile, and transform that man, impart to him God's nature, so that he thinks God's thoughts, wills what God wills, loves what God loves, and hates what God hates.

I never despair of any man when I think of the power of the Holy Spirit to make new, as I have seen it manifested again and again in the most hardened and hopeless cases. It is through us that the Holy Spirit regenerates others (1 Corinthians 4:15). As we have seen in Chapter 1, the Word has power to regenerate; but it is not the bare Word, but the Word made a living thing in the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. No amount of preaching, no matter how orthodox it is, and no amount of mere study of the Word will regenerate, unless the Holy Spirit works. Just as we are utterly dependent on the work of Christ for us in justification, so we are utterly dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit in us in regeneration. When one is born of the Spirit, the Spirit takes up His own abode in him (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19). The Holy Spirit dwells in everyone who belongs to Christ (Romans 8:9). We may not have surrendered our lives very fully to this indwelling Spirit; we may be very far from being "full of the Spirit"; we may be very imperfect Christians, but, if we have been born again, the Spirit dwells in us, just as Paul said to the Corinthians, who were certainly very far from perfect Christians, that He did in them. What a glorious thought it is that the Holy Spirit dwells in me! But it is also a very solemn thought. If my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, I certainly ought not to defile it, as many professed Christians do. Bearing in mind that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit would solve many problems that perplex young Christians.

4. We find a further thought about the power of the Holy Spirit in John 4:14,

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life"

You may not see at first that this verse has anything to do with the Holy Spirit, but compare John 7:37, John 7:39, and it will be evident that the water here means the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, then, has power to give abiding and everlasting satisfaction. The world can never satisfy. Of every worldly joy it must be said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." But the Holy Spirit has power to satisfy every longing of the soul. The Holy Spirit and He alone can satisfy the human heart. If you give yourself up to the Holy Spirit's inflowing, or rather upspringing, in your heart, you will never thirst. You will not long for the theater, or the ballroom, or the card party, or worldly gain, or honor. Oh, with what joy unutterable and satisfaction indescribable the Holy Spirit has poured forth His living water in many souls! Have you this living fountain within? Is the spring unchoked? Is it springing up into everlasting life? In Romans 8:2, we read, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The Holy Spirit has power to set us free from the law of sin and death. What the law of sin and death is we see in the preceding chapter (Romans 7:9-24). Read this description carefully. We all know this law of sin and death. We have all been in bondage to it. Some of us are still in bondage to it, but we do not need to be. God has provided a way of escape. That way is by the Holy Spirit's power. When we give up the hopeless struggle of trying to overcome the law of sin and death, of trying to live right in our own strength, in the power of the flesh; and in utter helplessness surrender to the Holy Spirit to do all for us; when we live after Him and walk in His blessed power; then He sets us free from the law of sin and death.

There are many professed Christians today living in Romans 7. Some go so far as to maintain that this is the normal Christian life, that one must live this life of constant defeat. This would be true, if we were left to ourselves; for in ourselves we are "carnal, sold under sin." But we are not left to ourselves. The Holy Spirit undertakes for us what we have failed to do ourselves (Romans 8:2-4). In Romans 8 we have the picture of the true Christian life, the life that is possible to us, and that God expects from each one of us; the life where not merely the commandment comes, as in chapter 7, but where the mighty Spirit comes also, and works obedience and victory. The flesh is still in us, but we are not in the flesh (Romans 8:12-13, compare Romans 8:9). We do not live after it. We "live after the Spirit." We, "through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body." We "walk in the Spirit,"; and do "not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). It is our privilege, in the Spirit's power, to get daily, hourly, and constant victory over the flesh and over sin. But the victory is not in ourselves, not in any strength of our own. Left to ourselves, deserted of the Spirit of God, we would be as helpless as ever. It is all in the Spirit's power. If we try to take one step in our own strength, we shall fail. Has the Holy Spirit set you free from the law of sin and death? Will you let Him do it now? simply give up all self-effort to be free from "the law of sin and death", to give up sinning; believe in the divine power of the Holy Spirit to set you free; and cast yourself upon Him to do it. He will do it. Then you can triumphantly cry with Paul, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death" (Romans 8:2, R.V.).

6. We find a closely allied but larger thought about the Holy Spirit's power in Ephesians 3:16, R.V.,

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man." The Holy Spirit strengthens the believer with power in the inward man. The result in this strengthening is seen in verses 17 to 19. Here the power of the Spirit manifests itself not merely in giving us victory over sin, but (a) in Christ's dwelling in our hearts; (b) our being "rooted and grounded in love"; (c) our being made "strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge..." (Ephesians 3:18-19). It all ultimates in our being "filled unto all the fullness of God."

7. We find a still further thought about the Holy Spirit's power in Romans 8:14, R.V., "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." The Holy Spirit has power to lead us into a holy life, a life as "sons of God", a godlike life. Not merely does the Holy Spirit gives us power to live a holy life, a life well-pleasing to God when we have discovered what that life is: He takes us by the hand, as it were, and leads us into that life. Our whole part is simply to surrender ourselves utterly to Him to lead and to mould us. Those who do this are not merely God's offspring, which all men are (Acts 17:28); neither are we merely God's children: "These are sons of God."

8. Further down in the chapter there is a new thought. Romans 8:16, R.V., "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The Holy Spirit bears witness with the spirit of the believer that he is a child of God. Note that Paul does not say that the Spirit bears witness to our spirit, but with it--"together with our spirit," is the exact force of the words used. That is, there are two who bears witness to our sonship: First, our spirit bears witness that we are children of God; second, the Holy Spirit bears witness together with our spirit that we are children of God.

How does the Holy Spirit bear His testimony to this fact? Galatians 4:6 answers this question, "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (R.V.). The Holy Spirit Himself enters into our hearts and cries, "Abba, Father." Note the order of the Spirit's work in Romans 8:2, Romans 8:4, Romans 8:13-14, Romans 8:16. It is only when "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (v.2), and so "the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled" in me "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (v.4), and I "through the Spirit of God do mortify the deeds of the body" (v. 13), and when I am surrendered to the Spirit's leading (v.14), it is then, and only then, that I can expect verse 16 to be realized in my experience, and that I have the clear assurance of sonship that comes from the Spirit of God testifying together with my spirit, that I am a child of God. There are many seeking this testimony of the Holy Spirit in the wrong place; namely, as a condition of their surrendering wholly to God, and confessing the crucified and risen Lord as their Saviour and Lord. The testimony of the Holy Spirit to our sonship comes after all this is done.

9. An exceedingly important thought about the Holy Spirit's power is found in Galatians 5:22-23,

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." The Holy Spirit brings forth in the believer Christlike graces of character (Compare Romans 5:5; Romans 14:17; Romans 15:13). All real beauty of character, all real Christlikeness in us, is the Holy Spirit's work. It is His "fruit." He bears it; not we. Note that these graces are not said to be the fruits of the Spirit; they are the "fruit." There is a unity of origin running all through the multiplicity of manifestation; and not some of these graces, but all, will appear in everyone in whom the Holy Spirit is given full control.

It is a beautiful life that is set forth in these verses. Every word is worthy of earnest study and profound meditation: "Love," "joy," "peace," "longsuffering," "gentleness," "goodness," "faith," "meekness," "self-control." Is not this the life we all long for, the Christ life? Is it not natural to us, and it is not attainable by an effort of the "flesh," or nature. The life that is natural for us is set forth in the three preceding verses (Galatians 5:19-21). But when the indwelling Spirit is given full control in the one He inhabits; when we are brought to realize the utter badness of the flesh, and give up in helpless despair of ever attaining to anything really good in its power; when, in other words, we come to the end of self, and just give over the whole work of making us what we ought to be to the indwelling HOLY SPIRIT, then, and only then, these holy graces of character are His "fruit." Do you wish these graces in your character and life? Renounce self utterly, and all its strivings after holiness; and let the Holy Spirit, who dwells in you, take full control and bear His own glorious fruit. We get the same essential truth from another point of view in Galatians 2:20 (R.V., Am. App.), "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me."

Settle it clearly and forever that the flesh can never bear this fruit, that you can never attain these things by your own effort, that they are "the fruit of the Spirit." We hear a good deal in these days about "ethical culture," which usually means a cultivation of the flesh until it bears the fruit of the Spirit. It cannot be done, until thorns can be made to bear figs, and a bramblebush, grapes (Matthew 12:33, Luke 6:44). We hear also a good deal about "character building." That is all very well, if you let the Holy Spirit do the building, and then it is not so much building as fruit-bearing.

(See, however, 2 Peter 1:5-7.) We hear also about "cultivating graces of character," but we must always bear in mind that the way to cultivate true graces of character is by submitting ourselves utterly to the Spirit to do His work. This is "sanctification of the Spirit" (1 Peter 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).

We turn now to the Holy Spirit in a different direction.

10. John 16:13, R.V.:

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak: and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come." The Holy Spirit has power to guide the believer "into all the truth." This promise was made in the first instance to the apostles, but the apostles themselves applied it to all believers (1 John 2:20, 1 John 2:27). It is the privilege of each of us to be "taught of God." Each believer is independent of human teachers. "Ye need not that any man teach you." This does not mean, of course, that we may not learn much from others, who are taught by the Holy Spirit. If John had thought that, he would never have written this epistle to teach others. The man who is most fully taught of God is the very one who will be most ready to listen to what God has taught others. Much less does it mean that when we are taught of God we are independent of the Word of God. For the Word is the very place where the Spirit leads His pupils, and the instrument through which He teaches them (John 6:63; Ephesians 6:17; Ephesians 5:18-19; Comp. Colossians 3:16). But, while we may learn much from men, we are not dependent upon them. We have a divine teacher, the Holy Spirit.

We shall never truly know the truth until we are thus taught. No amount of mere human teaching, no matter who our teachers may be, will give us a correct apprehension of the truth. Not even a diligent study of the Word, either in the English or original languages, will give us a real understanding of the truth. We must be taught of the Holy Spirit. And we may be thus taught, each one of us. The one who is thus taught, even if he does not know a word of Greek or Hebrew, will understand the truth of God better than the one who knows the Greek, the Hebrew, and all "the cognate languages," and is not taught of the Spirit. The Spirit will guide the one He teaches "into all the truth," not in a day, or in a week, or in a year, but step by step.

There are two especial lines of the Spirit's teaching mentioned. (a) "He shall declare unto you the things that are to come." Many say we can know nothing of the future, that all our thoughts on that subject are guesswork. Anyone taught of the Spirit knows better than that. (b) "He shall glorify me [i.e., Christ]: for He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." This is the Holy Spirit's especial line, with the believer as well as the unbeliever, to declare unto them the things of Christ and glorify Him.

Many fear to emphasize the truth about the Holy Spirit, lest Christ be disparaged. But no one magnifies Christ as the Holy Spirit does. We will never understand Christ, nor see His glory, until the Holy Spirit interprets Him to us. The mere listening to sermons and lectures, the mere study of the word even, will never give you to see the things of Christ. The Holy Spirit must show you, and He is willing to do it. He is longing to do it. I suppose the Holy Spirit's inmost desire is to reveal Jesus Christ to men. Let Him do it. Christ is so different when the Holy Spirit glorifies Him by taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us.

11. Turning to John 14:26, R.V., we find again the Holy Spirit's power to teach, but with an added thought,

"But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." The Holy Spirit has power to bring to remembrance the words of Christ. This promise was made primarily to the apostles, and is the guarantee of the accuracy of their report of what Jesus said. But the Holy Spirit does a similar work with each believer who expects it of Him and looks to Him to do it. He brings to mind the teachings of Christ, and the words of Christ, just when we need them, for either the necessities of our own life or of our service.

How many of us could tell of occasions when we were in great distress of soul, of great questioning concerning our duty, or great extremity as to what to say to one whom we were trying to lead to Christ, or to help; and just the scripture we needed, some passage we had not thought of for a long time, and, perhaps, never thought of in this connection, was brought to mind. It was the Holy Spirit who did this, and He is ready to do it even more, when we expect it of Him.

It is without significance, that in the next verse after making this great promise, Jesus says: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you"? Look to the Holy Spirit to bring the right words to remembrance at the right time, and you will have peace. This is the way to remember Scripture, just when you need it, and just the Scripture you need.

12. Closely akin to what has been said in the two preceding sections is the power of the Holy Spirit as seen in 1 Corinthians 2:10-14, R.V.:

"But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all thing, yea, the deep things of God. For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged". In these verses we have a twofold work of the Spirit:(a) The Holy Spirit reveals to us the deep things of God, which are hidden from and are foolishness to the natural man. It is pre-eminently to the apostles that He does this, but we cannot limit this work of the Spirit to them. (b) The Holy Spirit interprets His own revelation, or imparts power to discern, know, and appreciate what He has taught. Not only is the Holy Spirit the author of Revelation--the written Word of God. He is also the interpreter of what He has revealed. How much more interesting and helpful any deep book becomes when we have the author of the book right at hand to interpret it to us! This is what we always may have when we study the Bible. The author-- the Holy Spirit-- is right at hand to interpret. To understand the book we must look to Him. Then the darkest places become clear. We need to pray often with the psalmist, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy law" (Psalms 119:18).

It is not enough that we have the objective revelation in the written Word; we must also have the inward illumination of the Holy spirit to enable us to comprehend it. It is a great mistake to try to comprehend a spiritual revelation with the natural understanding. It is the foolish attempt to do this

that has landed so many in the bog of higher criticism. A man with no aesthetic sense might as well expect to appreciate the Sistine Madonna, because he is not color blind, as an unspiritual man to understand the Bible, simply because he understands the laws of grammar of the vocabulary of the language in which the Bible was written. I would as soon think of setting a man to teach art merely because he understood paints, as to set him to teach the Bible merely because he understood Greek or Hebrew.

We all need to recognize the utter insufficiency and worthlessness of our own righteousness, which is the lesson of the opening chapters of the epistle to the Romans, but also the utter insufficiency and worthlessness in the things of God, in our own wisdom, which is the lesson of the first epistle to the Corinthians, especially the first to the third chapters (see e.g. 1 Corinthians 1:19-21, 1 Corinthians 1:26-27). The Jews had a revelation by the Spirit but they failed to depend upon Him to interpret it to them, so they went astray. The whole evangelical church realizes the utter insufficiency of man's righteousness, theoretically at least. Now it needs to be taught, and made to feel, the utter insufficiency of man's wisdom. that is perhaps the lesson this nineteenth century of overweening intellectual conceit needs most of any. To understand God's Word, we must empty ourselves utterly of our own wisdom and rest in utter dependence upon the Spirit of God to interpret it for us (Matthew 11:25). When we put away our own righteousness, then, and only then, we get the righteousness of God (Php\_3:4-7, Php\_3:9; Romans 10:13).When we put away our own wisdom, then, and only then, we get the wisdom of God (Matthew 11:25; 1 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 1:25-28). When we put away our own strength, then, and only then, we get the strength of God (Isaiah 40:29; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 1 Corinthians 1:27-28). Emptying must precede filling- self poured out that Christ may be poured in. We must be daily taught of the Spirit to understand the Word.

I cannot depend today on the fact that the Spirit taught me yesterday. Each new contact with the Word must be in the power of the Spirit. That the Holy Spirit once illumined our mind to grasp a certain passage is not enough. He must do so each time we confront that passage.

Andrew Murray has put this truth well. He says, "Each time you come to the Word in study, in hearing a sermon or reading a religious book, there ought to be as distinct as your intercourse with the external means, a definite act or self-abnegation, denying your own wisdom and yielding yourself in faith to the divine teacher" (The Spirit of Christ, p. 221).

13. The Holy Spirit has not only power to teach us the truth, but also to impart power to us in communicating that truth to others. We see this brought out again and again.

"And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."- 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, R.V.

"Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost" (1 Thessalonians 1:5).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit enables the believer to communicate to others in "power" the truth he himself has been taught. We not only need the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth in the first place; and the Holy Spirit in the second place to interpret to us as individuals the truth He has revealed; but in the third place we also need the Holy Spirit to enable us to effectually communicate to others the truth He Himself has interpreted to us. We need Him all along the line. One great cause of real failure in the ministry, even when there is seeming success, and not only in the ministry but in all forms of service by Christian men and women, is from the attempt to teach by "enticing words of man's wisdom," i.e., by the arts of human logic, rhetoric or eloquence, what the Holy Spirit has taught us. What is needed is Holy Ghost power, "demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

There are three causes of failure of Christian work. First, some other message is taught than the message which the Holy Spirit has revealed in the Word. Men preach science, art, philosophy, sociology, history, experience, etc., etc., and not the simple Word of God as found in the Holy Spirit's Book-- the Bible. Second, the Spirit-taught message, the Bible, is studied and sought to be comprehended by the natural understanding, i.e., without the Spirit's illumination. Third, the Spirit-given message, the Word, the Bible, studied and comprehended under the Holy Spirit's illumination, is given out to others with "enticing words of man's wisdom" and not "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." We need, we are absolutely dependent upon, the Holy Spirit all along the line. He must teach us how to speak as well as what to speak. He must be the power as well as the message.

14. The Holy Spirit has power to teach us how to pray. In Jude 1:20, R.V., we read, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."

Again in Ephesians 6:18, R.V., "Praying at all seasons in the Spirit." The Holy Spirit guides the believer in prayer. The disciples did not know how to pray as they ought, so they came to Jesus and said, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). "We know not how to pray as we ought," but we have another helper right at hand to help us (John 14:16-17). "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity" (Romans 8:26 R.V.). He teacheth us to pray. True prayer is prayer "in the Spirit," i.e., the prayer in which the Spirit inspires and directs. When we come into God's presence to pray, we should recognize our infirmity, our ignorance of what we should pray for or how we should pray, and, in the consciousness of our utter inability to pray aright, look up to the Holy Spirit and cast ourselves utterly upon Him to direct our prayers, to lead out our desires, and guide our utterance of them. Rushing heedlessly into God's presence, and asking the first thing that comes into our minds, or that some thoughtless one asks us to pray for, is not "praying in the Holy Ghost," and is not true prayer. We must wait for the Holy Spirit, and surrender ourselves to the Holy Spirit. The prayer that God and the Holy Spirit inspires is the prayer that God the Father answers. From Romans 8:26-27, we learn that the longings which the Holy Spirit begets in our hearts are often too deep for utterance; too deep, apparently, for clear and definite comprehension on the part of the believer himself, in whom the Holy Spirit is working. God Himself must "search the heart," to know "what is the mind of the Spirit" in these unuttered and unutterable longings. But God does know "what is the mind of the Spirit." He does know what those Spirit-given longings mean, even if we do not, and these longings are "according to the will of God," and He grants them. So it comes that He is "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20). There are other times when the Spirit's leadings in prayer are so

plain that we 'pray with the Spirit and with the understanding also' (1 Corinthians 14:15).

15. The Holy Spirit has also power to lead out our hearts in acceptable thanksgiving to God. Paul says,

"...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father." Ephesians 5:18-20, R.V. Not only does the Spirit teach us to pray, He also teaches us to render thanks. One of the most prominent characteristics of the "Spirit-filled life" is thanksgiving. True thanksgiving is "to God, even the Father," "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," "in the Holy Spirit."

16. The Holy Spirit has power to inspire in the heart of the believer in Christ worship that is acceptable to God.

"For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Php\_3:3, R.V.

Prayer is not worship, thanksgiving is not worship. Worship is a definite act of the creature in relation to God. Worship is bowing before God in adoring acknowledgment and contemplation of Himself. Someone has said, "In our prayers we are taken up with our needs; in our thanksgiving we are taken up with our blessings; in our worship we are taken up with Himself." There is no true and acceptable worship except that which the Holy Spirit prompts and directs. "Such doth the Father seek to be His worshipers" (John 4:23, R.V.). The flesh seeks to enter every sphere of life. It has its worship as well as its lust. The worship which the flesh prompts is an abomination to God. Not all earnest and honest worship is worship in the Spirit. A man may be very honest and very earnest in his worship, and still not have submitted himself to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the matter, and so his worship is in the flesh. Even where there is great loyalty to the letter of the Word, worship may not be "in the Spirit," i.e., inspired and directed by Him. To worship aright we must "have no confidence in the flesh." We must recognize the utter inability of the flesh, i.e., our natural self as contrasted with the divine Spirit who dwells in and should mould everything in the believer, to worship acceptably. We must realize also the danger there is that the flesh, self, intrude itself into our worship. In utter self-distrust and self-abnegation we must cast ourselves upon the Holy Spirit to lead us aright in our worship. Just as we must renounce any merit in ourselves, and cast ourselves utterly upon Christ and His work for us for justification; just so we must renounce any capacity for good in ourselves, and cast ourselves utterly upon the Holy Spirit, and His work in us, in living, praying, thanking, and worshiping, and all else we are to do.

17. Let us next consider the Holy Spirit's power as a guide. In Acts 13:2-4, we read:

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost 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. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." The Holy Spirit calls men and sends them forth to definite lines of work. The Holy Spirit not only calls men in a general way into Christian work, but He also selects the specific work and paints it out. "Shall I go to China, to Africa, to India?" many a one is asking, and many another ought to ask. You cannot rightly settle that question for yourselves, neither can any other man settle it rightly for you. Not every Christian man is called to

China or Africa or any other foreign field. God alone knows whether He wishes you to go to any of these places. He is willing to show you.

How does the Holy Spirit call? The passage before us does not tell. It is presumably purposely silent on this point, lest, perhaps, we think that He must always call precisely the same way. There is nothing to indicate that He spoke by an audible voice, much less that He made His will known in any of the fantastic ways in which some profess to discern His leadings, e.g., by some twitching of the body, or by opening the Bible at random, and putting the finger on a passage that may be construed into some entirely different meaning than that which the inspired writer intended by it. But the important point is that He made His will clearly known. He is as willing to make His will clearly known to us today. The great need in Christian work today is men and women whom the Holy Spirit calls and sends forth. We have plenty of men and women whom men have called and sent forth; we have far too many who have called themselves. There are many today who object strenuously to being sent forth by men, by any organization of any kind, who are, what is immeasurably worse than that, sent forth by themselves, not by God. How shall we receive the Holy Spirit's call? By desiring it, seeking it, waiting upon the Lord for it, and expecting it. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted," the record reveals.

Many a man is saying, in self-justification for staying out of the ministry, or for staying home from the foreign field: "I have never had a call." How do you know that? Have you been listening for it? God speaks often in a still small voice. Only the listening ear can catch it. Have you definitely offered yourself to God to send you where He will? While no man ought to go to China or Africa unless he is clearly and definitely called, he ought to definitely offer himself to God for this work, and be ready for a call, and listening sharply that he may hear it when it comes. No educated Christian man or woman has a right to rest easy out of the foreign field until they have definitely offered themselves to God for that work, and it is clear no call from God has come. Indeed, a man needs no more definite call to Africa than to Boston, or New York, or Chicago.

18. We learn something further about the Holy Spirit's power to guide in Acts 8:27-29. First, we have the story of Philip:

"And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot."

Second, the second word is about Paul and his missionary party:

"And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the Word in Asia; and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." --Acts 16:6-7, R.V. The Holy Spirit guides in the details of daily life and service as to where to go and where not to go, what to do and what not to do. It is possible for us to have the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit at every turn in our lives. For example, in personal work it is manifestly not God's intention that we speak to everyone we meet. There are some to whom we ought not to speak. Time spent on them would be time taken from work which would be more to the glory of God. Doubtless Philip met many as he journeyed toward Gaza, before he met the one of whom the Spirit said: "God near and join thyself to this

chariot." In the same way is He ready to guide us in all the affairs of life: business, study, social life--everything. We can have God's wisdom, if we will, at every turn of life. There is no promise more plain and explicit than James 1:5: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." How shall we gain this wisdom? James 1:5-7 answers. Here are really five steps.

First: That we lack wisdom. We must be conscious of and fully admit our own inability to decide wisely. Not only the sinfulness but the wisdom of the flesh must be renounced.

Second: We must really desire to know God's way, and be willing to do God's will. This is implied in the asking, if the asking be sincere. This is a point of fundamental importance. Here we find the reason why men oft times do not know God's will, and have not the Spirit's guidance. They are not really willing to do whatever the Spirit leads. It is the "meek" whom He guides in judgment, and the meek to whom "He will teach His way" (Psalms 25:9). It is he who "willeth to do His will" who "shall know" (John 7:17, R.V.).

Third: We must ask, definitely ask guidance.

Forth: We must confidently expect guidance. "Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting" (vss. 6 and 7, James 1:6-7, R.V.).

Fifth: We must follow step by step as the guidance comes. Just how it will come no one can tell. But it will come. It may come with only a step made clear at a time. That is all that we need to know--the next step. Many are in darkness because they do not know what God will have them to do next week, or next month, or next year. Do you know the next step? That is enough. Take it, and then He will show you the next. (See Numbers 9:17-23). God's guidance is clear guidance (1 John 1:5). Many are tortured by leadings which they fear may be from God, but which they are not sure about. You have a right, as God's child, to be sure. Go to God and say: "Here I am, heavenly Father; I am willing to do Thy will, but make it clear. If this is Thy will, I will do it; but make it clear if it is." He will do it, if it is His will and you are willing to do it. You need not and ought not to do that thing until He does make it clear. We have no right to dictate to God how He shall give His guidance, as, e.g. by "shutting up every other way," or by a sign, or by letting us put a finger on a text. It is ours to seek and expect wisdom, but it is not ours to dictate how it shall be given (1 Corinthians 12:11).

19. In one more direction has the Holy Spirit power. Read Acts 4:31; Acts 13:9-10,

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness." The Holy Spirit has power to give us boldness in testimony for Christ. Many are naturally timid. They long to do something for Christ, but they are afraid. The Holy Spirit can make you bold if you will look to Him and trust Him to do it. It was He who turned the craven Peter into the one who fearlessly faced the Sanhedrin and rebuked their sin. (See Acts 4:8-12.)

Two things are manifest from what has been said about the power of the Holy Spirit in the believer: First, how utterly dependent we are upon the Holy Spirit at every turn of Christian life and service. Second, how perfect is the provision for life and service that God has made, and what the fullness of privilege that is open to the humblest believer, through the Holy Spirit's work. It is not so much

what we are by nature either intellectually, morally, spiritually, or even physically that is important; but what the Holy Spirit can do for us, and what we will let Him do. The Holy Spirit often takes the one who gives the least natural promise and uses him far more than those who give the greatest natural promise. Christian life is not to be lived in the realm of natural temperament, and Christian work is not to be done in the power of natural endowment but Christian life is to be lived in the realm of the Spirit, and Christian work is to be done in the power of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit is eagerly desirous to do for each of us His whole work. He will do for each of us all we will let Him do.

## The Power of the Word of God

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### The Power of the Word of God

by R. A. Torrey (from How To Obtain Fullness Of Power by R.A. Torrey, ©1897, Fleming H. Revell Company) "Power belongeth unto God." - Psalms 62:11 The great reservoir of the power that belongs to God is His own Word- the Bible. If we wish to make it ours, we must go to that Book. Yet people abound in the church who are praying for power and neglecting the Bible. Men are longing to have power for fruit-bearing in their own lives and yet forget that Jesus has said:

"The seed is the Word of God." (Luke 8:11) They are longing to have power to melt the cold heart and break the stubborn will, and yet forget that God has said:

"Is not my Word like as a fire? ...and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29)

If we are to obtain fullness of power in life and service, we must feed upon the Word of God. There is no other food so strengthening. If we will not take time to study the Bible, we cannot have power, any more than we can have physical power if we will not take time to eat nutritious food. Let us see what the word of God has power to do.

1. First of all, the Word of God has power to convict of sin. In Acts 2:37 we read,

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

If we look back and see what it was they heard and that produced this deep conviction, we find that it was simply the Word of God. If you will read Peter's sermon, you will find it one of the most biblical sermons ever preached. It was Scripture from beginning to end. It was, then, the word of God, carried home by the spirit of God, that pricked them to their heart. If you wish to produce conviction, you must give men the Word of God. I heard a man pray some time ago this prayer, "O God, convict us of sin," a very good prayer, but unless you bring your soul in contact with that instrument which God has appointed for the conviction of sin, you will not have conviction of sin. If you wish to produce conviction in others, you must use the word to do it. Not long ago a fine looking young man came into our inquiry-room. I said to him, "Are you a Christian?"

"No, sir."

"Why not?"

"I think Christianity is a first-rate thing, but I have not much feeling about this."

"But," I said, "do you not know that you are a sinner?"

He said: "Yes, sir, I suppose I am; but I am not very much of a sinner. I am a pretty good sort of a fellow."

I replied: "So, my friend, you have not very much conviction of sin. I have something in my hand that is a divinely-appointed instrument to produce conviction of sin." I opened my Bible to Matthew 22:37-38 and asked him to read it. He read, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."

"What commandment is that?" I asked.

He replied: "The first and great commandment."

"In the light of that, what must be the first and great sin?"

He replied: "It must be to neglect to keep that commandment."

"Have you kept it?" The Spirit of God took it home to his heart then and there. It was not long before we were kneeling, and he was asking God for mercy through Christ.

2. In the next place, the Word of God has power to regenerate. In 1 Peter 1:23 we read,

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." In James 1:18 we read, "Of His own will He begat us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures."

If you wish to be born again, the way is very simple. Take the Word of God concerning Christ crucified and risen, and drop it into your heart by meditation upon it. Look to God by His Holy Spirit to quicken it, believe it with the heart, and the work is done. If you wish to see someone else born again, give him the Word of God. The process of regeneration on our side is the simplest thing in the world. On God's side it is mysterious, but with that we have nothing to do. The process is simply this: the human heart is the soil; you and I are sowers; the word of God is the seed which we drop into that soil. God quickens it by His Holy Spirit and gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6). The heart closes around the Word by faith, and the new life is the product. The new birth is simply the impartation of a new nature, the impartation of God's nature. But how are we made partakers of God's nature? Read 2 Peter 1:4 (R.V.) and the context: "That through these (exceeding great and precious promises) ye may become partakers of the divine nature." That is all there is to it. The word of God is the seed out of which the divine nature springs up in the human soul.

3. Again, the word of God has power to produce faith. In Romans 10:17 we read, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

You can never get faith by merely praying; you can never get it by any effort of the will; you can never get it by trying to pump it up in any way. Faith is the product of a certain cause, and that cause is the Word of God. It is so, for example, with saving faith. Suppose you want a man to have saving faith. Simply give him something definite from God's Word upon which he can rest. The Philippian jailer asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30), and Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). But Paul did not stop there. Read verse 32, "And they spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." They did not merely tell the Philippian jailer to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and then leave him there floundering in the dark without giving him something to believe, or something for his faith to rest upon. They gave that which God has ordained to produce faith.

It is at this point that we often make a mistake. We tell people, "Believe, believe, believe," but do not show them how, do not give them anything definite to believe. The biblical way and the intelligent way is, when you tell a man to believe, to give him something to believe. Give him, for example, Isaiah 53:6, and thus hold up Christ crucified; or, give him 1 Peter 2:24. Here he has something for his faith to rest upon. Faith must have a foundation. Faith cannot float in thin air. It is pitiable to see men told to believe, to believe, to believe- and then give nothing for their faith to rest upon. Not only saving faith comes from the Word of God, but prevailing faith in prayer does also. Suppose I read Mark 11:24, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." I used to say, "The way to get anything I want is to believe I am going to get it." I would kneel down and pray and try to believe, but I did not get the things that I asked for. I had no real faith. Real faith must have a warrant. Before I can truly believe I am to receive what I ask, I must have a definite promise of God's Word, or a definite leading of the Holy Spirit, to rest my faith upon.

What, then, shall we do? We come into God's presence. There is something we desire. Now the question is, Is there any promise in God's Word regarding this which we desire? We look into the Word of God and find the promise. All we have to do is to spread that promise out before God. For example, we say: "Heavenly Father, we desire the Holy Spirit. Thou hast said in thy Word, 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?' And thou hast said again in Acts 2:39 that 'the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' I am a called man; I am a saved man. And here I have Your Word for it. You have promised it. I ask Thee now to fulfill me with the Holy Spirit." We then take 1 John 5:14-15, and say, "Father, this is the confidence I have in Thee, that, if I ask anything according to Thy will- and I know that this is according to Thy will- Thou hearest me, and, if I know that Thou hearest me, I know that I have the petition that I asked of Thee." Then I rise up, standing upon this promise of God, and say, "It is mine." And it will be mine. The only way to have a faith that prevails in prayer is to study your Bible, and know the promises, and lay them before God when you pray. George Mueller is one of the mightiest men of prayer in this century. But he always prepares for prayer by studying the Word (John 15:7).

It is just the same with the faith that we desire instead of doubt. This also comes by the Word of God. Suppose you have a skeptic to deal with, and you wish that man to have faith. What will you do with him? Give him a book on Christian evidences? I have nothing to say against books on Christian evidences. But there is an inspired Book on Christian evidences, and it is worth all the libraries ever written on this subject. Turn to John 20:31, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." The Gospel of John is an inspired Book on Christian evidences. What, then, shall we do with ourselves if we are skeptics? What shall we do with others? First, find out whether their will is surrendered or not. "If any man willed to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself" (John 7:17 R.V.). After the will is surrendered, just say, "Take this Book and read it thoughtfully and honestly and come back and tell me the result." The result is absolutely sure.

There is no man, agnostic, infidel, or whatever you please, whose will is surrendered to the truth, who will take this Book of God and ask Him to give him light, who will not come out believing that

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. I have tried this with I know not how many men and women, and there has never been one exception to the rule laid down by Christ. It has always come out the same way. The faith that gets the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; the faith that wins mighty victories for God, is also through the Word. (1 John 5:4; Ephesians 6:16; Hebrews 11:33-34).

Very early in my ministry I read a sermon by Mr. Moody. In it there was something to the effect that a man would not amount to anything if he had not faith. I said, "That sermon is true. I must have faith." I went to work and tried to work up faith. I did not succeed a bit. The more I tried to work up faith, the less I had. But one day I ran across this text, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17), and I had learned the great secret of faith, one of the greatest secrets I have ever learned. I commenced to feed my faith on the Word of God; and as I have thus fed it, it has kept on growing from that day to this. So in every aspect we see that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. If we are to have faith- and if we are to have power for God, we must have faith- we must feed steadily, largely, daily upon the Word of God.

4. In the next place, the Word of God has power to cleanse. In Ephesians 5:25-26, we read,

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word." The Word of God has the power not only to take impurity out of the heart, but to cleanse the outward life as well. If you wish to clean outward life, you must wash often by bringing your life in contact with the word of God. If one lives in a city whose atmosphere is polluted with smoke, when he goes into the street his hands will become black. He must wash frequently if he wishes to keep clean. We all live in a world whose atmosphere is polluted, a very dirty world. As we go out from day to day and come in contact with this dirty world, there is absolutely only one way to keep clean, and that is by taking frequent baths in the Word of God. You must bathe every day, and take plenty of time to do it. A daily, prolonged, thoughtful bath in the Word of God is the only thing that will keep a life clean (Psalms 119:9).

5. In the next place, the Word of God has power to build up. In Acts 20:32 we read, "I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up."

We hear a great deal in these days about character-building. The Word of God is that by which we must carry it on if it is to be done right. In 2 Peter 1:5-7 we have a picture of a seven-story-and-basement Christian. The great trouble today is that we have so many one-story Christians, and the reason is neglect of the Word. In 1 Peter 2:2, we have a similar thought expressed under a different figure, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." If we are to grow, we must have wholesome, nutritious food and plenty of it. The only spiritual food that contains all the elements necessary for symmetrical Christian growth is the Word of God. A Christian can no more grow as he ought without feeding frequently, regularly, and largely upon the Word of God, than a baby can grow as he ought without proper nutriment.

6. In the next place, the Word of God has power to make wise. Psalms 119:130 is worthy of the most careful attention, "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

There is more wisdom in the Bible than there is in all the other literature of the ages. The one who studies the Bible, if he does not study any other book, will know more of real wisdom- wisdom that counts for eternity as well as time, wisdom that this perishing world needs to know, wisdom for which hungry hearts are starving today- than the man who reads every other book and neglects his Bible. The man who studies his Bible and neglects all other books will be wiser than the man who studies all other books and neglects his Bible. The man who studies his Bible will have more to say that is worth saying, and that wise people wish to hear, than any man who studies everything else and neglects the one Book. This has been illustrated over and over again in the history of the church. The men who have greatly affected the spiritual history of this world, the men who have brought about great reformations in morals and doctrine, the men whom others have flocked to hear and upon whose words people have hung, have been Bible men in every instance, and in many cases they knew little besides the Bible. I have seen men and women without culture, who have had almost no advantages in school, but who knew their Bibles; and I would rather sit at their feet and learn the wisdom that falls from their lips, than listen to the man who knows much about philosophy and science and theology even, and does not know anything about the Word of God. There is wonderful force in the words of Paul to Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly (the revised version says "completely") furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17) Through what? Through the study of the Book.

7. The Word of God has power to give assurance of eternal life. In 1 John 5:13, R.V., we read,

"These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God." That is, the assurance of eternal life comes through what is "written". Suppose one has not assurance of salvation, what shall we do? Tell him to pray until he gets it? Not at all. Take him to such a passage as John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Hold him right to that point until he takes God's Word for it, and then is sure that he has everlasting life because he believes on the Son, and because God says that "he that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life."

8. The Word of God has power to bring peace into the heart. In Psalms 85:8 we read, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints."

There are many people looking for peace today, longing for peace, praying for peace. But deep peace of heart comes from study of the Word of God. There is, for example, one passage in the Bible which, if we feed upon it daily until it really gets into our hearts and gets hold of us, will banish all anxiety forever. It is Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Nothing can come to us that is not one of the "all things." If we really believe this passage, and it really takes hold upon us, whatever comes, it will not disturb our peace.

9. The Word of God has power to produce joy. Jeremiah says in chapter 15, verse 16, "Thy Words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." And Jesus said in John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

Clearly, then, fullness of joy comes through the Word of God. There is no joy on this earth from any worldly source like the joy that kindles and glows in the heart of a believer in Jesus Christ as he feeds upon the Word of God, and as the Word of God is brought home to his heart by the power of the Holy Spirit.

10. Patience, comfort, and hope also come through the Word of God. Romans 15:4,

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

11. Finally, the Word of God has power to protect from error and sin. In Acts 20:29-32, the apostle Paul warned the elders at Ephesus of the errors that would creep in among them, and he commended them, in closing, "to God and to the Word of His grace." In a similar way, Paul, writing to Timothy, the bishop of the same church, said:

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."- 2 Timothy 3:13-15. The one who feeds constantly on the Word of God is proof against the multiplying errors of the day. It is simple neglect of the Word that has left so many a prey to the many false doctrines that the devil, in his subtlety, is endeavoring to insinuate into the church of Christ today. And the Word of God has not only power to protect from error, but from sin as well. In Psalms 119:11 we read: "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." The man who feeds daily on the Word of God will be proof against the temptations of the devil. Any day we neglect to feed on the Word of God, we leave an open door through which satan is sure to enter into our hearts and lives. Even the Son of God Himself met and overcame the temptations of the adversary by the Scriptures. To each of satan's temptations, He replied, "It is written" (Matthew 4:4, Matthew 4:7, Matthew 4:10). Satan left the field completely vanquished.

It is evident from what has been said that the first step toward obtaining fullness of power in Christian life and service is the study of the Word. There can be no fullness of power in life and service if the Bible is neglected. In much that is now written on power, also in much that is said in conventions, this fact is overlooked. The work of the Holy Spirit is magnified, but the instrument through which the Holy Spirit works is largely forgotten. The result is transient enthusiasm and activity, but no steady continuance and increase in power and usefulness.

We cannot obtain power, and we cannot maintain power, in our own lives, and in our work for others, unless there is deep and frequent meditation upon the Word of God. If our leaf is not to wither and whatsoever we do is to prosper, our delight must be in the law of the Lord and we must meditate therein day and night (Psalms 1:2-3). Of course, it is much easier, and therefore much more agreeable to our spiritual laziness, to go to a convention or revival meeting, and claim a "filling with the Holy Spirit," than it is to peg along day after day, month after month, year after year, digging into the Word of God. But a "filling with the Spirit" that is not maintained by persistent study of the Word will soon vanish. It is well to bear in mind that precisely the results which Paul in one place ascribes to being "filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18-22), he in another place ascribes to letting "the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Colossians 3:16-18). Evidently Paul knew of no

filling of the Holy Spirit divorced from deep and constant meditation upon the Word. To sum all up, anyone who wishes to obtain and maintain fullness of power in Christian life and service must feed constantly upon the Word of God.

## The Secret of Abiding Peace

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The Secret of Abiding Peace By Reuben Archer Torrey Our subject is "The Secret of Abiding Peace. Abounding joy, and Abundant Victory in War Times and at All Times." You will find the text in Genesis 5:24, "Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away." In the description of Enoch's walk given in our text we find the secret of abiding peace, abounding joy, and abundant victory in war times and at all times. To my mind, the text is one of the most fascinating and thrilling verses in the entire Bible. It sounds more like a song from a heavenly world than a plain statement of historical facts regarding a humble inhabitant of this world of ours, but such it is, and it is possible for each one of us to so live and act that it may be recorded of us, "He walked with God," and later, "then he was no more, because God took him away."

The position of this verse in the Bible is significant and suggestive. There has been, in the verses immediately preceding, a very ordinary, commonplace, and, at first sight, long recital of how one man after another of the olden time lived so many years, fathered a son, continued to live so many years, and fathered other sons and daughters, and then died. Then suddenly Enoch is introduced and the story begins just as the other stories begin and goes on just as the other stories go on, and seems about to end just as the other stories end, but, no, there is this fresh breath from heaven and these melodious tones sound out: "Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away." Then the story goes on again in the same old strain. Remember that this account belongs to a far-away time, thousands of years before Christ, and about a thousand years before the Flood, and yet what depth of truth and beauty there is in it. Are there not lessons for us to learn from that far, far-away olden time?

The entire authentic history of Enoch is contained in nine verses in the Bible, six in the Old Testament, three in the New. History outside of the Bible is utterly unacquainted with him, yet he stands out as one of the most remarkable and admirable men of whom history speaks, a man whom God honored as He has honored but one other member of the entire race. Enoch's greatness was the kind that pleases God. We are told in the 11th chapter of Hebrews and the fifth verse that "By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God." Quite likely his greatness did not win very hearty commendation from his contemporaries. However, that was not of much consequence. His greatness did not consist of military renown, political power, profound scholarship, successful statesmanship, splendid artistic or architectural genius, or even of magnificent philanthropic achievement. It was greatness of a more quiet and less pretentious and visible nature, but of a far more real and lasting nature; it was greatness of character. "He walked with God," and God so enjoyed his fellowship that He took Enoch to be with Himself permanently.

I wish to make clear to you all three things: first, what it is to walk with God; second, what are some of the results of walking with God; third, how we may get into such a walk ourselves.

### I. What It Is to Walk with God?

First of all, I think I may safely say that for some of us here this morning that question needs no answer. God Himself has answered it to us in blessed, unspeakably blessed, experience. But for others of us--yes, many of us--it does need an answer. We have read the words of the text before, perhaps we have read them often. They have charmed us, soothed us, thrilled us, and yet often the question has arisen in our hearts, just what do they mean?

This question receives a very plain and simple answer:

To walk with God means to live one's life in the consciousness of God's presence and in conscious communion with Him, to have the thought constantly before us, "God is beside me," and every now and then to be speaking to Him, and, still more, listening for Him to speak to us. In a word, to walk with God is to live in the real, constant, conscious companionship of God.

We read that Enoch walked with God, not on a few rare occasions of spiritual exaltation, such perhaps as most of us have known, but for three hundred consecutive years after the birth of Methuselah (Genesis 6:22). It is possible for us to have this consciousness of the nearness and fellowship of God in our daily life, to talk with Him as we talk with an earthly friend; yes, as we talk with no earthly friend, and to have Him talk to us, and to commune with Him in a silence that is far more meaningful than any words could be. I would gladly linger here in this sweet and holy place, but let us pass on to the results of walking with God.

## II. The Results of Walking with God

1. The first result of walking with God is great joy, abounding joy. "In Your presence," sings the Psalmist, "You will fill me with joy" (Psalms 16:11).

There is no greater joy than that which comes from right companionship. Who would not rather live in a hut with congenial companions than in a palace with disagreeable associates? Who would not rather live on a bleak and barren isle among real Christians than in the fairest land the sun ever shone upon among infidels, blasphemers, drunkards, hoodlums, and the sexually immoral? The most attractive feature of heaven is its society, especially the society of God and the Lord Jesus. Samuel Rutherford said: "I would rather be in hell with Christ than in heaven without Christ: for if I were in hell with Christ that would be heaven to me, and if I were in heaven without Christ that would be hell to me." But when we have the conscious presence and companionship of God on earth, "we have two heavens, the heaven to which we are going and a heaven to go to heaven in." In one of the loneliest hours of His lonely life Jesus looked up with radiant joy and said, "Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me" (John 6:32).

Can you remember some ecstatic hour of your life when you walked, and sometimes talked and sometimes were silent, with an earthly companion whom you loved as you loved no other? Oh, happy hour! but only faintly suggestive of the rapture that comes from walking with God, for He is an infinitely dearer and better and more glorious companion than any earthly one could be. How the homely details of everyday life are transfigured if we have the constant fellowship of God in them. There lived in the Middle Ages a lad named Nicholas Hermann. He was a raw, awkward youth, breaking all things that he touched, but one day the thought was brought to his mind with great force that God was everywhere and that he might have the constant thought of God's presence with him and do all things to God's glory. This thought transformed his life. He soon took a job where his duty was of the most menial character--in the kitchen, washing pots and kettles,

but, to use his own way of putting it, he "practiced the presence of God" in the midst of his humble toil. That kitchen became so holy a place that men took long journeys to meet Nicholas Hermann and to converse with him.

2. The second result of walking with God is a great sense of security, of abiding peace. In the Psalm already quoted the Psalmist sings again: "I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken" (16:8). Certainly not. How can we be moved if God is with us? What harm can befall us? How often God says to His servants as they begin to tremble before approaching danger: "Do not fear, for I am with you" (Isaiah 41:10). How safe the trusting child feels with father or mother by its side. A little girl was once playing in a room below while her mother was above, busy about household duties. Every little while the child would come to the foot of the stairs and call up: "Mamma, are you there?" "Yes, darling, what is it?" "Nothing, I only wanted to know if you were there." Then again a little while: "Mamma, are you there?" "Yes, darling, what is it?" "Nothing, I only wanted to know if you were there." Ah! is not that all we want to know, that God is here, right here by our side?

There may be plagues, there may be war, there may be famine, there may be thugs on the street, there may be burglars in the house, there may be houses of sin, and unprincipled men and women on every hand; yes, our wrestling may not be with flesh and blood but "but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms," but what does it matter? God is with us. Oh, if only we bore in mind at every moment the thought of His presence with us, if only we could hear Him saying, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand," there would never be one single bit of fear in our hearts under any circumstances.

No matter how the war increases, no matter how near it may come to our own doors, there would be unruffled calm, abounding peace. We could constantly say, under all circumstances, "The LORD is my light and my salvation--whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life--of whom shall I be afraid? When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident." No wonder the Psalmist wrote in this connection, "One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple." The conscious companionship of God is the great secret of abiding peace.

3. The third result of walking with God is spiritual enlightenment.

Communion with God rather than scholarship opens to us the mind and thought of God. There is no hint that Enoch was a man of science or letters. I am very sure he was not a higher critic, and yet this plain man by walking with God and talking with God got such an insight into the purposes of God as no other man of his time had. In the Epistle of Jude, the 14th and 15th verses, we learn that even in that far-away day, a thousand years before the flood, Enoch got hold of the great truth of the second coming of Christ. So today some old washerwoman, or some humble cobbler, who walks with God may know more of the mind of God than many an eminent college professor, or even a professor in a theological seminary. The important question concerning points in dispute in religion and spiritual life is not, what do the scholars say, but what do the men and women who

walk with God say.

If one is considering going to some one for spiritual instruction, the first question is not how much of a scholar he is, not how much does he know of Latin and Hebrew and Greek and Syriac and philosophy and psychology, but does he walk with God? This is the great condition of spiritual insight, wisdom, and understanding.

4. The fourth result of walking with God is purity of heart and life.

Nothing else is so cleansing as the consciousness of God's presence. Things that we have long tolerated become intolerable when we bring them into the white light of the presence of the Holy One. How many things we do in the darkness of the night, yes, even in the broad light of day, that we could not for a moment think of doing if we realized God was right there by our side looking. Many deeds we now do would be left undone if we realized this. Many words we now speak would be left unspoken, many thoughts and fancies we now cherish would be speedily banished. There are certain things that we do in the absence of certain holy friends that we would not for a moment do in their presence, but God is always present, whether we know it or not, and if we walk in the consciousness of His presence, if we walk with God, our lives and hearts will speedily whiten.

I have a friend who in his early life, though he professed to be a Christian, was very profane. He tried hard to overcome his profanity, but failed. He felt he must give up his attempt to be a Christian, but one day a wise Christian to whom he appealed for help, said to him, "Would you swear if your father were present?" "No." "Well, when you go to your work tomorrow remember that God is with you every moment. Keep the thought of God's presence with you." At the end of the day, to his amazement, he had not sworn once. He had had the thought of God with him through the day and he could not be profane in that presence. The consciousness of the presence of God will keep us from doing all the things that we would not dream of doing in His presence. Herein lies the secret of a holy life.

5. The next result of walking with God is closely akin to this, beauty of character.

We become like those with whom we habitually associate. How like their parents children become. How many mothers and fathers have been startled by seeing their own imperfections and follies mirrored in their children. Husband and wife grow strangely like one another, thus also the one who associates with God becomes like God. If we walk with God, more and more will His beauty illumine and reflect itself in our lives. Moses' very face shone as he came down from the forty days and forty nights of conversation with God. So will our whole life soon shine with a heavenly glow and glory if we habitually walk with God. "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

6. The next result of walking with God will be eminent usefulness.

Our lives may be quiet and even obscure; it may be impossible to point to what men call great achievement, but the highest usefulness lies not in such things but in the silent, almost unnoticed but potent and pervasive influence of a holy life, whose light illumines, whose beauty compliments, and whose nobility elevates all who come in contact with it. Enoch has produced immeasurably more good for man than Nebuchadnezzar, who built the marvelous structures of Babylon, than Augustus who "found Rome brick and left it marble," than the Egyptian monarchs who built the

pyramids to amaze and mystify the world for thousands of years to come; and today the man or woman, no matter how humble or obscure, who walks with God is accomplishing more for God and man than Morse with his telegraph, Fulton with his steamboat, Stevenson with his locomotive, Cyrus Field with his Atlantic cable, Roebling with his marvelous bridges, Marconi with his wireless telegraphy and telephony, Edison and Tesla with their electric and electrifying discoveries, or any of the renowned political reformers of the day, with all their futile schemes for turning this world into a terrestrial paradise. Friends, if you wish to be really, permanently, eternally useful, walk with God.

7. But there is a still better result than this from walking with God--we please God. Before his translation Enoch had this testimony borne to him, that he "was commended as one who pleased God" (Hebrews 11:5). This is more than being useful. God wants our company, God wants us to walk with Him, and He is well pleased when we do. God is more concerned that we walk with Him than that we work for Him. Martha was taken up with her service for her Lord, but Mary was taken up with her Lord Himself, and He testified that Mary had chosen the better part. It is quite possible today to be so occupied with our work for God that we forget Him for whom we work. If we would please Him we should first see to it that we walk with him.

8. There is one result of walking with God still left to be mentioned, that is, God's eternal companionship. "Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away." The man who walks on earth with God, God will sooner or later take to be with Himself forever. "Whoever serves me," says Christ, "must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be." If we do not walk with God on earth we are not likely to live with God in heaven. If we do not care to cultivate His society now, we may be sure that He will not take us to be in His society forever.

### III. How to Enter into a Walk with God

These eight immeasurably precious results come from walking with God: abounding joy, abiding peace, spiritual enlightenment, purity of heart and life, beauty of character, eminent usefulness, pleasing God, God's eternal companionship. Do we not all then long to walk with Him? To come then face to face with the great practical question, what must we do that we ourselves may enter into this joyous, blessed walk with Him? The question can be plainly and simply answered.

1. First of all, we must trust in the atoning blood of Christ. "By faith," the record reads, "Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death" (Hebrews 11:5). Comparing this with what is said immediately before about Abel, we see that the faith by which he pleased God and was translated was faith in what God said about the blood. God is holy and we are sinners. Sin separates, as a deep and impassable gorge between us and Him. There can be no walk with Him until sin is put away and the gorge thus bridged, and it is the blood, and the blood alone, that puts away sin (Hebrews 9:22). It is vain for us to attempt to cultivate the presence of God until we have accepted the provision that God Himself has made for putting away sin from between us and Himself. Indeed, if we have any real thought of God's holiness and our sinfulness there could be no joy, but only agony, in fellowship with Him, unless our sin was covered up, washed away, blotted out by the blood. There are many today who are spurning the blood and still attempting to walk with God. Vain attempt! It is utterly impossible.

2. If we would walk with God we must obey God. Jesus said, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). Obedience to God, absolute surrender to His will, is necessary if we are to walk with Him. We cannot walk with God unless we go His way. Two cannot walk together unless they be agreed (Amos 3:3). There are many who once knew the presence of God every day and every hour. They know it no longer. The old and heavenly joy has faded from their lives. They wonder why it is. Ah! there is no mystery--disobedience. Come back, get right with God, surrender again and absolutely to His will.

There is but one thing more to say. If we would walk with God we must cultivate the thought of His presence. As Nicholas Hermann, or Brother Lawrence, put it, we must "practice the presence of God" constantly. Call to mind the fact that God is with you when you are about your work. Often say to yourself, "God is with me." When you lie down at night say, "God is with me." If you wake at night remember "God is here with me." So in all the relations and experiences of life.

There are four great aids to this:

(1) First, the study of God's Word. When we open this Book we realize, or ought to realize, that God Himself is speaking to us.

(2) Second, prayer. In prayer we come face to face with God.

(3) Third, thanksgiving. In intelligent and specific thanksgiving to God He is more real to us than even in petition.

(4) Fourth, worship. In worship we bow before God and contemplate Him. Oh, how near He gets at such a time.

It is the Holy Spirit who will make our walk with God true and real. It is in connection with the coming of the Spirit that Christ speaks of His own manifestation of Himself to us and of the coming of the Father and of Himself to be with us (John 14:16-18; John 14:21; John 14:23). Look, then, to God Himself by His Spirit to make His presence known and felt.

Brethren, shall we walk with God? God is saying to each of us today, "Come, take a walk with me." If we accept the wondrous invitation He will lead us on as long as we will let Him, and some day it will be true of us, as some one has quaintly said of Enoch, we will walk so far with God that we will not come back, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

## The Secret of the Blessedness of the Heart (Psalm 1.1-3)

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THE SECRET OF BLESSEDNESS IN HEART,

BEAUTY IN CHARACTER,

FRUITFULNESS IN SERVICE,

AND PROSPERITY IN EVERYTHING By R. A. Torrey

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Psalms 1:1-3. IN these verses, God speaking through the Psalmist sets before us the secret of blessedness in heart, beauty in character, fruitfulness in service, and prosperity in everything. Are not these the four things that we all desire for ourselves? These verses tell us in the plainest sort of way how we may obtain them. They tell us that if we will not do three things and will do two things, we shall have blessedness in our hearts, beauty in our characters, fruitfulness in our service, and prosperity in whatsoever we do.

I. THE THREE THINGS WE MUST NOT DO. The three things that we must not do are, First, Walk in the counsel of the ungodly; second, Stand in the way of sinners; third, Sit in the seat of the scornful, i.e., we must come out from the world and be separate in our walk, in our standing and in our sitting. As to our walk, we must not walk in the counsel of the ungodly; we must get our directions as to our walk from God and not from the world. We must not ask what the world does or advises, we must ask what God tells us to do. As to our standing, it must not be in the way of sinners; as to our sitting, or continuous fellowship, it must not be in the seat of the scornful. We will not dwell on these three things that we must not do for the words are so plain as to need no comment; what they need is not so much to be expounded as to be obeyed, and furthermore, if we do the two things which we must do we will be sure not to do the three things which we must not do.

II. THE TWO THINGS WHICH WE MUST DO. The first of the two things which we must do is "Delight in the law of the Lord." The Law of the Lord is God's will as revealed in His Word and these words tell us that it is not enough merely to read God's Word; indeed, that it is not enough even to earnestly study God's Word, we must delight in God's Word. We must have greater joy in the Word of God than in any other book, or in all other books put together. Now doubtless many of us will have to admit that we do not delight in the law of the Lord. Probably we read it, quite likely we study it diligently, but we read it and study it simply because we think it is our duty. As to delighting in it, we do not. If many of you were to reveal the exact facts about yourself, you would have to say, "I would rather read the newspaper than the Word of God. I would rather read the latest novel than the Word of God." When I was thirteen years of age, I was told that if I read three chapters in the Bible every week-day and five every Sunday, I would read the Bible in a year, and I

started out to do it, and I have read the Bible every day of my life from that time to this, but for years I did not delight in it. I read it simply because I thought I ought to, or because I was uneasy if I did not, but as for delighting in it, it was the dullest, stupidest book in the world to me. I would rather have read last year's almanac than the Bible. And what was true of me then, and remained true for years, is true of many a professed Christian to-day. They may study the Bible every day but simply do it from a sense of duty or because their conscience is uneasy if they do not.

What shall one do if he does not delight in the law of the Lord? The answer is very simple.

(1) First of all, he must be born again. The one who is truly born again will love the Word of God. The Lord Jesus says in John 8:47, "He that is of God heareth God's words: Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." The little Greek word which is translated "of" in this passage is a very significant word. It really means and should be translated "out of," i.e., in this connection "born of"; and what Jesus said was that the one that was born of God would have an ear for God's word, and that the reason that the Jews did not really have an ear for God's Word was because they were not born of God. One of the clearest proofs that a man is born of God is that he loves, delights in God's Word. I have seen men and women pass in a moment from an utter distaste for God's Word to an abounding delight in God's Word by simply being born again.

"But," some one will say, "how may I be born again?" God Himself answers the question in a very simple way in John 1:12. "But as many as RECEIVED HIM, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." According to these words the way to be born again is by simply receiving Him, receiving the Lord Jesus. The moment any man, woman, or child really receives Jesus to be to themselves all that He offers Himself to be to anyone, to be their Saviour from the guilt of sin by His death upon the cross, to be their Saviour from the power of sin, by His resurrection power (Heb. 7:25) and to be their Lord and Master, to whom they surrender the entire control of their lives (Acts 2:36), that moment that man, woman or child is born again and with the new life thus obtained they will get a new love, a love for God and a delight in His Word.

(2) In the second place, in order to delight in the law of the Lord we must feed upon it. Jeremiah says in Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them ; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." The reason why many do not delight in the Word of God is because they do not eat it. They read it ; they skim over it, they smell of it, but they do not eat it, and yet they wonder why they do not delight in God's Word. What would you think if some day some friend came to visit you who had never eaten strawberries, and you should get for him a dish of our wonderful California strawberries. You tell him how delicious they are and set them before him you are called away but in an hour or two you come back and you say to your friend, "How did you like those strawberries?" He replies, "I did not care for them. I have seen many things that I have enjoyed more." In surprise you say, "What, did not care for them?" "No, they seemed very ordinary to me." For a moment you are puzzled, and then you say to him, "Did you eat the berries?" "No," he answers, "I did not eat them. I smelled of them and I have smelled many things that smell better." Well, that is the way that many, even of professing Christians treat the Word of God. They just smell of it, they skim over a few verses, or many verses, or many chapters, but they do not stop to eat a single verse. They do not chew the words, swallow them and assimilate them. Oh, how different the Word of God becomes when we really eat it. Take for example, the most familiar passage in the Bible, the verse that most of us learned first of all, Psalms 23:1, "The LORD

is my shepherd; I shall not want." It sounds beautiful even when we merely read it, but how sweet it becomes when we stop and ponder it, weigh the meaning of the words, chew each word in it. When we ask ourselves first of all, "Who is my shepherd?" And then stop for a while to meditate upon the fact that it is JEHOVAH who is our Shepherd. Then ask ourselves, "What is Jehovah?" "My Shepherd." And then stop and think what is involved in being a shepherd and what it means to have Jehovah as our SHEPHERD. Then ask ourselves "Whose shepherd is Jehovah? My Shepherd." Not merely the Shepherd of men in general but my own Shepherd. A stranger entered a Presbyterian Church one day and was shown to a pew. The congregation rose to read the 23rd Psalm. A young lady sitting next to him, handed him one corner of her Bible as they read. As they read the first verse, he took a pencil out of his pocket and drew a line under the word "My." When the service was over, the young lady said to him, "Do you mind telling me why you drew the line under the word My?" "Well," he replied, "The Lord is my Shepherd. I was wondering if He were yours." Next dwell on the word, "I," then on the word "shall" with all the certainty that there is in the word then on the word "not" then on the word "want" and ask yourself all that is implied in the statement, "I shall not want." Ah, the old familiar verse becomes so much sweeter as we eat it, chew and chew it and swallow it and digest it and assimilate it. If we thus eat different portions of the Bible day by day we would soon find a joy in it that we find in no other book. The only word that would express our relation to the book would be "DELIGHT." The second of the two things that we must do is "meditate in the law of the Lord day and night." These words tell us how to study the Word and when to study it.

(1) First, How to study it. "MEDITATE" therein. We live in a day in which meditation is largely a lost art. It is largely a lost art in all our study. We send our children to school, they are not allowed to think; they are simply crammed and crammed we cram them with physiology, biology, psychology and all the rest of the ologies ; until they themselves become mere ape-ologies for real thinkers. We try to see how many branches we can cover in a few years and how much of each branch we can cram in. A child in the Grammar School grade has twelve studies; a child of thirteen will be set to writing a criticism on Tennyson's "In Memoriam." This is a good way to develop conceited fools, but it is no way to develop thinkers. Set a child of thirteen to criticizing Tennyson's "In Memoriam" and by the time she is eighteen she will be criticizing the Word of God itself. But cram, cram, cram, is the word of the hour in modern education. If our children studied fewer subjects and really studied and mastered those they did study, they would know more and be of more use in the world. But it is in Bible study especially that meditation is a lost art. We try to see how many chapters we can study in a single day. We get up a chart that covers the whole plan of the ages and all of God's dealing with men, angels and devils, from the eternity back of us to the eternity before us and expect to master it in thirty minutes or an hour. This is an excellent plan for making ourselves think that we are very wise; it is a miserable plan for getting the real nourishment out of the Word and the real honey out of the rock. We should not so much say, "I will read so many chapters in a day," as "I will spend so much time each day in really studying and feeding upon the Book." Sometimes we will give to a single verse, or a single word, that will arrest our attention, all the time we put into Bible study that day. There is no greater enemy to successful study than hurry, and this is especially true of Bible study. One night I was teaching a Bible class in Minneapolis. A travelling man from New York, a very active member of St. George's Episcopal Church, dropped into my class. He had to take the train for the Far West soon after the class and I walked down to the station with him. As we walked he said to me, "Tell me in a word how to study

my Bible." That is a pretty large contract to put into a single word, How to study the Bible, and I replied, "If I must put it into one word, that one word would be Thoughtfully. Think on what you study; look right at it, weigh it, weigh every word, turn it over and over and over meditate upon it." But the words of the Psalmist tell us not merely how to study the Word but when to study it, "DAY AND NIGHT." Many people are asking, "Must I study the Bible fifteen minutes every day, or a half hour a day or two hours a day?" "Day and night," replies the Psalmist. This, of course, does not mean that we should be sitting with an open Bible before us every moment of the day and night. But it does mean that having had some regular time for Bible study, that after that time for Bible study is over we should carry away in our mind and heart what we have studied and meditate upon it as we go about our business, our household duties, or whatsoever we have to do. Oh, how much lighter and pleasanter the drudgery of life becomes if we go about it with the Word of God in mind and heart, meditating thereon in the midst of our wearing toil. I know of nothing else that will keep one in such perfect peace and abounding joy in these days of war and gloom and agony as meditating on the Word of God day and night.

III. THE RESULT. And now what will be the result of our separating from the world in our walk, in our standing, in our sitting and of our delighting in the law of the Lord and meditating thereon day and night?

1. First of all, we will have blessedness in heart. "Blessed is the man," says our text that "walketh not/etc. The Hebrew word translated "blessed" is a very peculiar word in the Hebrew. It is not a participle at all, but a noun and a noun in the plural. Literally translated it would be "blessednesses of the man," i. e., how manifold and varied is the blessedness and happiness of the man that does not do these three things and does do these two things. This world knows no joy so varied, so full, so manifold, so wonderful as the joy that comes to the one who is separated from the world and who meditates on the Word. I know all about the joy that comes from reading good literature; I have been a passionate devourer of books from early childhood. When I was a boy. I would get a book and hide away in some corner and devour it until my mother would come and say, "Oh, Archie, why don't you take your gun and go out hunting?" But all the joy that I have found in the study of the best literature, in the study of science, in the study of philosophy, can never for a moment compare to the joy that I have found in meditating on the Word of God. So sweet has that joy become that oftentimes I am tempted to say that I will read no book but the Bible. I remember one night the first winter I was in Chicago. I had been very busy that day, answering my correspondence, and teaching in the Bible Institute in the morning, studying in the afternoon, and preaching that night. I got to my house late, after 11 o'clock, pretty thoroughly tired. I sat down for a little while to find rest in Bible study before I went to bed. I was reading the Bible through in course and had reached the last book in the Bible. In those days I did not care as much for that book as for other books sometimes I had even been tempted to wish that the book was not in the Bible, but as that was where I was in my reading the Bible in course, I began reading the 11th chapter of the book. When I reached the 15th verse, The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever, such joy swept into my soul as I took in the meaning of the words that I do you know what I did? Of course you do. I shouted aloud. I was not brought up to shout in meeting. I was brought up in the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches. I never heard anyone say "Amen" except where it came in the regular place in the service until after I was in the ministry, and the first time a man said "Amen" when I was

preaching it so upset me that I nearly lost the thread of my discourse. I cannot shout to this day in public, but, oh, when alone with God and His Book sometimes such a joy sweeps into the soul that nothing but a shout will give relief.

2. Second, we shall have beauty of character, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." What is more beautiful than a well-watered tree in full leaf, the maples and the oaks and the beeches in the East, our palms and pepper trees and umbrella trees here in the West? Well, the one who refrains from doing the three things mentioned above and does the two things mentioned will be just like that tree in full leaf. His character will be full of beauty. If we had time, I could show you from the Word of God how every grace of character is the result of Bible study. The Psalmist says in Psalms 119:9, "Where withal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." In the 11th verse he says, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." Nothing else has the power to keep a man from sinning and nothing else has the power to adorn a man with all possible graces of character that the study of the Word of God has.

3. Third, we shall have fruitfulness in service. "Bringeth forth his fruit in his season." Do we not all long to be fruitful Christians? So many of us are fruitless. The great secret of being fruitful is intelligent study of the Word of God. The Apostle Paul in writing to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The Revised Version says, "complete, furnished completely unto every good work." How? Through what the Apostle has just said, through the study of the inspired Word of God. A man may study everything else in the world, psychology, philosophy, pedagogy, and even theology, but if he does not study the Word of God he is not fitted for real work for God. He will have no measure of success in winning souls. But a man may be quite ignorant of other branches of knowledge but if he really studies and understands his Bible, he will have all the knowledge one needs to be a fruitful Christian and an efficient winner of souls.

4. Fourth. There will be one other result of not doing the three things and doing the two things, and that is prosperity in everything: "whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Are we not all seeking for prosperity ? There is no other way to get it than the way laid down in our text, but this road to prosperity is safe and sure. No one ever walked it without becoming prosperous in whatsoever he did. This, of course, does not mean necessarily that he will have what the world calls prosperity. He may not become a rich man, but he will have real prosperity in everything he undertakes. Some years ago I preached in Chicago a sermon on "The Power of the Word of God," or "The Advantages of Bible Study." I had in my congregation that morning a young man who was leading a rather defeated life. He was a Christian, but not a very effective Christian. He was a married man with a small family of children and was getting \$12.50 a week. His work required him to get up at two or three o'clock in the morning to go on the market to buy for the house for which he worked. As he listened to the sermon that morning he made up his mind that instead of getting up at two o'clock or three o'clock in the morning, he would get up at one or two o'clock in the morning in order that he might have a solid hour for Bible study before going to his work. He came on in his Christian experience by leaps and bounds and he came on in his business relations too. "Within a year he went into business for himself. The first year he made \$5,000 in his business, the next year I have been told that he made \$10,000, and some one has told me that the next year he

made \$15,000, and he has gone on advancing from that day until this; but that is not the best of it, he came on in his Christian character and in his efficiency in Christian service. He is to-day one of the most used laymen in Chicago, identified with and a leader in every aggressive movement that is taken up by the Christians of the city, a tower of strength in his own church, a generous giver to the work of Christ at home and abroad, with three sons and one daughter following in his steps. "Whatsoever he doeth prospers."

Now I am not saying that if anyone will begin to study the Bible an hour a day he will spring from \$12.50 a week to \$5,000 a year, but I am saying, and what is better, God's Word says it, he will have real prosperity in everything he undertakes. Do you want blessedness in your heart, beauty in your character, fruitfulness in your service, and prosperity in everything you do, then stop walking in the counsel of the ungodly, stop standing in the way of sinners, stop sitting in the seat of the scornful and begin to delight in the law of the Lord and meditate therein day and night.

## True Christian Union and the Devil's Counterfeit

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### True Christian Union and the Devil's Counterfeit

By R. A. Torrey My subject this morning is TRUE CHRISTIAN UNION AND THE DEVIL'S COUNTERFEIT. I have seven texts:

The first is Ephesians 4:1-3, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "

The second is John 17:20-21, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."

This third is Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

The fourth is Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

The fifth is 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

The sixth is 2 Chronicles 25:5-8, "Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield. He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver. But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim."

The seventh is 2 John 1:9-11, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

True Christian unity is one of the greatest, one of the grandest, one of the most glorious, one of the divinest, one of the most beneficent things on earth. It is the life of God the Father and the Son reproduced in the Church. It greatly delights the heart of God. It is one of the things that our Lord

Jesus Himself most emphasized in His high priestly prayer the night before His crucifixion. The devil's counterfeit of true Christian unity is one of the most abominable and pernicious things on earth. The Bible is full of warnings against it; indeed some of its most solemn warnings are against the devil's cunning counterfeit of that unity which God so greatly desires and for which our Lord Jesus so earnestly prayed and which He laid down His life to make possible. It has always been the devil's subtle policy to counterfeit God's work and God's methods. For God's true Christ, Christ Jesus, the devil would substitute his Antichrist, who is yet to come; for God's way of salvation through the atoning blood, resulting in those who accept Him who shed His blood as their atoning Saviour being transformed into His own perfect likeness, the devil would substitute "salvation by character," a character achieved by our own will and our own moral effort; for God's revelation of the truth in the written Word, the Bible, and in the Incarnate Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, the devil would substitute a revelation by man-made philosophy and man-made science. And for the true Christian unity that God works out in the body of true believers, the invisible church, in the ways we shall this morning consider, the devil would substitute a unity worked out by all kinds of compromises and cunning devices of men.

Some of the passages from God's Word which I have just read set forth in a very clear and unmistakable way both the beautiful character and the imperative need of true Christian unity. Other passages from God's Word which I have just read expose the awful wickedness and ruinous results of the devil's counterfeit of God's true Christian unity.

The words unity, brotherhood, love and cooperation are very much in evidence in these great days in which we are living. These words set forth eminently Christian ideas. But these words are today among the most abused and most frequently misused words in the English language. Everywhere one goes throughout the United States, in England, Scotland, Honolulu, Japan, Korea or China, the one word that is written large and forever drummed into our ears is "Union," "Union," "Union." But the union many are seeking to achieve and to foster is as far from the unity for which our Lord Jesus prayed and which He taught and which was emphasized by Paul and by John, as night is from day, as darkness is from light and as damning error is from saving truth and as the great enemy of God and Man, the devil or Satan, is from our glorious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

#### TRUE CHRISTIAN UNITY

What are the marks of true Christian unity, the unity for which our Lord Jesus so earnestly prayed, so insistently and constantly taught and which John and Paul and other inspired men so strongly emphasized?

· In the first place, true Christian unity is a "unity of the Spirit," that is, a unity which the Holy Spirit dwelling in and controlling the hearts of regenerated men, women and children brings to pass. This is clear from our first text, Ephesians 4:1-3-"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." True Christian unity is not a unity of man's making but of God's making. It is not a unity that results from a mob of men and women of heterogenous characters and ambitions and beliefs getting together to cooperate to bring about some result in which they are all more or less interested. It is a unity, as the context clearly tells us, of men and women who have one Lord, the Lord Jesus; and one faith, faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (John 20:31; 1 John 5:1, 1

John 5:5); and one baptism, the baptism in the Holy Spirit; and who are thus brought into one body, the real, living, invisible church, the Bride of Jesus Christ (see Ephesians 4:3-6), a unity, as we have said, which the Holy Spirit Himself brings to pass in those in whom He comes to dwell because they have received and confessed Jesus as their Saviour and their Lord and with the whole heart they believed on Him.

I need hardly say that the union that the Federation of Churches at home and Union Universities on the foreign field are seeking to promote does not bear the faintest resemblance to this true Christian union.

· In the second place, true Christian union or unity is a union that results from prayer. This is very clearly evident from our Lord's own wonderful prayer recorded in John 17:20-23 -"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word ... that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." The unity that our Lord desired for all those who should believe in Him throughout all coming generations was a unity that should be the outcome of His own prayers and the prayers of those who are at one with Him and, therefore, had fellowship with Him in His intercessory work. The unity that Jesus Christ prayed for and taught and that John and Paul emphasized was not a unity that men get up by their cunning contrivances and conscienceless compromises, but a unity that God sends down in answer to the fervent and believing prayer of His own dear Son whom He always hears and of those who are at one with Him through living faith in Him. It is the unity that comes in answer to believing prayer offered in the power of the Holy Ghost. It is not the unity that results from getting together a lot of shrewd ecclesiastical politicians to devise some way to keep men who believe something definite and worthwhile from voicing their convictions, as was done for example at the much-lauded Edinburg Missionary Conference by one of the most astute ecclesiastical politicians of the century and as the steering committee of the huge missionary conference to be held in Shanghai next spring are now trying to do.

While I was in Shanghai awaiting the departure of my steamer for this country, the various commissions preparing for this proposed conference of five hundred missionaries and five hundred native Chinese Christians were in session. The most important committee in many ways is the Committee on the Church's Message. This was assigned to five Chinese Christians, which looked promising; for taken as a whole, the Chinese converts today seem to be more soundly orthodox than the missionary body as a whole. But on this committee of five were appointed the two most notoriously radical modernists that there are among the Chinese "Christian" leaders, one man whose position was not altogether known and two men of the undoubted conservatives. These two men are in a hopeless minority, and it is doubtful whether they have the strength and decision to stand for their convictions. The evident object was to present as the Message of the Church a message upon which both those who believe only in the "social gospel" and those who believe in the real Gospel, the Gospel of a crucified and risen Saviour as set forth in the Word of God, could unite.

- In the third place, true Christian union is a union in Christ Jesus. This is clear from Galatians 3:28 -"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Please mark well the words, "in Christ Jesus." "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." This is true Christian union, and it is the only true Christian union, union "in Christ Jesus." There can be no Christian union except "in Christ Jesus." Many today, when they speak of Christian union, emphasize the word union; the Bible emphasizes the word Christian-"in Christ Jesus." There can be no true union between those who are "in Christ Jesus" and those who are not "in Christ Jesus." To attempt such a union is to aim at begetting a monster, a monstrosity.

It was union in Himself that our Lord Jesus prayed for so earnestly. His words are plain: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." Oh, how frequently those who are trying to forge a false unity quote our Lord's prayer, and how carelessly they read and quote His words, making no attempt to mark exactly for what He prayed! There is no hint here of prayer on our Lord's part for a union between those who really are in Him (and in whom He is) and those who are not in Him (and in whom He is not). Not for one moment would our Lord pray for such a monstrous thing. Indeed, in His prayer for union, He is very careful to say and very emphatic in saying it: "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine" (v. 9). Why will people who profess to be Bible students and especially students of the words of our Lord Jesus persist in ripping the words of our Lord out of their context and shutting their eyes to their plain meaning and putting upon them a construction which it is as clear as day He never intended they should bear?

- In the fourth place, true Christian union is a union in the Truth, a union between those who believe the great fundamentals of the Christian faith, and between these alone. This our Lord Himself clearly indicates in His prayer. In the words immediately preceding His prayer for oneness or union He says, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:17-19). John, who alone records this prayer of our Lord for union, says in his second epistle in John 17:9-11, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.

He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." This is the strongest possible prohibition on God's part of all union with any man or company of men who do not accept absolutely the authority of the teaching of Christ, who do not abide in His teaching, that is, those who throw the words of Christ overboard on any point (for example, rejecting the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the inerrancy of the whole Old Testament and the historicity of the story of the Flood and of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, all of which our Lord explicitly taught) because some German infidel who claims to be a great scholar teaches differently. Union with those who do not abide in the teaching of Christ, who reject His absolute authority at any point but go onward to something different that they claim is better, is not Christian

union. It has not the faintest resemblance to TRUE CHRISTIAN UNION. There can be no union pleasing to the God who is the Author of this Book or pleasing to Jesus Christ, between those who believe the great fundamentals of our faith and those who question any one of them.

#### WHAT ARE SOME OF THESE FUNDAMENTALS?

The first of all of these fundamentals is the absolute deity of Jesus Christ, His full equality in nature and attributes with the Father, the doctrine that He is a Being to be believed in, honored and worshipped even as God the Father is believed in, honored and worshipped (John 14:1 ff.; John 5:1-23). There can be no true Christian unity between us who believe this and those who deny or question it.

The second fundamental is the absolute, final and infallible authority of the Bible. Jesus taught this in a most expressive, most emphatic and most uncompromising way, and those who question it are of those whom John describes as going onward and abiding not in the teaching of Christ and with whom He forbids in the sternest way any form of union, any fellowship whatever.

Previous to the annual meeting of the Bible Union of China at Kuling, a very prominent missionary, who is supposed to be orthodox, said to my son that the point of division between missionaries should not be upon the authority of the Bible but upon the Cross of Christ, and he went on to tell him how the most notoriously bitter opponent of the Bible Union Movement in China was clear on the Cross of Christ, and that is where the line of division should be drawn. Now, when one carefully considers it, this is utter nonsense. To try to get those who believe in the absolute, final and infallible authority of the Bible to unite and cooperate with those who deny the absolute, final and infallible authority of the Bible, just because they happen to be clear on the Cross of Christ (if indeed they be clear on the Cross of Christ, as the doctrine of the Cross is taught in the bible) is as foolish as it would have been in the late war to get those who believed in the aims of the Allies to fight in the same regiments with those who were devoted to the damnable schemes of the Kaiser. Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot cooperate with the followers of the Antichrist, even though the Antichrist claims to be, as he always does claim to be, the real Christ.

And whether he knows it or not, everyone who denies the true deity of the Lord Jesus is a follower of, and aider and abetter of, the Antichrist. What does God say in 1 John 2:22-23? "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." And whosoever denies the absolute, final and infallible authority of this Book, the Bible, is also on the side of the Antichrist, and he is a more useful ally to the Antichrist and to the devil if he is in the church than if he were out of it. Will I unite to fight with him because he is a charming man in many ways and teaches some very beautiful things? Not 1. If I do, I will bring upon myself the stern condemnation of God as set forth by Him in 2 John 1:9-11 : "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

The third great fundamental is the substitutionary character of the atoning death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. Anyone who denies this great saving doctrine of the substitutionary character

of the death of Christ, that Christ Himself bore our sins in His own body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21), is a follower of the Antichrist.

This doctrine of the perfect atonement made by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary is the doctrine that the devil hates and that the devilish pride of the natural heart hates above almost any other doctrine. A man, some of whose devotional books have had a large sale and who is in great demand at many so-called Bible conferences, is reported on apparently good authority, the authority of one who sat in his classroom within a year or two and took down in black and white what he said, as saying, "The doctrine of the blood atonement is nauseating to me." Shall I cooperate with him because he is a delightful man and seems to teach many things that I believe? Never. It was on the question of atoning blood that there was the first great separation, a separation that God Himself brought to pass, between the one whom God accepted and the one whom God rejected, between Abel and Cain (Genesis 4:3-5).

Again, anyone who denies the doctrine of the literal resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead is a follower of the Antichrist. If he is right in his decision that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was simply a spiritual resurrection, then according to God's own Word our preaching is vain and our faith also is vain (1 Corinthians 15:13-14). Can I cooperate with one who denies this great fundamental of the Christian faith, the actual, literal resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead? Not unless I am an utterly blinded fool.

Still again, anyone who denies the virgin birth of our Lord is a follower of the Antichrist. His virgin birth was one of the chief points of attack by the first great scholarly enemy of our Lord Jesus Christ, Celsus; and most of the enemies of Jesus Christ from that day to this have followed in Celsus's wake. Any one who denies the virgin birth of our Lord makes Him out to have been a bastard, at least by implication, as Celsus frankly said in plain words. Shall I cooperate with anyone who even indirectly casts this appallingly blasphemous implication upon my Lord? How would you, feel toward anyone who cast such a reflection on your own mother's virtue and on yourself? How then do you feel toward the one who casts such an aspersion on the "blessed" mother of our glorious Lord? I for one burn with indignation toward every dastardly scoundrel that does it. Will I cooperate with him in Christian work and call it Christian union? Not for one briefest moment. Yet even Presbyterians in China send their Chinese candidates for the ministry to Union Theological Seminaries where this infamous doctrine of the denial of the virgin birth of our Lord is openly or secretly held and taught; and if any one dares to protest against such folly and wickedness, he is called hard names and is bitterly accused of introducing division in the forces of Jesus Christ. Forces of Jesus Christ? Never. He is separating the forces of Jesus Christ from the forces of Antichrist, and they ought to be separated. Has not God Himself said in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Between those who believe what this Book tells us in the plainest possible terms about the virgin birth of our divine Lord and those who deny His virgin birth and thus make Him out by implication at least to have been a bastard, there should be war, and war to the hilt.

Some one of you may say that this is an appeal to sentiment. Yes, it is in part an appeal to holy sentiment, but why not appeal to sentiment if it is holy, sound, Christian sentiment? Ought we not in our actions as well as our feelings be moved by the sentiment of love to our Lord who died upon the cross for us and a sentiment of intense indignation toward those who cast vile aspersions upon His holy Person and holy name? We should be more deeply sensitive to our Lord's honor and good name than to our own. Those who deny or question the virgin birth of our Lord sometimes do not realize, indeed oftentimes do not realize, what they are doing; but they should be made to realize it, and if they persist in pursuing their monstrous course we ought to bid adieu to them, and we ought to let them know with just what sentiments we regard them.

In the fifth place, true Christian unity is a unity of men and women who believe in Jesus Christ, a union of regenerated men and women. This our Lord Himself clearly indicates in His much quoted prayer. He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one" (John 17:20-21 a). That is plain enough, is it not? Union between those who are united to Christ by living faith and those who are not thus united to Christ is not Christian union. A union between men and women who have been born again and have thus become children of God, and those who have not been born again and thus remain children of the devil, is not Christian union. It is the devil's counterfeit and a mighty poor counterfeit at that; and yet, poor as the counterfeit is, it passes current today as the genuine coin of the kingdom among many who consider themselves very intelligent Christians. Oh, let us have done with this nonsense and this clamor for something that this Book condemns in no uncertain terms.

#### THE DEVIL'S COUNTERFEIT

I intended when I began to take up the marks of the devil's counterfeit of the true Christian union. But it is not necessary. The marks of true Christian unity which we have just indicated reveal by contrast the marks of the devil's counterfeit. The devil's counterfeit of true Christian unity is a man-made unity. It is a mere outward unity; it is a union out of Christ,- it is a union between those who disagree on fundamental doctrines; it is a union between the forces of Christ and Antichrist, it is a union between those who are born again, thus becoming children of God, and those who are unregenerated and, therefore, children of the devil. It is a union of the forces of Christ and the forces of antichrist.

For a true Christian unity let us pray and let us labor and let us make every necessary sacrifice. As to the devil's counterfeit of true Christian unity, let us fight it to the last ditch, knowing that it is the devil's great strategic masterpiece for the defeat of our Lord's work in the world. The enemies of Jesus Christ are far less dangerous when openly fighting against us than they are when they claim to be one with us and seek our cooperation in the substitution of any other gospel, the "social gospel" for example, for the saving Gospel of the once crucified, now risen and soon returning Lord.

## Why God Used D. L. Moody

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Why God Used D. L. Moody

by

R.A. Torrey

Eighty-six years ago (February 5, 1837), there was born of poor parents in a humble farmhouse in Northfield, Massachusetts, a little baby who was to become the greatest man, as I believe, of his generation or of his century -- Dwight L. Moody. After our great generals, great statesmen, great scientists and great men of letters have passed away and been forgotten, and their work and its helpful influence has come to an end, the work of D. L. Moody will go on and its saving influence continue and increase, bringing blessing not only to every state in the Union but to every nation on earth. Yes, it will continue throughout the ages of eternity. My subject is "Why God Used D. L. Moody," and I can think of no subject upon which I would rather speak. For I shall not seek to glorify Mr. Moody, but the God who by His grace, His entirely unmerited favor, used him so mightily, and the Christ who saved him by His atoning death and resurrection life, and the Holy Spirit who lived in him and wrought through him and who alone made him the mighty power that he was to this world. Furthermore: I hope to make it clear that the God who used D. L. Moody in his day is just as ready to use you and me, in this day, if we, on our part, do what D. L. Moody did, which was what made it possible for God to so abundantly use him. The whole secret of why D. L. Moody was such a mightily used man you will find in Psalms 62:11 : "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that POWER BELONGETH UNTO GOD." I am glad it does. I am glad that power did not belong to D. L. Moody; I am glad that it did not belong to Charles G. Finney; I am glad that it did not belong to Martin Luther; I am glad that it did not belong to any other Christian man whom God has greatly used in this world's history. Power belongs to God. If D. L. Moody had any power, and he had great power, he got it from God. But God does not give His power arbitrarily. It is true that He gives it to whomsoever He will, but He wills to give it on certain conditions, which are clearly revealed in His Word; and D. L. Moody met those conditions and God made him the most wonderful preacher of his generation; yes, I think the most wonderful man of his generation. But how was it that D. L. Moody had that power of God so wonderfully manifested in his life? Pondering this question, it seemed to me that there were seven things in the life of D. L. Moody that accounted for God's using him so largely as He did.

(1) A Fully Surrendered Man The first thing that accounts for God's using D. L. Moody so mightily was that he was a fully surrendered man. Every ounce of that two-hundred-and-eighty -pound body of his belonged to God; everything he was and everything he had, belonged wholly to God. Now, I am not saying that Mr. Moody was perfect; he was not. If I attempted to, I presume I could point out some defects in his character. It does not occur to me at this moment what they were; but I am confident that I could think of some, if I tried real hard. I have never yet met a perfect

man, not one. I have known perfect men in the sense in which the Bible commands us to be perfect, i.e., men who are wholly God's, out and out for God, fully surrendered to God, with no will but God's will; but I have never known a man in whom I could not see some defects, some places where he might have been improved.

No, Mr. Moody was not a faultless man. If he had any flaws in his character, and he had, I presume I was in a position to know them better than almost any other man, because of my very close association with him in the later years of his life; and furthermore, I suppose that in his latter days he opened his heart to me more fully than to anyone else in the world. I think He told me some things that he told no one else. I presume I knew whatever defects there were in his character as well as anybody. But while I recognized such flaws, nevertheless, I know that he was a man who belonged wholly to God. The first month I was in Chicago, we were having a talk about something upon which we very widely differed, and Mr. Moody turned to me very frankly and very kindly and said in defense of his own position: "Torrey, if I believed that God wanted me to jump out of that window, I would jump." I believe he would. If he thought God wanted him to do anything, he would do it. He belonged wholly, unreservedly, unqualifiedly, entirely, to God.

Henry Varley, a very intimate friend of Mr. Moody in the earlier days of his work, loved to tell how he once said to him: "It remains to be seen what God will do with a man who gives himself up wholly to Him." I am told that when Mr. Henry Varley said that, Mr. Moody said to himself: "Well, I will be that man." And I, for my part, do not think "it remains to be seen" what God will do with a man who gives himself up wholly to Him. I think it has been seen already in D. L. Moody.

If you and I are to be used in our sphere as D. L. Moody was used in his, we must put all that we have and all that we are in the hands of God, for Him to use as He will, to send us where He will, for God to do with us what He will, and we, on our part, to do everything God bids us do.

There are thousands and tens of thousands of men and women in Christian work, brilliant men and women, rarely gifted men and women, men and women who are making great sacrifices, men and women who have put all conscious sin out of their lives, yet who, nevertheless, have stopped short of absolute surrender to God, and therefore have stopped short of fullness of power. But Mr. Moody did not stop short of absolute surrender to God; he was a wholly surrendered man, and if you and I are to be used, you and I must be wholly surrendered men and women.

(2) A Man of Prayer The second secret of the great power exhibited in Mr. Moody's life was that Mr. Moody was in the deepest and most meaningful sense a man of prayer. People oftentimes say to me: "Well, I went many miles to see and to hear D. L. Moody and he certainly was a wonderful preacher." Yes, D. L. Moody certainly was a wonderful preacher; taking it all in all, the most wonderful preacher I have ever heard, and it was a great privilege to hear him preach as he alone could preach; but out of a very intimate acquaintance with him I wish to testify that he

was a far greater pray-er than he was preacher.

Time and time again, he was confronted by obstacles that seemed insurmountable, but he always knew the way to surmount and to overcome all difficulties. He knew the way to bring to pass anything that needed to be brought to pass. He knew and believed in the deepest depths of his soul that "nothing was too hard for the Lord" and that prayer could do anything that God could do.

Often times Mr. Moody would write me when he was about to undertake some new work, saying: "I am beginning work in such and such a place on such and such a day; I wish you would get the students together for a day of fasting and prayer" And often I have taken those letters and read them to the students in the lecture room and said: "Mr. Moody wants us to have a day of fasting and prayer, first for God's blessing on our own souls and work, and then for God's blessing on him and his work."

Often we were gathered in the lecture room far into the night -- sometimes till one, two, three, four or even five o'clock in the morning, crying to God, just because Mr. Moody urged us to wait upon God until we received His blessing. How many men and women I have known whose lives and characters have been transformed by those nights of prayer and who have wrought mighty things in many lands because of those nights of prayer!

One day Mr. Moody drove up to my house at Northfield and said: "Torrey, I want you to take a ride with me." I got into the carriage and we drove out toward Lover's Lane, talking about some great and unexpected difficulties that had arisen in regard to the work in Northfield and Chicago, and in connection with other work that was very dear to him. As we drove along, some black storm clouds lay ahead of us, and then suddenly, as we were talking, it began to rain. He drove the horse into a shed near the entrance to Lover's Lane to shelter the horse, and then laid the reins upon the dashboard and said: "Torrey, pray"; and then, as best I could, I prayed, while he in his heart joined me in prayer. And when my voice was silent, he began to pray. Oh, I wish you could have heard that prayer! I shall never forget it, so simple, so trustful, so definite and so direct and so mighty. When the storm was over and we drove back to town, the obstacles had been surmounted, and the work of the schools, and other work that was threatened, went on as it had never gone on before, and it has gone on until this day. As we drove back, Mr. Moody said to me: "Torrey, we will let the other men do the talking and the criticizing, and we will stick to the work that God has given us to do, and let Him take care of the difficulties and answer the criticisms." On one occasion Mr. Moody said to me in Chicago: "I have just found, to my surprise, that we are twenty thousand dollars behind in our finances for the work here and in Northfield, and we must have that twenty thousand dollars, and I am going to get it by prayer." He did not tell a soul who had the ability to give a penny of the twenty thousand dollars' deficit, but looked right to God and said: "I need twenty thousand dollars for my work; send me that money in such a way that I will know it comes straight from Thee." And God heard that prayer. The money came in such a way that it was clear that it came from God in direct answer to prayer.

Yes, D. L. Moody was a man who believed in the God who answers prayer, and not only believed in Him in a theoretical way but believed in Him in a practical way. He was a man who met every difficulty that stood in his way -- by prayer. Everything he undertook was backed up by prayer, and in everything, his ultimate dependence was upon God.

3) A Deep and Practical Student of the Bible The third secret of Mr. Moody's power, or the third reason why God used D. L. Moody, was because he was a deep and practical student of the Word of God. Nowadays it is often said of D. L. Moody that he was not a student. I wish to say that he was a student; most emphatically, he was a student. He was not a student of psychology; he was not a student of anthropology -- I am very sure he would not have known what that word meant; he was not a student of biology; he was not a student of philosophy; he was not even a student of

theology, in the technical sense of the term; but he was a student, a profound and practical student of the one Book that is more worth studying than all other books in the world put together; he was a student of the Bible.

Every day of his life, I have reason for believing, he arose very early in the morning to study the Word of God, way down to the close of his life. Mr. Moody used to rise about four o'clock in the morning to study the Bible. He would say to me: "If I am going to get in any study, I have got to get up before the other folks get up"; and he would shut himself up in a remote room in his house, alone with his God and his Bible.

I shall never forget the first night I spent in his home. He had invited me to take the superintendency of the Bible Institute and I had already begun my work; I was on my way to some city in the East to preside at the International Christian Workers' Convention. He wrote me saying: "Just as soon as the Convention is over, come up to Northfield." He learned when I was likely to arrive and drove over to South Vernon to meet me. That night he had all the teachers from the Mount Hermon School and from the Northfield Seminary come together at the house to meet me, and to talk over the problems of the two schools. We talked together far on into the night, and then, after the principals and teachers of the schools had gone home, Mr. Moody and I talked together about the problems a while longer.

It was very late when I got to bed that night, but very early the next morning, about five o'clock, I heard a gentle tap on my door. Then I heard Mr. Moody's voice whispering: "Torrey, are you up?" I happened to be; I do not always get up at that early hour but I happened to be up that particular morning. He said: "I want you to go somewhere with me," and I went down with him. Then I found out that he had already been up an hour or two in his room studying the Word of God.

Oh, you may talk about power; but, if you neglect the one Book that God has given you as the one instrument through which He imparts and exercises His power, you will not have it. You may read many books and go to many conventions and you may have your all-night prayer meetings to pray for the power of the Holy Ghost; but unless you keep in constant and close association with the one Book, the Bible, you will not have power. And if you ever had power, you will not maintain it except by the daily, earnest, intense study of that Book.

Ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are merely playing at Bible study; and therefore ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are mere weaklings, when they might be giants, both in their Christian life and in their service.

It was largely because of his thorough knowledge of the Bible, and his practical knowledge of the Bible, that Mr. Moody drew such immense crowds. On "Chicago Day," in October 1893, none of the theaters of Chicago dared to open because it was expected that everybody in Chicago would go on that day to the World's Fair; and, in point of fact, something like four hundred thousand people did pass through the gates of the Fair that day. Everybody in Chicago was expected to be at that end of the city on that day. But Mr. Moody said to me: "Torrey, engage the Central Music Hall and announce meetings from nine o'clock in the morning till six o'clock at night." "Why," I replied, "Mr. Moody, nobody will be at this end of Chicago on that day; not even the theaters dare to open; everybody is going down to Jackson Park to the Fair; we cannot get anybody out on this day."

Mr. Moody replied: "You do as you are told"; and I did as I was told and engaged the Central Music Hall for continuous meetings from nine o'clock in the morning till six o'clock at night. But I did it with a heavy heart; I thought there would be poor audiences. I was on the program at noon that day. Being very busy in my office about the details of the campaign, I did not reach the Central Music Hall till almost noon. I thought I would have no trouble in getting in. But when I got almost to the Hall I found to my amazement that not only was it packed but the vestibule was packed and the steps were packed, and there was no getting anywhere near the door; and if I had not gone round and climbed in a back window they would have lost their speaker for that hour. But that would not have been of much importance, for the crowds had not gathered to hear me; it was the magic of Mr. Moody's name that had drawn them. And why did they long to hear Mr. Moody? Because they knew that while he was not versed in many of the philosophies and fads and fancies of the day, he did know the one Book that this old world most longs to know -- the Bible.

I shall never forget Moody's last visit to Chicago. The ministers of Chicago had sent me to Cincinnati to invite him to come to Chicago and hold a meeting. In response to the invitation, Mr. Moody said to me: "If you will hire the Auditorium for weekday mornings and afternoons and have meetings at ten in the morning and three in the afternoon, I will go. " I replied: "Mr. Moody, you know what a busy city Chicago is, and how impossible it is for businessmen to get out at ten o'clock in the morning and three in the afternoon on working days. Will you not hold evening meetings and meetings on Sunday?" "No," he replied, "I am afraid if I did, I would interfere with the regular work of the churches."

I went back to Chicago and engaged the Auditorium, which at that time was the building having the largest seating capacity of any building in the city, seating in those days about seven thousand people; I announced weekday meetings, with Mr. Moody as the speaker, at ten o'clock in the mornings and three o'clock in the afternoons. At once protests began to pour in upon me. One of them came from Marshall Field, at that time the business king of Chicago. "Mr. Torrey," Mr. Field wrote, "we businessmen of Chicago wish to hear Mr. Moody, and you know perfectly well how impossible it is for us to get out at ten o'clock in the morning and three o'clock in the afternoon; have evening meetings." I received many letters of a similar purport and wrote to Mr. Moody urging him to give us evening meetings. But Mr. Moody simply replied: "You do as you are told," and I did as I was told; that is the way I kept my job. On the first morning of the meetings, I went down to the Auditorium about half an hour before the appointed time, but I went with much fear and apprehension; I thought the Auditorium would be nowhere nearly full. When I reached there, to my amazement I found a queue of people four abreast extending from the Congress Street entrance to Wabash Avenue, then a block north on Wabash Avenue, then a break to let traffic through, and then

another block, and so on. I went in through the back door, and there were many clamoring for entrance there. When the doors were opened at the appointed time, we had a cordon of twenty policemen to keep back the crowd; but the crowd was so great that it swept the cordon of policemen off their feet and packed eight thousand people into the building before we could get the doors shut. And I think there were as many left on the outside as there were in the building. I do not think that anyone else in the world could have drawn such a crowd at such a time.

Why? Because though Mr. Moody knew little about science or philosophy or literature in general, he did know the one Book that this old world is perishing to know and longing to know; and this old world will flock to hear men who know the Bible and preach the Bible as they will flock to hear nothing else on earth.

During all the months of the World's Fair in Chicago, no one could draw such crowds as Mr. Moody. Judging by the papers, one would have thought that the great religious event in Chicago at that time was the World's Congress of Religions. One very gifted man of letters in the East was invited to speak at this Congress. He saw in this invitation the opportunity of his life and prepared his paper, the exact title of which I do not now recall, but it was something along the line of "New Light on the Old Doctrines." He prepared the paper with great care, and then sent it around to his most trusted and gifted friends for criticisms. These men sent it back to him with such emendations as they had to suggest. Then he rewrote the paper, incorporating as many of the suggestions and criticisms as seemed wise. Then he sent it around for further criticisms. Then he wrote the paper a third time, and had it, as he trusted, perfect. He went on to Chicago to meet this coveted opportunity of speaking at the World's Congress of Religions.

It was at eleven o'clock on a Saturday morning (if I remember correctly) that he was to speak. He stood outside the door of the platform waiting for the great moment to arrive, and as the clock struck eleven he walked on to the platform to face a magnificent audience of eleven women and two men! But there was not a building anywhere in Chicago that would accommodate the very same day the crowds that would flock to hear Mr. Moody at any hour of the day or night.

Oh, men and women, if you wish to get an audience and wish to do that audience some good after you get them, study, study, STUDY the one Book, and preach, preach, PREACH the one Book, and teach, teach, TEACH the one Book, the Bible, the only Book that is God's Word, and the only Book that has power to gather and hold and bless the crowds for any great length of time.

(4) A Humble Man The fourth reason why God continuously, through so many years, used D. L. Moody was because he was a humble man. I think D. L. Moody was the humblest man I ever knew in all my life. He loved to quote the words of another; "Faith gets the most; love works the most; but humility keeps the most.

He himself had the humility that keeps everything it gets. As I have already said, he was the most humble man I ever knew, i.e., the most humble man when we bear in mind the great things that he did, and the praise that was lavished upon him. Oh, how he loved to put himself in the background and put other men in the foreground. How often he would stand on a platform with some of us little fellows seated behind him and as he spoke, he

would say: "There are better men coming after me." As he said it, he would point back over his shoulder with his thumb to the "little fellows. " I do not know how he could believe it, but he really did believe that the others that were coming after him were really better than he was. He made no pretense to a humility he did not possess. In his heart of hearts, he constantly underestimated himself, and overestimated others.

He really believed that God would use other men in a larger measure than he had been used. Mr. Moody loved to keep himself in the background. At his conventions at Northfield, or anywhere else, he would push the other men to the front and, if he could, have them do all the preaching --

McGregor, Campbell Morgan, Andrew Murray, and the rest of them. The only way we could get him to take any part in the program was to get up in the convention and move that we hear D. L. Moody at the next meeting. He continually put himself out of sight.

Oh, how many a man has been full of promise and God has used him, and then the man thought that he was the whole thing and God was compelled to set him aside! I believe more promising workers have gone on the rocks through self-sufficiency and self-esteem than through any other cause. I can look back for forty years, or more, and think of many men who are now wrecks or derelicts who at one time the world thought were going to be

something great. But they have disappeared entirely from the public view. Why? Because of overestimation of self. Oh, the men and women who have been put aside because they began to think that they were somebody, that they were "IT," and therefore God was compelled to set them aside.

I remember a man with whom I was closely associated in a great movement in this country. We were having a most successful convention in Buffalo, and he was greatly elated. As we walked down the street together to one of the meetings one day, he said to me: "Torrey, you and I are the most important men in Christian work in this country," or words to that effect. I replied: "John, I am sorry to hear you say that; for as I read my Bible I find man after man who had accomplished great things whom God had to set aside because of his sense of his

own importance." And God set that man aside also from that time. I think he is still living, but no one ever hears of him, or has heard of him for years.

God used D. L. Moody, I think, beyond any man of his day; but it made no difference how much God used him, he never was puffed up. One day, speaking to me of a great New York preacher, now dead, Mr. Moody said: "He once did a very foolish thing, the most foolish thing that I ever knew a man, ordinarily so wise as he was, to do. He came up to me at the close of a little talk I had given and said: 'Young man, you have made a great address tonight.'" Then Mr. Moody continued: "How foolish of him to have said that! It almost turned my head." But, thank God, it did not turn his head, and even when pretty much all the ministers in England, Scotland and Ireland, and many of the English bishops were ready to follow D. L. Moody wherever he led, even then it never turned his head one bit. He would get down on his face before God, knowing he was human, and ask God to empty him of all self-sufficiency. And God did.

Oh, men and women! especially young men and young women, perhaps God is beginning to use you; very likely people are saying: "What a wonderful gift he has as a Bible teacher, what power he has as a preacher, for such a young man!" Listen: get down upon your face before God. I believe here lies one of the most dangerous snares of the Devil. When the Devil cannot discourage a man, he approaches him on another tack, which he knows is far worse in its results; he puffs him up by whispering in his ear: "You are the leading evangelist of the day. You are the man who will sweep everything before you. You are the coming man. You are the D. L. Moody of the day"; and if you listen to him, he will ruin you. The entire shore of the history of Christian workers is strewn with the wrecks of gallant vessels that were full of promise a few years ago, but these men became puffed up and were driven on the rocks by the wild winds of their own raging self-esteem.

(5) His Entire Freedom from the Love of Money The fifth secret of D. L. Moody's continual power and usefulness was his entire freedom from the love of money. Mr. Moody might have been a wealthy man, but money had no charms for him. He loved to gather money for God's work; he refused to accumulate money for himself. He told me during the World's Fair that if he had taken, for himself, the royalties on the hymnbooks which he had published, they would have amounted, at that time, to a million dollars. But Mr. Moody refused to touch the money. He had a perfect right to take it, for he was responsible for the publication of the books and it was his money that went into the publication of the first of them.

Mr. Sankey had some hymns that he had taken with him to England and he wished to have them published. He went to a publisher (I think Morgan & Scott) and they declined to publish them, because, as they said, Philip Phillips had recently been over and published a hymnbook and it had not done well. However, Mr. Moody had a little money and he said that he would put it into the publication of these hymns in cheap form; and he did. The

hymns had a most remarkable and unexpected sale; they were then published in book form and large profits accrued. The financial results were offered to Mr. Moody, but he refused to touch them. "But," it was urged on him, "the money belongs to you"; but he would not touch it.

Mr. Fleming H. Revell was at the time treasurer of the Chicago Avenue Church, commonly known as the Moody Tabernacle. Only the basement of this new church building had been completed, funds having been exhausted. Hearing of the hymnbook situation Mr. Revell suggested, in a letter to friends in London, that the money be given for completion of this building, and it was. Afterwards, so much money came in that it was given, by the committee into whose hands Mr. Moody put the matter, to various Christian enterprises. In a certain city to which Mr. Moody went in the latter years of his life, and where I went with him, it was publicly announced that Mr. Moody would accept no money whatever for his services. Now, in point of fact, Mr. Moody was dependent, in a measure, upon what was given him at various services; but when this announcement was made, Mr. Moody said nothing, and left that city without a penny's compensation for the hard work he did there;

and, I think, he paid his own hotel bill. And yet a minister in that very city came out with an article in a paper, which I read, in which he told a fairy tale of the financial demands that Mr. Moody made upon them, which story I knew personally to be absolutely untrue. Millions of dollars passed into Mr. Moody hands, but they passed through; they did not stick to his fingers. This is the point at which many an evangelist makes shipwreck, and his great work comes to an untimely end. The love of money on the part of some evangelists has done more to discredit evangelistic work in our day, and to lay many an evangelist on the shelf, than almost any other cause.

While I was away on my recent tour, I was told by one of the most reliable ministers in one of our eastern cities of a campaign conducted by one who has been greatly used in the past. (Do not imagine, for a moment, that I am speaking of Billy Sunday, for I am not; this same minister spoke in the highest terms of Mr. Sunday and of a campaign which he conducted in a city where this minister was a pastor.) This evangelist of whom I now speak came to a city for a united evangelistic campaign and was supported by fifty-three churches. The minister who told me about the matter was himself chairman of the Finance Committee. The evangelist showed such a longing for money and so deliberately violated the agreement he had made before coming to the

city and so insisted upon money being gathered for him in other ways than he had himself prescribed in the original contract, that this minister threatened to resign from the Finance Committee. He was, however, persuaded to remain to avoid a scandal. "As the total result of the three weeks' campaign there were

only twenty-four clear decisions," said my friend; "and after it was over the ministers got together and by a vote with but one dissenting voice, they agreed to send a letter to this evangelist telling him frankly that they were done with him and with his methods of evangelism forever, and that they felt it their duty to warn other cities against him and his methods and the results of his work." Let us lay the lesson to our hearts and take warning

in time.

(6) His Consuming Passion for the Salvation of the Lost The sixth reason why God used D. L. Moody was because of his consuming passion for the salvation of the lost. Mr. Moody made the resolution, shortly after he himself was saved, that he would never let twenty-four hours pass over his head without speaking to at least one person about his soul. His was a very busy life, and sometimes he would forget his resolution until the last hour, and sometimes he would get out of bed, dress, go out and talk to someone about his soul in order that he might not let one day pass without having definitely told at least one of his fellow-mortals about his need and the Savior who could meet it.

One night Mr. Moody was going home from his place of business. It was very late, and it suddenly occurred to him that he had not spoken to one single person that day about accepting Christ. He said to himself: "Here's a day lost. I have not spoken to anyone today and I shall not see anybody at this late hour." But as he walked up the street, he saw a man standing under a lamppost. The man was a perfect stranger to him, though it turned out afterwards the man knew who Mr. Moody was. He stepped up to this stranger and said: "Are you a Christian?" The man replied: "That is none of your business, whether I am a Christian or not. If you were not a sort of a preacher I would knock you into the gutter for your impertinence." Mr. Moody said a few earnest words and passed on. The next day that man called upon one of Mr. Moody's prominent business friends and said to him: "That man Moody of yours over on the North Side is doing more harm than he is good. He has got zeal without knowledge. He stepped up to me last night, a perfect stranger, and insulted me. He asked me if I were a Christian, and I told him it was none of his business and if he were not a sort of a preacher I would knock him into the gutter for his

impertinence. He is doing more harm than he is good. He has got zeal without knowledge." Mr. Moody's friend sent for him and said: "Moody, you are doing more harm than you are good; you've got zeal without knowledge: you insulted a friend of mine on the street last night. You went up to him, a perfect stranger, and asked him if he were a Christian, and he tells me if you had not been a sort of a preacher he would have knocked you into the

gutter for your impertinence. You are doing more harm than you are good; you have got zeal without knowledge."

Mr. Moody went out of that man's office somewhat crestfallen. He wondered if he were not doing more harm than he was good, if he really had zeal without knowledge. (Let me say, in passing, it is far better to have zeal without knowledge than it is to have knowledge without zeal. Some men

and women are as full of knowledge as an egg is of meat; they are so deeply versed in Bible truth that they can sit in criticism on the preachers and give the preachers pointers, but they have so little zeal that they do not lead one soul to Christ in a whole year.)

Weeks passed by. One night Mr. Moody was in bed when he heard a tremendous pounding at his front door. He jumped out of bed and rushed to the door. He thought the house was on fire. He thought the man would break down the door. He opened the door and there stood this man. He said: "Mr. Moody, I have not had a good night's sleep since that night you spoke to me under the lamppost, and I have come around at this unearthly hour of the night for you to tell me what I have to do to be saved." Mr. Moody took him in and told him what to do to be saved. Then he accepted Christ, and when the Civil War broke out, he went to the front and laid down his life fighting for his country.

Another night, Mr. Moody got home and had gone to bed before it occurred to him that he had not spoken to a soul that day about accepting Christ. "Well," he said to himself, "it is no good getting up now; there will be nobody on the street at this hour of the night." But he got up, dressed and went to the front door. It was pouring rain. "Oh," he said, "there will be no one out in this pouring rain. Just then, he heard the patter of a man's feet as he came down the street, holding an umbrella over his head. Then Mr. Moody darted out and rushed up to

the man and said: "May I share the shelter of your umbrella?" "Certainly," the man replied. Then Mr. Moody said: "Have you any shelter in the time of storm?" and preached Jesus to him. Oh, men and women, if we were as full of zeal for the salvation of souls as that, how long would it be before the whole country would be shaken by the power of a mighty, God-sent revival?

One day in Chicago -- the day after the elder Carter Harrison was shot, when his body was lying in state in the City Hall -- Mr. Moody and I were riding up Randolph Street together in a streetcar right alongside of the City Hall. The car could scarcely get through because of the enormous crowds waiting to get in and view the body of Mayor Harrison. As the car tried to push its way through the crowd, Mr. Moody turned to me and said: "Torrey, what does this mean?" "Why," I said, "Carter Harrison's body lies there in the City Hall and these crowds are waiting to see it."

Then he said: "This will never do, to let these crowds get away from us without preaching to them; we must talk to them. You go and hire Hooley's Opera House (which was just opposite the City Hall) for the whole day." I did so. The meetings began at nine o'clock in the morning, and we had one continuous service from that hour until six in the evening, to reach those crowds.

Mr. Moody was a man on fire for God. Not only was he always "on the job" himself but he was always getting others to work as well. He once invited me down to Northfield to spend a month there with the schools, speaking first to one school and then crossing the river to the other. I was obliged to use the ferry a great deal; it was before the present bridge was built at that point.

One day he said to me: "Torrey, did you know that that ferryman that ferries you across every day was unconverted?" He did not tell me to speak to him, but I knew what he meant. When some days later it was told him that the ferryman was saved, he was exceedingly happy.

Once, when walking down a certain street in Chicago, Mr. Moody stepped up to a man, a perfect stranger to him, and said: "Sir, are you a Christian?" "You mind your own business," was the reply.

Mr. Moody replied: "This is my business." The man said, "Well, then, you must be Moody." Out in Chicago they used to call him in those early days "Crazy Moody," because day and night he was speaking to everybody he got a chance to speak to about being saved.

One time he was going to Milwaukee, and in the seat that he had chosen sat a traveling man. Mr. Moody sat down beside him and immediately began to talk with him. "Where are you going?" Mr. Moody asked. When told the name of the town he said: "We will soon be there; we'll have to get down to business at once. Are you saved?" The man said that he was not, and Mr. Moody took out his Bible and there on the train showed him the way of salvation. Then he said: "Now, you must take Christ." The man did; he was converted right there on the train

Most of you have heard, I presume, the story President Wilson used to tell about D. L. Moody. Ex-President Wilson said that he once went into a barber shop and took a chair next to the one in which D. L. Moody was sitting, though he did not know that Mr. Moody was there. He had not been in the chair very long before, as ex-President Wilson phrased it, he "knew there was a personality in the other chair," and he began to listen to the conversation going on; he heard Mr. Moody tell the barber about the Way of Life, and President Wilson said, "I have never forgotten that scene to this day." When Mr. Moody was gone, he asked the barber who he was; when he was told that it was D. L. Moody, President Wilson said: "It made an impression upon me I have not yet forgotten." On one occasion in Chicago Mr. Moody saw a little girl standing on the street with a pail in her hand. He went up to her and invited her to his Sunday school, telling her what a pleasant place it was. She promised to go the following Sunday, but she did not do so. Mr. Moody watched for her for weeks, and then one day he saw her on the street again, at some distance from him. He started toward her, but she saw him too and started to run away. Mr. Moody followed her. Down she went one street, Mr. Moody after her; up she went another street, Mr. Moody after her, through an alley, Mr. Moody still following; out on another street, Mr. Moody after her; then she dashed into a saloon and Mr. Moody dashed after her. She ran out the back door and up a flight of stairs, Mr. Moody still following; she dashed into a room, Mr. Moody following; she threw herself under the bed and Mr. Moody reached under the bed and pulled her out by the foot, and led her to Christ.

He found that her mother was a widow who had once seen better circumstances, but had gone down until now she was living over this saloon. She had several children. Mr. Moody led the mother and all the family to Christ. Several of the children were prominent members of the Moody Church until they moved away, and afterwards became prominent in churches elsewhere. This particular child, whom he pulled from underneath the bed, was, when I was the pastor of the Moody Church, the wife of one of the most prominent officers in the church.

Only two or three years ago, as I came out of a ticket office in Memphis, Tennessee, a fine-looking young man followed me. He said: "Are you not Dr. Torrey?" I said, "Yes." He said: "I am so and so." He was the son of this woman. He was then a traveling man, and an officer in the church where he lived. When Mr. Moody pulled that little child out from under the bed by the foot he was pulling a whole family into the Kingdom of God, and eternity alone will reveal how many succeeding generations he was pulling into the Kingdom of God.

D. L. Moody's consuming passion for souls was not for the souls of those who would be helpful to him in building up his work here or elsewhere; his love for souls knew no class limitations. He was no respecter of persons; it might be an earl or a duke or it might be an ignorant colored boy on the

street; it was all the same to him; there was a soul to save and he did what lay in his power to save that soul. A friend once told me that the first time he ever heard of Mr. Moody was when Mr. Reynolds of Peoria told him that he once found Mr. Moody sitting in one of the squatters' shanties that used to be in that part of the city toward the lake, which was then called, "The Sands," with a colored boy on his knee, a tallow candle in one hand and a Bible in the other, and Mr. Moody was spelling out the words (for at that time the boy could not read very well) of certain verses of Scripture, in an attempt to lead that ignorant colored boy to Christ.

Oh, young men and women and all Christian workers, if you and I were on fire for souls like that, how long would it be before we had a revival? Suppose that tonight the fire of God falls and fills our hearts, a burning fire that will send us out all over the country, and across the water to China, Japan, India and Africa, to tell lost souls the way of salvation!

(7) Definitely Endued with Power from on High The seventh thing that was the secret of why God used D. L. Moody was that he had a very definite endowment with power from on High, a very clear and definite baptism with the Holy Ghost. Moody knew he had "the baptism with the Holy Ghost"; he had no doubt about it. In his early days he was a great hustler; he had a tremendous desire to do something, but he had no real power. He worked very largely in the energy of the flesh. But there were two humble Free Methodist women who used to come over to his meetings in the Y.M.C.A. One was "Auntie Cook" and the other, Mrs. Snow. (I think her name was not Snow at that time.) These two women would come to Mr. Moody at the close of his meetings and say: "We are praying for you." Finally, Mr. Moody became somewhat nettled and said to them one night: "Why are you praying for me? Why don't you pray for the unsaved?" They replied: "We are praying that you may get the power." Mr. Moody did not know what that

meant, but he got to thinking about it, and then went to these women and said: "I wish you would tell me what you mean"; and they told him about the definite baptism with the Holy Ghost. Then he asked that he might pray with them and not they merely pray for him.

Auntie Cook once told me of the intense fervor with which Mr. Moody prayed on that occasion. She told me in words that I scarcely dare repeat, though I have never forgotten them. And he not only prayed with them, but he also prayed alone. Not long after, one day on his way to England, he was walking up Wall Street in New York; (Mr. Moody very seldom told this and I almost hesitate to tell it) and in the midst of the bustle and hurry of that city his prayer was answered; the power of God fell upon him as he walked up the street and he had to hurry off to the house of a friend and ask that he might have a room by himself, and in that room he stayed alone for hours; and the Holy Ghost came upon him, filling his soul with such joy that at last he had to ask God to withhold His hand, lest he die on the spot from very joy. He went out from that place with the power of the Holy Ghost upon him, and when he got to London (partly through the prayers of a bedridden saint in Mr. Lessey's church), the power of God wrought through him mightily in North London, and hundreds were added to the churches; and that was what led to his being invited over to the wonderful campaign that followed in later years.

Time and again Mr. Moody would come to me and say: "Torrey, I want you to preach on the baptism with the Holy Ghost." I do not know how many times he asked me to speak on that subject. Once, when I had been invited to preach in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York (invited at Mr. Moody's suggestion; had it not been for his suggestion the invitation would

never have been extended to me), just before I started for New York, Mr. Moody drove up to my house and said: "Torrey, they want you to preach at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York. It is a great big church, cost a million dollars to build it." Then he continued: "Torrey, I just want to ask one thing of you. I want to tell you what to preach about. You will preach that sermon of yours on 'Ten Reasons Why I Believe the Bible to Be the Word of God' and your sermon on 'The Baptism With the Holy Ghost.'"

Time and again, when a call came to me to go off to some church, he would come up to me and say: "Now, Torrey, be sure and preach on the baptism with the Holy Ghost." I do not know how many times he said that to me. Once I asked him: "Mr. Moody, don't you think I have any sermons but those two: 'Ten Reasons Why I Believe the Bible to Be the Word of God' and 'The Baptism With the Holy Ghost'?" "Never mind that," he replied, "you give them those two sermons."

Once he had some teachers at Northfield -- fine men, all of them, but they did not believe in a definite baptism with the Holy Ghost for the individual. They believed that every child of God was baptized with the Holy Ghost, and they did not believe in any special baptism with the Holy Ghost for the individual. Mr. Moody came to me and said: "Torrey, will you come up to my house after the meeting tonight and I will get those men to come, and I want you to talk this thing out with them." Of course, I very readily consented, and Mr. Moody and I talked for a long time, but they did not altogether see eye to eye with us. And when they went, Mr. Moody signaled me to remain for a few moments. Mr. Moody sat there with his chin on his breast, as he so often sat when he was in deep thought; then he looked up and said: "Oh, why will they split hairs Why don't they see that this is just the one thing that they themselves need? They are good teachers, they are wonderful teachers, and I am so glad to have them here; but why will they not see that the baptism with the Holy Ghost is just the one touch that they themselves need?"

I shall never forget the eighth of July, 1894, to my dying day. It was the closing day of the Northfield Students' Conference -- the gathering of the students from the eastern colleges. Mr. Moody had asked me to preach on Saturday night and Sunday morning on the baptism with the Holy Ghost. On Saturday night I had spoken about, "The Baptism With the Holy Ghost: What It Is; What It Does; the Need of It and the Possibility of It." On Sunday morning I spoke on "The Baptism With the Holy Spirit: How to Get It." It was just exactly twelve o'clock when I finished my morning sermon, and I took out my watch and said: "Mr. Moody has invited us all to go up to the mountain at three o'clock this afternoon to pray for the power of the Holy Spirit. It is three hours to three o'clock. Some of you cannot wait three hours. You do not need to wait. Go to your rooms; go out into the woods; go to your tent; go anywhere where you can get alone with God and have this matter out with Him." At three o'clock, we all gathered in front of Mr. Moody's mother's house (she was then still living), and then began to pass down the lane, through the gate, up on the mountainside. There were four hundred and fifty-six of us in all; I know the number because Paul Moody counted us as we passed through the gate.

After a while Mr. Moody said: "I don't think we need to go any further; let us sit down here." We sat down on stumps and logs and on the ground. Mr. Moody said: "Have any of you students anything to say?" I think about seventy-five of them arose, one after the other, and said: "Mr. Moody, I could not wait till three o'clock; I have been alone with God since the morning service, and I believe I have a right to say that I have been baptized with the Holy Spirit." When these testimonies were

over, Mr. Moody said: "Young men, I can't see any reason why we shouldn't kneel down here right now and ask God that the Holy Ghost may fall upon us just as definitely as He fell upon the apostles on the Day of Pentecost. Let us pray." And we did pray, there on the mountainside. As we had gone up the mountainside heavy clouds had been gathering, and just as we began to pray, those clouds broke and the raindrops began to fall through the overhanging pines. But there was another cloud that had been gathering

over Northfield for ten days, a cloud big with the mercy and grace and power of God; and as we began to pray, our prayers seemed to pierce that cloud and the Holy Ghost fell upon us. Men and women, that is what we all need: the Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

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