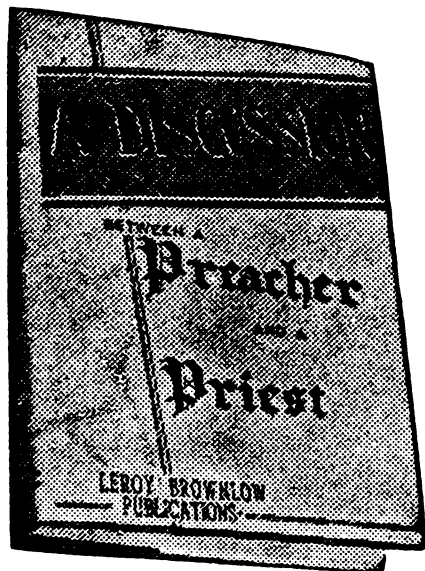


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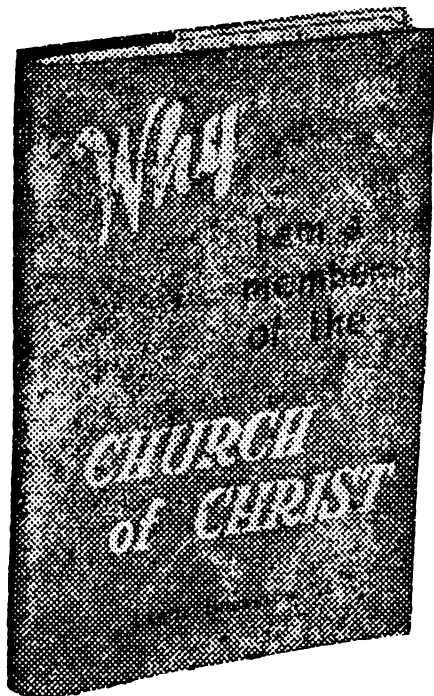
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Some "Do's" and "Don'ts"
for the Christian

Studies in Better Living

By

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Foreword

THE title of this book, **SOME "DO'S" AND "DON'TS" FOR THE CHRISTIAN**, is suggested by the fact that Christian living is both positive and negative, consisting of "do's" and "don'ts." Those acquainted with the Bible know that from the first time God commanded man until the New Testament was finished, Jehovah expressed his will by saying, "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not." Concerning a certain tree, Jehovah said to Adam and Eve, "Ye shall not eat of it." This was negative. Paul, in naming the works of the flesh, gives seventeen "don'ts," and, in listing the fruit of the Spirit, names nine "do's." So the Bible is filled with teaching which is both positive and negative. This volume, therefore, naturally divides itself into two parts, Part I, "Do's" and Part II, "Don'ts."

SOME "DO'S" AND "DON'TS" FOR THE CHRISTIAN was designed to be a companion book to **WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST**. The latter deals with the first principles of the gospel, while this volume is devoted to the development of the children of God in everyday Christian living. Both types of teaching are urgently needed.

The author has not tried to exhaust the topics discussed. If he had, it would have necessitated the publication of many volumes. Neither does this volume include every "do" and "don't" of the Christian life. To attempt to present such a book would be a hopelessly impossible task for any human writer. But herein are presented teachings and principles given in the Bible which, when properly applied, should be of practical help to the reader in facing even the most minute affairs of life.

It has been the constant aim of the author at all times in preparing this material to write a book of practical lessons designed for the needs of all of us, both young and old. The most of us are hardworking people, whether with hand or head, who do not live in a study. These lessons have been written in the simplest manner and easiest language possible, in order to reach our hearts rather than go over our heads.

These studies have been designed to be used as a guide in Bible classes for men, women and young people, to be used in midweek services, and to be used by the individual Christian in his home studies.

Different teachers cover the same material at different paces. The author, being aware of this, has broken the chapters into various sections and topics, making it easy for each class to cover the material at the speed it deems wise.

The Review Exercise is optional. Some readers, pupils and teachers will not care to use it. Those who use the exercise will find the lesson more profitable if they will study and discuss each topic thoroughly before considering the exercise. The exercise is merely suggestive. The teacher may wish to add to it many other thoughts and questions.

All Scripture quotations are from the American Standard Version, unless otherwise indicated.

The author, in presenting this volume to the public, is now hopeful that it will be a source of help to Christians, a source of glory to the Master Teacher, and that it will be fulfilling its mission years after death has silenced the writer's voice and stilled his pen.

LEROY BROWNLOW

Fort Worth, Texas

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PART I

“Do’s”

I GROW

I. INTRODUCTION

I*T is very evident that Christian growth is a Christian duty.* Our God has said, "As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk . . . that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2); again, "But grow in the grace, and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18). So God wants his children to grow.

2. *A failure to grow is contrary to both the law of God and the law of nature.* Growth is a normal thing. A little plant will break the surface of the earth, and, barring hindering causes, will grow until it is grown. A normal animal, properly cared for, will grow until it reaches maturity. The parents and friends of a little child would become alarmed and heartbroken if he did not grow. It is natural for a child to grow until he reaches the climax in physical growth, and then the anticlimax or old age comes. We can thank God, however, that in spiritual growth there is no necessary weakening or anticlimax, for we read, "But though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day" (II Cor. 4:16). This enriches life, and takes the sting out of old age.

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR GROWTH

1. *New birth.* No one can grow as a child of God unless he has been born again. The new birth is fundamental. "Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jno. 3:3). A man once took unusual interest in the church. Strangers thought he was a Christian, but he was not. He explained, saying, "I am testing myself, and if I can

live the Christian life, I am going to become a Christian." How futile, for no person can live the Christian life when he is not a Christian. It is impossible for one to be a new creature out of Christ (II Cor. 5:17).

2. *Freedom from sin.* Disease will stunt and, if not cured, will kill a child. Likewise, sin will check and maybe kill spiritual growth. We have seen examples of both. Peter teaches us to put away sin, if we would grow: "Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (I Pet. 2:1). May we ever remember "that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that we should no longer be in bondage to sin" (Rom. 6:6), and "that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness" (Rom. 6:16). May we daily be consecrated and penitent, and daily watch and pray to keep sin from dwarfing our souls. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

3. *Food.* "Long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (I Pet. 2:2); hence, no food, no growth. In unfortunate countries, many little bodies are puny and dwarfish due to an insufficient diet. But how much more nearly universal is this picture in the spiritual world, because many of God's children have starved their souls. The Bible is milk and meat—milk to the newborn babe and meat to the older Christian (Heb. 5:12-14). By living on the milk of the word, one grows and becomes able to digest the more difficult things in the Bible. Nothing will take the place of the divinely appointed food of God. In the above passage, we are commanded to desire this food. This means we are to long for it. How many of us do? We feed our bodies twenty-one times a week. How often do we feed our souls?

4. *Exercise strengthens,* so we are commanded: "Exercise thyself unto godliness" (I Tim. 4:7). The Christian life

is a life of "faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6). We are workers together with God (II Cor. 6:1). "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11). We learn to do by doing. A baby learns to talk by talking and to walk by walking. We learn to sing by singing, pray by praying, preach by preaching, and win souls by winning souls. Unfortunately, some do not want to do these things until they learn how. But how are they going to learn without trying? If you will study the Bible, pray to God, visit the sick, welcome the stranger, encourage the faint-hearted, restore the fallen, and win the lost, you will become stronger. Activity strengthens; inactivity weakens. Remember: we show our faith by our works (Jas. 2:18); hence, little work is evidence of little faith.

5. *Climate or environment.* In the physical, we call this factor climate; but in the spiritual we call it environment. Climate may affect physical growth, and environment may retard spiritual growth. "Be not deceived: evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33). Environment was one of the factors that caused Herod to order the execution of John: "And the king was grieved; but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that sat at meat with him, he commanded it to be given" (Matt. 14:9). The influence of heathen wives pulled Solomon away from the true God. In speaking of influence, Paul said, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump" (I Cor. 5:6, 7). In the presence of some people, it is easy to be spiritual; while in the presence of others, it is very difficult. Many Christians have been weakened and led astray by evil associations. Examples are many.

6. *Time.* Neither a baby nor a Christian is born full grown. It takes time for the growth and development of both. Relative to Christian growth, we read, "For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers" (Heb. 5:12). A realization of this fact is a source of encouragement to the young in Christ.

III. EVIDENCES OF GROWTH

Since we are commanded to grow, we should be anxious to know whether or not we are growing; for if we are not, we are sinning. But how can we tell?

1. *Growth is like learning in school.* We cannot see it day by day, but later we can look back and see it. As we look back over our Christian lives, can we see that we have grown? Grown in the knowledge of God's word? Grown in faith and obedience? Grown in good works?

2. *When we act like men rather than children.* Paul said, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things" (I Cor. 13:11). There is a big difference in the behaviour of a child and a man. It may be that if you were to do some of the things today that you did back during the early days of your Christian life, it would smite your conscience deeply. Did you once do things that you would not dare do now? If so, you have grown.

3. *When we begin to produce fruit.* When a fruit tree begins to bear, you know it has grown. Growing Christians bear fruit, "some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Matt. 13:23). Are the fruits of Christianity evident in our lives? If so, we have grown; if not, we are abnormal Christians. May we grow and bear fruit lest we be cut down by God's axe. "And even now the axe lieth at the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matt. 3:10). Christ said, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away" (Jno. 15:2).

Review Exercise

1. "As newborn.....also....., desire the sincere.....truth.....of the word, that ye may.....grow.....thereby." Scripture.....1 Pet. 2:2.....
2. Give another passage, found in Peter's writings, commanding us to grow. 2 Pet. 3:18
3. Give examples showing that growth is a normal thing.
4. In which growth is it possible to escape an anticlimax? Scripture.....2 Cor. 4:16

5. No one can grow as a child of God unless he has been born again (T or F).
6. List the sins Peter mentioned that the newborn babe must put away if he expects to grow. *weebidness, pride, hypocrisy, doubts, and speaking* Scripture *1 Pet. 2*
7. What standard has Paul given us to use in determining whose servant man is? *Rom 6:1*
8. What did Paul say about the wages of sin? *death*
9. Explain: The Bible is both milk and meat to Christians. Scripture *1 Cor. 3:1-2*
10. "Exercise thyself unto *godliness*" (hatred, gossip, intemperance, covetousness, godliness, love).
11. Our faith can be exercised only by our *works* (Jas. 2:18).
12. What is the difference between climate and environment? How may each affect man?
13. "Be not deceived: evil *company* corrupt good *character*." Scripture *1 Cor. 15:2*
14. Name a king who was influenced to sin by evil associates. *David*
15. Give the scripture which teaches that time is a necessary factor in growth. *1 Th. 5:2*
16. What are two evidences of Christian growth?
17. "Every tree which bringeth not forth good *fruit* is *hewn* down, and cast into the *fire*." Scripture *Matt. 3:10*
18. Thought question for discussion: What practical things can Christians do which will encourage spiritual growth?

II

STUDY GOD'S WORD

I. COMMANDED TO STUDY GOD'S WORD

ANOTHER “do” of the Christian life is to study the word of God.

1. Paul said, “*Give diligence [study, K. J. V.] to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth*” (II Tim. 2:15). The Bible is a book to be rightly divided, and a person must study to do that; otherwise, he may later find that he handled it to his own destruction (II Pet. 3:16).

2. We next read I Tim. 4:13: “*Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching.*” Timothy was commanded to be diligent in reading the Sacred Writings.

3. *Christians are commanded to add knowledge to faith*: “Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge” (II Pet. 1:5). This knowledge will not be added miraculously; it must come through study or not at all.

II. THE WAY TO APPROACH BIBLE STUDY

1. *Reverently*. It is the word of God—“inspired of God” (II Tim. 3:16)—rather than the word of men. “Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit” (II Pet. 1:21). Let us study it with care, with reverence and godly fear.

2. *Meditatively and deliberately* instead of the “hurry up and get through” kind of reading. “In his law doth he meditate day and night” (Psa. 1:2). We must have our minds free from other things that Bible study may be profitable to us.

3. *As one who needs guidance*, aware of this fact: “O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is

not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). One of the mistakes of the church at Laodicea was that its members felt need of nothing (Rev. 3:17).

4. *Not for the purpose of getting doctrine from it.* Man should not decide what he wants for doctrine and then go to the Bible and try to find proof of it; but should let the Bible be his doctrine, for every scripture is profitable for doctrine (II Tim. 3:16).

5. *As a truth-lover.* A love for truth is a prerequisite to learning truth; otherwise, man will be deceived by error. "They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie" (II Thess. 2:10, 11).

6. *As a truth-seeker.* "Seek, and ye shall find" (Matt. 7:7). This will cause the student to take the whole counsel of God rather than fragments of scriptures. The Bereans searched the Scriptures daily to learn if the things they had heard were true (Acts 17:11).

7. *With a desire to obey.* A common error of men is to try to change the Scriptures to fit themselves rather than change themselves to fit the Scriptures. An elderly lady once said to the author that she had read the Bible through many times to see if God had commanded her to do something she had not done or was not doing. This is the kind of Bible study that will take people to heaven. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves" (Jas. 1:22).

III. BLESSINGS DERIVED FROM STUDYING THE BIBLE

1. We learn from II Tim. 3:16, 17 that we receive from the inspired Word (1) *teaching*, (2) *reproof*, (3) *correction*, (4) *instruction in righteousness*, and (5) *information to furnish us unto every good work*. The child of God needs all

2. *Man, by hearing God's word, may have his heart cut and pricked*, "For the word of God is living, and active, and this, and the Bible supplies this need.

sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the

dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). The people who heard the preached word on the day of Pentecost were pricked in their hearts (Acts 2:37). We thank God for this piercing, restraining and correcting power over the heart. All deeds are first committed in the heart; therefore, we guard the life by first guarding the heart.

3. *Food for the soul.* Peter teaches that God's word is milk for the newborn babe in Christ, and is necessary for spiritual growth (I Pet. 2:1, 2). In keeping with this figure, we learn from Heb. 5:12-14 that the Word is solid food, meat, or an adequate diet for the older Christian. It is just as impossible to be strong spiritually without spiritual nourishment as it is to be strong physically without physical nourishment. God has appointed his word for spiritual nourishment, and nothing will take its place. Those who neglect the study of it will starve and dwarf themselves spiritually.

4. *A study of the Bible illuminates man's pathway.* "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). Many grope in darkness because they have refused this light. Why have they rejected this great blessing? "Men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil" (Jno. 3:19).

5. *It enables the student to see himself as God sees him,* for the Bible is God's mirror for the soul. "For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror" (Jas. 1:23). Man needs to see himself daily in his true perspective, so that he may make the necessary changes to be in harmony with God's will.

6. *By studying God's word, we are given a view of some things that will come up at the judgment.* "The dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. 20:12). Christ said, "The word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jno. 12:48). Some will be surprised at the judgment to learn that

God demanded certain things of them about which they knew nothing in this life, and all because they did not study God's message to man.

7. *Bible study will stabilize us doctrinally* and guard us against apostasy, "that we be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error" (Eph. 4:14). Hear Paul again: "Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee" (I Tim. 4:16). The salvation of souls, ours and others, demands that we take heed to both the teaching or doctrine and the living. A knowledge of the Bible will protect us from false teachers who "in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you" (II Pet. 2:3).

8. The addition of godly knowledge is one of the things *to protect us from falling*. Peter mentions the increase of knowledge and other Christian graces, and then says, "If ye do these things ye shall never stumble" (II Pet. 1:5-10). It will strengthen and fortify us in our battle with temptation. Our Saviour left us the glorious example of saying to the devil, "It is written," and then he would quote the scripture. Fortunate is the person today who has such a knowledge; those who do not have it are often destroyed. Hosea's statement (4:6), "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" is an apt commentary on some Christians.

9. *Our faith is strengthened* by studying the Lord's word. This is the divine way of developing faith. "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). Again, "These are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (Jno. 20:31). We definitely need faith. It is one of the articles of the Christian's armor, "the shield of faith" (Eph. 6:15). Many soldiers of the cross have protected themselves from "the fiery darts of the evil one" with the shield of faith. Many others have perished in battle because they did not have it.

10. *Christians are commanded to do several other things which necessitate study:* (1) Preach the gospel. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk. 16:15). (2) Be "ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you" (I Pet. 3:15). (3) Defend the gospel. "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). In this connection, Paul said, "I am set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil. 1:16). We must study, for without knowledge none of these commands can be obeyed.

11. *It can be summed up* by saying that a study and obedience of the Holy Scriptures will build us up and give us a home in heaven. Paul said to the Ephesian elders, "And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). Too much depends upon Bible study for us to neglect it.

Review Exercise

1. The Bible is a book to be rightly divided (T or F).
2. Explain why we should study the Bible in a manner different from the way we study other books.
3. Name six ways we should approach Bible study.
4. If a person does not love the truth, God will send him a working of error that he should believe a lie (T or F).
5. How did the Bereans seek the truth? *Study of scriptures*
6. What did James say about hearers only? *Be doers*
7. Name the things in II Tim. 3:16, 17 to which the Scriptures furnish us. *profit, instruction, and. imp. to the soul*
8. God's word has power to affect, cut or prick the heart (T or F).
9. What are the figures used to describe God's word as spiritual nourishment? *milk - meat*
10. Why do some persons dislike Bible study?
11. How can man see himself as God sees him? *study*
12. Man will be judged by what he thinks is right rather than by the word of God (T or F).
13. How can souls be used for merchandise? Scripture *2Pe 1:2-3*
14. Why does the study of the Bible increase faith? Scripture *2Tim 10:1*
15. Name some other positive commands Christians cannot obey without first obeying the command to study.

16. What did Paul tell the Ephesian elders that God's word would do for them? *Build them up*
17. Thought questions for discussion: (1) What do you think of one's reading a chapter with the "hurry up and get through" spirit just so he can say he read the Bible that day? (2) Should one have a regular time to read the Bible? (3) Is it advisable to memorize portions of the Bible?

III

PRAY

I. INTRODUCTION

ONE of the outstanding duties, privileges, and joys of the Christian life is prayer. It is the Father's desire and will that his children pray. "Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward" (I Thess. 5:17, 18). What a privilege to "draw near with holiness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). It gives us joy and satisfaction to know "the supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (Jas. 5:16), that God has the ability and skill to answer prayer. No wonder the early Christians leaned so heavily upon prayer.

II. CHRIST PRAYED MUCH

The fact that Christ spent much time in prayer is positive proof that Christians must be praying disciples. Note: (1) At the beginning of Christ's public ministry, immediately following his being baptized, he prayed (Lk. 3:21). (2) On the night before Jesus selected the twelve "he went out into the mountains to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God" (Lk. 6:12). (3) "And after he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray; and when even was come, he was there alone" (Matt. 14:23). (4) "And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed" (Mk. 1:35). (5) At the conclusion of Christ's parting message to the disciples he lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed (Jno. 17). (6) Shortly before the trying ordeal of his arrest by the cruel mob he took Peter, James and John and went

into the Garden of Gethsemane and prayed three times (Matt. 26:36-44). (7) While he was dying upon the cross he prayed (Lk. 23:34-46).

Surely no prayerless person can be a follower of him who prayed so much.

III. THE EARLY CHURCH WAS STRONG IN PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING

1. In speaking of three thousand who had been added to the church, Luke says, "*And they continued steadfastly in . . . prayers*" (Acts 2:41, 42).

2. When Paul was kept in prison by Herod "*prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him*" (Acts 12:5).

3. *The churches were admonished to pray:* (1) To the saints in Rome: "Continuing steadfastly in prayer" (Rom. 12:12). (2) To the church of God in Corinth: "Give yourselves unto prayer" (I Cor. 7:5). (3) To the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus at Ephesus: "With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:18). (4) To the church at Philippi: "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). (5) To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colossae: "Continue steadfastly in prayer, watching therein with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2). (6) To the church of the Thessalonians: "Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to youward" (I Thess. 5:17, 18.)

4. The last three above mentioned passages show *the close inter-relation of prayer and thanksgiving*. We always need to be mindful that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17). To receive these blessings from God without ever thanking him is to live on the level of the hogs which eat the acorns under the trees without ever looking up.

5. Jesus set the good example of giving thanks for food. In feeding the four thousand (Mk. 8:6) and also in feeding the five thousand (Jno. 6:11) Christ first gave thanks. A feeling of dependence upon God and of gratitude to him will cause us to do the same.

IV. GOD'S PROMISE TO ANSWER PRAYERS IS CONDITIONAL

Men may pray and not be heard. James said, "Ye ask and receive not" (Jas. 4:3); therefore, it is good to note the following conditions of acceptable prayer:

1. *Be righteous.* "For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears unto their supplication" (I Pet. 3:12).

2. *Be obedient.* "And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight" (I Jno. 3:22). Jno. 9:31.

3. *Pray in faith.* "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). Jas. 1:6, 7.

4. *Have a forgiving spirit.* "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:15).

5. *Abide in Christ.* "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jno. 15:7).

6. *Have the right motive in praying.* "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures" (Jas. 4:3).

7. *Pray in harmony with God's will.* "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us" (I Jno. 5:14).

8. *Pray in Jesus' name.* "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jno. 14:13).

9. We read of several different postures: (1) Standing (I Ki. 8:22, 23). (2) Bowing down (Psa. 95:6). (3) Kneeling (Acts 20:36). (4) Falling on the face (Matt. 26:39). (5) Lifting up the hands (I Tim. 2:8).

V. THINGS FOR WHICH TO PRAY

1. *For the forgiveness of (saint's) sins.* "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). Acts 8:22.

2. *For help in time of temptation.* "And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matt. 6:13). Matt. 26:41; II Pet. 2:9.

3. *For daily necessities of life.* "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. 6:11).

4. *For earthly rulers* and for the privilege of leading a quiet life. "For all men; for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity" (1 Tim. 2:1, 2).

5. *For the sick.* "Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him" (Jas. 5:14).

6. *For enemies.* "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you" (Matt. 5:44).

7. *For laborers to enter the harvest.* "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38).

8. *For preachers and for the Lord's word to be glorified.* "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified" (II Thess. 3:1).

9. *For the children of God* (Phil. 1:9-11).

10. *For God's will to be done.* "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth" (Matt. 6:10). Matt. 26:39.

11. *The model prayer* given by Christ gives us an insight to prayer (Matt. 6:9-13). The prayer is addressed to God and includes adoration, supplication for the kingdom, and petitions for daily sustenance, for forgiveness, for deliverance from the evil one, and an ascription of glory.

12. *We should not pray now for the kingdom to come* (Matt. 6:10), because it has already come (Col. 1:13); but we can pray for it to increase.

Prayer is not only the expression of gratitude and of need,

the supply of which is sought of God, but is a high and beautiful expression of trust, submission and union with God.

Review Exercise

1. Quote a passage which proves that prayer avails much.
2. Name four instances of prayer in the life of Christ.
3. The church in Jerusalem continued steadfastly in prayer (T or F).
4. Name six churches admonished to pray. _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____
5. There is a close inter-relation of prayer and thanksgiving (T or F).
6. _____ set an example of giving thanks for food.
7. Name seven conditions of acceptable prayer.
8. Is posture a condition of acceptable praying?
9. Name nine things for which we can pray.
10. Quote the model prayer given by Christ.
11. Is it right for us to pray for the kingdom to come?
12. Comment: During the war we occasionally read of some person who, while facing a crisis, cursed awhile and prayed awhile, and it was often implied that such availed much.
13. Can a person who holds malice in his heart pray acceptably?
14. Comment: Many say their prayers rather than pray.
15. Should we endeavor to make our prayers sound beautiful?
16. What do you think about saying the prayer of example (commonly called the Lord's Prayer) in public gatherings?
17. Thought question: How can prayer mean more to us with the passing of the years?

IV

“LAY BY IN STORE”

I. INTRODUCTION

MANY persons apparently are not aware of it, but *laying by in store or giving is also one of the positive duties of the Christian life.*

2. *In every age and dispensation men have been taught to give or sacrifice to God; hence, the giving of our means has ever been a matter of concern to him.*

(1) Back in the early dawn of time, “Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect” (Gen. 4:4, 5). God would not accept just any offering then, and neither will he today. This should stimulate us to give thought and prayer to our giving.

(2) Christ showed concern for the way people gave. “And he sat down over against the treasury, and beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury” (Mk. 12:41). Jesus was interested in what they gave; he is interested in what we give. What does he see?

(3) Once again, the Lord was watching when Ananias and Sapphira made their gift (Acts 5:1-11). In a vain effort to receive praise of men, they lied about their giving. What was the result? They were executed on the spot. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked” (Gal. 6:7).

From the foregoing, it is evident that God looks with interest upon our giving. Since he is the one who receives or refuses the offering, it could not be otherwise. A remembrance

of this fact will encourage scriptural giving.

II. I CORINTHIANS 16:2

We find several questions relative to giving answered in I Cor. 16:2: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come."

1. *When?* "Upon the first day of the week." This settles the matter as far as the day is concerned. God specified the first day of the week. Inasmuch as this day comes every week, then we must give regularly and systematically.

2. *Who?* "Let each one of you." Paul was writing to Christians, church members; therefore, every Christian is commanded to give something if he has prospered any. The command is to both male and female, to both young and old.

A little boy with a nickel in his hand, sitting beside a well dressed, dignified lady, watched the contribution plate go down a number of pews. He became alarmed as the plate got nearer, because the lady sitting by him was making no effort to get any money to give. Just as the plate got to her, he handed her the coin and said, "Here, Lady, put my nickel in, and I'll crawl under the bench." He had been taught individual giving from I Cor. 16:2. A good lesson!

3. *What?* "Lay by him in store."

(1) This tells us what to do, and every Christian should purpose or plan to do it. "Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7). We should give purposefully rather than thoughtlessly. It is not seeking the kingdom first to spend all week and come to the worship on the Lord's day and offer God a few pennies that happen to be left. We should purpose our giving and so plan it that we shall have it ready when the time comes. We plan our budgets so that we can meet our material obligations, and this is good; but let us not crowd God out of these budgets.

(2) As seen in the above mentioned passage, we should give "not grudgingly, or of necessity." "Grudgingly" means

reluctantly. We should not begrudge our giving nor grumble about it. Neither should we grumble about sermons on this duty.. Giving of necessity or compulsion to receive popular applause does not benefit the giver. Such giving loses its benefits to the donor. "The gift without the giver is bare."
— *James Russell Lowell.*

4. *How much?* "As he may prosper." This is proportionate giving. The amount we give should be in proportion to the amount we receive. We see the justice and fairness of God in this command. The demand is so made that everyone whether he makes little or much can obey it. "For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not" (II Cor. 8:12).

The tithe was given under the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations. This was proportionate giving and the percentage was one tenth.

Abram gave a tenth to Melchizedek, priest of God Most High (Gen. 14:17-20).

Jacob made this promise to God: "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen. 28:22).

The tithe became a law to the Hebrews: "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is Jehovah's: it is holy unto Jehovah . . . And all the tithe of the herd or the flock, whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto Jehovah" (Lev. 27:30-32).

God considered anything less than a tenth as robbery: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8).

Jesus placed his approval on tithing and exhorted the Pharisees to do it: "Ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone" (Matt. 23:23). The law of Moses, however, was still in force at this time.

Inasmuch as tithing is not commanded under the Chris-

tian dispensation, then it cannot be followed today as a safe and infallible standard. Since we are stewards, perhaps each should ask, "How much shall I keep?" instead of, "How much shall I give?"

5. *Why?* "That no collections be made when I come." In most instances, there will not be even a need for special collections when Christians give proportionately, systematically and weekly.

III. SUNDRY THOUGHTS

1. *We are stewards* (I Cor. 4:1, 2; I Pet. 4:10). The English etymology of the word "steward" is very suggestive. It is literally "sty-ward." "Sty" means, in the old English, a place for cattle; and "ward" means a watcher or keeper. Here are the cattle in the pen; and here is the watcher set to ward or to keep them. He will have to account to his master for the way in which he cares for them. We are God's stewards; everything belongs to him. "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (I Cor. 10:26). We, too, are his by right of creation (Gen. 1:26), by right of redemption (Eph. 1:7), and by right of providential care (Matt. 6:26-30). We shall have to account some day for the way we use God's world and goods. The rich fool said, "My barns, my grain and my goods." But Christ said, "This night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?" (Lk. 12:18-20). May we never forget these words: "For we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out" (I Tim. 6:7).

Use your money while you're living;
Do not hoard it to be proud;
You can never take it with you;
There's no pocket in a shroud.

2. *The churches of Macedonia were strong in giving* (II Cor. 8:1-5).

(1) They were deep in poverty, but rich in liberality (ver. 2). Liberality is not measured by the amount, but by

the spirit and the percentage. That is why the poor widow cast in more than all others who were giving (Mk. 12:41-44).

(2) They gave "beyond their power," and "of their own accord" (ver. 3). They "gave until it hurt," but it did not hurt. It is possible to "give until it hurts," and then give until it does not hurt.

(3) They besought Paul with much entreaty to accept their gift (ver. 4). They regarded giving as an opportunity rather than an imposition. How do we view it?

(4) "First they gave their own selves to the Lord" (ver. 5). This is the secret of Christian liberality. It is like sailing under sealed orders. Where? You do not know. When? You cannot say. It is saying an eternal "Yes" to God and an eternal "No" to self. It is like signing your name to a blank check and letting the Lord fill in the amount.

Some Africans, converted from a heathen religion to the Christian religion, were casting gifts into a large ring drawn on the ground. Gold, silver, etc. were being given; but one native stepped into the ring and said, "I give myself." We need to give ourselves and sing:

Lord, I give myself to Thee,
 Friends and time and earthly store;
 Soul and body Thine to be —
 Wholly Thine forevermore.

3. *Giving is a grace to be cultivated*: "But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also" (II Cor. 8:7). Even though the Corinthians abounded in many graces, they had neglected the grace of giving. Liberal giving is a grace to be developed. A brother who once gave \$1.00 a week began to increase his contributions; today he is giving \$10.00 weekly.

IV. WHAT A FAILURE TO GIVE INDICATES

A failure to give signifies:

1. In some instances, *a lack of teaching*. We are what we have been taught. One may be a Mohammedan, Buddhist,

or Christian, depending upon what he has been taught. One may be a liberal giver or a stingy giver, depending upon his teaching.

2. In other cases, *rebellion toward God*. God's law teaches giving (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7). The person who understands this and does not obey is guilty of rebellion. He is set on having his own will in contrast to this spirit: "Not my will, but thine be done."

3. *That one is religiously lopsided*, that he believes the Bible in spots. He thinks the alien has to obey Acts 2:38, but that the Christian does not have to obey I Cor. 16:2. He thinks Christians have to follow the example of assembling on the first day of the week to take the Lord's supper, but that they do not have to obey the command to give. Just what kind of religion is this?

4. *A lack of faith in God's word*. We show our faith by our works (Jas. 2:18), rather than by our professions. It is easy to tell what a person believes by what he does.

5. *A lack of interest in mission work*. The church is to support the truth, for it is the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15). The church must send men out (Rom. 10:13, 14), but it cannot do this without finances; therefore, a refusal to give is a refusal to preach the gospel.

6. *A lack of interest in benevolent work*. The church is the only benevolent institution known to the Bible. The church in Jerusalem had a "daily ministrations" (Acts 6:1). Other passages: Eph. 3:21; Col. 3:17. A miserly contribution will force the church to have a minor program of benevolence.

7. *A lack of interest in the local church*. It takes money to get things which are needed in building up a congregation. To decline to give is equivalent to saying, "Let the local church die." But who wants to live in a community where its influence is not felt?

8. *A lack of cooperation*. We are to work together (II Cor. 6:1). One may not be able to give much, but all of us together can.

9. *A love for money.* One may refuse to give because he is a lover of money more than a lover of God (I Tim. 6:10). Covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5), and those guilty of it cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:10).

10. *That you are a poor investor.* You are investing your money some way. Roger Babson said, "One dollar spent for lunch lasts five hours. One dollar spent for a necktie lasts five weeks. One dollar spent for a cap lasts five months. One dollar spent for an automobile lasts five years. One dollar spent in the service of God lasts for eternity." You cannot take your money with you, but you can send it on ahead of you (Matt. 6:19, 20). Here is one of the most meaningful epitaphs ever engraved:

What I saved I lost
 What I spent I used
 What I gave I have

Review Exercise

1. Prove that God will not accept just any offering man may make.
2. Prove that Christ, while here on earth, had a concern for the way people gave. Is he concerned now?
3. Who, in attempting to deceive relative to giving, were executed?
4. What questions concerning giving are answered in I Cor. 16:2?
5. What does it mean for one to give "according as he hath purposed in his heart"?
6. What does it mean to give "not grudgingly"?
7. Can tithing be followed by all classes of people today as an acceptable standard of giving? Thought question for discussion: Should Christians give less than a tenth?
8. What word aptly describes our relationship to all earthly assets?
9. is the word overworked and misused by the rich fool.
10. Whom did Paul commend for their outstanding liberality?
11. How does God measure liberality?
12. What is the secret of Christian liberality? Scripture
13. Paul spoke of giving as a grace (T or F).
14. A person who obeys Acts 2:38 but disobeys I Cor. 16:2 is religiously lopsided (T or F).
15. A person's failure to give as he has prospered does not reflect upon his faith in God's word (T or F).
16. Quote I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7.
17. Why is the person who fails to give scripturally a poor investor?
18. Special questions: Can we rob God (Mal. 3:8, 9)? Should we fellowship covetous members of the church?

V

TEACH

I. INTRODUCTION

ALL Christians are obligated by divine authority to teach the Bible. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20). The apostles were to teach the baptized all things Jesus had taught the apostles. One thing Jesus taught the apostles was to teach the gospel; hence, the command to teach others stands enjoined today upon each baptized person. Paul has expressed it in this manner: "Ye ought to be teachers" (Heb. 5:12). Hear Paul again: "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (I Cor. 9:16). Christ said "go" and Paul said "woe" if we do not; hence, it is either "go" or "woe."

2. *The duty to teach and win souls also grows out of the second great commandment of the law:* "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:39). Obedience to this command will make personal evangelists of all of us. The Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12) will stimulate us to the same service.

3. Children of God everywhere in every walk of life need to learn that they have been saved to serve, and that *they must win others to save themselves*. Ezekiel plainly expressed it: "And thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; and he turn not from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezek. 33:8, 9). This is a fearful thought.

The wise do something about it, for "he that winneth souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30).

II. PERSONAL WORK AND TEACHING OF JESUS

1. *Christ did much personal work and teaching.* Walking along a sea shore, Christ saw Peter and Andrew casting a net into the sea, and said to them, "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:18, 19). They immediately quit fishing for fish to start fishing for souls. James and John were in a boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. Jesus called and "they straightway left the boat and their father, and followed him" (Matt. 4:22). They quit mending nets to help sinful man amend his ways. Christ passed by the place of toll in Capernaum and said to the tax collector, "Follow me" (Matt. 9:9). Matthew immediately left off collecting earthly treasures to help man lay up heavenly treasures.

2. *Some of Christ's most familiar sermons were preached to single hearers rather than to multitudes.* This was true of the sermon on the new birth (Jno. 3:1-13). It was preached to Nicodemus during an evening interview. This is also true of the great sermon on living water (Jno. 4:5-26). It was preached during a noon hour at Jacob's well to a sinful, out-cast woman of Samaria.

III. PERSONAL TEACHING OF EARLY DISCIPLES

1. *Andrew "findeth first his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, (which is, being interpreted, Christ). He brought him unto Jesus"* (Jno. 1:41, 42). With most of us, there is a great field of evangelistic opportunity among our own flesh and blood.

2. *After Philip had enlisted with Jesus he went to find Nathanael.* He personally taught him, saying, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote" (Jno. 1:45). Each convert should go forth and find others and bring them to Christ.

3. Concerning the persecuted Christians in Jerusalem,

we read, "*They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word*" (Acts 8:4). As a result, the word of God grew and multiplied.

4. Personally teaching the Bible was so important that *an angel of the Lord called Philip away from the multitudes in Jerusalem to teach a lone Ethiopian* (Acts 8:25-39). It resulted in the sinner's being baptized.

5. Paul, in speaking to the Ephesian elders, said, ". . . *and teaching you publicly, and from house to house*" (Acts 20:20). What a glorious pattern for us to follow!

Thus the story of personal evangelism runs throughout the New Testament. When one was converted, he taught others and the others taught others. Surely this was one of the greatest contributing factors in the rapid growth of the gospel in the first century. How else could the gospel have been preached to every creature under heaven (Col. 1:23) in such a short time?

IV. WAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF PERSONALLY TEACHING THE BIBLE

1. *Paul taught from house to house* (Acts 20:20). Paul went into the Philippian jailer's house and taught him and his family—the result: they were baptized the same hour of the night (Acts 16:25-34). Peter went into the home of Cornelius and instructed him and his friends (Acts 10:25-48). Jesus went into the home of Zachaeus and personally taught him (Lk. 19:1-10). To teach the people, we must reach the people; and this is one way of reaching them.

2. *We may also reach and teach persons by inviting them into our homes.* After Matthew quit collecting taxes to follow Jesus, he invited many sinners and publicans into his home to dine with Jesus (Matt. 9:9, 10). This gave Jesus an opportunity to teach them.

3. Another way to teach is to *call those in error aside and expound unto them the word of God.* Aquilla and Priscilla set a good example. They took Apollos aside and taught him

out of his error (Acts 18:24-26). How many of us have ever done this?

4. *You may teach by talking to those with whom you work.* Those who work together talk about something. A Christian's speech should be seasoned with salt (Col. 4:6). Peter and Andrew, James and John, and Matthew were all on the job working when Jesus talked to them about a greater work. No Christian should make himself offensive, but he should speak a word for Christ as he has opportunity.

5. *We should make opportunities to do personal work* by turning small incidents into favorable channels. Jesus did this at Jacob's well by talking to the Samaritan woman about spiritual water (Jno. 4:5-26). Paul, who was brought into the presence of king Agrippa, made it an opportunity to teach. After awhile the king said, "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian" (Acts 26:28). When Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he did not throw up his hands in despair; but rather taught all who came to his dwelling from morning till evening (Acts 28:30, 31).

V. REASONS WHY SOME ARE NOT SOUL WINNERS

1. *The peril of over-caution* is the cause in many cases. We are reminded of the proverb: "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap" (Eccl. 11:4). This proverb is not aimed against suiting the labor to weather conditions, but rather against the peril of over-caution, for such will leave the fields unsown in the springtime or unharvested in the fall. Many Christians are afraid to speak for Christ for fear they may say the wrong thing. The person who is anxious to win souls rather than just win arguments need not worry about his being very offensive to reasonable people, for his humility, sincerity, and love for souls will nearly always make a good impression.

2. Others fail to do personal evangelism, because they realize *they do not know enough about the Bible to do such.* But this is not God's fault; it is theirs. We are commanded

to study (II Tim. 2:15), to add knowledge to faith (II Pet. 1:5, 6), and to be ready always to give an answer to those who ask a reason for our hope (I Pet. 3:15). If we lack knowledge to do this work, we should prepare ourselves.

3. Some refuse to do personal evangelism, because *they do not have the word of God in their own hearts*. Jeremiah tried to refrain from talking to others but he could not; for it was like having a burning fire shut up in his bones (Jer. 20:8, 9). Christ said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34); therefore, when a mouth never speaks any Bible, there must be no Bible in that person's heart. No doubt, this is why some do not speak for Christ.

Review Exercise

1. Prove that the command to go and teach or make disciples is enjoined upon Christians today.
2. "Ye ought to be teachers....." (Heb. 5:12).
3. How does man stand between "go" and "woe"?
4. Show how that the second great commandment of the law and the Golden Rule encourage personal evangelism.
5. "And thou dost not teach..... to warn the wicked..... from his way; that wicked..... man shall die in his iniquity.....; but his blood..... will I require at thy..... hand." Scripture Ex. 23:8, 9.....
6. "He that winneth souls..... is wise....." Scripture Prov. 11:30.....
7. Some of Christ's most familiar sermons were preached to single hearers rather than to the multitudes (T or F).
8. Name two instances to show that the personal work of Jesus was effective.
9. Andrew brought Simon to the Lord through personal work (T or F).
10. After Philip had enlisted with Jesus he refused to do personal work (T or F).
11. The persecution in Jerusalem kept the disciples from doing personal work (T or F).
12. The Ethiopian eunuch was converted in a big, public gathering (T or F).
13. "I have taught you publicly and from house..... to house." These words were spoken by Paul....., and the passage is found in Acts 20:20.....
14. Give two examples of effective personal teaching in homes.

15. Who invited sinners into his home to dine with Jesus? ^{Matthew} Would a similar procedure be good today?
16. Is it possible to do effective personal work while working on the job?
17. If a person wishes to do personal work, can he ordinarily make an opportunity for such? Give some examples in the Bible.
18. Should we be cautious in doing personal evangelism? Has over-caution hindered this work?
19. Does a lack of knowledge of the Bible keep some from teaching it?
20. Why was it that Jeremiah could not refrain from talking to others about God's word?

VI

TAKE HEED LEST YE FALL

I. INTRODUCTION

PAUL gave this positive command to Christians: "*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*" (I Cor. 10:12). No one is exempt from this danger, not even the ones who feel the most secure. Even Paul himself recognized the possibility of apostasy in his own life (I Cor. 9:27).

2. *This danger is not imaginary, but real.* There are thousands who "shrink back unto perdition" (Heb. 10:38, 39). They were once faithful Christians, but now it is different. "The last state is become worse with them than the first" (II Pet. 2:20).

II. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT A CHILD OF GOD CAN FALL AND BE LOST

1. Christians are warned to take heed lest they fall (I Cor. 10:12).
2. A child of God can quit believing (Heb. 3:12).
3. Some Christians did fall from grace (Gal. 5:4).
4. The parable of the sower teaches that Christians can fail to bear fruit and thus be lost (Matt. 13:3-8, 18-23; 7:19).
5. A Christian's harvest will be dependent upon his sowing (Gal. 6:7-9).
6. Christ will spew the lukewarm out of his mouth (Rev. 3:16).
7. The parable of the vine and the branches proves that a Christian can be severed from Christ and burned (Jno. 15:1-6).
8. We learn from the parable of the talents that a

servant of the Lord can be lost (Matt. 25:14-30).

9. Jesus said that he would gather certain ones out of his kingdom and cast them into the furnace of fire (Matt. 13:41, 42).

III. SOME THINGS WHICH CAUSE PEOPLE TO DRIFT AWAY FROM THE CHURCH

1. *Evil associations.* "Be not deceived: evil companions corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33). In the presence of some persons, we are elevated; but the association of others pulls us down.

2. *A desire to be popular.* Many of the rulers believed on Christ, but their desire to be popular caused them to deny him (Jno. 12:42, 43). This desire begets the new hypocrisy. The old hypocrisy is to act better than you are. The new hypocrisy is to act in such a way as to leave the impression that you are meaner than you really are, in an effort to be popular with the world.

3. *Marriage adjustments.* Marriage should make living the Christian life easier, but observation teaches us that marriage often changes a Christian within a few months from faithfulness to indifference and carelessness. The couple must adjust themselves to each other and to financial responsibilities and economic problems. This period of adaptation is often perilous to Christianity.

4. *Marriage out of the church.* Solomon married foreign wives; and when he was old, "his wives turned away his heart after other gods" (I Ki. 11:1-8). Remember: the day one marries may be the day he determines where he will spend eternity.

5. *The coming of a baby.* This should have a sobering effect on parents and draw them closer to the Lord.

God has his small interpreters;

The child must teach the man.—John G. Whittier.

The tremendous responsibility of parenthood should encourage more faithfulness to God, but does it? Not always. It has caused many couples to quit the church. There was a

time before and after the baby came when they did not attend. The lack of encouragement and help derived from church services began to have its effect, and in time they lost all interest.

6. *A move into a strange community.* Moving is quite trying on religion. It becomes a temptation for one to say, "I'm worn out, tired, nervous, and don't know anybody here. I won't go today, but I will go next Sunday." But next Sunday it is easier to forsake the assembly than it was the Sunday before. As time goes on, your conscience bothers you less and less. You are on the road to complete apostasy.

7. *Too much money.* We have seen money turn the hearts of Christians. They have become highminded and have had "their hope set on the uncertainty of riches" instead of God (I Tim. 6:17). It has led them to say, "We are rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing" when in reality they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked (Rev. 3:17). Riches are deceitful (Matt. 13:22); so those who have them should watch lest they fall. Read Eccl. 5:10.

8. *Too little money.* The poor often have an inferiority complex which causes them to feel that others consider themselves better than they, that their clothes are not good enough, and that they are being ridiculed, when really it is nothing more than a figment of their imagination. Solomon said, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" and tells us why (Prov. 30:8, 9). May we learn to be content and true to the Lord in both plenty and poverty (Phil. 4:11, 12).

9. *Idleness in the church.* All Christians should be workers (II Cor. 6:1). Work strengthens the Christian and stimulates his interest. It will cause him to say "we" instead of "they" in speaking of the church. Perhaps you have heard the story of the member who requested that his name be taken from the roll. The preacher said, "Just as you say; but first I wish you would take this box of groceries over to a needy family." He did, and returning, said, "Leave my name on; I've had more joy today than ever before." Each should look

for work, and "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10).

10. *Sickness.* Some are forced to miss the services on the Lord's day due to illness; and after their recovery, many are never faithful. They say that they got out of the habit of going, but worshiping God should be a matter of consecration and devotion instead of habit.

11. *Sunday work.* This care of the world often chokes out the word completely (Matt. 13:22). Any employment must be declined by the Christian, unless it permits him to attend at least one of the services of worship on the Lord's day (Heb. 10:25).

12. *Worldliness.* This led Demas to forsake Paul and the Lord's work (II Tim. 4:10). "No man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24). Read I Jno. 2:15-17 and Jas. 4:4.

13. *The feeling that one has been wronged by another member of the church.* Paul was betrayed by false brethren (II Cor. 11:26) and had dissension with Barnabas (Acts 15:2); but he did not "take it out on the Lord" and quit the church. He continued to press toward heaven.

14. *Discouragement.* One makes a mistake—it may be the loss of temper, a curse word, etc.—and then absents himself from the worship the next Lord's day, thinking that he is not worthy to worship. He goes from bad to worse, telling himself, "I am not going to heaven anyway, so what difference does it make?"

15. *The pharisaical attitude of some members.* A weak Christian stumbles, and some of the modern "Pharisees" punch each other and say, "What did I tell you? I knew he wouldn't last long." Or it may be gossip concerning the weak member that drives him away. How much better it would be for all of us to obey Gal. 6:1.

IV. SOME THINGS WHICH FORTIFY CHRISTIANS AGAINST FALLING

1. *A study of circumstances which lead to a backslidden state.* This will enable the Christian to strengthen himself

against the most dangerous conditions rather than to be caught unaware. We noted some in the previous section. A knowledge of such facts plus watchfulness and prayer should protect us in the hour of temptation (Matt. 26:41).

2. *The avoidance of evil.* We are commanded to "abstain from every form of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). Years ago, a drunkard who became a Christian quit drinking. He wanted to show everyone how strong he was, so he continued to tie his horse to the post in front of the saloon. This worked for awhile, but it was not long until he was overcome and was drinking again. Many have not only failed to avoid the appearance of evil; but they have actually invited it.

3. *A consciousness that one himself may fall* just the same as the other person. Many think that it is impossible for such to happen to them. Peter was of this persuasion when he said, "If all shall be offended in thee, I will never be offended" (Matt. 26:33). Paul has taught each one to look to or consider himself lest he be tempted (Gal. 6:1).

4. *An understanding of the progressiveness of sin.* Some think that they will sin just a little, but that they will not permit it to go very far; however, sin is progressive in its nature and multiplies rapidly. Note:

(1) In the first Psalm. First, walk in the counsel of the wicked; second, stand in the way of sinners; third, sit in the seat of the scoffers.

(2) In the life of Peter (Matt. 26:58-75). First, Peter followed the Lord afar off; second, he denied the Lord and lied; third, he denied with an oath; fourth, he cursed and swore.

(3) In doctrinal departure (II Tim. 4:3, 4). First, "will not endure sound doctrine"—an attitude; second, "heap to themselves teachers"—the segregation of teachers, having only the teachers who teach what they want taught; third, "turn away their ears from the truth"—will not have it; fourth, "turn aside unto fables"—out, gone.

Sin, even in thought, is too dangerous to play with.

5. *A memory of scripture* and the quotation of appropriate passages in the moment of trial will fortify us against falling. Jesus left this example for us by quoting scripture each time during his temptations (Matt. 4:1-11). The devil then left him. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7).

6. *The control of thoughts.* All sins are first committed in thought; therefore, each should "keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). Christ said, "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings" (Matt. 15:19). Hence, when we control the thoughts, we are controlling the source of sin. But how can we? By being so busy thinking good thoughts and putting them into practice that there is neither time nor room for sinful thoughts.

7. *Faithful attendance* at the services of worship and study. It is there that we receive reproof, rebuke and exhortation (II Tim. 4:2) which help to hold our thoughts and deeds in line with God's will. It will give us strength and encouragement to go through another week.

8. *The addition of Christian graces.* If we do this, we have the assurance that we shall never fall. This is the promise: "Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness, and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love . . . for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble" (II Pet. 1:5-10). If we want to endure unto the end (Matt. 10:22), we should set ourselves to the task of mastering God's specified conditions.

Review Exercise

1. Which parable teaches that a saved person can be severed from Christ and burned? *Vine r branches*
2. Prove that a child of God can quit believing.
3. Christ promised to spew the lukewarm out of his mouth (T or F).

46 SOME "DO'S" AND "DON'TS" FOR THE CHRISTIAN

4. "Be not deceived: evil ~~compromises~~ corrupt good morals." Scripture ...1C.11.15-23.....
5. Why did some rulers deny Christ? Scripture ~~Matthew 23:12~~ Mt. 23
6. Comment on the new hypocrisy and the old hypocrisy.
7. Comment on the effect marriage may have on Christian faithfulness.
8. How may one's money affect his Christian living?
9. Solomon said, "Give me neither poverty nor riches" (T or F).
10. How may idleness in the church affect spirituality?
11. What caused Demas to forsake the Lord's work? Scripture ~~2 Tim 4:10~~ 2 Tim 4:10
12. How may discouragement cause one to drift away from the church?
13. Name seven things which fortify Christians against falling.
14. Comment on the importance of abstaining "from every form of evil" in holding out faithfully unto the end.
15. How did sin progress in the life of Peter?
16. Name the steps in doctrinal departure.
17. What did Christ do when he was tempted?
18. How important is it that Christians control their thoughts?
19. On what conditions did Peter promise Christians that they would never stumble?

VII

WIELD THE CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE

I. INTRODUCTION

ONE of the sweetest epitaphs ever written stands engraved on a marble marker at the grave of a little girl. It reads, "A child of whom her playmates said, 'It was easier to be good when she was with us'." What a beautiful tribute to the power of a good influence.

2. A candidate's card often reads, "Your vote and influence will be appreciated." A voter may influence many votes. *Jesus wants both you and your influence.* You may give Christ your own soul, and, by living for him, influence many souls to accept him.

II. THE INFLUENCE OF CHRIST

Christ, our example, is the world's greatest influencer. It has been nineteen hundred years since he lived in the flesh on the earth, but his influence lives and marches on. Our coins bear testimony to his influence by being dated according to his birth, and so do the cornerstones in our magnificent buildings. His influence is so tremendous that an infidel cannot write a letter without acknowledging his birth by dating it in the year of our Lord.

Napoleon, in speaking of this living force, said, "But can you conceive of a dead man making conquests with an army faithful and entirely devoted to his memory? My armies have forgotten me, even while living, as the Carthaginian army forgot Hannibal. Such is our power! A single battle lost crushes us, and adversity scatters our friends.

"Can you conceive of Caesar as the eternal Emperor of the Roman senate, and from the depths of his mausoleum

governing the empire, watching over the destinies of Rome? Such is the history of the world by the invasion of Christianity. Such is the power of the God of the Christians. Nations pass away, thrones crumble, but the church remains.

"Christ speaks, and at once generations become his by stricter, closer ties than those of blood. He lights up the flames of a love which consumes self-love, which prevails over every other love."

Christ's influence lives through his word and through the influence of his followers. But there are millions who do not read his word; hence, Christ's influence over them is indirect. It comes through the influence of his disciples.

We are the only Bibles
The careless world will read;
We are the sinner's gospel;
We are the scoffer's creed.

This surely causes us to stop and think about the gospel that we are writing and that the world is reading in our lives.

You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day,
By deeds that you do, by words that you say.
Men read what you write whether faithless or true.
Say! What is the gospel according to you?

III. IT IS A CHRISTIAN DUTY

1. *The kingdom of heaven, the church* (Matt. 16:18, 19), *is a kingdom of influence.* "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened" (Matt. 13:33). This parable relates to the powerful influence of the kingdom on the world, to its penetrative force, and to the way in which it lends a savor to that with which it comes in contact.

2. Jesus once said, "*Ye are the salt of the earth*" (Matt. 5:13). Salt has been used through the ages as an agent of influence in the preservation of meats; therefore, the metaphor teaches that Christ's disciples are to be agents of influence in preserving the world from putrefaction, corruption and destruction. There was not enough salt in the world of Noah's

day (Gen. 6:5-7), nor in the city of Sodom (Gen. 18:20-33; 19:13) to save them from destruction.

3 Christ also said, "*Ye are the light of the world*" (Matt. 5:14). Light influences darkness by dispelling it. Christians, by good works, teaching, and their example, are to dispel spiritual darkness. Paul gave this command to the Christians at Ephesus: "For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8).

4. *A Christian wife is commanded to win her non-Christian husband to the Lord by her godly living:* "In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behavior of their wives; beholding your chaste behavior coupled with fear" (I Pet. 3:1, 2). This passage shows the power of Christian influence over the non-Christian life.

IV. HOW TO HAVE A GOOD INFLUENCE

1. *Do not be a stumblingblock:* ". . . that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling" (Rom. 14:13). We must also guard against the things which are wrong under some circumstances, although they are inherently right. For instance, there is nothing wrong with drinking soda pop, but to put it in a whiskey bottle and drink it downtown is sinful. A game of checkers may be perfectly innocent, but if your love for checkers causes you to stay at home and miss the worship, then you have sinned. It will destroy Christian influence and manifest to the world that you are not seeking first the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33).

2. *Be uncompromising.* Stand for what you believe. "Contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3). You lose your influence by compromising, because others lose respect for your sincerity. The person who is strong in his faith, whether it be true or false, is always personally respected by those who know him. But we have no confidence in the person who has no convictions and tries to "work both sides of the street."

3. *Show your faith by your works.* "Show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith" (Jas. 2:18). In other words, practice what you preach. If we do not, the world will say, "I am not interested in what you say, because I see what you do." We can talk to another about attending the worship, but if we do not attend, our words will carry no weight. Many other examples could be given.

4. *Serve the needs of others.* "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11). The selfish, self-centered life carries no influence. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister" (Matt. 20:28), and through service the world may see Christ in us. A missionary once came upon a village in which the natives were kind in their treatment of him. He explained the life of Christ to them, telling them he was the poor man's friend, that he ate with common people, healed their sick, was the friend of the sick and the outcast, and that little children ran after him and climbed upon his knees. A native interrupted and said, "Sir, we know him well. He lived here for years." It turned out that a missionary had once lived in that distant village. Oh, if only we had that influence in our communities. Paul said, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death" (Phil. 1:20).

V. INFLUENCE LIVES AFTER WE ARE DEAD

1. *Our influence whether good or bad will continue to live forever* affecting the world and the destinies of souls. This is a very sobering thought. By our manner of living we put into motion certain things in this life which will continue to vibrate throughout eternity. John said, "I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14:13).

2. *The influence of parents lives in the lives of their children.* This being true, the best time to start training a

child is with his grandparents. We see the value of this in the life of Timothy. Paul said, "Having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and, I am persuaded, in thee also" (I Tim. 1:5). It could be said of this young preacher, "From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings" (II Tim. 3:15).

In illustrating these points further, we call attention to the Jukes and Edwards families.

Max Jukes, a Dutch settler in New York, had two sons. Both married into a family in which there were six daughters, five of whom, including the wives they chose, were disreputable characters. R. L. Dugdale was appointed to make an investigation of New York prisons. In the course of his work he ran across this Jukes family. He ferreted out their genealogical history through five generations and found descending directly from these untoward marriages a nauseating stream of pauperism, prostitution, illegitimacy and crime. Of the 709 descendants investigated he found that one-fifth of them were criminals. Nearly one-fourth had been paupers supported at government expense. About one-fourth of the children were illegitimate. Of the women, one out of six was a prostitute. Dealing with crimes committed by this family cost an estimated \$1,300,000.00. Of course, no definite statistics can reveal the indirect moral and social evil springing from this fountain-head of evil influence.

The only point in giving these sickening statistics is to warn parents against an evil influence over their children, and they in turn over their children, and on and on.

But let us look at a brighter picture. Jonathan Edwards, a minister, was a strict disciplinarian in morals. We are not discussing his doctrinal position, but everyone grants that he stood four-square for the highest and noblest things. Tracing his genealogical tree we find as his direct descendants: twelve college presidents, 265 college graduates, sixty-five college professors, sixty physicians, one hundred ministers, seventy-five

army officers, sixty prominent authors, one hundred lawyers, thirty judges, eighty public officers, such as governors, mayors and state officials, three congressmen, two United States Senators, and one vice-president of the United States.

Is not starting a stream of influence like that worth a lifetime of high living? Then if our descendants should be unworthy, it will not be our fault.

Lives of great men all remind us,
 We can make our lives sublime,
 And, departing, leave behind us
 Footprints on the sands of time;
 Footprints, that perhaps another,
 Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
 A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
 Seeing, may take heart again.

Review Exercise

1. Who is the world's greatest influencer?
2. Name two ways Christ influences the world.
3. What parable teaches that the church is a kingdom of influence?
4. What two things did Jesus mention in the sermon on the mount to describe his disciples as powers of influence?
5. What did Peter say a Christian wife may do to win her non-Christian husband to the Lord? Scripture
6. Name four things that will increase Christian influence.
7. Give some examples showing that a thing may be inherently right, but wrong under some circumstances.
8. James said he would show his faith by his words (T or F).
9. The Son of man came to be ministered unto (T or F).
10. How did Paul say that he would magnify Christ? Scripture
11. When is the best time to start the training of a child and why?
12. Special questions for discussion: (1) Should a Christian compromise with a non-Christian companion for the purpose of winning him or her to the Lord? (2) Give some concrete examples of what Christians may do to influence their neighbors.

VIII

“FOLLOW AFTER THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE”

I. INTRODUCTION

ANOTHER positive duty of the Christian is to follow a course in his behavior and relationship with others that will make for and maintain peace.

1. *“So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another”* (Rom. 14:19). This was Paul’s exhortation to the church at Rome.

2. Peter said, *“Let him seek peace, and pursue it”* (I Pet. 3:11).

3. One of the beatitudes of Christ concerns peace-making: *“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God”* (Matt 5:9). Unfortunately, some have lived as though it read: *“Blessed are the strifemakers.”*

4. *The wise person is peaceable, but the fool is quarrelsome.* *“It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife; but every fool will be quarreling”* (Prov. 20:3). Prov. 18:6.

5. *Peace is a fruit of the Spirit, but strife is a work of the flesh* (Gal. 5:19-22).

6. *Strife is evidence of a carnal spirit.* *“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men?”* (I Cor. 3:3).

7. *Unity is a pleasant thing:* *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity”* (Psa. 133:1); but the sowing of discord is an abominable thing in God’s sight (Prov. 6:16-19). *“God is not a God of confusion, but of peace”* (I Cor. 14:33).

II. THINGS WHICH DESTROY PEACE

1. *Contention.* "As coals are to hot embers, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to inflame strife" (Prov. 26:21). Note carefully the comparison: a contentious person is to strife what wood is to fire. Wood keeps fire burning, and contention keeps strife kindled.

2. *Vengeance.* We have to live and associate with imperfect people just like ourselves. In the course of time, it is easy to feel that someone has wronged us. This may be true, and it may be nothing more than a figment of the imagination. Even though it is true, we should not seek retribution, but rather should leave it with the Lord to handle at the proper time in his own way. God has said, "Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me: I will recompense, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19).

3. *A self-willed spirit.* Trouble will come when a person is set on having his way regardless of the wishes of others. Following the philosophy of "have my way or else" will inevitably result in strife. It is easy to see the wisdom of God in stipulating that elders or bishops must not be self-willed (Tit. 1:7), and that they must not lord it over the charge allotted to them (I Pet. 5:3).

4. *An unholy ambition for power and preeminence.* This has led to conflicts of both minor and major proportions, from fisticuffs to world wars. It has led to struggle and strife in the church. Listen to John: "I wrote somewhat unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not" (III Jno. 9). A church with a "modern Diotrephes" is sure, in time, to have discord.

5. *Bitterness, wrath, and anger.* "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph. 4:31). These evil traits tend to break the peace of a family, church or community; for they will break forth in word and deed and do injury.

"An angry man stirreth up strife" (Prov. 29:22). "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32). He who is incapable of controlling himself is unable to handle critical situations, because he is incapable of sane decisions. "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26).

6. *Foolish and ignorant questions.* "But foolish and ignorant questionings refuse, knowing that they gender strifes" (II Tim. 2:23.) Questions which do not proceed from any trained habit of thinking are to be declined.

7. *Corrupt speech.* "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth" (Eph. 4:29). (1) Hasty words create strife; so we are commanded: "But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (Jas. 1:19). This verse reminds us of the common adage: "Think twice before you speak." (2) Gossip and tale-bearing excite strife. "A whisperer separateth chief friends" (Prov. 16:28). "For lack of wood the fire goeth out; and where there is no whisperer, contention ceaseth" (Prov. 26:20). (3) Harsh words are to be avoided. Let us remember: "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but a grievous word stirreth up anger" (Prov. 15:1). (4) Clamor is to be put away (Eph. 4:31). This is outcry, vociferation, uproar, or violent expression of discontent. It not only characterizes the mob, but occasionally describes church meetings. The wrong word is spoken at a delicate time and the whole assembly is inflamed. (5) Rail- ing is forbidden (I Tim. 6:4, 5). This means to insult, revile, vituperate and scoff. It is not Christian.

III. THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE

1. *The seven bonds of union make for mutual concord.* They are one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all (Eph. 4:4-6).

2. *A recognition of a standard of authority makes for peace.* This is true in the realms of time, weights, and

measures. This is also true in religion which has the Scriptures for its standard (II Tim. 3:16, 17). A woman once told the author that she knew a certain thing was so no matter what the Bible says. If each should be his own standard of authority, we would be hopelessly divided.

3. *An unselfish spirit.* This is exemplified in the conduct of Abraham who was willing for Lot to take the choice land and for him to take what was left (Gen. 13:7-11), and it made for peace. Paul has said, "Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Phil. 2:4).

4. *The practice of the Golden Rule* — "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them" (Matt. 7:12) — will bring harmony to capital and labor and to every other relationship of men.

5. *Returning good for evil* is one of the sure ways of promoting peace. It will even heap coals of fire upon the head of the guilty. "But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head" (Rom. 12:20). This is overcoming evil with good. It will bring to remorse a guilty person who has any manhood.

6. *A spirit easy to be entreated.* "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated" (Jas. 3:17). Each Christian should have a yielding disposition, easy to be entreated, in all matters of opinion. In matters of faith, we must be uncompromising.

7. *A forgiving spirit.* "If any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3:13). We are to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). Some people are so hardened that they will not forgive. This makes it hard on both the offender and the offended. Some say that they will forgive but not forget; but when God forgives, he remembers the sin no more (Heb. 10:17). Oh, that man were this way!

8. *A longsuffering spirit* is one of the traits to be put on by Christians (Col. 3:12). This is the long and patient endurance of offense. It permits time to mediate, and time is a healing ointment for wounded feelings and strained relationships.

IV. IF IT BE POSSIBLE

"If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men" (Rom. 12:18). This passage teaches that it is not always possible to be at peace with all men. "Peace at any price" is a dangerous principle and should not be practiced by Christians. It will sabotage the truth and lead the church into apostasy. As Christians, we should be willing to sacrifice opinions to be at peace with all men, but we should never compromise truth and duty. We must contend earnestly for the faith (Jude 3).

Review Exercise

1. Quote Rom. 14:19.
2. Quote one of the beatitudes concerning peacemaking.
3. Who is quarrelsome?
4. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" Scripture *Prov 13:17*
5. Name seven things which destroy peace.
6. What example did Solomon use to show that a contentious person inflames strife?
7. What was the sin of Diotrephes?
8. What should we do with foolish and ignorant questions?
9. What will a soft answer do? Scripture *Prov 15:1*
10. What are the seven bonds of union?
11. Why must we have an accepted standard of authority to have peace?
12. How did Abraham avoid strife with Lot?
13. How will an obedience to the Golden Rule affect the relationships of men?
14. A Christian is obligated to keep peace at any price (T or F).
15. Thought questions for discussion: (1) Why is it better for man to let God take vengeance rather than take matters into his own hands? (2) What will be the result when a person says, "I will have my way or else"? (3) Comment: "I have forgiven, but not forgotten."

IX

COOPERATE AND WORK WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS

I. INTRODUCTION

ANOTHER duty or "do" of the Christian life is to *cooperate with other Christians and with God*. Man alone is a very helpless being. He becomes strong by relating himself to forces outside himself. Man relates himself to natural power in the world and by use of steam, electricity and machinery multiplies his strength. Christians also increase their spiritual power by cooperating and working together. "Two are better than one" (Eccl. 4:9).

2. *Cooperation is a test of intelligence*. Someone said to the manager of a mental institution, "Are you not afraid the inmates will combine against you?" He replied, "No, if they had sense enough to cooperate, they would not be here."

II. CHRISTIANS MUST WORK TOGETHER

1. "*And working together with him we entreat also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain*" (II Cor. 6:1). Not only must we work, but we must work together.

2. *Paul teaches cooperative work by using the figure of the human body*. "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; it is not therefore not of the body. If the whole body were any eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? . . . Now ye

are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof" (I Cor. 12:14-27).

Each member of Christ's body should supply his part. "From whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16). The human body is used to illustrate the church. The figure teaches both individual and cooperative activity for the good of the whole. The church is to be "fitly framed and knit together," and its growth is "according to the working in due measure of each several part."

The function of the various parts of the human body remind us of the story of the blind man and the crippled man who wanted to go to a certain place. That which seemed impossible was accomplished through cooperation. The man unable to walk climbed on the strong back of the blind man and they started their journey. The blind man did the walking and the crippled man did the seeing. Through this means they arrived at their destination.

3. *Solomon teaches the wisdom of cooperative work by referring to the locust:* "The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands" (Prov. 30:27). This well-known insect of the grasshopper family cannot do much alone, but by uniting their activities, they can be grievously destructive, as is seen in Ex. 10:1-20.

4. Hear Solomon again: "*And if a man prevail against him that is alone, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken*" (Eccl. 4:12). A small cord will not lift much weight, but several cords twisted together become exceedingly strong.

An aged story gives us an example of an old man who gave a bound bundle of sticks to his sons and said, "Break them." Each tried and failed. He then untied the sticks and gave them to the boys, saying, "Try again." The sticks were easily broken one by one. The aged father then said,

"My sons, the lesson is easy: as long as you stick together and work together, you are strong; but if you become divided, you are weak." What a lesson for Christians!

5. *"For we are God's fellow-workers"* (I Cor. 3:9). In speaking of associate work in the gospel, Paul said, "I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (I Cor. 3:6).

6. *Nehemiah was able to accomplish the huge task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem through cooperation.* When Nehemiah explained his purpose, the people replied, "Let us rise up and build." The task was so great that their enemies took delight in ridiculing them for even thinking that they could accomplish this enormous undertaking (Neh. 2:19; 4:3). But through faithful, cooperative labor of the builders, the walls went up. The enemies of God's people then became alarmed and decided to rush them in battle. This threat was overcome through cooperation. Some worked while others watched and guarded (Neh. 4:16). "So we built the wall . . . for the people had a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6). Note that Nehemiah said "we." Many in the church today, in referring to the congregation in which they are members, say "they" — what "they" are doing, or what "they" are not doing. If one is a member, why should he not refer to the church as "we," and let it be what "we" are doing?

III. REASONS WHY SOME FAIL TO COOPERATE

1. *A lack of oneness hinders cooperation.* Christians are to walk by the same rule: "By that same rule let us walk" (Phil. 3:16). God's children are to be of the same mind: "That ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27). "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psa. 133:1). "He that soweth discord among brethren" does a hateful and an abominable thing in the sight of God (Prov. 6:16-19). If we work against each other, we shall destroy ourselves. "But if ye bite and devour one another,

take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal. 5:15).

2. Paul tells us that *two contrasted dispositions keep Christians from cooperating.*

(1) Self depreciation. The foot underestimates its value because it is not the hand, and the ear minimizes its worth because it is not the eye (I Cor. 12:15, 16). Hence, some members fail to be of any use in the church because they think that they do not amount to anything. It is true that our talents vary, but God will hold each responsible for what he can do, whether it be small or large (Matt. 25:14-30).

(2) Depreciation of other Christians. "And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you" (I Cor. 12:21). The eye must not think that it is the aristocratic member of the body and has no need of the ear. Each Christian should appreciate and work with all other Christians.

3. *A self-willed spirit.* (See chapter on "Follow After Things Which Make For Peace," page 53.)

4. *A lack of understanding between the overseers or elders of the flock and its other members may prevent cooperation.* There is no point in having leadership unless you have "followship." Both are essential.

(1) The elders should lead the flock. It is to be regretted when a congregation has to lead its leaders. A motorist was flagged to a stop by a colored man who said, "Mista, has you seen a group of colored people down the road?" When the driver replied in the affirmative, the colored man commented, "Well, I'd betta hurry on down there, because I'se their leada." They had already gone off and left the leader.

(2) The congregation should follow the leadership in the Lord's work. We are commanded to "obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account" (Heb. 13:17).

Now, let us be personal. Do I cooperate in reaching the lost? In restoring the fallen? In visiting new members? In building up the Bible classes? In attending the services during a gospel meeting and on all other scheduled occasions? In visiting the sick? In burying the dead? In caring for the needy? In creating a reverent, friendly and progressive atmosphere? In passing out literature? In taking census? And in financing the Lord's work? To sum it up, if everyone in the church should cooperate or fail to cooperate as I do, what kind of church would it be?

Review Exercise

1. How does man become strong?
2. What figure did Paul use to emphasize cooperative work?
3. What insect was mentioned by Solomon to illustrate cooperative work?
4. Solomon also spoke of a.....to illustrate strength through unity and cooperation.
5. How are Christians described in I Cor. 3:9?
6. What great work was Nehemiah, with the cooperation of many others, able to accomplish?
7. What common mistake do many members of the church make in referring to what the church is doing or not doing?
8. What is both a hateful and an abominable thing in the sight of God?
9. Quote Psa. 133:1.
10. If we bite and devour one another, we shall be consumed one of another (T or F).
11. What are the two dispositions mentioned in I Cor. 12:15, 16 which keep Christians from cooperating?
12. How can a self-willed spirit hinder cooperation?
13. Topics for discussion: (1) The essentiality of both leadership and cooperation in the Lord's work. (2) "So we built the wall . . . for the people had a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6).

X

“DO’S” IN HOME LIFE

I. INTRODUCTION

HOME! What a beautiful word! It is one of the fondest words enshrined in humanity’s affection. What sweet memories strike responsive chords in the human heart at the very thought of home.

The home is the foundation of all human stability and progress. As goes the home, so goes the nation.

So long as we have homes to which men turn
At close of day;
So long as we have homes where children are
And women stay;
If love and loyalty and faith be found
Across those sills,
A stricken nation can recover from
Its gravest ills.

—Grace Noll Crowell

Two of the most cherished words in the English language are heaven and home. It is the duty of every Christian to so conduct the home as to put a little heaven into it.

With the same letter heaven and home begin,
And the words dwell together in the mind;
For they who would a home in heaven win,
Must first a heaven in home begin to find.

—James Very

II. DUTIES OF HUSBAND

1. *Head the household.* God has put this responsibility upon the man. “For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church” (Eph. 5:23). To insure stability, peace and order, every institution must have a head. God has commanded the husband to be the head of the wife. In living up to this obligation, man must be

the ruler, provider and protector of the home. Husbands, remember, no man can successfully control another who is not able to control himself (Prov. 16:32).

2. *Love the wife.* "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it" (Eph. 5:25). "*Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them*" (Col. 3:19). Man's love for his wife will regulate his conduct toward her and keep him from abusing his authority as head. Love is longsuffering, kind, humble, patient, unselfish and courteous (I Cor. 13:4-8). No marriage can be happy apart from a strong, mutual love.

3. *He should render unto her that which is due her and vice versa.* "But, because of fornications, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband" (I Cor. 7:2, 3). This is a sacred and holy relationship. God has said, "Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4).

4. *The husband should make the living.* It is a serious offense for a man to fail, due to indolence, shiftlessness or drunkenness, to discharge this duty. This is how sinful it is: "But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever" (I Tim. 5:8).

III. DUTIES OF WIFE

1. *Be a helper of man.* The reason for her creation is given in Gen. 2:18: "And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him." The word "meet" means suitable. Man needed companionship, and woman was created as a suitable companion and coworker of man. It is in this sphere that woman finds her greatest usefulness, charm and beauty. Nature has especially equipped woman to serve as the com-

rade of man; hence, it is in this relationship that she can most fully express her natural and peculiar abilities. Someone has said: "God did not take woman from man's head that she might rule over him, nor yet from man's feet that he might trample upon her. God took woman from man's side that she might be his companion and helper throughout life." And it is by man's side that she can realize her greatest usefulness and sweetest joys.

2. The wife is commanded to *be submissive to her husband*. Let us read: "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands as unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:22). Sarah is presented as an example of the obedient wife: "For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well, and are not put in fear by any terror" (I Pet. 3:5,6). This does not mean that woman's intellect is inferior to man's. It only means that she with her feminine and tender qualities is not as well endowed for rulership as man. If obedience to husband necessitates disobedience to God, the wife should remember that the command to obey husband is limited to that which is "fitting in the Lord" (Col. 3:18). God has priority over any man. "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

3. *Bear children*. God gave woman the duty and distinction of being mother of the human family. "And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living (Gen. 3:15). Paul said, "I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling" (I Tim. 5:14). Hear Paul again: "But she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety" (I Tim. 2:15). Note that the salvation promised women through childbearing does not exempt them from the discharge of other Christian duties. In fact, it takes more than childbearing to constitute true

motherhood. John A. Shedd said, "Simply having children does not make a mother."

The woman who chooses to become a wife and mother should not look upon her work as inferior to the careers of others. It is a calling which glorifies God and perpetuates his creation. It is the greatest calling of all, having the gravest responsibilities and the greatest possibilities. The magnitude and fame of her work are expressed in the following quotations:

All that I am, or can be, I owe to my angel mother.
—Abraham Lincoln

The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom.
—Henry Ward Beecher

The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.
—John Gray

Youth fades, love droops, the leaves of friendship fall;
A mother's secret love outlives them all.
—Oliver Wendell Holmes

The bravest battle that ever was fought,
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not;
It was fought by the mothers of men.

—Joaquin Miller

4. *Keep the home.* Paul commanded the older women to train the younger women in those qualities essential to Christian homemaking: "That aged women train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2:5). We quoted in the previous section I Tim. 5:4, which enjoins domestic duties upon the woman. Woman's feminine endowments have especially equipped her for homemaking. The touch of her hand can transform a hovel into a palace, because it takes more than lumber, nails, brick and mortar to make a home. There is a great distinction between a house and a home. Edgar A. Guest said, "It takes a heap o' livin' in a house t' make it home." There is more to homemaking than keeping a house. In addition to keeping a tidy house, the wife should make an atmosphere

of love, happiness, friendliness, cheerfulness and cooperation. The reason some men spend so much of their spare time away from home is that the wife nags, keeps a messy house, is sloven in dress and appearance, gads about, and shows very little interest in him and his work. Such a woman is a "help eat" instead of a "help meet." She has blasphemed the word of God (Tit. 2:5).

Note Solomon's description in Prov. 31:10-31 of the excellent wife whose value is far about rubies:

- (1) Worthy of husband's trust (ver. 11).
- (2) Loyal to her husband (ver. 11, 12).
- (3) Industrious rather than indolent (ver. 13-19).
- (4) Takes care of domestic needs of family (ver. 15, 21).
- (5) Is charitable (ver. 26).
- (6) Adorns herself properly (ver. 22).
- (7) Adds to the respectability of her husband (ver. 23).
- (8) Economical rather than extravagant (ver. 24, 16).
- (9) Dresses up the inward man (ver. 25).
- (10) Opens her mouth with wisdom (ver. 26).
- (11) The law of kindness is on her tongue (ver. 26).
- (12) Takes care that all behave themselves well (ver. 27).
- (13) Busy rather than idle (ver. 27).
- (14) Has the respect and gratitude of husband and children (ver. 28, 29).
- (15) Fears Jehovah (ver. 30).
- (16) Her works praise her (ver. 31).

IV. RULES FOR A HAPPIER MARRIAGE

1. Strive to live up to your marital duties (Eccl. 9:10).
2. Make marriage a comradeship (Gen. 2:18).
3. Show an interest in the other and in his or her work (Phil. 2:4).
4. Be unselfish. Love "seeketh not its own" (I Cor. 13:5).
5. Never be jealous of in-law relations (Prov. 6:34).
6. Be tolerant (Matt. 7:3).

7. Be pleasant (Prov. 16:24)
8. Keep a merry heart (Prov. 15:13).
9. Hear a matter completely before you answer it (Prov. 18:13).
10. Speak fitting words (Prov. 25:11).
11. Be slow to anger (Prov. 16:32).
12. Exercise self-control (Prov. 16:32).
13. Be forgiving (Col. 3:13).
14. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26).
15. Practice the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12).
16. A higher level of happiness in marriage can be assured by common interests, shared friendships, harmony in recreational activities, generous use of affectionate words, agreement as to the use of money, and regular attendance at church services.

V. DUTY OF PARENTS TO CHILDREN

We are all blind until we see
 That in the human plan
 Nothing is worth the making if
 It does not make the man.
 Why build these cities glorious
 If man unbuilt goes?
 In vain we build the work unless
 The builder also grows.

—Edward Markham

1. *Paul specified two of these duties in Eph. 6:4:* (1) "Ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath"; (2) "but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." Since the mind of youth is plastic and is easily influenced, this responsibility is tremendously great. Solomon said, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). This calls for Bible study and religious education. Read Deut. 6:6, 7.

2. Give them *the well balanced education* that our Saviour received. "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and

stature, and in favor with God and men" (Lk. 2:52). This education was intellectual, physical, religious and social. No education can better fit a person for life and eternity than this.

3. *Love children.* "Love their children" (Tit. 2:5). The hearts of many children are crying out for love.

4. *Discipline children.* A common adage is, "Spare the rod and you spoil the child." Solomon said, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24); and, "Correct thy son, and he will give thee rest; yea, he will give delight unto thy soul" (Prov. 29:17). Read Prov. 23:13, 14.

5. *Provide for children.* "The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children" (II Cor. 12:14).

VI. DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO PARENTS

This is discussed in the chapter relative to the Fifth Commandment, page 87.

Review Exercise

1. Whose responsibility is it to head the household?
2. What did Paul use to illustrate how a man should love his wife? (Eph. 5:25).
3. How serious offense is it for a man to fail to make a living for his family?
4. Why was woman created?
5. Woman is commanded to be in subjection to her husband (T or F).
6. What is the great distinction enjoyed by woman?
7. Prove that a woman who fails to keep the home is guilty of blaspheming the word of God. Scripture
8. The worthy woman mentioned in Prov. 31 is to husband,, and Jehovah. (disobedient, loyal, unruly, stubborn, industrious, indolent, charitable, extravagant, economical, busy, fears, idle.)
9. See how many of the rules for a happier marriage, given in the lesson, you can name.
10. Comment: Marriage should be a comradeship (Gen. 2:18).

70 SOME "DO'S" AND "DON'TS" FOR THE CHRISTIAN

11. How can a failure to hear a thing completely before you answer it complicate marital relations?
12. How can selfishness make marriage unhappy?
13. Comment: Tolerance and forgiveness are indispensable to a happy marriage.
14. Name two duties in Eph. 6:4 of parents to children.
15. What education should parents give their children?
16. What did Solomon say concerning the discipline of children?

XI

SUNDRY "DO'S"

I. "DO'S" IN SOCIAL LIFE

THOU shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (Rom. 13:19). "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Rom. 13:10). Three attitudes are manifested in the story of the good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-36): (1) The robber's attitude was "beat him up" and take what he has. (2) The attitude of the priest and Levite was that of indifference; they "passed by on the other side." (3) The Samaritan expressed a neighborly attitude; he helped although it cost him both time and money.

2. "*Render to no man evil for evil*" (Rom. 12:17). Sinners do unto others as others do unto them; but Christians have a better rule, the Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12). Vengeance belongs to the Lord; he will recompense (Rom. 12:19).

3. *Do good to enemies.* "But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head" (Rom. 12:20). Prov. 25:21, 22. "For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" (Matt. 5:46).

4. *Respect principles rather than persons.* "To have respect of persons is not good" (Prov. 28:21). Read Jas. 2:1-4.

5. *Be hospitable.* "Given to hospitality" (Rom. 12:13). The Shunammite woman stands out as a praiseworthy example (II Ki. 4).

6. *Attend to your own business* rather than meddle in other men's affairs. "For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters" (I Pet. 4:15). Christians should never be busybodies (II Thess. 3:11; I Tim. 5:13).

7. *Endeavor to live in peace with all men.* "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men" (Rom. 12:18). Matt. 5:9.

8. *Be tolerant or forbearing.* "Walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called . . . forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:1, 2). The most of us are too impatient with the fool, the unlearned, the inexperienced, the weak, and the sinful. It is a mistake to expect everybody to say and do everything according to our wishes. After all, we might be wrong. It is another mistake to criticize others without first criticizing self (Matt. 7:3-5).

9. *Be forgiving.* In our associations with others, sooner or later, we are sure to feel that we have been sinned against. It may be true, or it may be only imaginative. Anyway, it is a Christian duty to forgive. Jesus taught the disciples to pray: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). Man must have a forgiving heart in order to receive forgiveness from God (Matt. 6:14, 15). Christ taught that there should be no limit to the number of times we forgive one who has sinned against us (Matt. 18:21, 22). Our Lord has threatened the unforgiving with torment (Matt. 18:23-35).

Two men had a quarrel. In time, one became deathly ill. The well man called on the other and said, "I understand you may die, and I want you to know that I have forgiven you and I want your forgiveness; but in case you get well, none of this holds good." Sham forgiveness will not suffice; Christ said that it must come from the heart (Matt. 18:35).

Some have said, "I have forgiven, but I have not forgotten." But this is not the way Jesus forgives; when he forgives sin he remembers it no more (Heb. 10:17). We cannot forgive one, and then constantly remind him of that sin and hold it over him.

One of the essentials in society is the practice of forgiveness. As long as time lasts, men will sin; just that long, we shall need to forgive each other.

II. "DO'S" IN BUSINESS LIFE

1. *Be honest.* "Take thought for things honorable [honest, K. J. V.] in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17). "A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah; but a just weight is his delight" (Prov. 11:1). Christians should have an excellent reputation for honesty.

2. *Be truthful.* Hear Solomon: "For my mouth shall utter truth" (Prov. 8:7). "He that uttereth truth showeth forth righteousness; but a false witness, deceit" (Prov. 12:17). "The getting of treasure by a lying tongue is a vapor driven to and fro by them that seek death" (Prov. 21:6). Truth is opposed to deceit. A Christian's word should be as good as his bond.

3. *Be prompt in meeting obligations.* "Owe no man anything, save to love one another" (Rom. 13:8). This precept does not prohibit the making of a debt, but obligates us to be prepared to pay it when it is due. Christians should be the best credit risks in the world.

4. *Be diligent.* "In diligence not slothful" (Rom. 12:11). King James Version: "Be not slothful in business." Some of Solomon's proverbs are devoted to this matter and are very appropriate: "The desire of the sluggard killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor" (Prov. 21:25). "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men" (Prov. 22:29). "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as a robber, and thy want as an armed man" (Prov. 24:33, 34). It is a reflection upon Christianity for those who have named the name of Christ to be shiftless, lazy and indolent.

III. "DO'S" IN CIVIL LIFE

1. *Be in subjection to civil authorities.* "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers" (Rom. 13:1). Why? "For there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). This being true, "there-

fore he that resisteth the power; withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment" (Rom. 13:2). Earthly government "is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:4). Allegiance to God demands allegiance to civil government. If loyalty to earthly rulers necessitates disloyalty to God, then God must be obeyed rather than men (Acts 5:29).

2. *Honor rulers.* "Honor the king" (I Pet. 2:17). "Render to all their dues . . . honor to whom honor" (Rom. 13:7). If it is impossible for you to respect the man, you can at least respect the office that he holds.

3. *Pay taxes.* "For this cause ye pay tribute also . . . Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom" (Rom. 13:6, 7). "Tribute" means direct taxes; "custom" refers to tolls, imports, indirect taxes on goods and merchandise. Jesus taught that it is a Christian duty to pay taxes (Matt. 22:15-22). "Some hundred years later, Paul's words about taxes were being strictly obeyed, for Tertullian, representing that time, says that what the Romans lost by the Christians refusing to bestow gifts on the idolatrous temples, they gained by their conscientious payment of taxes." —*Commentary*, McGarvey and Pendleton, p. 513.

IV. GUARD THE TRUTH

1. *Guarding the truth is a Christian duty.* Paul commanded Timothy: "O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called" (I Tim. 6:20). Paul repeated the charge in his second letter to Timothy (II Tim. 1:13, 14). The truth or sound words had been committed to Paul, and such was a sacred trust for him to guard. "We have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel" (I Thess. 2:4). This is the world's most valuable trust.

2. *The gospel truth must be protected from false teaching and its teachers:*

(1) False teaching. Paul teaches that there is but one gospel, and that a different gospel is in reality not another gospel, but is only a perversion of the true gospel (Gal. 1:6, 7). Only the truth can free men of sin (Jno. 8:32); and any perversion of it is heresy (II Pet. 2:2).

(2) False teachers. Christ warned us, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). Paul warned the Ephesian elders against false teachers, saying, "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29). Remember this: a false teacher may look like a sheep, but in reality he is a wolf. No doubt, some false teachers are sincere, but others through hypocrisy speak lies (I Tim. 4:2). Peter teaches that some false teachers are nothing more than religious racketeers. He said, "And in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you (II Pet. 2:3).

3. *Note some ways to guard the truth:*

(1) Be quick to discern good and evil, truth and error (Heb. 5:14). Heresy is a mixture of truth and error. Error is most dangerous when varnished with truth, because it is more deceptive. Error is never born full grown. Its development is a matter of growth. In its infancy it is clothed in the outer garments of truth and appears innocent and harmless to many. In its incipiency, error is discerned only by the more alert and better informed students of the Word. From simple beginnings, scores of unscriptural doctrines and organizations have developed. The church needs loyal and discerning members who are able to detect error in its incipient stages and destroy it. This will safeguard the church against digression.

(2) Contend for the faith. "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). In this connection, Paul said, "I am set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil. 1:16). If the gospel is worthy of embracing, it is worthy of defending. "Peace at any price" is a dangerous rule and will corrupt the church. The forces of

error and of falsehood have to be met in every generation. God's people, though they be in the minority, must never shrink from defending the faith.

They are slaves who will not choose
 Hatred, scoffing and abuse
 Rather than in silence shrink
 From the truth they needs must think;
 They are slaves who dare not be
 In the right with two or three.

—Lowell

(3) Take care of the doctrinal purity of the pulpit. The church at Ephesus did this. John said, "Thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false" (Rev. 2:2). They tried certain men who professed to be true messengers of Christ, and the examination revealed that such were false teachers. Is this not worthy of emulation? A church cannot be stronger than its teaching program.

(4) Have no fellowship with the doctrinally unsound. The Lord has commanded us: "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greetings: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works" (II Jno. 10, 11). Paul states that he withdrew fellowship or "delivered unto Satan" Hymenaeus and Alexander because they "made shipwreck concerning the faith" (I Tim. 1:19). This will keep the church free of heresy.

(5) Hand the truth on to the coming generation in its purity. Paul made mention of this responsibility to Timothy: "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also (II Tim. 2:2). The danger of drifting is ever with us. False teachers with covetous hearts constitute a continual threat to the church. Every generation faces the danger anew; therefore, each generation must be indoctrinated. If we fail to indoctrinate just one generation, it will be tragic for the church.

Review Exercise

1. What are the three attitudes exemplified in the story of the good Samaritan?
2. It is permissible for Christians to render evil for evil (T or F).
3. What must we do to heap coals of fire upon the head of an enemy? Scripture
4. Meddling in the affairs of others is contrary to the principles of Christianity (T or F).
5. A false balance or dishonesty is an abomination to the Lord (T or F).
6. Name eight positive commands in social life.
7. Name four "do's" in business life.
8. Civil government has been ordained of God (T or F).
9. Should we honor civil authorities?
10. Is it scriptural to pray for civil authorities? (I Tim. 2:1, 2).
11. What did Paul command Timothy to guard?
12. Name five things we can do to guard the truth.
13. What did the church at Ephesus do to safeguard true teaching?
14. Should we fellowship those who are doctrinally unsound?
15. Thought questions for discussion: (1) What do you think of this policy in the church: "Peace at any price"? (2) What would result, if we should fail to indoctrinate just one generation in the church? (3) Is the danger of digression ever with us? (4) Has God ordained any particular kind of government?

XII

“DO’S” WHICH MAKE LIFE MORE LIVABLE

I. INTRODUCTION

THERE is a vast difference between existing and living. Life is to be lived rather than endured. One may exist four score years, and never really live. Living is an art, and the person who masters it has accomplished something greater than the works of any artist or sculptor. Every essential of successful and happy living is also a specified requirement of the Christian life. The following “do’s” make life more livable.

II. WORK

1. *Employment is essential to happiness.* The unhappiest people in the world are those who have nothing to do but have a good time. Idleness explains the discontent and bitterness of many, both the rich and the poor. Idleness permits the imagination to run riot, and exposes a person to all kinds of worries and fears.

2. *It is a Christian duty to work and earn a living.* It is a command: “Work with your hands, even as we charged you” (I Thess. 4:11). Christians are commanded to discourage indolence and begging by refusing to feed those who are unwilling to work for a livelihood: “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat” (II Thess. 3:10). This encourages a busy, industrious society.

3. *Man was created and adapted to work,* and God intends for him to work. God put man in the Garden of Eden and told him “to dress it and to keep it” (Gen. 2:15). When man was driven from the garden, he was instructed to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow (Gen. 3:19).

4. *Man needs to be happy in his work.* This will turn seeming drudgery into delight. The happiest wife, businessman or laborer is the one who finds joy in his or her work. Employment in which one can never be properly orientated makes for misery instead of happiness. Employment should be more than just a bread-and-butter proposition. One needs to see in his work something that ministers to the welfare of others.

5. The Christian life also demands that we *work in the behalf of others* and serve them. A Christian once said, "I barber for a living, but my vocation is serving God." "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matt. 20:28). Remember: "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister" or servant (Matt. 20:26). Serving God is a full time job; hence, it makes for maximum living. It discourages idleness and encourages activity. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" (Matt. 20:6).

III. LOVE

1. *Man must have someone to love.* It is this part of our nature that causes us to keep dogs, cats, birds and other pets. We want something to love and protect. Of course, we are aware of the fact that some few persons who are a miscarriage of nature do not feel a need to love, because they are too selfish ever to love anything but themselves.

2. The Lord has taken into consideration man's need to love and has commanded us to *love God* (Matt. 22:37), *neighbor* (Matt. 22:39), *companion* (Eph. 5:25), *brotherhood* (I Pet. 2:17) and *enemy* (Matt. 5:43-47).

IV. ACCEPT SELF

1. *We must accept the fact that different people have different talents and degrees of ability* (Matt. 25:14-30). No two people are exactly alike. If we are only one-talent men, it is to our advantage to accept it gracefully. It will not profit us any to grumble and complain about what nature did not give us. If we do not use and develop what we have, we would not have used superior qualities if they had been bestowed

upon us. "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much" (Lk. 16:10).

2. *Man's unwillingness to accept the inferior in life often prevents his reaching the higher goal.* This was true of Daniel Webster who aspired to be President. He was twice sought for the vice-presidency but he declined. In each instance he, as vice-president, could have risen to the presidency due to the death of the President. A refusal to accept second place often keeps us from rising to first place. Conceit is one of our most devastating enemies. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18).

3. *We should be content with what we have, but not with what we are.* Paul said, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content" (Phil. 4:11). But Paul was not content with himself, so he stated, "Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13, 14).

4. *In accepting self we must accept our handicaps.* We are reminded of Noah in "The Green Pastures" who said, "I ain't very much, but I'se all I got." We must reconcile ourselves to our limitations. There are diversities of gifts. "All the members have not the same office" (Rom. 12:4). After accepting self, we must then use our obstacles as stepping-stones. We have an example in Fanny J. Crosby, who became blind at six weeks of age. She testified: "I am the happiest soul living. If I had not been deprived of my sight, I would never have received so good an education, nor cultivated so fine a memory, nor have been able to do good to so many people." This self-acceptance of encumbrances was much better than useless resentment. She could have gone to the streets to beg, but she chose to turn adversity into victory instead.

V. EXAMINE SELF

1. *Another "do" for the Christian is to examine self.* "Try [examine, K. J. V.] your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves" (II Cor. 13:5). "But let a man prove [examine, K. J. V.] himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup" (I Cor. 11:28). Each day we should pull back the curtains of life and ask, "Oh, God, have I done anything today that I should not have done? Have I left undone anything today that I should have done?" This exercise enables us to see ourselves as God and others see us. It guards us against egotism, bitterness and cynicism.

2. Another blessing derived from this experience is that *it focuses the criticism on self instead of others.* We do not like to look at self. We prefer to look at the faults of others. "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Matt. 7:3). Many persons develop such a critical attitude of others that they cannot enjoy living. About the only criticism they ever make of self is that they have not been critical enough of somebody else. Poor people! They remind us of the Pharisee who said, "I thank thee that I am not as the rest of men" (Lk. 18:11).

VI. CULTIVATE AN INTEREST IN OTHERS

1. *The man who prayed,* "Oh, Lord, bless me and my wife, our son, John, and his wife, us four and no more," surely had a miserable existence rather than a happy, useful life.

2. Listen to God relative to this duty: "*Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others*" (Phil. 2:4). "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). "Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15). It is summed up in the Golden Rule which teaches us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us (Matt. 7:12).

3. A teacher asked a small boy what lesson he got from the story of the good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-37). He replied,

"The lesson I got from it is that when I'm in trouble, my neighbors ought to help me." The old thought of self-interest! *We should think of life in terms of serving rather than being served.* It makes life more meaningful.

VII. KEEP SELF FIT TO LIVE WITH

1. Man must live with himself; therefore, *he should keep himself fit to live with.* "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). May each so live that he can respect himself. If we respect ourselves, others will respect us. When a person is unfit to live with others, he is really unfit to live with himself.

2. *Man must live up to the knowledge he possesses in order for him to respect himself.* Paul in his unconverted state was a blasphemer and a persecutor, but he could respect himself because he did it ignorantly in unbelief (I Tim. 1:13). He lived in all good conscience (Acts 23:1). Since man must live a lifetime with his conscience, he should keep it pure and approving. May we live conscientiously and thus say in the words of Paul, "Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always" (Acts 24:16). This is the only happy way to live. A condemning conscience will destroy happiness, mar personality, undermine health, and steal sleep from one's eyes. Remember: "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (I Jno. 3:20).

VIII. LIVE LIFE A DAY AT A TIME

1. *Living in the present is the only way we can live.* We cannot live yesterday, for it is past; neither can we live tomorrow, for it has not come. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34). This does not encourage slothfulness, for the best preparation any person can make for the future is to do well what needs to be done today.

2. *No person has strength to carry the burden of all the future.* Many people live in misery, because they try to cross all their bridges before they get to them. Life has become

unbearable because they view it in the aggregate. There is an interesting story in McGuffey's old reader of a clock which suddenly stopped. The clock stated that it had counted the number of times it would have to tick in a year—31,536,000 times—and had become discouraged and decided to quit. But an explanation was given to the clock that it would have to tick only one tick at a time, and the old timepiece regained its morale and began running again.

IX. LIVE EACH DAY AS IF IT WERE THE LAST

1. *The Christian should live each day as best he can, and as if it were the last.* We should live in a constant state of watchfulness and preparation. "Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh" (Matt. 24:42). Read Matt. 24:36; 25:13. "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jas. 4:14).

2. If we want our past to be pleasant and unregrettable, then we must live today in peace, joy, and in service to God and man, because *tomorrow our todays will be our yesterdays.* The great word of the Bible is "today" (Heb. 3:13; II Cor. 6:2). Yesterday is gone and gone forever; tomorrow may never come; so today is all man has.

Review Exercise

1. Name eight "do's" which make life more livable.
2. Should we feed the lazy and indolent?
3. Prove that man was created to work.
4. Comment: It is part of our nature to want to love and to be loved.
5. What is the first and great commandment in the law? The second?
6. Prove that man must accept the fact that different people have different talents and degrees of ability.
7. Comment: He who will not use and develop inferior abilities would not use superior talents if he had them.

8. How can pride interfere with man's accomplishments? Quote Prov. 16:18.
9. Name three blessings derived from self-examination.
10. Prove that the Christian should be interested in the welfare of others.
11. What lesson do you get from the story of the good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-37)?
12. Comment: Man should so live that he can respect himself.
13. What must man do to have respect for himself?
14. Relative to time, how must life be lived? Relative to time, how do some people make life miserable for themselves?
15. Why should we live each day as if it were the last?
16. What figure did Jesus use to illustrate the brevity of life?
17. What must we do to make our past pleasant?

XIII

“DO’S” IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

THE Ten Commandments or the Decalogue may be divided into two parts. The first four regulate the relationship between God and man, and the last six govern the association between man and man. The fourth and fifth commandments are positive, while the others are negative. The Decalogue was more than law; it was a philosophy of life. Its principles were enlarged and improved by Christ.

II. THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT: REMEMBER THE SABBATH

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8).

1. *The sabbath was the seventh day.* “But the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God” (Ex. 20:10). God worked six days and rested on the seventh day. We see from Gen. 2:3 that this was the day God hallowed and sanctified: “And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it he rested from all his work which God had created and made” (Gen. 2:3). The sabbath, being the seventh day, corresponds to our Saturday rather than Sunday.

2. The command, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” *was given to the Hebrew people* at Sinai: “Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, who are all of us here alive this day” (Deut. 5:2, 3).

3. *Jehovah never intended for the law of Moses, which contained the law of sabbath keeping, to be permanent.*

(1) One of its functions was to be a “shadow of the good things to come” (Heb. 10:1).

(2) Another object of the law was to be a schoolmaster or tutor by which man could be brought to Christ (Gal. 3:24).

(3) The Holy Spirit speaks of the first covenant and the second covenant (Heb. 8:7). The first was taken away that the second might be established (Heb. 10:9).

(4) The law was to last "till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made" (Gal. 3:19). The seed or descendant was Christ (Gal. 3:16); hence, when Christ came, he nailed the law to the cross (Col. 2:14).

4. *When the law of Moses died, the law of sabbath-keeping also died.* Paul speaks of sabbath-keeping as a temporary command, being only a shadow of things to come: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come" (Col. 2:16, 17).

5. *Every command and principle of the Ten Commandments was restated and made a part of the new covenant except the fourth which concerns the sabbath.* It was not incorporated in the Christian dispensation. It is true that some of the early evangelists went into the Jewish synagogues on the sabbath (Acts 13:14, 42; 18:4), but such was not for the purpose of keeping the sabbath. These early Christians had a message for those people, so they went to the place of assembly, whether it was in the synagogue or by the river side (Acts 16:13). They were merely seeking to preach the gospel to every creature (Mk. 16:15, 16).

6. Let us remember that there is *a distinction between the sabbath and the first day of the week*: "Now late on the sabbath day, it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" (Matt. 28:1).

7. *We who live under the new covenant are taught to assemble on the first day of the week, the Lord's day* (Rev. 1:10), and worship. This is evident from the following: "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread" (Acts 20:7). "Upon the first day

of the week let each one of you lay by him in store" (I Cor. 16:2).

III. THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT: HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER

"Honor thy father and thy mother" (Ex. 20:12).

1. *Youth needs to honor parents.* There is a tendency among youth to be disrespectful toward parents. Many young people think that father and mother are survivors of an outmoded age, unlearned and ignorant. Mark Twain once said something like this, "When I was sixteen, I thought my father was the most ignorant man I had ever seen; but ten years later I decided he was very brilliant and I just wondered how the old man had learned so much in ten years."

2. *Paul repeated this command in Eph. 6:2* and spoke of it as "the first commandment with promise." This command prohibits all hurtful acts and cruel speeches to parents on the one hand, and enjoins all necessary acts of kindness and filial respect on the other hand. In this very context, Paul said, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Eph. 6:1). The parents take care, protect and sustain the children; therefore, it is a matter of right that the children obey them. But the passage limits the obedience to that which is within the bounds of God's law. If obedience to parents necessitates disobedience to God, then God must be obeyed rather than parents. God holds priority over any man.

3. *In the Mosaic law, a disobedient, stubborn, rebellious and drunken son who would not hearken nor profit from chastisement was to be stoned to death* (Deut. 21:18-21).

4. *Hear words of wisdom from Solomon:*

(1) "A wise son heareth his father's instruction; but a scoffer heareth not rebuke" (Prov. 13:1). So it is a mark of wisdom for a child to listen to his father.

(2) "A fool despiseth his father's correction; but he that regardeth reproof getteth prudence" (Prov. 15:5).

(3) "A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish man despiseth his mother" (Prov. 15:20).

(4) "A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him" (Prov. 17:25).

(5) "He that doeth violence to his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame and bringeth reproach" (Prov. 19:26).

(6) "Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in blackness of darkness" (Prov. 20:20).

(7) "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Prov. 23:22).

(8) "Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression, the same is the companion of a destroyer" (Prov. 28:24).

5. *Here are some ways in which we can honor father and mother:*

(1) We can express our affection for them in unmistakable terms, but actions speak louder than words. Love is something that proves itself: "Show ye . . . the proof of your love" (II Cor. 8:24). We manifest our love by our works. Mothers and fathers rejoice to see the manifestations of their children's love for them. T. B. Larimore beautifully expressed the thought in this poem:

Take my withered hands in yours,
 Children of my soul;
 Mother's heart is craving love;
 Mother's growing old.
 See, the snows of many years
 Crown my furrowed brow;
 As I've loved and petted you,
 Love and pet me now.

(2) We can honor parents by helping them with our substances, if they are needy. One of the last things Jesus did before his death was to make provision for the physical welfare of his mother. As he was dying on the cross, he looked out over the multitude and saw his mother and said to John, "Behold, thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home" (Jno. 19:27). Parents

give of themselves, flesh of their flesh, to bring their children into existence, and then sacrificially give of themselves little by little to see the new life blossom into maturity. Parents care for their children during a helpless state, and oftentimes, years later, parents become helpless and should be cared for by the children. Life has a way of balancing things.

(3) Another way to honor parents is to write them often, if we are separated from them. The poet has expressed it thus:

The tender words unspoken,
The letters never sent,
The long forgotten messages,
The wealth of love unspent—
For these some hearts are breaking,
For these some loved ones wait;
So show them that you care for them
Before it is too late.

(4) We may also honor parents by being the men and women we should be. When a child grows up and becomes a good and honorable person, he naturally reflects honor upon his parents. The history of great men may well be considered as the biography of great parents. We must live the praises due them, for vain are all our tributes to father and mother, if in our manner of living we discredit them.

6. *The parents, too, have a responsibility in this relationship and in the child's eventual obedience to the fifth commandment.*

(1) What the child grows up to be and what his respect for parents will be depends much upon the influence of the parents. The mind of youth is plastic and is easily influenced. Blessed is the child who receives the training received by Christ who "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Lk. 2:52). Jesus grew intellectually, physically, religiously and socially.

(2) Paul has said, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Solomon said, "Train

up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). Woe unto the parents whose indifference, selfishness and unchristian lives hinder the normal development of their children.

7. *Note some blessings derived from keeping the fifth commandment:*

(1) A better world in which to live. The home is the foundation of civilization. A disrespect for parents will undermine the very foundation of our civilization and culture.

(2) It makes for richer and nobler living. There is a relationship between right attitudes and right living. The person whose attitude toward parents is right is likely to be a better neighbor and citizen.

(3) It produces happiness in the child. Happiness is a fruit, a product of an obedient, unselfish and useful life.

(4) It makes for longevity of life (Eph. 6:3; Ex. 20:12). Even common sense tells us that the respectful and loving child has a better chance to live longer than the disobedient, disrespectful and dissipating child.

Review Exercise

1. How may the Ten Commandments be divided?
2. Which day was the Sabbath?
3. Prove that God never intended for the Mosaical law (it contained the Sabbath law) to be permanent.
4. Why did some of the early evangelists go into the Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath?
5. What passage makes a distinction between the Sabbath and the first day of the week?
6. Prove that we today should meet and worship on the first day of the week.
7. What is the fifth commandment? How did Paul speak of it?
8. Should children obey parents when such obedience violates a command of God?
9. Name four ways in which children may honor parents.
10. What did Jesus, as he was dying on the cross, do for his mother?
11. What is the responsibility of the parents to the children?
12. What was the four-fold education that Jesus received? Scripture
13. Name four blessings derived from keeping the fifth commandment.
14. Thought topic for discussion: Comment on Prov. 22:6.

PART II

“Don’ts”

“DON'TS” IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I. THE FIRST COMMANDMENT: DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

T*HOU shalt have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3). Every commandment that God has given to man is based upon the truth that there is “one God and Father of all, who is over all” (Eph. 4:6). Therefore, it is fitting that the “don’ts” for Christians begin with this negative: “Have no other gods before me.”*

2. Prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments, *God had demonstrated his superiority over the so-called gods of the Egyptians.* The Nile River was sacred to the Egyptians, but God turned its waters to blood. God afflicted with murrain the cattle, sacred to the Egyptians. The Egyptians worshiped the sun god, but Jehovah demonstrated his superiority over this god by smiting the land with darkness for three days. These signs manifested Jehovah’s power over all the deities of the Egyptians, and held him up as the only god worthy of man’s respect and worship.

3. *Jehovah appears before the universe of intellectuals as the omniscient, omnipresent, omnivisual, omnific, and omnipotent being (Psa. 139:1-18).* We lift our voices in praise and say, “Holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come” (Rev. 4:8).

4. *This command forbids idolatry.* The New Testament prohibits it, too. John said, “My little children, guard yourselves from idols” (I Jno. 5:21). Paul said, “Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry” (I Cor. 10:14). Anything which occupies the place due to God is an idol. It

has been said, "Whatever thy heart clings to and relies upon, that is properly thy god." With this as a standard, there are many forms of idolatry in America today.

5. *Some forms of idolatry.*

(1) Nature worship. In ancient times, the death penalty was pronounced upon those who had "gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, or the sun, or the moon, or any of the host of heaven" (Deut. 17:3-5). Read II Ki. 23:5. There are wonderful things in nature, but they were created by Jehovah. We are to worship the Creator rather than the created.

(2) Creature worship. Paul, in speaking of some heathen people, said, "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (Rom. 1:25).

(3) Hero or man worship. Cornelius fell down at Peter's "feet, and worshipped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:25, 26). Paul and Barnabas at Ephesus, in an effort to restrain the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them, cried out, "We also are men of like passions with you" (Acts 14:8-18). In praise to Herod, "the people shouted, saying, The voice of a god, and not of a man." Jehovah's displeasure is seen in that "immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory" (Acts 12:21-23). This should serve as a warning today.

(4) Pleasure worship. "Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (II Tim. 3:4). In speaking of this kind of idolatry, Paul said, "whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:18, 19). "But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth" (I Tim. 5:6). This form of idolatry is definitely hurting the church today (I Jno. 2:15-17). It is easy to tell whether a man is serving the idol of pleasure by observing what he does, where he goes, and how he spends his time

and money. God must be first (Matt. 6:33) lest we be idolaters.

(5) Mammon worship. Listen to Jesus: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Paul declares that covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5). He further states, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (I Tim. 6:10). Christians, beware!

(6) Mental-image worship. Many who have rejected metal images have made their mental images of God. Consciously or unconsciously, they have made God to conform to their likes and dislikes. The Psalmist expressed it: "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself" (Psa. 50:21). Man can deceive man and hide from man; he is often slack in his word; he accepts bribes; he thinks one religion is as good as another. Hence, man is apt to think that he can deceive God and hide from him, that God is unfaithful in his word, that God can be bribed, and that God considers one religion as good as another. They measure God according to their own standard, and make God in the image of themselves. They worship and serve a god they have created out of their own imaginations.

II. THE SECOND COMMANDMENT: DON'T MAKE A GRAVEN IMAGE

"Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image" (Ex. 20:4).

1. *Idol-makers have always made their gods to resemble themselves or worse.* Some have made them in the likeness of animals. This was because they had become brutish. We have a good commentary on the ideals and hopes of ancient peoples by studying the deities they had created out of their own imaginations. God forbids man to make a graven image in any form (Ex. 20:4, 5; Deut. 4:15-18). "Being then the offspring of God, we ought not

to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man" (Acts 17:29).

2. *One of the basic reasons for image-making is to have a concrete manifestation of deity.* Man finds it difficult to communicate with a god he cannot see; therefore, he creates some symbol to represent the deity. The Israelites made a golden calf and said, "These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. 32:8). They knew the golden calf did not bring them out of Egypt; it was a symbol of deity. The creation of this symbol to represent deity is called idolatry (I Cor. 10:7); hence, the person given to image-making today who tries to justify it on the basis that he does not worship the image but the being it symbolizes is guilty of idolatry, according to the stated word of God.

3. *God had a good reason for this prohibition.* Finite man cannot construct a true representation of the Infinite One. Jehovah has never posed for the photographer or sculptor. Every effort to create a representation of God results in a misrepresentation of him. "God is a Spirit"; therefore, it is impossible to symbolize him, and every effort to do so results in injury to the worshiper. Image-makers stress sight rather than faith; but "we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7).

4. *"To countenance its image worship, the Roman Catholic Church has left the whole of the second commandment out of the decalogue, and thus lost one whole commandment out of the ten; but to keep up the number they have divided the tenth into two . . . The verse is found in every MS. of the Hebrew Pentateuch that has ever yet been discovered."* — *Adam Clarke's Commentary.*

III. THE THIRD COMMANDMENT:

DON'T TAKE THE NAME OF GOD IN VAIN

"Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain" (Ex. 20:7).

1. *This command prohibits the use of God's name in*

any irreverent and disrespectful way. It forbids the use of God's name in any manner which is not accompanied with deep reverence and godly fear, whether it be prayer, false swearing, or a byword in careless conversation. There are many things worthy of honor and respect. We honor the name of our parents and resent any man's speaking of them disrespectfully. We respect the flag and are filled with indignation when men regard it lightly. How much more should we regard the name of the Lord our God with reverence and awe (Heb. 12:28).

2. *Many who would not think of cursing plainly use bywords which are very closely akin.* About eighty per cent of the Christians I know use one or more of the following euphemisms:

(1) "My Lordy." This is repeating the name of the Lord in vain.

(2) "Golly." This is an euphematic substitute for God (Webster's New International Dictionary).

(3) "Gosh." This is a "softened form of 'God!' used as a mild oath" (Webster's New International Dictionary).

(4) "For goodness sake" and "goodness gracious." Webster says that such expressions originally referred to the goodness of God.

(5) Many who throw up their hands in horror when they hear the word "hell" used in an oath, repeatedly say, "My heavens," or "For heaven's sake." If anything, this is worse, for it gets closer to God and his throne. Christ said, "And he that sweareth by the heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon" (Matt. 23:22).

(6) "Darn." It means "Damn" (Funk and Wagnall's Practical Dictionary).

(7) "Dickens." This is an euphemism for "Devil" (Webster's New International Dictionary).

(8) "What the deuce." This really means "What the devil" (Webster's New International Dictionary).

3. It is regrettable that there is *so much disrespect for the name of God in our land*. Many take the name of God in vain thoughtlessly, rather than for the express purpose of being offensive toward him; nevertheless, they are guilty. "Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Ex. 20:7). "Out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (Jas. 3:10). "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by the heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath: but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay: that ye fall not under judgment" (Jas. 5:12).

4. *It is not smart to take God's name in vain*. There is nothing to be gained by being irreverent toward the name of God. Since there are about 400,000 words in the English language, a person should be able to express himself without cursing. In fact, it reflects upon man's intelligence. It signifies that the person has not the ability to express his feelings without being irreverent toward God.

IV. THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT: DON'T KILL

"Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13).

1. *Murder is the most grievous sin against society*. You may steal a man's purse, and later return it; you may ruin his good reputation by bearing false witness, and later apologize and make amends; but, if you take his life, you will never be able to restore it. A man's life, with the exception of his soul, is his most precious possession (Matt. 10:28). This law which protects human life has been incorporated into the civil laws of all civilized nations. One of the reasons God has legislated against murder is that man was created in the image of God, and thus his life is sacred (Gen. 9:6).

2. *Christ broadened this commandment to include murderous intentions of the heart*. He said, "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you,

that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire" (Matt. 5:21, 22). Murder is first committed in the heart (Matt. 15:19); so Jesus legislated against the cause. There are many murderers who have never shed another's blood, as we see from the standard laid down in I Jno. 3:15: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." They wish others dead, but are unwilling to pay the price to make it a reality. The above passages make known the punishment that will come to those who violate this commandment. God said to Cain, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Gen. 4:10).

3. *This commandment had no reference to capital punishment.* How do you know? Because the same God who commanded, "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13) also commanded, "He that smiteth a man, so that he dieth, shall surely be put to death" (Ex. 21:12). He who commanded no murder commanded capital punishment. According to the Mosaical law, the murderer forfeited his right to live. There are several other examples in the Old Testament in which God commanded capital punishment.

Review Exercise

1. Upon what truth is every command of God based?
2. How did God demonstrate his superiority over the Egyptian deities?
3. Name six forms of idolatry.
4. Peter refused to allow Cornelius to fall down at his feet and worship him (T or F).
5. How have many in America created mental images of God?
6. Quote a verse which expresses the false idea that many people have of God. Scripture
7. Prove that the creation of an image to symbolize deity is idolatry.
8. Why is it impossible for an image to symbolize Jehovah?
9. What do image-makers stress?

10. What has the Roman Church done to the Scriptures in an effort to lead people into image worship?
11. What does it mean to take God's name in vain?
12. How does cursing reflect upon man's ability?
13. Why is murder such a grievous sin against society?
14. Why did God legislate against murder?
15. How can one be guilty of murder without taking another's life?
16. Does the sixth commandment have reference to capital punishment?

II

“DON'TS” IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (Cont'd)

I. THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: DON'T COMMIT ADULTERY

THOU shalt not commit adultery” (Ex. 20:14).

1. “As to the word *adultery*, *adulterium*, it has probably been derived from the words *ad alterius torem*, to another’s bed.” — *Adam Clarke’s Commentary*. God said, “And thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbor’s wife, to defile thyself with her” (Lev. 18:20). This command guards the home.

2. *Legalized adultery* is the marriage union of one or two divorced persons who was or were not scripturally free to remarry. Jesus said, “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery” (Matt. 19:9).

3. *Mental adultery* is a form of adultery committed through lust. “Every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5:28). The will is taken for the deed. Adultery is first committed in thought (Matt. 15:19); hence, Jesus legislates against the thought behind the act. He cuts off sin at its beginning. Social control is surely dependent upon self-control.

4. *All unchastity and illicit connections are sinful* and are under condemnation. “Fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (Heb. 13:4). “Neither fornicators nor adulterers . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God” (I Cor. 6:9, 10).

5. Oftentimes the word “adultery” has no reference to

a relationship of person to person, but to *man's unfaithful relationship with God*. For instance, Jas. 4:4.

II. THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: DON'T STEAL

"Thou shalt not steal" (Ex. 20:15).

1. *This command guards the property and possessions of others.* Our papers are filled with reports of burglary and theft which testify to man's disregard for the law of God and his disrespect for the rights of others.

2. *This command prohibits* armed robbery, taking something not yours whether it be too much change or a piece of merchandise, shortchanging, cheating in a trade, charging exorbitant prices, or swindling.

3. Paul teaches that *it is better to work than to steal*. Hear him: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need" (Eph. 4:28). This passage sets forth two Christian principles which rebuke the thief: first, we should work to have instead of steal to have; second, we are to have that we may give to others rather than take from others that we may have for ourselves.

4. *Three attitudes toward possessions are given in the story of the good Samaritan* (Lk. 10: 30-37). (1) Thief: "What is yours is mine, and I will take it." This violates the eighth commandment. (2) Priest and Levite: "What is mine is mine, and I will keep it." But no man can keep earthly possessions long (Lk. 12:20). (3) Good Samaritan: "What is mine is yours, and I will divide it." The true philosophy of life is that of dividing instead of stealing.

III. THE NINTH COMMANDMENT: DON'T BEAR FALSE WITNESS

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" (Ex. 20:16).

1. *Proverbs from Solomon:*

(1) One of the things Jehovah hateth is "a false wit-

ness that uttereth lies" (Prov. 6:16-19).

(2) "Lying lips are an abomination to Jehovah; but they that deal truly are his delight" (Prov. 12:22).

(3) "A false witness shall not be unpunished; and he that uttereth lies shall not escape" (Prov. 19:5).

(4) "Deceive not with thy lips" (Prov. 14:28).

(5) "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow" (Prov. 25:18).

2. *This commandment guards the reputation of man, and should prevent false testimony in court, blackmail and gossip. The gossipier enjoys talebearing because it gives him or her a feeling of virtue by contrast. All slanderers do not assassinate character by outright lying, but some merely arouse suspicion by asking questions. "Can you trust him?" "Was she true to him while he was gone?" "Have you looked into his record?"*

3. *Here are three good questions to ask ourselves before we say anything about a neighbor: (1) Is this true? (2) Even if it is true, will it do good to tell it? (3) Would I say this in the presence of that person?*

4. *Gossipy tongues would soon cease wagging, if gossipy ears would quit listening; therefore, we can silence the slanderer by refusing to lend him our ears.*

5. *Bearing false witness against a neighbor robs him of his good reputation which is one of his most valuable possessions. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22:1). Shakespeare has aptly expressed it:*

Who steals my purse steal trash,—
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.

6. *May we heed this admonition: "He that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (I Pet. 3:10).*

IV. THE TENTH COMMANDMENT: DON'T COVET

"Thou shalt not covet" (Ex. 20:17).

1. *An example:* It has not been long since the author stood in a little country cemetery in Wise County, Texas, at the grave of a sixteen year old girl killed by Indians many years ago. The Indians killed the girl to get her horse and saddle. It was a case of covetousness, the inordinate desire to have that which belonged to another. The Tenth Commandment warns against such an unrestrained attitude toward the possessions of others. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's" (Ex. 20:17).

2. Jesus and the New Testament writers used the word "covetousness" to mean *an inordinate love of money and of other material possessions*. They gave it a broader usage than that given in the Ten Commandments.

(1) A man came to Jesus and asked Jesus to bid his brother to divide the inheritance with him. Christ refused and then gave this warning: "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15). Our Lord then gave a parable of a man who gave his life to the accumulation of material things, who tilled and toiled, who slaved and saved to have that which could be stacked in barns, who thought that he had much to live on for many years and that he could eat, drink, and be merry. But he died that night, and Christ called him a foolish one (Lk. 12:13-21).

(2) In several passages we find the word "covetousness" in the King James Version while in the American Standard Version it is translated "love of money"; for instance, Lk. 16:14, I Tim. 3:3 and II Tim. 3:2.

(3) Covetousness is called idolatry: "Covetousness, which is idolatry." The rich young ruler who was covetous turned sorrowfully away from Jesus, because he was un-

willing to remove this idol from his heart (Matt. 19:16-22). He chose to serve the god of mammon instead of the God of heaven. "No man can serve two masters . . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). In this age, millions have been blinded by the luster of gold and have lost sight of the true values of life. They are blindly engrossed and avariciously enslaved in the mad struggle of greed to get that which must soon be left behind. "For we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out" (I Tim. 6:7).

3. *Covetousness is the root of many other sins:*

- (1) It leads to a departure from the faith (I Tim. 6:10).
- (2) It caused Gehazi to lie (II Ki. 5:20-27).
- (3) It prompted Achan to steal (Josh. 7:16-21).
- (4) Covetousness causes domestic trouble (Prov. 15:27).
- (5) This sin led David to commit adultery (II Sam. 11:1-5).
- (6) It has caused murder (Ezek. 22:12).

Covetousness is a grave sin, and has always been a serious menace to society.

4. Covetousness is such a heinous sin that the Scriptures class it among the most distasteful crimes: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:9, 10). Paul has made it plain that covetousness will keep a person from inheriting the kingdom of God.

Review Exercise

1. Why did God legislate against adultery?
2. What is legalized adultery? Mental adultery?
3. The word "adultery" sometimes has reference to an unfaithful spiritual relationship (T or F).
4. What is guarded by the eighth commandment? Name six things it prohibits.

5. Name two principles set forth in Eph. 4:28 which rebuke the thief.
6. What are the three attitudes toward possessions given in the story of the good Samaritan?
7. What are three good questions to ask ourselves before we say anything about somebody else?
8. How do some slanderers assassinate character without outright lying?
9. What does the tenth commandment warn against?
10. What parable did Christ give against covetousness?
11. How is the word "covetousness" in the King James Version sometimes translated in the American Standard Version?
12. Why is covetousness idolatry?
13. Name six other sins covetousness may cause.

III

DON'T FORSAKE THE ASSEMBLING FOR WORSHIP

I. INTRODUCTION

A NOTHER negative command for Christians is to forsake not the assembling for worship: "*Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is*" (Heb. 10:25). It is obvious from this passage that some had forsaken the "assembling together," and thus had forsaken the teachings of God and were at fault. When we forsake a command of God, we have forsaken God.

II. EARLY CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLED EVERY LORD'S DAY FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP

There is nothing more evident in the New Testament than that the members of the church met on every Lord's day for public worship.

1. *The church in Jerusalem* continued steadfastly in worship: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). This passage indicates a regularity and frequency instead of an occasional custom. It further implies that the frequency of its observance was so well known to Theophilus that it was useless to write him the details.

2. *The church at Troas* came together on the first day of the week for the purpose of breaking bread: "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow" (Acts 20:7). Note the following:

(1) They came together on the first day of the week for the primary purpose of breaking bread. Which first day of the week? There is but one first day of the week. There

has never been a week without a first day or with more than one first day.

(2) Does this mean that they met together to take the Supper the first day of every week? It does not say "every week," but neither does it say that God commanded the Jews to keep every Sabbath. God said, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8). They were obligated to keep the Sabbath. It came around once every week; therefore, they were obligated to keep it every week. The early disciples met upon "the first day of the week" to break bread, and did so with apostolic approval. If we follow this approved example, how often shall we meet to break bread? Just as often as the first day of the week comes, and that is once every week.

3. *The church at Corinth* ate the Lord's supper when they assembled, which was the first day of every week. To the church at Corinth, which had corrupted the Lord's supper through hunger and drunkenness, Paul said, "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper" (I Cor. 11:20). Now if there was any regularity about their meeting together, there was also regularity about their eating the Lord's supper. There was regularity about their meeting together, for they were commanded to give of their means "upon the first day of the week" (I Cor. 16:2). It is agreed that this means every first day of the week. Now look what we have: (1) It was their practice to eat the Lord's supper when they met together (I Cor. 11:20). (2) It was their practice to meet together upon the first day of every week (I Cor. 16:2). (3) Therefore, it was their practice to eat the Lord's supper upon the first day of every week.

4. The members of the church at Corinth were *commanded to lay by in store upon the first day of the week*: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" (I Cor. 16:2). They would have to

assemble before they could lay by in store; so it is evident that it was their practice to meet together for worship upon the Lord's day.

The foregoing Scriptures make it plain that the early Christians met together every Lord's day for public worship. God has said, "Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is" (Heb. 10:25). When God says, "Don't forsake the assembling together," and one does it, then he is guilty of sin. For a Christian to wilfully absent himself from the worship on the Lord's day is sin, public sin. This is one of the most common and "respectable" sins among us, but it is sin, rebellion against God's law.

III. SOME OTHER REASONS FOR ATTENDING THE SERVICES

1. That we *show the proof of our love for the Lord*. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (Jno. 14:15). We noticed some plain, specific commands in the above section. If we love the Lord, we shall keep these commandments.

2. That we *show our faith by our works*. "Yea, a man will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith" (Jas. 2:18). Hence, the works of many are evidence that they do not have much faith, or they would not wilfully disobey God.

3. That we *increase our knowledge of God's word*. "Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge" (II Pet. 1:5). Hearing God's word publicly taught affords one a good opportunity to increase his knowledge. The members who indifferently absent themselves from the services have never been known to increase their knowledge very much.

4. We should *attend that we may grow and become*

stronger Christians. "As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (I Pet. 2:2). This passage teaches that the taking of spiritual food is a prerequisite of spiritual growth. No person who is indifferent toward the worship of God and the study of the Bible has ever grown.

5. Attendance at the worship *presents an opportunity for us to meet the Lord and be with him*. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Do you not like to be in the presence of Christ? Or do you absent yourself because you dislike his presence?

6. We should *attend because we need all the help we can get*. Surely something will be done or said to help us.

7. Attendance at church services *guards against apostasy*. The Bible has much to say about the danger of apostasy. It is worse than never knowing the Lord (II Pet. 2:20-22). The members of the church make many mistakes, but one who attends all the services has seldom ever been known to apostatize. Therefore, attendance must have some bearing upon steadfastness.

8. Each should be a consistent attendant *that he may be missed when he is dead and leave a good influence behind*. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14:13).

9. We should *attend and learn to enjoy it*, for if we do not enjoy being with the people of God in a period of worship in this world, we would not be prepared to enjoy heaven even if we should go there.

10. Our presence will *help to build up and strengthen the church*. No congregation can grow without attendance. If no one attended, there could be no service; the doors would be locked, and the cause of Christ would die in that community. It has happened in some communities; it could happen in yours.

11. We should attend that *we may support the truth*. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15). The members should be present to support the truth.

12. There are many things in church work we cannot do, but *we can attend if we are not ill*. We can help to make a crowd and this is a vital thing in church work.

13. We should be present at all the services because *a vacant pew has an eloquent tongue which preaches a sermon of defeat*. To the preacher it says, "Your efforts are not appreciated; the members will not stand behind you; why don't you quit?" It shouts to the treasurer, "Look out for a deficit." To the visitor it whispers, "There is no interest here; if I were you, I wouldn't come back." It suggests to the faithful member who is present, "The other members don't attend; you might as well be absent next time." It is hard to preach and to listen when the empty pews are crying out to be heard. If we would fill them and keep them quiet, it would be easier to make progress.

IV. WHY SOME NEGLECT PUBLIC WORSHIP

1. We are not told in Heb. 10:25 why those referred to in the passage neglected public worship. *It may have been for some of the following causes:*

(1) Some may have absented themselves because of fear of persecution. It was trying times, and those who assembled would be more exposed to this danger than those who did not. But Jesus said, "And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul" (Matt. 10:28).

(2) Some may have failed to live up to this sacred duty, because they lacked interest. But too much was at stake for them to lose interest: the soul, their influence and the welfare of the church.

(3) Some may have neglected this duty, because they were not well taught concerning the necessity of it. If so, they should not have lived in this neglect long, for they

were censured for it (Heb. 10:25).

2. Here are *some of the excuses* offered today by those who absent themselves from the services of worship.

(1) "Do not like the preacher." But Christians do not meet to worship the preacher (Matt. 4:10).

(2) "Some of the members mistreated me." Why not correct the trouble? They may not know about it. Jesus said, "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matt. 18:15). Paul was betrayed by false brethren (II Cor. 11:26), but it did not relieve him of his duties to God.

(3) "The church is not being run right." Maybe it is not, but why get angry and take it out on God and on your own soul? Would it not be better to be faithful to God and use your influence to help the church rather than forsake it?

(4) "My clothes are not good enough." If they are good enough for one to wear other places, they are good enough to wear to the services of worship; "for Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:7).

(5) "I am tired on Sunday and need relaxation." There are others who are tired, too, but it does not keep them from obeying God. One who goes to work five or six days a week and then absents himself from services of worship on the Lord's day is not seeking the kingdom of heaven first (Matt. 6:33). A period of worship should be a great period of recreation and relaxation for the person who has been busy with the passing things of this life.

(6) The real reason some do not attend faithfully and consistently the services of worship is that they do not have enough interest in their souls and in the church. Seldom ever do they admit this, the real reason; they usually offer some excuse like the ones mentioned above.

Review Exercise

1. What does Heb. 10:25 teach?
2. Quote Acts 20:7.
3. Prove that "the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7) means the first day of every week.
4. Prove that the church at Corinth ate the Lord's supper the first day of every week.
5. Name as many reasons as you can for attending the services of worship.
6. How will faithful attendance at the worship prove one's love for the Lord?
7. How does consistent attendance at the services of worship, or the lack of it, prove one's faith?
8. At the worship we may meet the Lord and be with him (T or F).
9. If we do not enjoy worship in this world, could we enjoy heaven in the next?
10. What does absenteeism from the worship services do?
11. What may have caused some in the first century to absent themselves from public worship?
12. Comment on some of the excuses offered today for not attending the worship services faithfully.
13. What is usually the real reason for absenteeism from public worship?

IV

DON'T BE FASHIONED ACCORDING TO THIS WORLD

I. INTRODUCTION

THE title for this chapter is suggested in Rom. 12:2: “*And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*”

II. “BE NOT FASHIONED ACCORDING TO THIS WORLD”

1. *Christians should not conform to the maxims, feelings and manners of the people who know not God.* The people of the world live under the influence of Satan. Some live in the vilest manner, as described by Paul in Rom. 1:18-32. They freely indulge in the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). The god of pleasure is served by the multitudes (I Tim. 5:6). Others of the world live moral lives, but have no concern for the church and the work of God. These attitudes of the world constitute a threat to the spirituality and faithfulness of the people of God. We must not be like the world; we must be different from the world.

2. *We are warned against following the multitudes.* “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil” (Ex. 23:2). The fact that “everybody else is doing it” does not make a thing right. Christians are to fashion their lives after Christ — “to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21) — rather than after the masses.

3. *The Christian life is one of restraint instead of indulgence.* Paul said, “Abstain from every form of evil” (I Thess.

5:22). This does not leave out anything that is wrong. The children of God must deny themselves the common tastes and practices of the world which spot them (Jas. 1:27).

4. *James made it plain that Christianity is antipodal to friendship of the world.* Hear him: "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). This note is given in the margin of the America Standard Bible relative to the meaning of adulteresses: "Who break your marriage vow to God." Worldliness is spiritual adultery. Setting our hearts on and giving our lives to the amusements, gratifications and principles which characterize the people called "the world" is enmity with God. Many who have professed to be the followers of Christ are really his enemies by virtue of the fact that they are trying to serve two masters. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Matt. 12:30). There can be no divided allegiance in the kingdom of God.

5. *Love for God and love for worldly things are incompatible* (I Jno. 2:15-17). Christians are not to love the world. As a person's love for the world increases, his love for God decreases. This was true of Demas who forsook the Lord's work. Paul wrote, "For Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica" (II Tim. 4:10).

6. *Christians must make a distinction between evil and good and between their attitudes toward each.* "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9). When this command is obeyed, it is easy to distinguish Christians from sinners, as easy as distinguishing light from darkness. Christians are light (Matt. 5:14-16). It is regretted that so many are not shining, and thus have lost their identity as the people of God and can no longer be distinguished from alien sinners.

7. It is the work and duty of every Christian to "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). *We must influence sinners rather than allow them to influence us.* Peter teaches that a Christian wife may convert her non-Christian husband by living an exemplary life before him (I Pet. 3:1, 2). "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (I Cor. 5:6). Our leaven for righteousness must be stronger than sinners' leaven for unrighteousness.

III. "BE YE TRANSFORMED"

1. The Christian life is *a changed life*. In writing to the church at Thessalonica, Paul said, "Ye turned unto God from idols to serve a living and true God" (I Thess. 1:9). They had been converted by the power of God's word and were living transformed lives.

2. Peter speaks of *some Christians who had made some diametric changes*. In time past, they "wrought the desire of the Gentiles," "walked in lasciviousness, lusts, winebibbings, revellings, carousings, and abominable idolatries" (I Pet. 4:3, 4). Now life has changed! But their old friends understand not the transforming power of the gospel, and they think it strange that these Christians "run not with them into the same excess of riot." Christians must be transformed from corrupt passions and unlawful desires, dancing and all other acts of revelry, winebibbings and beer-guzzlings, carousals, and all other forms of sinful pleasure.

3. The Christians at Rome had been *transformed from servants of sin to servants of righteousness*. "Ye were servants of sin . . . being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17, 18).

4. Paul in the third chapter of Colossians states *a number of things Christians are to do in completing this change from the world to Christ*:

(1) "Seek the things that are above" (Col. 3:1).

(2) "Set your mind on the things that are above, not

on the things that are upon the earth" (Col. 3:2).

(3) "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry . . . wherein ye also once walked, when ye lived in these things; but now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth: lie not one to another" (Col. 3:5-9).

(4) "Ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man" (Col. 3:9, 10).

(5) "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye: and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:12-14).

5. *This transformation is accomplished by the renewing of the mind.* "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). This means by the making new or by the changing into new views and feelings. The Christian is often spoken of as a new creature (II Cor. 5:17). The mind is renewed from evil thoughts to good thoughts, from unbelief to belief, from the love of the world to the love of the Lord, from trust in material things to trust in God, from unholy purposes to holy purposes, and from disobedience to obedience.

IV. THE TRANSFORMED MIND CONCERNING RECREATION

1. One of the problems today concerning what is right and wrong in the Christian life centers around *recreation*. It is here that many are seeking help.

2. Jesus recognized that *wholesome recreation is helpful*. He commanded his disciples to seek rest (Mk. 6:31, 32). Those who are accustomed to being with people find recreation in going to the country away from people. This was

true of those disciples. Those who work in the country find recreation in going to town to be with the crowds. Individual recreation varies with one's work and environment.

3. *Our recreation should pass a number of tests:*

(1) Is it a work of the flesh? They are given in Gal. 5:19-21. Anything classified as a work of the flesh is wrong for everybody at any time or place. It is wrong within itself.

(2) Does it arouse the indecent within me? This appeal may come through motion pictures or still pictures, reading matter, conversation, and through various associations with the opposite sex. Our recreation must not encourage disobedience to this command: "Whatsoever things are pure . . . think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

(3) Does it interfere with my spiritual growth? Anything which does is wrong (I Pet. 2:1,2; II Cor. 4:16).

(4) Does it weaken me spiritually due to associations with the wicked? We must guard against such. "Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals" (I Cor. 15:33).

(5) Does it weaken my influence as a Christian? We must not give "great occasion to the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme," as did David (II Sam. 12:14). Instead, we should "bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ" (I Cor. 9:12). We should treasure and guard our influence; for "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22:1).

(6) Can Jesus walk with me as I do this? Jesus said, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). But sin separates between us and the Lord. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God" (Isa. 59:2). If Jesus cannot go with us, we had better not go. If something comes between us and the Lord, we had better refrain from it.

(7) Is it within my financial ability? "Owe no man anything" (Rom. 13:8). It is wrong to make obligations we cannot meet. We must live within our means.

(8) Will it injure my health? We should discriminate between recreation and dissipation. Recreation contributes to health, but dissipation destroys it. It is sinful to destroy the body, for the body is the temple of God (I Cor. 3:16, 17).

Review Exercise

1. What does it mean to "be not fashioned according to this world?"
2. Does the fact that "everybody else is doing it" make a thing right? What did Moses say about this principle?
3. "The friendship of the world is.....with....."
4. What is the meaning of the word "adulteresses" in Jas. 4:4?
5. Prove that there can be no halfway Christians or divided spiritual allegiance.
6. What should a Christian's attitudes be toward evil and good? Scripture.....
7. What did Paul say the members of the church at Thessalonica had done relative to a changed life? Scripture.....
8. What did Paul say relative to the transformed lives of the Christians in Rome?
9. Name four things mentioned in Col. 3 that man is to do in completing the change from the world to Christ.
10. What is it that makes possible the changed state or transformation?
11. Name eight tests that recreation should pass.
12. A work of the flesh can be right under some circumstances (T or F).
13. How valuable is a good name? Scripture.....
14. What is the difference between recreation and dissipation?

V

DON'T WASTE TIME

I. INTRODUCTION

DOST thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.”—*Poor Richard's Almanac*, Benjamin Franklin. The title for this chapter is surely an important “don't” for the Christian. Paul admonishes us to be busy, “redeeming the time [buying up the opportunity, footnote] because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:16).

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF TIME

1. Science has been able to add a number of years to the span of life, but *the greatest question of the day is not how to add years to life, but how to add life to years.* There is a vast difference between existing and using one's time well. One may exist fourscore years and never really live, due to a waste of life or time. Methuselah was 969 years old when he died, but he may have lived very little in one sense. There is no record of his having accomplished one thing. Concerning him, the Bible only states that he was here on the earth for 969 years.

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

2. Thomas Edison said, “*Time is the most important thing in the world.*” Time is the best remedy for our heart-aches and ills. In time, Joseph forgot his toil and affliction (Gen. 41:51). Time is the most efficient detective to uncover error and bring truth to light. Time revealed to Jacob that his sons had lied concerning the disappearance of Joseph

and that he was alive (Gen. 45:25-28). Time is the best builder. The passing of the years can build a great city where cattle once roamed. It can raise up a teacher of the Word from a babe in Christ. "For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers" (Heb. 5:12). Time is the best arbitrator to restore broken friendships. Time arbitrated the difference between Paul and Barnabas and restored Mark to Paul's confidence (Acts 15:37-39; I Cor. 9:6; Col. 4:10, 11; II Tim. 4:11). Many of the valuable things of life which are lost can be regained, but time cannot be gotten back. Character may crumble to pieces and be built up again. Health may be lost and regained. Lost friends may be regained or new ones won. Silver and gold may fly from us and be recovered later. But time cannot be recalled. When once it is gone, it is gone forever.

3. *The brevity and uncertainty of man's life emphasize the importance of time.* Time is not important to God, because he is from everlasting to everlasting (Psa. 90:2); hence, "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8). But time is important to man, because he has only a limited amount of it on this earth. Note these scriptures: Psa. 90:10; Job 14:1; Jas. 4:13, 14; Prov. 27:1. In view of the brittleness of the thread of life, we cry out in the appropriate words of the ancients: "Jehovah, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; let me know how frail I am" (Psa. 39:4). "So teach us to number our days, that we may get us a heart of wisdom" (Psa. 90:12). "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jno. 9:4).

The clock of life is wound but once,
 And no man has the power
 To tell just when the hand will stop,
 At late or early hour.
 Now is the only time you own!
 Live, love, toil with a will;
 Place no faith in tomorrow
 For the hands may then be still.

III. GOD CONDEMNS IDLENESS AND LAZINESS

1. *Jesus rebukes idleness* by asking the question, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" (Matt. 20:6).
2. *Hunger is one of the penalties of idleness*: "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and the idle soul shall suffer hunger" (Prov. 19:15).
3. *Another price the indolent must pay for their slothfulness is the wearing of rags*: "And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags" (Prov. 23:21).
4. *Idleness leads to many other evils*, as seen from Paul's writings: "And withal they learn also to be idle, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" (I Tim. 5:13).

IV. HOW TIME IS WASTED

1. *Lack of application*. "Go to the ant, thou slug-gard; consider her ways, and be wise" (Prov. 6:6).
2. *Lack of organization*. "Seest thou a man diligent [skilful, footnote] in his business? he shall stand before kings" (Prov. 22:29).
3. *Reading cheap literature*. "For as he thinketh within himself, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). Literature directs our thinking.
4. *Unwholesome recreation and entertainment*. "Abstain from every form of evil" (I Thess. 5:22).
5. *Meditating on fanciful injuries*. "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matt. 18:15).
6. *Pondering past mistakes*. "One thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13, 14).
7. *Worrying about what may happen in the future*.

"And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

8. *Gossiping or lending ears to a gossiper.* "He that would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (I Pet. 3:10).

9. *Lying in bed longer than is needful or even helpful.* "Love not sleep lest thou come to poverty" (Prov. 20:13).

10. *Unnecessarily long telephone conversations.* "In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression: but he that refraineth his lips doeth wisely" (Prov. 10:19). Note Eccl. 5:2.

Many men and women fill their days with too many wholly useless things, leaving no time for God and his church. The reason that many do not have time to do church work is that they waste their time doing things not essential.

V. EXCUSES OFFERED FOR WASTING TIME IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

1. Some say, "*I have so many other things that have to be done, it does not leave any time for church work.*" Think seriously, Christian friends, have you ever been guilty of offering this excuse? If so, how will you fare when you face these words in the judgment, "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). We must conserve our moments so that we shall have some time to work for the Lord.

2. Some say, "*I am too young to give my time to the Lord.*" But the Lord wants the strength, vigor and enthusiasm of youth. "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth" (Eccl. 12:1).

3. Others say, "*I am too old to accomplish anything.*" Age does not necessarily give wisdom; gray hair does not necessarily signify gray matter; neither does the accumulation of years assert that a man's accomplishments decline in

value nor that his abilities necessarily become debilities. Remember:

(1) Commodore Vanderbilt, between the ages of seventy and eighty-three, added about one hundred millions to his fortune.

(2) Verdi at seventy-four produced his masterpiece, "Othello"; at eighty, "Falstaff"; and at eighty-five, the famous "Ave Maria."

(3) Tennyson at eighty-three wrote "Crossing the Bar."

(4) Titian at ninety-eight painted his historic picture of the "Battle of Lepanto."

Age may necessitate retirement in the commercial world, but we must never retire in the Lord's service (II Cor. 4:16).

4. Some say, "*If I could do a big work, I would.*" But if one will not do what he can, neither would he do "big things" if he had the ability or the opportunity. "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much" (Lk. 16:10).

5. Some say, "*The Lord cannot use me in his work.*" Do not say that. Have you not read the following accounts?

(1) Christ used two mites to teach a lesson on generosity (Mk. 12:41-44).

(2) Jehovah used a stone, a sling, and a shepherd boy to overcome the giant, Goliath, who had defied the people of God (I Sam. 17).

(3) Our Father used Moses, "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue," to lead the Israelites (Ex. 4:10).

(4) The Lord used a donkey in his service (Matt. 21:1-3).

(5) Christ used a boy's lunch to feed the multitudes (Jno. 6:9-11).

If God can use the above mentioned things in his service, he can use our lives, no matter how insignificant they may seem to us.

Review Exercise

1. What does it mean to "redeem the time"?
2. Comment: It is better to add life to years than to add years to life.
3. What did time do for Joseph? For Paul and Barnabas?
4. Why is time not important to God, but is important to man?
5. Quote Psa. 90:12.
6. What question did Christ ask in condemning idleness?
7. Name two penalties of idleness.
8. Name some evils, mentioned by Paul, which are encouraged by idleness.
9. Name ten ways time is wasted.
10. Name five popular excuses given for wasting time in the Lord's vineyard.
11. When should man begin to serve God? Scripture.....
12. Prove that one should never retire in the Lord's vineyard. Scripture.....
13. Answer this excuse for not working for the Lord: "If I could do a big work, I would."
14. Answer this excuse for wasting time that should be spent in the Lord's vineyard: "The Lord cannot use me in his work."
15. Prove that God can use a person "slow of speech" to accomplish great things.

VI

DON'T SIN WITH THE TONGUE

I said, *I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue*" (Psa. 39:1).

Another thing for Christians to avoid is the misuse and abuse of the tongue. It is God's will that man bridle his tongue; otherwise, his religion is vain. James declares, "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jas. 1:26). There are many ways in which man can sin with the tongue; for instance:

1. *Taking God's name in vain.* See Chapter I, "DON'TS."

2. *Filthy speaking.* "But now do ye also put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, railing, shameful speaking [filthy communication, K. J. V.] out of your mouth" (Col. 3:8). A filthy mouth reveals a filthy heart, "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34). A Christian's conversation should be pure; he should not indulge in dirty jokes, obscene allusions and indecent talk which has a double meaning; nor should he smile when others tell such; he must think on things that are pure (Phil. 4:8) and season his speech with salt (Col. 4:8).

3. *Gossip.* Tale-bearing has always been an awful menace to society. God has legislated against it. "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people" (Lev. 19:16). It is not wise to tell secrets; however, a faithful person keeps a secret, but a talebearer reveals it. "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth a matter." (Prov. 11:13). With this passage as the measuring rod, which are you? A

talebearer? Or a faithful person? Gossip can alienate friendships. This we know from observation and from the Bible. "A whisperer separateth chief friends" (Prov. 16:28). Gossip can start a run on a bank, divide a church, break up a family, ruin a reputation and shatter the happiness of the innocent. The devilish work of the following characters should not be tolerated: Madam Don't You Tell, Sister Add To, Mrs. I've Heard, Miss Suspicious Remark, Brother Rumor, Mr. Vicious Talk, Brother They Say and Mr. Slander Good Name. God said in the long ago that the righteous are not to associate with such persons. Hear him: "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; therefore company not with him that openeth wide his lips" (Prov. 20:19). So the person who lends his ears to gossip is guilty just the same as the person who wags the tongue. An eagerness to hear evil and slander reveals a wicked heart, as we see from Solomon's writings: "A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue" (Prov. 17:4). Remember: if there were no gossipy ears, there would soon be no gossipy tongues.

4. *Railing* is forbidden (I Tim. 6:4,5). This means to insult, revile, vituperate and scoff. It is unchristian.

5. *Clamor* is another thing we must put away (Eph. 4:31). This is uproar, outcry, or violent expression of discontent; such as men use in a brawl. It characterizes the mob, and should not be known among God's children. Christians must learn to be calm and serious.

6. *Hasty words*. James said, "But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (Jas. 1:19). This passage reminds us of the common motto: "Think twice before you speak." If all of us would do this, no doubt there would be less speaking and more joy in the world. "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles" (Prov. 21:23).

7. *Angry words* excite strife. "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but a grievous word stirreth up anger" (Prov.

15:1). It is not always wise for one to speak his mind; if he does, God says he is a fool: "A fool uttereth all his anger [mind, K. J. V.]; but a wise man keepeth it back and stilleth it" (Prov. 29:11). Christians are "not to be contentious" but gentle (Tit. 3:2).

Angry words! O let them never
From the tongue unbridled slip;
May the heart's best impulse ever
Check them ere they soil the lip.

8. *Deceitful speaking.* "Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in his heart he layeth wait for him" (Jer. 9:8). One of the negative qualifications of deacons is "not double-tongued" (I Tim. 3:8). So many people have double tongues and "frameth deceit" (Psa. 50:19). They talk one way at your face and another way at your back. But one of our Christian duties is to so speak and so do that we can be relied on for what we say.

9. *Flattery.* "A flattering mouth worketh ruin" (Prov. 26:28). Flattery comes from an unfaithful and insincere person. "For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue" (Psa. 5:9). Christians should so conduct themselves that they might say in the language of Paul, "For neither at any time were we found using words of flattery" (I Thess. 2:5).

10. *Boasting.* "So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things" (Jas. 3:5). Bragging is contrary to Christianity and James says that it is evil. "But now ye glory in your vauntings: all such glorying is evil" (Jas. 4:16).

11. *Murmurings and complainings.* The children of Israel did much murmuring and complaining and Paul used them as an example to warn Christians. He said, "Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured and perished by the destroyer" (I Cor. 10:10). This was written for our admo-

nition. They had been brought into a wilderness of want and thought that they might perish. They complained of their leaders and proposed to return to Egypt. Children whine and cry and complain. But Christians are to put away childish things and behave themselves like men (I Cor. 16:13).

12. "Their mouth speaketh *great swelling words*" (Jude 16). II Pet. 2:18. "The word means of excessive bulk . . . it denotes a kind of speech full of high-sounding verbosity without substance."—*Word Studies in the New Testament*, Vincent. It is so easy to talk and not say anything, "multiply words without knowledge" (Job 35:16). Our conversations should be more than a contest of words. Let us take heed to Solomon's excellent advice: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression; but he that refraineth his lips doeth wisely" (Prov. 10:19).

13. *False teaching*. Relative to this sin of the tongue, listen: "There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:7). Peter declares that just as there were false prophets among the people, even so there would arise false teachers who would make merchandise of souls (II Pet. 2:1-3). Christ warned of wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15). Paul speaks of some who were "teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Tit. 1:10). Man is not permitted to alter God's word (Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18, 19); it is final; it is the last word; beyond it there is no appeal. We should be sure that we are teaching the truth. Using the tongue to misrepresent Christ, his church and his teachings is an awful abuse of the privilege of speech. It leads to ruin, for "if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit" (Matt. 15:14). Teaching or preaching the Word is such a tremendous responsibility that James said, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment" (Jas. 3:1). See topics, "Guard the Truth," page 74, and "Don't Be Deceived By False Doctrines," page 146.

14. *Lying*. One of the hateful and abominable things in

the sight of God is a lying tongue (Prov. 6:16-19). Prov. 12:22. Lying is satanic for Satan "is a liar, and the father thereof" (Jno. 8:44). This is the doom of liars: "their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). Paul makes it plain that Christians must tell the truth. He said, "Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor" (Eph. 4:25).

In concluding this part of our study concerning the tongue, we are reminded of these words: "He that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (I Pet. 3:10). Divine advice! And man needs it!

Review Exercise

1. What did James say about the religion of the man who has an unbridled tongue? Scripture.....
2. What does a filthy mouth reveal? Scripture.....
3. "A whisperer.....chief.....". Scripture
4. Why is it wrong to lend our ears to gossip?
5. What is railing?
6. What is clamor?
7. What will a soft answer do? Scripture.....
8. Criticize this spirit: "I always speak my mind." What did God say about such a person?
9. Can a deceitful man be a deacon?
10. A flattering mouth worketh ruin (T or F).
11. Quote Prov. 10:19.
12. How can a person in the name of religion sin with the tongue?
13. Who is the father of lies? Scripture.....
14. Name ten sins of the tongue.
15. What must the person "who would love life, and see good days" do? Scripture.....

VII

DON'T GET DRUNK — DON'T BE DISCOURAGED BY UNJUST CRITICISMS

I. DON'T GET DRUNK

AND *be not drunken with wine*" (Eph. 5:18).

1. *Another negative for the Christian* is expressed by Paul in the above passage. Paul also says in this verse by way of contrast, "but be filled with the Spirit." In other words, he who is drunken is not filled with the Spirit and vice versa. The contrast is plain. Both the Bible and present day conditions prove the need for this prohibition or "don't."

2. *The prevalence of this sin among ancient people* is evident from several individual cases recorded in the Bible: (1) Noah (Gen. 9:21). (2) Lot (Gen. 19:33, 34). (3) Nabal (I Sam. 25:36). (4) Uriah (II Sam. 11:13). (5) Amnon (II Sam. 13:28). (6) Elah (I Ki. 16:9), etc. (7) The prevalence of drunkenness in New Testament times is reflected in numerous passages: Matt. 24:49; Lk. 21:34; Acts 2:13-15; Eph. 5:18; etc.

3. *Some of the effects of drunkenness* are very graphically portrayed in the Holy Scriptures:

(1) Some of its physical effects: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man" (Psa. 107:27). "Redness of eyes" (Prov. 23:29). "As a drunken man staggereth in his vomit" (Isa. 18:14). What a repulsive scene! How disgusting!

(2) Note some of the mental effects of drunkenness: "And they drank and were merry with him" (Gen. 43:34). "Take away the understanding" (Hos. 4:11).

(3) Drunkenness affects man's joy and prosperity. It

produces woe and sorrow (Prov. 23:29) and poverty (Prov. 23:21); "it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. 23:32).

(4) The sin of drunkenness leads to many other vices. It leads to a perversion of justice (Prov. 31:5; Isa. 5:23), brawls (Prov. 23:1), contentions (Prov. 23:29), indecency (Gen. 9:21), and the utterance of perverse things (Prov. 23:33). It is allied with licentiousness and strange women (Prov. 23:33; Joel 3:3).

(5) Drunkenness enslaves its victims. "Enslaved to much wine" is a statement made by Paul. Legions are slaves of this cruel master which demands their sacrificial services. What a pity! Their freedom has been lost, because their self-control has been destroyed.

4. *God prohibits a man who is a drunkard from a prominent place in the church.* One of the qualifications of an elder or deacon is "not given to much wine" (I Tim. 3:2, 8). The drunkard cannot successfully lead or serve others, because he cannot even lead or serve himself properly.

5. Does not the Bible say something about taking a *little wine for your stomach's sake?* Yes. Let us quote the passage: "Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (I Tim. 5:23). Note: First, a "little" is to be taken in contrast with "much." Second, it was taken for the promotion of health as a medicine rather than for the purpose of producing excitement and hilarity.

6. *Paul lists drunkenness as one of the works of the flesh,* and says, "that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21). Paul repeats the thought in I Cor. 6:10 that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God. There are no "ifs" and "maybes" about this. God has spoken!

II. DON'T BE DISCOURAGED BY UNJUST CRITICISMS

1. *People will find fault no matter what we do. This*

is illustrated by an old Spanish parable concerning a man, a boy, and a donkey. They were all three walking down a dusty road on a summer day. They overheard some passerby say, "Look at those foolish people walking when at least one of them could be riding the donkey." Not wanting to appear foolish, the father climbed upon the donkey. It was not long until another onlooker remarked, "Look at that inconsiderate man making that poor little boy walk." Upon hearing this, the father and son exchanged places, and still they had not satisfied their fellowmen who said, "Look at that young man riding and the old man walking in the heat of the day." The father then got on the donkey with the son. They had only ridden a short distance when another passerby exclaimed, "Look at that poor donkey carrying those two people; they should be carrying the donkey instead." So the man and boy tied the donkey's legs to a pole and proceeded to carry the donkey. Everyone then exclaimed, "Look at those foolish people." This goes to prove that you cannot please everybody, and that you will be censured no matter what you do or how you do it.

2. *Christ was censured because he did not please everybody.*

(1) Jesus was criticized for eating with sinners and publicans. The Pharisees condemned him by asking his disciples, "Why eateth your Teacher with the publicans and sinners?" (Matt. 9:11). If Christ had not eaten with these people, he then would have been accused of being haughty and unfriendly toward the outcast and the poor.

(2) Christ was criticized because of his family and his poverty. Men were astonished at his mighty works and asked, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13:55). But if his family had been rich, he would not have escaped criticism. It would then have been said that Jesus was "born with a silver spoon in his mouth" and that he was unacquainted with the struggles of the common people. Many of the world's great men and women have been born of humble parentage.

(3) Our Lord was chided because of the community in which he lived. "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (Jno. 1:46). Many persons have been criticized because of the communities in which they grew up; it is a fact that many of the world's most outstanding citizens have come from obscure places.

(4) Simon found fault with the Saviour for permitting a sinful woman to touch him (Lk. 7:36-39). But if Jesus had refused, he would have been condemned for being untrue to his mission. It would have been said that he came to save sinners, but would not allow a sinner even to touch him.

(5) Jesus was persecuted for healing on the Sabbath (Jno. 5:1-16). But if Christ had refused to heal the cripple, it would have been said that he respected rites and ceremonies more than persons. "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mk. 2:27).

Those who criticized Jesus were wanting to find fault with him. When the censorious are looking for evil, they are sure to find it, even though they have to make something out of nothing as they did relative to Christ. Christians, be not dismayed at the faultfinding of the hypercritical man or woman, because even Jesus Christ could not please everybody. This being true, no one can serve well as a leader in the church or in any other realm who cannot take criticism.

3. *Reactions to criticisms.*

(1) Since we shall be criticized regardless, it is better to "suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing" (I Pet. 3:17). Benjamin Franklin said, "Be sure you are right and go ahead." Never say, "Oh, well, I shall be criticized anyway" to justify wrongdoing.

(2) Our reactions to criticisms should not be determined by whether the criticisms were meant to be destructive or constructive, but by the merit of such. We might be able to profit by the criticisms even though they were intended to hurt us; if so, we have gained that much.

(3) God's people must never give up the right because

they are reproached for it. Solomon said, "Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). If a thing is right, we should go ahead even though the whole world is against us. It was this spirit that gave birth to the movement to restore unadulterated, New Testament Christianity. It is this spirit that guards the faith today. May our every deed be motivated by the desire to please God instead of man (Gal. 1:10). We are reminded of this incident: At the conclusion of a service, one man said to another, "I didn't like the prayer you prayed tonight." The reply was, "Sir, the prayer was not addressed to you for your approval."

(4) The Lord has promised to bless the ones who are "persecuted for righteousness' sake . . . when men shall reproach you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely" for his sake (Matt. 5:10-12). Let us be sure we are suffering for Christ's sake and not for the sake of our sins; under these circumstances, we shall be blessed.

4. *A word to the censorious.* If people really knew each other and the circumstances involved, I am sure they would not be as merciless in their criticisms as they oftentimes are. A man in a Pullman car, after listening for an hour or more to a screaming baby, exclaimed to the man who was walking up and down the aisle with the child, "Oh, why don't you take that kid to its mother?" The man replied with tears in his voice, "I would gladly do so, sir, but this baby's mother is in a casket in the baggage car." He would not have spoken so impatiently had he known the facts. Neither would we in every case be so harsh in our criticisms of others, if we knew the circumstances.

Jesus instructs the censorious person to be sure that he has removed the beam from his own eye before he criticizes another for having a mote in his eye (Matt. 7:3-5).

Review Exercise

1. What is the contrast mentioned in Eph. 5:18?
2. Name five Old Testament characters who became drunken.
3. Name five effects of drunkenness.

4. Name five other vices encouraged by drunkenness.
5. A drunkard cannot qualify as an elder or deacon (T or F).
6. Explain I Tim. 5:23.
7. Can a drunkard inherit the kingdom of God?
8. Comment on these statements: "I take just a social drink to be a good sport." "I drink to drown my troubles."
9. Name four things for which men criticized Jesus.
10. How do some people vainly attempt to justify their wrongdoing?
11. Name three right ways to respond to criticisms.
12. Will all people who are persecuted be blessed?
13. What instructions did Jesus give to censorious persons?
14. Comment on this thought: Christians should expect criticisms and persecutions. I Tim. 3:12.
15. Thought question: What about the person who never sees anything wrong in anything or anybody? Heb. 5:14.

VIII

DON'T ENVY—DON'T DO YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM WRONG MOTIVES

I. DON'T ENVY

ENVY is defined: "Discontent at the excellence or good fortune of another. Frequently in the Bible with the distinct idea of malice or spite."—*Cruden's Complete Concordance*. Envy is to be distinguished from jealousy. "We are jealous of our own; we are envious of another man's possessions. Jealousy fears to lose what it has; envy is pained at seeing another have."—*Crabb's English Synonyms*.

2. *The Bible catalogues envy among "the works of the flesh"* (Gal. 5:19-21) in distinction from "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22, 23). It is satanic in nature and origin.

3. In the first chapter of Romans *envy is classed with covetousness, maliciousness, strife, deceit, malignity and murder* as one of the deadly sins of the pagan world. No vice is more ruinous to character or more condemned by God's word. It is a sin of disposition which is both mean and wicked. Envy is outrageously malicious, because it seeks to deny or destroy the good it sees in others. It "traduceth the best actions and turneth them into an ill odor." A man who lacks a certain admirable quality may envy that virtue in others. "Men's minds will either feed upon their own good, or upon others' evil," and envy makes an effort to turn others' good to evil in order to feed upon it.

4. Solomon declares, "*But envy is the rottenness of the bones*" (Prov. 14:30). Like a cancer, it eats out the life of the soul.

5. *Envy has committed some of the foulest deeds of*

history.

(1) Envy committed the first crime in history. It was envy that caused Cain to slay Abel (Gen. 4:1-8). Some men today envy the positions and talents of others, and murder their reputations.

(2) Envy delivered Christ to be crucified. Pilate "knew that for envy they had delivered him up" (Matt. 27:18). So envy committed what men have called the blackest crime of history.

(3) Envy sold Joseph into slavery. In Gen. 37 we have the account of Joseph's being sold by his brethren into Egyptian servitude. This cruel deed was the fruit of envy. "And his brethren envied him" (ver. 11).

6. "*Love envieth not*" (I Cor. 13:4). This is true, because envy has its root in selfishness. The person who envies is self-centered and self-seeking; but "love seeketh not its own" (I Cor. 13:5). Love is unselfish; therefore, where there is love there can be no envy. A mother does not envy her daughter's dress or hat; neither does a father envy the success and fame of his son. When there is envy among preachers, elders, deacons, song leaders, Bible teachers and other members of the church, it is proof that there is a lack of love for each other. Thus as envy manifests itself, it also reveals other basic sins which produce this malignant evil.

7. The newborn babe in God's family is specifically *commanded to put away envy* (I Pet. 2:1, 2). It has no place in the life of a Christian. When a man of mediocre ambition and inferior thought spends his life in envying another man for his eminent success, his notable influence and his high ideals, it will dwarf, wither, and shrivel the soul of the envious, fill his life with hatred and bitterness and make his life miserable and wretched. To love is to rejoice in another's good and to seek his welfare; this is Godlike. To envy is to cherish the murderous hatred of Cain who slew his brother; this is satanic.

II. DON'T DO YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM WRONG MOTIVES

"Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them" (Matt. 6:1).

1. The Saviour begins this "don't" or negative with a *warning*: "Take heed." Christ is not an imaginary alarmist, so we had better pay attention. This is a real danger.

2. *This is not a warning against open discipleship.* We are not forbidden to do righteousness before others. Christianity is not to be concealed under a bushel, but is to be allowed to show itself and radiate like a lamp on a stand that the world may be benefited (Matt. 5:15). We are commanded to let our light shine before men (Matt. 5:16). Jesus tells us why—that men "may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Paul said, "Christ shall be magnified in my body" (Phil. 1:20). The only way some people ever see Christ is in the life of somebody else; they do not read the Scriptures or listen to preaching. Peter declared that a Christian woman may win her non-Christian husband to the Lord by her manner of life before him (I Pet. 3:1-3). Exemplified Christianity is a convincing argument. No doubt, many persons would still be in their alien state, if it had not been for the Christian living before them. Those godly lives were too leavening (Matt. 13:33) for those unconverted to continue in sin.

3. *Then why do we have this "don't" or prohibition?* It was not given to control our activities, but was given instead to govern our motives which produce our activities. Jesus said, "Before men, to be seen of them." Now this is the thing that is prohibited. In Christian living, not only must we do the right thing, but we must do it from the right motive. In Matt. 5 Jesus talks about actions, but in Matt. 6 he deals with the motives. Our Saviour condemns ostentatious works performed for human praise and self-laudation. The haughtiness and hypocrisy of the Pharisees are here rebuked.

4. *"Else ye have no reward with your Father who is in*

heaven." If the righteousness of men is motivated by a desire for earthly glory, God will not reward them. Jesus said, "They have their reward." They were trying to acquire the reputation of being righteous and liberal, and were seeking the praise of men. They will get this reward, but they will get none from God. They will get only that which they were seeking: the applause of men. Acts of righteousness apart from love are empty. The incentive that avails heavenly blessings is "faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6). The most laudable works will go unrewarded at the judgment if love is lacking (I Cor. 13:1-3).

5. *Christ brings the motive test to bear upon three activities:* giving (Matt. 6:2-4), praying (Matt. 6:5-8) and fasting (Matt. 6:16-18). The hypocrites did these things for the acclaim of men. They made a great noise about their giving to be sure every one knew about it. They prayed long prayers in the most conspicuous places that they might attract public attention. They disfigured their faces that they might be seen of men to fast. They were publicity seekers. Christ condemned this ostentatious spirit, and surely the Pharisees felt the sting of it.

6. *These examples illustrate the danger of wrong motives:*

(1) King Saul gave his daughter, Michal, in marriage to David, because he was hoping that she might be a snare to David and that the hand of the Philistines might be against him (I Sam. 18:21). What an impure motive for giving a child in marriage! Many parents have had selfish motives for encouraging their children to marry certain ones, and others have had selfish motives in trying to restrain their children from marriage.

(2) Herod ordered the wise men to go and search for Christ, and, when they had found him, to bring him word that he might go worship this baby (Matt. 2:5, 8). But Herod was a hypocrite. He did not want to worship this child. He really wanted to kill him.

(3) Christ said to the multitude, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled" (Jno. 6:26). Their motive for following Christ concerned the physical instead of the spiritual. This motive has perhaps impelled some in modern times to line up with Christian people.

(4) The scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman taken in adultery (Jno. 8:3-11). This could have been a praiseworthy deed, but their motive was wrong. They were not trying to help the unfortunate woman. They were trying to ensnare Christ.

(5) Judas "came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Rabbi; and kissed him" (Matt. 26:49). But! it was a kiss of betrayal. If the motive had been right, this would have been one of the most beautiful deeds of history. So that which is the blackest could have been the whitest, and that which is the most treacherous could have been the most loyal.

(6) Ananias and Sapphira sold a possession and brought a portion of the money and laid it at the apostles' feet (Acts 5:1-6). The thing wrong with this was that their motive was evil, so evil that it prompted them to lie. Too bad! For it could have been a noble deed of liberality.

7. *Here are some questions which test man's motives:*

(1) Do you work for Jesus when your labors can be seen of men and fail when they are in private?

(2) Do you quit doing good deeds when men fail to applaud?

(3) Do you work so long as you are in the lead and quit when you are expected to follow?

(4) Do you attend church services when your clothes are new and stay away when they are old?

(5) Do you give more when it is known publicly and less when it is in secret?

(6) Are you happy with the church when it serves you and unhappy with it when you are expected to serve it?

Review Exercise

1. What is the difference between jealousy and envy?
2. Envy is a work of the flesh (T or F).
3. Quote Prov. 14:30 relative to envy.
4. What caused Cain to slay Abel?
5. Why was Christ delivered to Pilate? Scripture.....
6. Love does not envy (T or F).
7. Thought question: What are some of the common things that people envy in others?
8. Is it wrong to do righteousness before men?
9. Matt. 6:1 was given to control our.....
(activities, motives).
10. What is the reward of those who do righteousness before men to be seen of them?
11. What is the incentive spoken of in Gal. 5:6 that avails heavenly blessings?
12. How important is love as a motive? I Cor. 13:1-3.
13. In Matt. 6 Christ tested motives with three activities:.....,
.....,
14. What was wrong with Saul's motive in giving Michal in marriage?
15. What was the real motive of Herod in sending the wise men out to search for Christ?
16. Comment on how Judas could have changed his deed by having a different motive for kissing Christ.

IX

DON'T BE DECEIVED

A NOTHER negative for the Christian is "*Be not deceived*" (Gal. 6:7).

I. DON'T BE DECEIVED ABOUT YOUR LIFE

1. *They who claim to be sinless are only deceiving themselves.* "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I Jno. 1:8). The very nature of the gospel implies that we are sinners and are in need of the cleansing blood of Christ. A man who says that he is sinless knows little of himself and of the gospel. "For in many things we all stumble" (Jas. 3:2).

2. *We must not be deceived by a feeling of false security.* The most confident may fall. "For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal. 6:3). They who feel that they are so good they cannot be tempted, so strong they cannot fall, are not safe. They think they are something, but are really nothing. They need to look to themselves lest they be tempted (Gal. 6:1) and to take heed lest they fall (I Cor. 10:12).

3. *Does not the Bible speak of some Christians as perfect?* Paul said, "Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded" (Phil. 3:15). In the footnote of the American Standard Bible the word "fullgrown" is given as the meaning. The same word is used in I Cor. 2:6 where the Greek word is rendered in the King James Version "perfect" while in the American Standard Version it is translated "full-grown." Paul is evidently speaking of mature Christians.

II. DON'T DECEIVE YOURSELF BY HEARING ONLY

Multitudes have been deceived by a passive attitude, by

hearing and refusing to obey. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves" (Jas. 1:22). Only those who "doeth the will of my Father" can enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:22). The doers of the word are the wise who build upon the rock, but the hearers only are the foolish who build upon the sand (Matt. 7:24-27). Just hearing a sermon will not suffice; if it is the truth, it must be put into practice. Thousands of church members are punctual in attending preaching, but go away and do very little about it. They are like "a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (Jas. 1:23, 24). He who pursues such a course is grossly deceived.

III. DON'T BE DECEIVED BY THINKING YOU CAN MOCK GOD

1. *Some are deceived by thinking they can mock God.* They think they can sow one thing and reap something different. But Paul teaches that it cannot be done. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). In all the affairs of life, physical and spiritual, a man's harvest is dependent upon his sowing. Adam and Eve, who were expelled from the Garden of Eden, learned that a sinful sowing must have a bitter reaping (Gen. 3:3, 22-24). Ahab, who wanted the vineyard of Naboth, met the very end God told him he would meet (I Ki. 21:19; 22:38). He learned that God cannot be mocked. Judas learned the hard way that as a man sows so must he reap (Matt. 26:20-25; 27:3-5). There is no escape from it. "For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. 6:8).

2. Some have deceived themselves into thinking they can mock God, *because they can mock man.* We are reminded of these words, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself" (Psa. 50:21). Man can hide from man, so

he thinks he can hide from God. Man's word is often lightly given, so he imagines that God is unfaithful in his word. Since men can deceive each other, they are apt to think they can deceive God. Bribery is a common practice among men, so many think of God in terms of human flesh and expect him to be bribed into good humor. They think they can bribe God into overlooking their sins by going to church occasionally, by giving a little money, etc. Since man lives in a sinful world, sin is not very horrible and repulsive to him; therefore, he is likely to think God feels the same way about it. When we attempt to measure God by our own standard, we are only deceiving ourselves. God is not like man. He cannot be deceived nor mocked because he is all-seeing, all-knowing, all-truthful, all-powerful and all-honorable.

IV. DON'T BE DECEIVED BY SIN

1. "Lest any one of you be hardened by *the deceitfulness of sin*" (Heb. 3:13). The Bible speaks of "the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:25). Sin must be enjoyable or there would not be so many sinners. On the other hand, it is a source of grief and sorrow throughout civilization. Warring nations, broken homes, class hatred, lawlessness, men's disregard for the rights of each other and for the law of God are but marks of sin. Throughout the ages, sin has been "the world's most heartless breaker of human hearts."

2. *Why do people condone and tolerate such a foe of the human race?* There is but one answer: "the *deceitfulness of sin*"; sin has deceived them. Sin does not present itself to us in its true form of treacherous deceit. It does not come wearing the filthy and tattered rags of disillusionment, disappointment, despair and death. But contrariwise, sin comes clothed in the silks and satins of pleasure, peace, righteousness and even religion. Sin promises happiness, but gives sorrow; promises peace, but gives misery; promises life, but gives death. Sin is a snake in the grass, a wolf in sheep's clothing. God does not want us to be deceived by its false pretense and enticing nature.

V. DON'T BE DECEIVED BY RICHES

1. *The thorny-ground hearer* was overcome by the deceitfulness of riches. "The care of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word" (Matt. 13:22).

2. Jesus gives a *parable of a man deceived by riches* (Lk. 12:13-21). The rich man said, "This will I do . . ." But he failed to take God into consideration and died that night. He said, "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry." But the soul cannot live on that which is stacked in barns. He said, "my fruits," "my barns," "my grain and my goods." But God said, "This night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou has prepared, whose shall they be?" Jesus called him a "foolish one." He was grossly deceived.

3. *Lest we be deceived by riches*, it is good for us to remember:

(1) "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk. 12:15).

(2) "The eyes of man are never satisfied" (Prov. 27:20).

(3) "For riches certainly make themselves wings, like an eagle that flieth toward heaven" (Prov. 23:5).

(4) "But godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out" (I Tim. 6:6, 7).

(5) "But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts" (I Tim. 6:9).

(6) "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (I Tim. 6:17).

VI. DON'T BE DECEIVED BY FALSE DOCTRINES

1. *Satan uses every form of strategy, trickery and deceit*

to fight the work of God and to damn souls. One of his most effective wiles is to transform himself into an angel of light (II Cor. 11:13-15). He comes disguised in the robes of religion.

2. *Satan has his ministers* who are fashioned as the ministers of righteousness (II Cor. 11:13-15). They appear to be sheep, but are only wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15). They employ the sleight of men and craftiness (Eph. 4:14), pervert the true gospel and preach a different gospel (Gal. 1:6, 7). These ministers of Satan "with feigned words make merchandise" of souls (II Pet. 2:1-3).

3. *Satan has his synagogues or churches and his sponsored worship.* The Lord speaks of a "synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9). Jesus said that some worshiped him, the Christ, in vain because they taught "as their doctrines the precepts of men" (Matt. 15:9).

4. *Here are some things for us to do to keep from being deceived by false doctrines.*

(1) Prove the teaching by the Bible. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I Jno. 4:1). The Bereans examined the Scriptures daily to see if the things they were hearing were so (Acts 17:11).

(2) Do not listen even to an angel from heaven, if it be some other gospel (Gal. 1:8, 9). No matter who is right or wrong, the Bible is right; let us stay with it.

Review Exercise

1. What did John say about those who claim sinless perfection? I Jno. 1:8.
2. What does it mean when the Bible speaks of some Christians as perfect?
3. How did Ahab attempt to mock God?
4. What conception do men have of God that causes them to think they can mock Him? Scripture.....
5. What is the law of God in both physical and spiritual realms relative to sowing and reaping? Scripture.....

6. How does sin deceive?
7. What did Jesus say, mentioned in the parable of the sower, deceives men?
8. What does Jesus call a man deceived by riches? Scripture.....
9. Why do men think God can be mocked? Scripture.....
10. Satan has his ministers and churches (T or F).
11. It is impossible for a person to worship the Lord in vain (T or F).
12. False.....make merchandise of.....
II Pet. 2:1-3.
13. Name two things we should do lest we be deceived by false doctrine.
14. Name six ways in which we can be deceived.

X

DON'T MEASURE YOURSELF BY OTHERS — DON'T FORGET

I. DON'T MEASURE YOURSELF BY OTHERS

SOME members of the Lord's church want to measure themselves by other members as the standard. Their ideal of service is that of the average. "I am doing as well as the other fellow" is a mighty power over men. You hear them say, "I give as much money, I attend worship as often and I am as devoted to the Lord as the average member." It is true that the standard of "average" has a good influence over some, but it has a bad influence over others. Those persons living below the standard of the average are lifted up by its demands, but those who might have the ambition to excel the average may be pulled down by it. The Christian is in constant danger of being dragged down by averages.

2. *Christ wants service that excels "average."* Jesus gave a higher ideal of righteousness than the standard of the scribes and Pharisees who considered themselves models of righteousness. He said, "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). The Christian was not permitted to measure himself by the Pharisee; he had to excel. In the same sermon, Christ asked, "What do ye more than others?" (Matt. 5:47). Thus the Saviour taught that his followers must not be satisfied to live by the false standards of men; their calling demands that they surpass others.

3. Paul teaches that *it is not wise for the Christian to compare himself with or measure himself by others.* Hear

him: "For we are not bold to number or compare ourselves with certain of them that commend themselves; but they themselves, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding" (II Cor. 10:12). The Pharisee who went into the temple to pray made a mistake in measuring himself by other men and by the publican in particular. He said, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican" (Lk. 18:11). Suppose he was better than some, did that make him as good as he should be? Not necessarily! There are some with this spirit today who say, "You know, I am thankful that I am living better than so-and-so." But these people are not the Christian's standard of conduct; so the question is: Are they living as God requires?

4. *The only pattern and rule of measurement for the Christian is Christ.* He is our example. Peter said, "For heretofore were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21). In this connection, Paul said, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1). Christ is our example and standard. The fact that some church member does not do his duty does not give us a license to sin; for we shall be measured by the word of Christ at the day of judgment and not by the words and deeds of men. The Saviour said, "The word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jno. 12:48).

5. *Christians are exhorted to prove their own works by the true standard.* "But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying [rejoicing, K. J. V.] in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor" (Gal. 6:4). Each is to prove himself and his conduct by the word and example of Christ; and if they are in harmony, he shall then have rejoicing in himself alone, feeling that he is following the true model. He will not have rejoicing in another nor derive his consolation from comparing himself with another who may

be weaker or less instructed than himself.

Christians, you should not measure yourself by others; neither should you measure others by yourself.

II. DON'T FORGET

"Being not a hearer that forgetteth" (Jas. 1:25).

We see from the above scripture that another negative for the Christian is: don't forget; the positive, remember. There are some things that should be forgotten, things evil; but there are many things that should be remembered: God's word, Christian duties, and everything that enriches and ennobles life. But oftentimes we remember what we should forget, and forget what we should remember.

1. *Don't forget God.* As it was in the days of Jeremiah, so it is today with many: "Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number" (Jer. 2:32). A maid cannot forget her ornaments; a bride cannot forget her wedding gown; neither can a man forget his business affairs; but multitudes have forgotten God. They have remembered the material and have forgotten the spiritual. But man, beginning in the days of his youth, is commanded to remember God (Eccl. 12:1).

2. *Don't forget the word of God.* "But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing" (Jas. 1:25). Remember, Christians, we did not hear the word with the object of forgetting it. We heard and enlisted in the Master's service with the aim of remembering his word in our hearts forever. May nothing deter us. If we are hearers that forgetteth not, we shall be blessed.

3. *Don't forget the benefits of God.* "Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (Psa. 103:2). Think of his benefits: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights"

(Jas. 1:17). Let the person who has forgotten God and thinks he does not need the blessings of God do without God's air, sunshine, rain, and a thousand other benefits. It ennobles man to remember from whence these blessings come, and it degrades him to forget such.

4. *Don't forget the consequences of sin.* Jesus said, "Remember Lot's wife" (Lk. 17:32). Why? In fleeing from Sodom, she looked back (Gen. 19:26) when God had commanded them not to look back (Gen. 19:17), and God made her a monument of his displeasure by turning her into a pillar of salt. This is an example of the consequences of sin. Sin has its consequences. Man cannot sin without paying the penalty. The sinner may escape some penalties in this life, because it rains on the just and on the unjust (Matt. 5:45); but the day of reckoning will come (Rom. 14:12).

5. *Jesus does not want us to forget him.* Christ said to the apostles, "Remember the word that I said unto you" (Jno. 15:20).

(1) A remembrance of the word of Jesus will lead to penitence, obedience and righteousness. We have a wonderful example in the life of Peter of what it will do. After Peter had denied his Lord and after the cock crew it was memory which shocked him to his senses and brought him to penitence. "Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said . . . and he went out and wept bitterly" (Matt. 26:75). Through forgetfulness Peter was led away from the Lord, but through memory he was brought back.

(2) It is so vital in Christian living that we remember Jesus and what he has done for us that he instituted the Lord's supper in memory of himself. "The Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in

remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:23-26). The Christian is to observe the Lord's supper as a sweet and simple memorial, a memorial much more effective than a faded flower taken from a loved one's grave, or a lock of hair cut from a friend's head bowed in death, or a marble monument standing on some square. This memorial stands in memory of Christ's having come and as a reminder that he will come again. We take the Lord's supper in retrospect, looking backward to his having come, and in prospect, looking forward to his coming again (I Cor. 11:26). We need the benefits of both. This period of remembrance each week will warm the heart and rekindle love. Our Saviour said, "This do in remembrance of me"; but many have forgotten the Lord in the very thing he has commanded them to do in his memory. As to the regularity with which we are to take the Lord's supper, see chapter on "Don't Forsake the Assembling for Worship," page 107.

6. *Fallen Christians have been too forgetful*; hence, they are admonished to remember. Jesus said to the church at Ephesus which had left its first love, "Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works" (Rev. 2:5). "Remember"! Remember what "first love" caused you to do. Recall the place prayer used to have in your life. Reflect upon how you once read and studied the Bible. Oh! how you loved that Book! Remember how sensitive you were to sin back during those days of "first love" for Christ. But now how long it has been since you have wept over sin! Yes, such a sweet memory of what "first love" did will help to restore the fallen.

7. *A forgetfulness of God is a devastating force which also weakens and destroys nations*: "The wicked shall be turned unto Sheol, even all the nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17). A remembrance of God strengthens nations, but a forgetfulness of God weakens them. Every nation which forgets God sooner or later perishes. America, beware!

8. *If we forget God in this life, memory will haunt us in the next life.* Abraham said to the rich man who was in torments, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things" (Lk. 16:25). The rich man had a memory of what he had done and had failed to do in this life. Grace rejected! God's love refused! The hand of God spurned! The Lord's work deserted! The gospel trampled on beneath unholy feet! These and a thousand other thoughts will haunt us in the hereafter if we forget God in this world and die in that state.

Review Exercise

1. How does the standard of "average" influence people?
2. The standard of "average" meets the approval of Christ (T or F).
3. In which passage did Paul teach that it is not wise for Christians to compare themselves with themselves?
4. Relative to standards of measurement, what mistake did the Pharisee in the parable make? Comment on how some today commit the same error.
5. What is the true rule of measurement for the Christian?
6. How can a person "have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor?"
7. When should man begin to remember God? Scripture.....
8. What kind of hearer did James say would be blessed? Scripture.....
9. Why did Jesus say, "Remember Lot's wife?"
10. How did a remembrance of the words of Jesus affect Peter?
11. What memorial did Jesus institute to perpetuate his memory?
12. How do we take the Lord's supper in retrospect and prospect?
13. How did the Lord appeal to the fallen Christians in the church at Ephesus?
14. Quote a scripture which should cause America as a nation to beware.
15. Prove that memory will not end with death.

XI

DON'T FEAR

F*EAR has a variety of meanings:* "Painful emotion marked by alarm; dread; disquiet; anxious concern; awe; profound reverence, especially for God." — Webster. We wish, however, in this lesson to study fear from the viewpoint of dread, disquiet and concern. In this world of uncertainty, hate, bloodshed and anxiety, the admonition, "Fear not," is certainly timely. It is another "don't" for the Christian.

1. *Don't fear the darts of the wicked*, because God is your shield. Jehovah said to Abram, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (Gen. 15:1). In speaking of the Christian's armor, Paul stated that we have the shield of faith for our protection: "Withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one" (Eph. 6:16).

2. *Don't fear danger*, because the Lord is with us. God said to Isaac, "Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee" (Gen. 26:24). Jesus gave us this promise: "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). It is trust in such promises that dispels fear in time of trouble. We are reminded of a child who said to his father, "Daddy, do not leave me, for if you are with me I shall not be afraid." After the child had gone to sleep the father prayed: "Dear God, do not leave me, for if you are with me I shall not be afraid."

3. *Don't fear our enemies*, because the Lord will fight for us. As the Israelites were ready to cross the Red Sea, pursued by the Egyptians, Moses said, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah . . . Jehovah will fight for you" (Ex. 14:13, 14). Gideon's army, reduced from

thirty-two thousand to three hundred, and with God's help, routed the enemy (Judges 7). This proves that one man with God on his side constitutes the balance of power and needs not fear.

4. *Don't fear that God will fail you or forsake you.* Moses said to Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them: for Jehovah thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Deut. 31:6). God will not forsake us if we draw nigh unto him. James said, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (Jas. 4:8). In this fickle world in which men, without cause, forsake one another, it is consoling to know that "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24).

5. *Don't fear starvation,* for the Lord will supply your needs. Elijah said to the widow, "Fear not . . . The jar of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that Jehovah sendeth rain upon the earth" (I Ki. 17:13, 14). In speaking of God's feeding the birds, Jesus asked, "Are not ye of much more value than they?" (Matt. 6:26). And concerning raiment, our Lord said, "But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 6:30). We have this promise: "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

6. *Don't fear that your burdens will be too heavy,* for God will strengthen you. God said to Israel, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee" (Isa. 41:10). "Cast thy burden upon Jehovah, and he will sustain thee" (Isa. 55:22). Peter said, "Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you" (I Pet. 5:7). But many of us are afraid to cast our burdens upon the Lord. Years ago a farmer in a wagon picked up a packpeddler. The

peddler sat down on the floor of the wagon bed. After awhile the farmer looked back and saw that the peddler still had the pack on his back. He asked, "Why don't you lay the pack down and take a rest?" The peddler replied, "I didn't know whether you were willing to haul both me and my pack or not." Poor fellow! But what about us? If we are God's children, he is already carrying both us and our burdens; and it would not make the Lord's load any heavier for us to lay the burdens down and rest. Remember: "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

7. *Don't fear man.* The writer of Hebrews quotes from Psalms and says, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?" (Heb. 13:6). Saul lamented that one of his great mistakes was made because of his fear of man. Hear him: "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of Jehovah, and thy words, because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice" (I Sam. 15:24). Man can persecute and even destroy life, but he cannot destroy the soul. Our Saviour said, "And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). Let us say in the language of the faithful, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

8. *Don't fear death because:*

(1) Man is a dual being composed of flesh and spirit. The flesh dies, but the spirit lives. "But though our outward man is decaying yet our inward man is renewed day by day" (II Cor. 4:16). Read II Cor. 5:1. In keeping with the thought, hear Solomon: "The dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7). Thus death is not the end of man, but merely the beginning of a new life in another realm. It is good for us to put off these earthly and corruptible bodies, for

they are not suited for an eternal habitation.

(2) The Lord is our shepherd. "Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want . . . Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me" (Psa. 23). As man comes to the great chasm which separates time from eternity and life from death, there where all earthly friends must linger behind, the Shepherd of the soul will walk with the Christian down through the valley of the shadow of death. It is then that his presence will mean more than a thousand worlds.

(3) The Lord will resurrect the dead. "We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:51, 52). If God has the power to resurrect the dead grass in the springtime and to clothe the nude trees with foliage, surely he has the power to resurrect man and to clothe him with a new body "conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:21).

(4) Jesus has gone to prepare the eternal dwelling place of many mansions. "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you" (Jno. 14:1, 2). And he will come again and receive us unto himself.

(5) Death to the Christian is gain. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). We find in this passage the solution of the greatest problems men have ever faced: the problems of life and death. Paul solves the problem of life with four words: "To live is Christ." When the problem of life is solved correctly and scripturally, then there is no problem to death. Death will take care of itself whenever and wherever it comes. Death will be gain.

There are two philosophies of death. One is aptly expressed by Shakespeare in Hamlet:

But that the dread of something after death,
 The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have
 Than fly to others that we know not of.

The other attitude is very beautifully expressed by William Cullen Bryant in *Thanatopsis*:

So live that, when thy summons comes to join
 The innumerable caravan which moves
 To that mysterious realm where each shall take
 His chamber in the silent halls of death,
 Thou go not like the quarry slave at night
 Scourged to his dungeon; but, sustained and soothed
 By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
 Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
 About him and lies down to pleasant dreams.

To the unprepared there is "the dread of something after death"; but to the Christian death is like lying "down to pleasant dreams." It is precious to God. "Precious in the sight of Jehovah is the death of his saints" (Psa. 116:15).

Review Exercise

1. What is the Christian's shield? Scripture.....
2. What promise did Jesus make the disciples, concerning his being with them, at the time he gave the great commission?
3. Why should we not fear our enemies?
4. What reason do we have for feeling that God will not forsake us?
5. What examples did Christ use to illustrate that God will provide sustenance for us?
6. What must man do to have the promise that the necessities of life will be added unto him?
7. "Casting all your upon him, because he for you." Scripture.....
8. What must man do to enjoy the promise that everything will work together for his good?
9. How did fear of man cause Saul to sin?
10. Whom did Jesus teach us to fear? Scripture.....
11. In what sense is man a dual being?
12. Why did the writer of Psa. 23 say that he would fear no evil when he faced death?
13. What consoling thing will transpire at the last trump? Will the righteous and wicked come forth the same hour? Jno. 5:28, 29.
14. How did Paul solve the greatest problems of men? Scripture
15. Quote Psa. 116:15.
16. Name five scriptural truths that should dispel fear of death for the Christian.

XII

DON'T NEGLECT TO TAKE INVENTORY OR EXAMINE SELF

EACH of the twelve took stock by asking, "Is it I, Lord?" When Jesus announced to the twelve disciples, "One of you shall betray me, . . . they were exceeding sorrowful and began to say unto him every one, Is it I, Lord?" (Matt. 26:22). Each examined self. It would have been easy for some to ask, "Lord, is it Peter? James? Or John?" But instead, each searched his own heart, saying, "Is it I, Lord?" Concerning the Lord's supper, we read, "But let a man prove [examine, K. J. V.] himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup" (I Cor. 11:28). Christianity demands that we take inventory of the soul. There is a vast difference between "churchanity" and Christianity. Christianity is not something to wear on Sunday and take off on Monday; it is a daily religion. It would bless us immensely if we would be more thorough in our examinations of self. Now, in the sight of Him who has "eyes like a flame of fire" (Rev. 2:18) and before whom "all things are naked and laid open" (Heb. 4:13), *let us ask ourselves some soul-searching questions.* May each ask, "*Is it I, Lord?*"

(1) Do I occasionally violate this passage: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thy own eye? . . . Thou hypocrite" (Matt. 7:3-5)?

(2) Did I find more joy yesterday in giving than in receiving? Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

(3) Am I putting my trust in the Lord or am I going

beyond the borders of thoughtful concern and engaging in useless worry? "Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding" (Prov. 3:5). Read Rom. 8:28, please.

(4) Is my word as good as my bond? "Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17).

(5) Have I daily manifested Christian friendliness? "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them" (Matt. 7:12).

(6) Do I dress in modest apparel? Have I kept this command: "In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel" (I Tim. 2:9)?

(7) What kind of literature did I read last week? Would it build up a Christian or would it destroy his spirituality? "For as he thinketh within himself, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). And a man's thinking is affected by his reading.

(8) Am I guilty of violating this command: "And be not drunken with wine" (Eph. 5:18), or have I dimmed my light of influence by taking just a social drink? Matt. 5:16.

(9) Have I encouraged my son to become a gambler by playing for stakes at the card table? "Provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

(10) Did I engage in any questionable entertainment yesterday? "Pure religion . . . is . . . to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27).

(11) Would I want Christ to find me in every place I went last month? Beer taverns? Honkey tonks? Night clubs? Or was the conduct in my own home compatible with Christianity? "Watch therefore; for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh" (Matt. 24:42).

(12) Did I yesterday take the name of the Lord in vain? Or did I use idle talk or slang? "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain" (Ex. 20:7). Matt. 12:36, 37.

(13) Do I tell dirty jokes? Or do I laugh when

someone else tells them? "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" (Col. 4:6).

(14) Am I humble? Or do I think too highly of myself? "For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think" (Rom. 12:3).

(15) Am I keeping this command: "Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

(16) Did I forgive my brother who trespassed against me? "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:15).

(17) Did I return evil for evil? "Render to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17).

(18) Did I turn against a friend and return evil for good? "So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men" (Gal. 6:10).

(19) Have I acted hypocritically by talking one way in the presence of one friend and by talking a different way in the presence of another friend? "Not double-tongued" (I Tim. 3:8).

(20) Am I guilty of murder because of hatred in my heart toward someone? "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (I Jno. 3:15).

(21) Have my attitudes toward those of the opposite sex been Christian? "But I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28).

(22) Did I help a needy neighbor when I could have helped? "So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men" (Gal. 6:10).

(23) Did I say an unkind thing about anybody yesterday? "Speak not one against another, brethren" (Jas. 4:11). Think! Did I?

(24) Did I spread gossip yesterday? Or did I lend my

ears to gossip and thus encourage its circulation? "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people" (Lev. 19:16).

(25) Did I become angry yesterday? If so, did I let the sun go down upon my wrath? "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26).

(26) At anytime during the past week did I violate the Golden Rule? "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12).

(27) Would I want my child to do everything I did yesterday? "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

(28) Have I, through jealousy, mistreated my in-law relations? "Love worketh no ill" (Rom. 13:10). "For jealousy is the rage of a man" (Prov. 6:34).

(29) Children: Have I honored my parents that my days may be long? "Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:4).

(30) Wives: Have I looked upon my husband just as a "bread ticket" instead of one to work with and help? "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). A help!

(31) Husbands: Have I looked upon my wife just as someone to keep house for me? "Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them" (Col. 3:19).

(32) Have I used insincere words to gain selfish ends? Have the words of my mouth been contrary to the sentiments of my heart? "With their tongues they have used deceit" (Rom. 3:13).

(33) Did I lie to put over a business transaction? "Lie not one to another" (Col. 3:9).

(34) Have I placed the church above every other institution and thing in the world? Or am I guilty of violating this command: "But seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness" (Matt. 6:33).

(35) Do I stay out so late on Saturday night that I am not in physical condition to worship God "in spirit and truth" (Jno. 4:24).

(36) Do I purpose in my heart each week what I should give to the Lord on the Lord's day? "Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7).

(37) Did I refuse to defend the church when it was attacked? Paul said, "I am set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil. 1:16).

(38) Have I contended earnestly for the faith? Or have I taken the attitude that it makes no difference? "I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

(39) Do I invite someone to church each week? "And he that is wise winneth souls" (Prov. 11:30).

(40) Wives: Did I so arrange my household duties last week that I could attend Bible study and worship Sunday morning? Or did I wait until Sunday morning to do those things which could have been done previously and thus neglected to put spiritual things first? Matt. 19:29.

(41) Have I attended worship faithfully? Or have I forsaken the assembling of the saints? "Not forsaking our own assembling together" (Heb. 10:25).

(42) Do I take my child to church? Or do I send him? Have I made a sincere effort to bring up my child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

(43) Have I been more interested in my own amuse-

ments and in social affairs than in the work of the church? "For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life" (Mk. 8:36).

(44) Did I read and study my Bible yesterday? "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (I Tim. 4:13).

(45) Did I pray yesterday? "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17).

(46) Did I visit the sick? This will come up at the judgment (Matt. 25:36-46).

(47) Did I make an effort yesterday to restore the fallen? "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness" (Gal. 6:1).

(48) Do I look for opportunities to preach the gospel to lost souls? "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk. 16:15).

(49) Am I a lover of the world more than a lover of God? "Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (II Tim. 3:4).

(50) Have I been irreverent around the Lord's table? "Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord" (I Cor. 11:27).

(51) Did I yesterday, in an effort to impress wicked people, act meaner than I really am? Peter did, but later repented (Matt. 26:69-75). Do I need to repent of this sin?

(52) Am I cooperative? Can I work well with others? "And working together with him" (II Cor. 6:1).

(53) Am I making spiritual growth as a child of God? "As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (II Pet. 2:2).

(54) Did I yesterday count all things loss to gain Christ? Paul said, "Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. 3:7).

(55) Am I guilty of saying and not doing? In speaking of the Pharisees, Jesus said, "They say, and do not" (Matt. 23:3).

(56) Have I become weary in well-doing? "And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

(57) Am I selfish and self-centered? "Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Phil. 2:4).

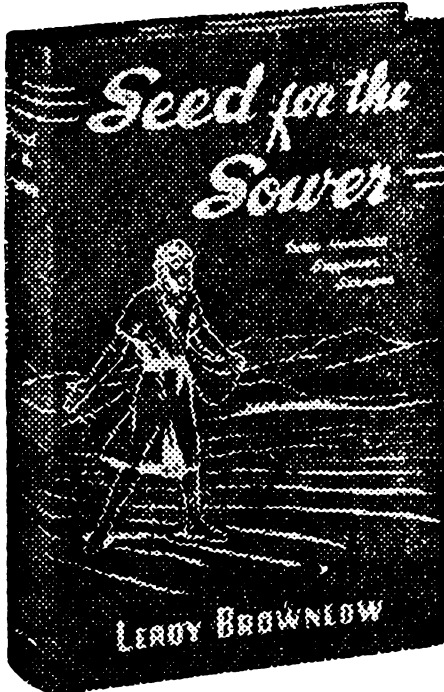
(58) Am I guilty of avenging myself? "Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19).

(59) Has my conduct hindered the gospel of Christ? Paul said, "But we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ" (I Cor. 9:12).

(60) Am I earnestly striving this day to open my life more completely to God and his way of life? Am I? "Is it I, Lord?"

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