







# THE DEITY OF JESUS

## AND OTHER SERMONS

BY

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**"All hail the power of Jesus' name!  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown Him Lord of all."**

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## DEDICATION

**T**O the memory of a younger brother, Kenneth K. Kellems, who, in accordance with the traditions of his family, planned to be a minister of the Word, but who in answer to his country's call gave his life in the cause of world freedom, the first man from his State, this book is lovingly dedicated.



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# I

## The Deity of Jesus

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*Text: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."—Matt. 16:16.*

### INTRODUCTION

There have in reality been but two views of Jesus. No matter how many shades of meaning we have regarding the person of that mighty one who has wrought so powerfully in the history of the world, in the last analysis there are but two views of him. Whether it be the Ebionites or Gnostics, the Neo-Platonists or Arians, the Socinians or the Unitarians, there have always been but the two views of the person of Christ.

The first view maintains that he was just the son of man. "He was a great man, truly wonderful, but only a man, a bright and shining light like John the Baptist, a sensitive tender-hearted patriot and martyr like Jeremiah, an intrepid messenger from the courts of Heaven like Elijah, a beautiful Heraclitus or Socrates, a noble Seneca or Epictetus, a Palestinian Confucius or Buddha, very great, very wonderful, but still a man." (Jefferson, *The Fundamentals*.) As we are men with passions and temptations so also

he was a man, a little better than we are or perhaps ever can hope to be, but after all only a man. Emerson held this view when he said,

“I am the owner of the sphere,  
Of the seven stars and the solar year,  
Of Caesar’s hand and Plato’s brain,  
Of Lord Christ’s heart, and Shakes-  
peare’s strain.”

How little did he understand the man of Galilee. What a travesty that upon the same level with Plato and Caesar he should place the Lord Christ.

Charles Lamb held the opposite and far more noble view when he said, “If Shakespeare should come into this room we would rise to greet him; but if that person (Christ) should enter here, we should fall upon our knees and kiss the hem of his garment.”

If Christ was only a man, we are duty-bound by the urge of the “Categorical Imperative,” to surpass him. We cannot stand still, we must be better men than he was a man. If, however, he was more than a man and better than we are now, we are duty-bound to obey him. If he was only a man, we can master him in every respect for we are men; and after almost two thousand years of experience we should be able to understand him thoroughly, and make him a part of us. But have we mastered him? The church has been endeavoring to do this for almost twenty centuries; but how sadly she has fallen short of the shining character which so long has been her inspiration! To Peter he well said: “Flesh and blood hath

not revealed it unto thee but my Father who is in heaven." Paul said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

Horace Bushnell says that the character of Jesus forbids his possible classification with men. If he was only a man, why are we not turning out better men today? We have every facility today in our great colleges and universities for surpassing anything that his age could produce. And yet, with all these facilities we are falling far short of the standard set by him. What a wondrous miracle; he was raised in an obscure and despised province of the Roman Empire, of poor parents and without the means of education, and yet he is the most colossal figure in all history.

The second view of Christ, and it is the triumphant one, the one held by all the redeemed saints of God throughout the centuries, is that he was the Son of God and the Savior of the world. It was only by coming and dwelling in flesh among men that God could demonstrate love to them, and by the demonstration of that love win them unto his own heart. Let us examine minutely these two views of Christ.

## ARGUMENT

### I. CAN WE EXPLAIN THE LIFE AND WORKS OF JESUS BY THE VIEW THAT HE WAS ONLY A MAN?

First of all let us notice what kind of a picture the disciples paint for us in the gospels.

(1) He is the physically transcendent one.

He has absolute power over nature, which he can command whenever needed to show the glory and

power of his heavenly Father. He heals the sick, he gives sight to the blind and they go on their way rejoicing in the new world before their delighted eyes. He cleanses the leper and returns him to his loved ones. He stills the tempest, speaking to the winds and the roaring waves, and they are still. He feeds the five thousand, and walks on the water. Yea, even more than all this: he has power to bring back the dead from the depths of the tomb. He has absolute power over the forces of earth, sky, and sea. The earth is his, and he rules it according to his will.

(2) He is ethically and spiritually transcendent.

This is by far the most beautiful and amazing part of the picture. Jesus is a member of our race, subject to all its sorrows and temptations, to all its trials and heartaches, and yet he is without sin. There never has been in all the world another of such entrancing loveliness as this one. Those who knew him best and thus had every opportunity of observing taint, if such there had been, testified without one dissenting voice that he was the purest of our race. He is represented as being spotless in conduct and character. John the Baptist, the most outspoken of his contemporaries and the one who would have been the first to denounce sin, believed him pure and recognized his moral preëminence. When Jesus demanded baptism at his hands he protested vehemently: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" (Matt. 3:14). In the presence of Christ's moral beauty Peter felt condemned, and falling down before his Lord, cried out: "Depart from me, for I

am a sinful man, oh, Lord!" (Luke 5:8.) There never was one of his disciples—and they lived with him and knew him intimately for more than three years—who ever accused him of sin. They believed in his moral spotlessness with all their hearts.

The enemies of Jesus testified that he was pure. Pilate, looking upon him with the cold, critical eye of a magistrate, said, "I find no fault in him." While he was hanging on the cross, those who were murdering him testified to his spiritual and ethical beauty when they said, "He trusted in God." The dying thief, rebuking the blatant, angry words of his suffering partner in crime and knowing that the man who died between them was one of superlative excellence, said: "This man hath done nothing amiss." The Centurion, touched by the death of the Lord and realizing that he had died unjustly, cried out at the very foot of the cross: "Truly this was a righteous man."

Jesus was never conscious of sin in his own life. He never confesses it; he never asks for pardon from it; he never seems to have one thought that aught he had ever said or done made him an alien from God. There is nowhere any change of heart or conversion in his life as a beginning of his clean, beautiful years. While he commands men to repent, and his words come with the power of a mighty storm, yet he nowhere shows that he himself needs the message. He clearly considers himself as not belonging to the category of "sinner," a thing which the boldest men have not essayed to do.

The fact that Jesus forgave sins implies moral perfection, for how could he tell men that the past was blotted out unless he himself was so perfect that he had the power to forgive the sins of all? Because of this sinlessness he said unto the sick of the palsy: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." To the scribes the assumption of this authority was tantamount to a declaration of divinity; for they protested, saying, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Their meaning was that if Jesus could forgive sins he was God and morally perfect; for only God has the power to forgive the transgressions of men. To forgive sins against oneself is one thing; but to forgive sins which concern God, and which God alone can know, implies a moral excellence equal to that of God.

Thus we have the evangelists' portrait of Jesus Christ. It is the most original, the most unheard of, the most amazing picture ever painted. The life portrayed is the most beautiful, the most charming, and the most beneficent life that has ever been lived. The work accomplished by this mighty figure is the most stupendous ever accomplished. How can we explain it? What conclusions can we logically draw from the marvelous array of facts presented to us?

## II. CAN WE EXPLAIN THESE FACTS BY THE CLAIM THAT THE LOVE OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST CAUSED THEM TO INVENT THE DEIFIC VIEW?

(1) Was this sort of invention a natural thing to the Hebrew mind?

We have before us the most wonderful and original creation that the world has ever seen. These men were Jews, and as Jews they had inherited a great idea of God, the finest and noblest idea of the ancient world. Now, one of the most amazing things about their portrait of Jesus is the fact that they are able to paint him as the Son of God, the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth,—and yet not lower God to the level of men. The Greeks had thought of sons of God, and they had tried to imagine such an one as the character that the evangelists give us; but in so doing they had brought Zeus down to the level of men with all the follies and weaknesses of men. But not only do the evangelists not bring God down to the level of mankind but in their picture they have actually exalted and ennobled our very idea of God, a work that no other piece of historical literature has ever done or even approached.

But there is something still more remarkable in the view of Jesus as given by the evangelists. “Jesus is conceived as one who has never appeared in history before; he is no ordinary person and yet he is to be portrayed in a history. We should be tempted to represent all that he did as gigantesque and all that he said as oracular and mysterious. The more stupendous the representation grew, the more abnormal, contra-natural, incredible would the conception become and we should be forced to abandon the task, confessing that the work was impossible to literary art. How do the evangelists deal with this problem? In a most surprising way. The highest speculation is embodied in the simplest history. He who is conceived as the

Son of God is represented as the most natural character in all history." (Fairbairn.)

Now, could the disciples of our Lord have invented this wonderful view and in their own power have solved the perplexing theological and historical problems presented by such a conception? If there is anything historically certain about the Hebrew it is that this type of literature was wholly foreign to his mind. He gave to the world no dramas. This type of literature was far more natural to the Greek mind; and had these writers been Greeks, with the same high moral and spiritual conception as that of the Hebrews, we might have credited the position that they had invented the deified Jesus. But, remember that these men were Jews with all the training of Jews, with all the prejudice and beliefs of Jews. We have some very fine specimens of the literature which they did produce in the Old Testament Scriptures, the apocryphal books, the Targums or comments of the scribes upon the sacred writings, and the works of Josephus. In these writings we find the trend of the Hebrew mind and that trend was toward morals and not toward art. In the Laws of Moses there were stern prohibitions against the making of graven images, hence the Hebrews produced no statues or paintings. To do this would have been to break the very commandments of God. In frequent lapses into idolatry they did deify stone or wood, but never a man. This was the Greek idea, but not the Hebrew. Not only so, but the wonders which Jesus did would not have caused the disciples to invent a deific view of

him because they were used to the prophets who did similar things.

(2) What type of men would the evangelists have needed to be to produce the deific view?

It is certain that they were not of the literary or book-making classes. They were the common people, unlearned and unskilled in any kind of literature of even the simplest form. But the literature which they produced is the noblest of earth. How can we explain the miracle? Matthew was a tax collector under the Roman government. Mark was a friend and companion of the Apostle Paul. More of his early history we do not know. Luke was a physician. John was a fisherman. These were men without university training and yet they give us the greatest and most astonishing piece of literature in the world.

And how brief and calm is the record that they give of that beautiful life. This characteristic may be better appreciated if we compare it with the uninspired Lives of Christ. Andrews' Life of Christ contains 615 pages, Geikie's more than 1200, Hanna's over 2100, Edersheim's 1500, or a total of about 5490 pages, and it would take months of reading to go over it all but one time. Bagster prints the gospel in 82 pages, The Oxford Edition is in 104, the American Revision in 120. In Bagster, Matthew has but 23 pages, Mark 13, Luke 25, John 21. Thus simple and brief is the inspired record. The inspired writers do not enthuse over the story; they simply tell it. While they are filled with wonder and admiration for the marvelous things that Jesus did and said, yet they

never dilate on his works or unduly emphasize the character that inspired them; they simply give a dignified record of his life.

To invent this wonderful view of Jesus the disciples must have had the depth and the breadth and the wisdom of Jesus, for not only must they have been able to draw the portrait, but they must have been able to think out the mighty, universal doctrines which Jesus taught. The philosophers of Greece and Rome have not done this and they were men of great elevation of intellect. They have always felt their incapacity. Plato sighed for the coming of a great teacher who could make light what to him was dark. If the evangelists had invented Jesus as the Son of God, there would have been four Christs instead of one, for there were the four and differing types of intellect. Not only would it have been necessary to think out the doctrines of Christ, but it would have been just as necessary to conceive one who could live them to the letter.

There is nothing so true as the commonplace statement that "every effect must have an adequate cause." We see a delicate piece of machinery showing the results of a marvelous ingenuity and skill. We know immediately that somewhere there must have been the master mechanic, the cause adequate to the production of the great effect. Alone and unaided, the disciples of the Lord could never have produced their portrait of him; they could never have invented the deific view. A work of art which thrills us and brings us to tears can only be the work of a master artist. None but a Michelangelo could carve a Moses, none

but a Raphael could paint the transfiguration, none but a Milton could give us *Paradise Lost*; and none but the Spirit of our God could give us Jesus Christ. How true are the words of Theodore Parker. "None but a Jesus could forge a Jesus."

### III. CAN WE EXPLAIN JESUS BY THE VIEW THAT HE WAS ONLY A MYTH?

This has been a position frequently advocated in the past by those who would get away from the miraculous. These shallow thinkers would class the Lord with the Greek Zeus, the Egyptian Isis and Osiris, the Scandinavian Thor and Odin, the Hindustani Vishnu or Buddha. He never really lived upon the earth, and all the stories that have arisen about him are but the accretions of the years, those that naturally cling to the mythical character. The folk soul feeling throughout the years the need of one like unto Jesus, has invented this view of him; the historic Christ never really lived.

But we should notice that there are certain well-defined laws according to which myths grow just as there are laws of trees and plants. If the story of Christ cannot come under the laws of myths we must conclude that the character which it portrays is not in any sense a mythical character. Let us consider these laws.

(1) Myths originate and as conceptions are complete before written history.

Nothing of a mythical character is ever given credence for any length of time after the history of a

nation has been written. It may flourish for a time as a rumor, but it does not become a myth. The great myths of the world have all arisen before written history. Away back before the dawn of history man dreamed of great gods and goddesses. Rude pictures tell us of the myths. They antedate all letters and records. But Jesus appears after the history of his people has been written. He does not come at the dawn of the history of Israel, but at the twilight, after the greatest and most eventful part of it had been written. According to this first law, then, he cannot be considered a mythical character.

(2) About all myths there is something grotesque if not monstrous.

The mythical character shocks our common sense. He is a gross exaggeration. He does impossible and unnecessary things. There is a myth concerning the love of Buddha. While traveling along the road one day he met a hungry peasant. The heart of Buddha was touched and he resolved to feed the man by turning himself into a rabbit. But before doing this great act of kindness he became even more magnanimous in that he carefully shook off a flea so that the flea might not suffer from the heat of the frying pan. This type of miracle amuses us because it is so preposterous, so unnecessary.

While in myths human characters are gigantic and impossible, in the historic character there is sanity and sobriety. And this is the character of Jesus. While he is a supernatural being, yet his supernaturalism is a sane supernaturalism. He appears as other men appear, and there is nothing in his personal appearance

or general actions to set him apart from other men. There is nothing of the monstrous or the grotesque in his life.

In the mythical character there is also invariably an attempt to describe the personal appearance. Contrary to this law of myths, the evangelists nowhere describe the features of the Lord. They are concerned about his teaching and his mission and not about his appearance.

(3) Myths reflect the coloring of the time, race, and place.

Zeus is Greek in every action and in every thought; Odin and Thor are Scandinavian in every detail; Isis and Osiris reflect the coloring and carry with them the atmosphere of old Egypt; Bel-Merodach is Chaldean. Jesus, however, while a Jew, is not Jewish in teaching, in his conceptions of life, or in his view of man. He is the first and only universal man.

(4) In all cases myths defy chronology, they are without dates.

Some time away back in the past a certain thing happened. "Once long, long ago," or "once upon a time," these are the introductions to the myths. Their origin is always clothed in mystery. But of Jesus we know the time of his coming and the place of his dwelling. Herod was king in Judea.

(5) Myths also defy topography, they are without definite localities.

They originate far away from the place of their first telling. We know the place of the dwelling and of the life and actions of Jesus. The Bible places are

exact. It was said of Jesus. "As to this man we know from whence he is."

(6) Myths are never completed at one telling.

A story is told and then repeated over and over again. The fathers die, and their children tell it to their children's children, and, thus, after centuries, perhaps, we have the well-defined myth. But this is not true of the story of Jesus. Any story told about him which is not in the New Testament is given but little credence. It is only the inspired record which is today believed.

(7) Myths belong to the infancy of a nation and never to its age.

Suppose, for illustration, that 2000 years from today someone should discover one of the cartoons of the late Colonel Roosevelt which were recently so popular. As the finder would look at the large teeth, the broad smile, and the big stick he might think that no such man had ever lived in the twentieth century; but he would have no trouble proving that such a character did live, for Colonel Roosevelt lived after a large and eventful history of his country had been written. And so with Jesus, we can have no trouble proving that he was not a mythical character at all, because of the large place which he has taken in the life of his time and city. He lived only a few years from Vespasian and after Julius Caesar. The nation which gave him birth was old, its youth had been long passed.

(8) The results of Christ's life in the world could never have come from a myth.

The Church of Christ was not founded upon a myth. It should be remembered that the very first church was organized in the same city in which Jesus had suffered and died and within seven weeks after the terrible event. If it had been founded upon a myth, its Pentecost would never have been in the same city where the hero of the myth had had his great humiliation. The Pentecost of a false religion would have been a thousand miles removed from this place. In other words, if the story preached by the apostles had been false, it could very easily have been proven so because all the facts were at hand. But instead of this, the first church was formed of those who just a few weeks before had been such enemies of Christ that they had nailed him to the Cross. There had not been enough time for a myth to arise before Peter preached his great Pentecostal sermon, and as evidence of the fact that the people realized this there were three thousand converts the very first day. This number rapidly increased until the church had conquered the empire. Rabid enemies, as were those who crucified the Christ, are not converted to the one whom they had so ardently persecuted on insubstantial evidence. The most rigid and searching examination of the facts had been made before they decided to abandon their old position and acknowledge their faith in the one whom they had so lately beaten and taunted even to the moment of his death.

Then, also, the work of the Christian religion in the souls of men could not be the result of the life of a mythical character, but could only have its foundation in sober fact. When we think of all the benef-

icent effects of the religion of Christ, we are constrained to say that if this is the result of a myth, then myth is better than fact. It is a travesty upon the intelligence of modern Christian scholars to say that, as they date their letters and legal documents, they are dating them from a phantom Savior who never can and never did save a soul because he never really lived. No, Jesus is not a myth, but the most colossal and mighty character that has ever trod the earth.

(9) The only position which will explain the facts of Jesus is that he is the Son of God, and in a sense in which no one else has ever been or ever can be the Son of God.

#### I. HIS CLAIMS ARE THE CLAIMS OF GOD

The amazing thing about these claims is the fact that they are claims that only God would make. No mere man would make such claims at all. We have heard the claims of men and we are not surprised at them, for as long as the race has lived such claims have been made. But the claims of Jesus are so strange, so original, so godlike that they make us intuitively realize that only God would make them.

(1) He claimed to be above the Scriptures.

Several times he said, "It hath been written" or, "Ye have been told of old time" and added, "but I say unto you." His claim thus to be able to add to the teaching, or to include in it things that were not before included, caused astonishment among the people. They well realized that this was a claim to deity; for God had given the Scriptures and only God was greater than that which he had given.

(2) He considered himself greater than the most sacred institutions of the nation.

The Sabbath was the great and holy day to the Hebrews, yet he claims that, "The son of man is Lord of the sabbath." The Law and the Prophets were sacred to Israel, yet Jesus claimed that he had come to "fulfill the Law and the Prophets." He considered himself greater than the Temple, the house in which Jehovah met his people. There was but one conclusion from these claims: that he was the one who had given these institutions to the people and, therefore, had the right and the power to do as he pleased with that which belonged to him.

(3) He set himself above all men, living or dead.

Abraham was the father of the faithful, and every Jew was proud of the fact that he was the son of Abraham; but to the amazement of those who heard him, Jesus said: "Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58.) This was a claim to divinity, and the Jews knew it; hence immediately after this claim they took up stones to stone him.

(4) He claimed to be greater than Solomon, the wisest man that had ever lived.

In his great sermon recorded in the eleventh chapter of Luke, Jesus rebukes the cravings of the multitudes, for a sign and their failure to believe the works which he had already done among them, saying: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn them: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall

stand up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here." (Luke 11:31-32.)

(5) He claimed pre-existence.

In his great intercessory prayer he pleads with the Father: "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5.) In his discourse on the bread of life he says: "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38.)

In the great third chapter of John we have another instance of this claim when he says: "And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the son of man, who is in heaven." (John 3:13.) His claim is, then, that before the world came forth from chaos at the command of God he was with the Father in eternal delight. This is a claim of deity.

(6) He claimed to be sinless.

Of the Pharisees he asks the question: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" To this they were silent, for like Pilate they could find no fault in his life. He, in his living, is always the same: "the lily of the valley and the fairest among ten thousand." Knowing that none was good save God alone, the Jews at once recognized in this claim of Jesus a claim to equality with God. For this reason, although they could find nothing amiss in his life, they condemned him as a blasphemer. If he was absolutely pure in conduct and character he was God.

(7) He claimed all authority in heaven and on earth, and that he would some day judge the world.

Just before he gives the great commission, he says to the disciples: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth; go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." (Matt. 28:18, 19.) He is the head of all things, for "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." In the awe-inspiring message in which he is describing to his wondering disciples the coming judgment, he tells them of his own position as judge when he says: "When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory." (Matt. 25:31.) He claims, therefore, not only to be the creator of the world, but its highest authority and judge as well.

These are the claims of a god or an impostor. They cannot be the claims of an impostor because Jesus had nothing to gain by making this type of claim. He knew that he would lose the attention of the multitudes of followers which accompanied him wherever he went, for he was striking at the very foundation of the things which they believed; yet he preaches these things about his own person. These claims are those which we would expect from God if he were to manifest himself among men and in the form of men. They are the claims of one who had the right to make them.

## II. HIS TEACHING IS THE TEACHING OF GOD

Increasingly is the teaching of Jesus impressing itself upon the minds of men as his greatest miracle. There is enough in this alone to demonstrate to the

world that he was God in flesh. He was wonderful in a multitude of ways, but in this he towers above all others.

(1) He was wonderful in the method of his teaching.

Jesus was absolutely extemporaneous. There is never a moment of hesitancy. He speaks forth the words of truth without any apparent effort; speaks them as though he had always known them. He claimed to be the truth, and if this claim was justified his words were the words of truth.

He was not only extemporaneous in his teaching, but he was also strongly dogmatic. He never says, "I think" or, "it is my opinion," but his words are positive and to the point. Truth is essentially dogmatic in nature. "Two plus two is four" is a very dogmatic proposition because it is true, and is always true. There is never any exception to the rule. The teaching of our Lord is of the same type. The words he utters are true, have always been true, and will always be true. He speaks the eternal truth. It is only when we have the truth that we can be dogmatic; but since he always spoke the truth, his teaching was always given in the dogmatic manner and in positive tone.

He was marvelously simple as a teacher. The common people heard him gladly. And why? Because they could understand him. The most wonderful truths in all the world are couched in such simple words that "the wayfaring man, though a simpleton, cannot err therein." What a splendid example Jesus set for modern teachers in this respect! If we would

have men accept our message, we must make it one that they can readily understand; and as they gladly received his word so with joy they will heed our teachings.

(2) Jesus was also wonderful in the enduring quality of his teachings.

Human teachers are out of date in but a few years. Hugh Miller was once a great authority on geology, but no one reads him now. His work is out of date. Adam Smith wrote "The Wealth of the Nations" and it was thought by some that the last word in the realm of political economy had been spoken; but no one reads his work today save as he desires to have history of the science. I was asked recently what I thought of the theory of evolution, and my questioner was amazed when I asked in return, "Which one?" If Charles Darwin were to arise from the dead today, he would not know the theory which he fathered because of the many modifications through which it has gone. A few years ago I remember standing before an audience and showing by every possible argument that "the United States should reduce her armament to a minimum necessary for police duty only." The arguments were then well received; but if that same speech were to be given today, the one giving it would be hissed from the platform. How soon are our theories out of date!

But this is not true of the teachings of our Lord. He himself said: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall never pass away." His words are eternal, they are always abreast of the times, they are never surpassed. He has said the last word in ethics

and in morals. To this testify John Stuart Mill, Renan, and Rousseau. And yet, in the light of this fact, behold a marvel! Christ was totally unschooled. He never attended a great university. He never left the land of Palestine, a small, down-trodden province of the Roman Empire. He never wrote anything and never studied any ancient learning. From the standpoint of the world Paul was far more learned than Jesus. And yet he spoke words that have shaken the world. As the years roll on, the world is more and more coming to see that the only cure for its sorrows, its heartaches, and its strifes is the teaching of the Man of Galilee.

(3) Jesus was wonderful in the composure of his teaching.

We are told that when Isaac Newton by mathematical calculation had discovered the law of gravitation, he was so overcome by the marvelous discovery that he went out and wept for more than an hour. Jesus utters words which are to be the foundation of civilizations yet unborn with a calm majesty and without surprise, showing that he had always known them, and that they are to him nothing new. One time Louis Agassiz was introduced to a large audience as "the great teacher." As he arose, he said: "I am a teacher, but not the great teacher. There is only one great teacher and that is the Lord Jesus Christ." Truly, Jesus was "a teacher come from God."

### III. HIS PLAN IS THE PLAN OF GOD

(1) Notice the originality of it.

We have found that no mere man would claim to be

what Jesus claimed to be. His claims are absolutely original. So, also, no man would plan to do what Jesus planned to do. We can understand the plans of men. We can understand how an Alexander, a Napoleon, or a Kaiser could plan a world-empire and execute that plan by the assembling of great armies with which to crush all opposition to their wills. We can understand how a Mohammed could plan to subdue by the power of his sword and force his religion upon men. There have been many attempts at world-empire and they have all been built upon force. But Jesus plans an empire different in every respect from all these. His is to be an empire of hearts; the hardest empire in all the world to build. He is going to take the "down and outs," the sinners of the world, and build them into one mighty and universal kingdom which shall eventually conquer the earth. He proposes to take the "trash heaps of society" and make of them men after God's own heart.

(2) Notice the catholicity of this plan.

I wish to quote here a wonderful passage from a wonderful work, "The Philosophy of the Christian Religion" by Fairbairn: "Jesus of Nazareth is the least local, sectional, or occasional type of moral manhood in all literature. In their ideals race differs from race and age from age. The typical manhood of Greece, while under the spell of Homer, is the swift-footed Achilles or the crafty and far-traveled Odysseus; but when under the spell of Plato, it is the sage that loved truth, praised virtue, and studied how to know and realize the good in the state. The saints in the East would not be canonized in the West, while

the qualities which the cultured West most admires the civilized East holds in disdainful contempt. Few things, indeed, are more permanent or more prohibitive of moral sympathy and appreciation than racial characteristics. A good man in a black skin may be pitied and helped, or patronized and misunderstood by white men, but he certainly would not be hailed as a savior to be believed or as a master to be revered and followed. We may say, 'Beauty is only skin deep,' but as a matter of fact there are few things deeper than skin; it represents not so much a physiological or racial difference as an intellectual, a moral, and social cleavage between man and man. The fields of religion and history teem with illustrations. Confucius is a sage China worships, but the Hindus would despise his ostentatious ignorance of the only being they think worth knowing and his indifference to the only life they think worth living. The ascetic community which is Buddha's social ideal for his saints, a Greek would have conceived as the final apostasy from good of a person destined by nature to live as a free citizen in a free state. The status Mohammed assigns to woman is an offense to the domestic ideal of the Teuton; and the way he indulged his sexual appetite makes him even more deeply distasteful than even the 'necessary fiction' which he compounded with the 'eternal truth' that 'there is only one God.' But the character of Jesus transcends all racial limitations and divisions. He is the only oriental that the occident has admired with an admiration that has become worship. His is the only name that the West has carried into the East

which the East has received, and praised, and loved with sincerity and without qualification. And this power it has exercised ever since it has made its appeal to human thought: it overcame the insolent disdain of the Greek for all things barbarian; the proud contempt of the Roman for a crucified malefactor sprung from a hated and conquered people; the vain conceit of a commercial race, which before the moral majesty of a moneyless peasant has almost wished to forget its passion for gold. And this catholicity endures because it is based upon nature. What seemed to His own day to be disastrous to His claims—the want of rank, of name and fame and honor—has saved the ideal from death, emphasizing the fact that His transcendence was due to nothing adventitious, but to Himself alone. If He had appeared as Caesar, the majesty of the man would have been sacrificed to the ostentation of the emperor; if as the Roman Augustus, He would not have seemed so sublime and kingly as He does as Jesus of Nazareth. But though all men may see this now, few saw it then. Their ignorance and simplicity saved the evangelists from the temptation to make Him appear more royal than He was. If they had known imperial Rome, they could hardly have refrained from borrowing some of its purple and fine linen for His cradle or His grave. If they had known how the Gentiles would regard His birth and state, they might have tried to hide them under the shadow of the pomp He had despised. But knowing Him, and knowing nothing else, they told what they heard and described what they saw, and so created the most immortal work of art in all

literature,—a character so complete and catholic in its humanity that to it alone belongs the distinction of having compelled the homage of universal man.”

Jesus is the great cosmopolite. He is the one man for all men. There is nothing about him that limits him to race or class. His feelings, sympathies and plans overleap all barriers. He was indeed the child of the race, “the son of man.” His plan for the building of an empire of souls is universal in that it is to include all races and tribes and tongues. All time past, present and future is to be his, in that all that have lived or will live will belong to his kingdom. His, indeed, is the plan of the ages.

(3) Notice the method which he employs to accomplish this plan.

We can understand how a Caesar, an Alexander, or a Mohammed could try to found an empire on force, for this method has been repeatedly attempted; but how different and original is the method which Jesus uses. He will not force men to be religious; he will draw them, and by the power of divine love. Some men have a peculiar power about them to draw men unto themselves. When Napoleon came back from Elba, 250,000 men sprang to arms to follow him and to die for him upon the battlefield. But Jesus had no wealth or position to offer men. His was a martyr's cross and a martyr's crown. To follow him meant suffering and death. He had won no victories, he had no palaces or money to offer, and yet men left their all and followed him. What is the secret of it all? What is this wonderful power? It is the power of divine love, the irresistible power of an uplifted cross.

“And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me,” is Christ’s own statement of the most marvelous power that has ever been known to man. Throughout the centuries he has been drawing men until now his is the mightiest empire under the heavens.

Truly this plan of Jesus to regenerate the whole world and make it fit for the abiding of God the Father, and to do it by the power of divine love, is the plan of God himself. No man would attempt it or even think of it. His very plan, therefore, witnesses to the fact that he is Deity in flesh.

#### IV, HIS MIRACLES ARE THE ACTS OF GOD

They are exactly the acts which we would expect from such a being as God in flesh. All of the evangelists tell of these works or power apart from the ordinary course of nature. All of these miracles were performed after He had entered upon his personal ministry and none before that time. While some of these were acts upon external nature, the majority of them were works of mercy and love such as healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, the power to walk to the lame, and cleansing the leper. Three times we are told that he raised the dead. It is plain that all of these acts were works of mercy and that they sprang from the heart of Christ, touched as he was by human need as it manifested itself in human suffering.

The attitude of the Master as he did these wonderful works was that of absolute calmness and without ostentation. He acts as though they were entirely

natural to him, as natural as the ordinary actions of life are to the ordinary man. There is no place where we are told that he considered these acts as the most important in his life, in fact he tells us that faith which is based upon them alone is an inferior faith. While it is commonly held that the miracles of Christ were for the purpose of attesting his divine mission, and while they are in reality for this purpose, we should not forget that they are just the works that would spring from his heart. They are thus best understood when they are viewed as first of all deeds of love and kindness that come from his compassionate heart. He had more than human power, and more than human love; and that more than human love could only express itself in such deeds as would alleviate the sufferings and agonies of the miserable and sorrowing around him. His miracles were even more expressions of character than of power. They flowed unchecked from a great heart of love.

There is also a sobriety and sanity about the miracles of Jesus which cannot be found in the mythical miracle. The mythical miracle "reflects a morbid temper, it is commonly the creation of a fancy grown fantastic and even childish," but there is nothing so foreign and so distasteful to the gospels as wonders for wonders' sake. This is more to be wondered at when we consider the fact that the religious imagination, when allowed to work freely in the realm of the supernatural, does not at all work sanely. Fairbairn gives some fine illustrations of the morbid character of the religious imagination. He quotes from Jerome, one of the most highly educated and devout of the

**Ancient Fathers, in his "Life of Hilarion." Hilarion by his prayers made a barren woman to bear, he answered the prayers of a certain Italicus whose horses raced in the circus, that he might win the victory over his heathen rival. By letting them drink out of the cup from which he used to drink, the horses of Italicus were made to fly to the goal far ahead, while those of the rival stuck to the spot. He tells also how the saints cast out a lascivious devil from a maid who had been bewitched by certain forms and figures beneath the threshold of her house; how he disposed of another devil, a gigantic camel, which thirty men with strong ropes could hardly hold; how he commanded a mighty serpent, which had been devouring oxen, to ascend a funeral pyre and be burned to ashes before all the people; how, months after his death, his body was conveyed from Cyprus to Palestine as perfect as if alive, and fragrant with sweet odors; and how at the places alike where he had been and where he was buried great miracles were daily performed, in one case as it were by his body and the other by his spirit. In the "Four Dialogues" of Gregory, even more wonderful miracles are recorded. He tells how the Italian monks could treat water as if it were dry land; how great showers of gold pieces, as if fresh from the mint, fell down from heaven; how terrible floods which rose round the churches till they came to the tops of the doors did not enter, though the doors stood open; how the arm of an executioner was held rigid and fixed as it was upraised to strike off the head of a monk, but its power was restored to it on the promise never again**

to use it against a Christian. Thus there are hundreds of illustrations of the insanity of the mythical consciousness when allowed to work freely in the religious field.

The miracles of Jesus do not, however, have any taint of the morbid, the grotesque, or the impossible about them, but they are just what we would expect of him, and they are as sane and sober as he is sane and sober and natural in his life. While they are supernatural they are not contra-natural. A comparison of the things which he did with the reported miracles of the Church Fathers or even with some of the modern so-called miracles of healing brings out strongly the fact that they are but the transcripts of his character, a character which might well be termed a sort of "embodied beneficence, creating health and happiness." To quote once more from Fairbairn, as he remarks upon the way in which the evangelists have described the mighty works of Jesus: "The evangelists are the most modern writers of Christian antiquity; and we may add, without fear of contradiction, that with the most absolute and august idea of the supernatural to be found in the whole literature of religion, they have given it an expression so objective and realistic as to be without any parallel."

The mightiest miracle of all, the resurrection, witnesses to the Deity of Jesus. All the gospels tell of the glorious event, as does also Paul, the apostle to the gentiles. The accounts are fragmentary and the precise order of the events cannot always be clearly traced; but the great fact remains that the disciples claim that early on the morning of the third day after

the crucifixion the body of Jesus was missing from the tomb. As an explanation of its disappearance they claim that he appeared unto them and that they ate with him, and talked with him, and knew him, as the same one who had died upon the cross such a short time before. Yet in this representation they do not claim that Jesus returned to his former life. Although bodily actions were possible to him yet he was independent of them, for he appeared at any place at will. He did not dwell with his friends in the same manner in which he had dwelt before, but appeared to them and talked to them from time to time and was unseen at intervals. At the beginning of Acts of the Apostles we are told that the appearances lasted for a space of forty days and that at the expiration of that time he was received up into heaven, after he had given commandments to his disciples regarding their work in bringing the world to him. Fifty days from the Passover on which he died there came a wondrous new force into the church in the advent of the Holy Spirit. This, in brief, is the record.

There have been a great number of theories concerning the resurrection, but the fact of the matter is that no one can clearly understand all about it because it lies in the realm of the spirit world and that realm is essentially a mystery to all. With what body Jesus rose, has been discussed again and again, but the materials for a clear answer do not exist. If we take just the gospel account we will see that his resurrection was the rising into a new and glorious

spiritual life with the power to manifest himself at will to men in this world.

There is every reason to accept the scriptural accounts as true. While the records are not complete they nevertheless report the resurrection as an observed fact. Those reporting it do not seem to think that it needs any proof, but deem sufficient the mere testifying to what they saw. It should be remembered just here that those giving the record are not so much concerned about giving a detailed history of the events as they are to give their testimony to it as an historical fact. Blackstone, commenting upon this testimony, says: "No event in history is more amply substantiated than the resurrection of Christ."

The great events which followed the disappearance of the body of Jesus from the tomb, argue for the truth of the testimony of the disciples. Just three days after the death of their beloved Lord, the disciples who had been filled with gloom at the tragedy suddenly take on new life and boldness, and from the ashes of defeat they rise to the mountain-top of victory. Some wonderful power must have been given them, some wonderful event must have transpired in their lives to bring them from the depths of depression to such amazing confidence and enthusiasm. The problem as presented by the testimony of these men that they knew that Jesus had risen from the dead because they had seen him after his resurrection, is ably summed up by Edersheim. The following words give a résumé of his statement of the problem:

Considering their previous state of mind and the absence of any motive, how are we to account for the change of mind on the part of the disciples, and the sudden change at that, concerning the resurrection? There can be no doubt that they came to believe, and with most absolute certitude, in the resurrection as an historical fact; nor yet that it formed the substance and basis of all their preaching even to martyrdom.

For the fact that all the gospels and Paul give detailed accounts of this wonderful event.

For the fact that Paul, an inveterate enemy of Christ and an ardent persecutor of the church, and one to whom the story of a risen Lord was absolutely abhorrent, became after a searching examination a devout believer in the resurrection as an historical fact, believing it so firmly that he could say: "If Christ is not risen then is our faith vain." The gibes and coarse sneering objections of the Greek scholars spurred him on to the most rigid examination of all the facts.

We may well add a fourth fact just here, and that regarding those who were just a little while before enemies of Christ. How can we explain the fact that only fifty days after Jesus had died, in the same city in which he had suffered and had been put to death, three thousand of those who were guilty of murdering him confessed their faith in him and became the first members of his church? For it should ever be remembered that the first Christians were enemies of Jesus when they heard the sermon concerning his

resurrection. They at least believed that the apostles were telling the truth.

There is only one way to explain these facts and that is to freely acknowledge that the disciples actually had seen Jesus after his resurrection, or in other words, that the resurrection is a fact, the most wonderful and sublime fact that the world has ever known. These men could not have been deceived, because he was seen on too many different occasions, by too many different persons, and by some of these persons too many different times. There could have been no possibility of mistake. The disciples had every opportunity to identify him as the same one who had before lived with them, and talked with them, and taught them the way of life. We cannot now disclaim it all by saying that these men were dishonest men in that they were trying to palm off an imposition on the world. There was absolutely no inducement to dishonesty, because to tell such a story could bring them no money or fame. Then, also, the story that a crucified Jew was the savior of the world was the most unwelcome story that could be preached at that time. Men will not knowingly and willingly suffer and die for a lie. Yet it is significant that these men preached their story even though the preaching of it meant stripes, imprisonment, and death. Even to the last drop of their blood they told the story and never one of them recanted. Honesty can demand no more than that a man seal his testimony with his own blood. The lives of these men were among the finest and purest that the world has ever seen. If

they were not honest men then the world has never known even the meaning of the term honesty.

The church was founded upon the story of the resurrection, and as long as this stands there is hope for a world lost in sin and longing for the positive hope of immortality. That hope can be given by a resurrected Lord alone, one who has come back victorious from the darkness of the grave, bringing the keys of death with him. Thus the resurrection of our Lord, "the most amply attested fact of history," witnesses for the deity of Jesus.

#### V. HIS SINLESS LIFE IS THE LIFE OF GOD

It is, of course, an impossibility to prove a negative here and demonstrate that he never committed a sin, but we can accept the record of those who knew him best, for after all, those who know a man most intimately are best qualified to judge as to the worth of his character. And those who knew him best tell us that he was clean in conduct and pure in character. He himself challenged his critics with: "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" (John 8:46), at the same time claiming that the Father was with him, "because I do always the things that please him" (John 8:29). There never was the consciousness in the life of Jesus that he was a sinner, and though he taught his disciples to ask for forgiveness he himself never prays such a prayer. He is nowhere conscious of the struggle "between the beast and the angel." He stands before the world as the only man for whom it have even been claimed that he was without stain of wrong in character or conduct. Defects

in the moral character are not found, and it is frankly agreed upon by all that this one was the perfect man.

The one thing in which Jesus' life is strong as an evidence of sinlessness is the absolute consistency between his conduct and his teachings. Here we all fail, and miserably. The philosopher may teach men what they should do to be happy, but he need not do it himself. But Jesus never tells us to do one thing while he himself does another. His words are, "Follow me;" for he always leads us. Take any doctrine that the Lord taught and examine his own life pertaining to it and note that not only does he teach it, but he lives it. His teaching regarding the value of the soul is an illustration in point. He says that the soul is the most valuable creation in all the universe. How valuable, Lord and Master? Of such priceless value that he was willing to preach a sermon to the woman at the well, a woman who was wicked in her life, so low indeed that the majority of men today would have passed her by without one word. But Jesus, the Lord of heaven and earth, was willing to put forth the effort to save her from her degradation. He tells us to forgive our enemies, yea, even to love them. Impossible, Lord Jesus! But is it impossible? Upon a cross, lifted above a howling, angry multitude, with the clouds darkening over him and the very earth quaking in shame beneath him this same Lord cries out: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." He prays for those who were murdering him. Here is the sublime example of forgiveness. Thus it is ever: he is consistent always. His doctrines and life coincide.

The sinlessness of this life witnesses for the deity of Jesus. No mere man has in this world, so full of sin as it is, been able to live pure and holy, clean in conduct and character. Every tree may be known by its fruits. The time in which Jesus was born was the most corrupt time in the history of the world, and yet from it came forth the only sinless man who has ever lived. There is but one conclusion: his life was the life of God upon the earth.

## VI. HIS MIGHTY WORK IN THE WORLD IS THE WORK OF GOD

### (1) How marvelous is Jesus in his triumphs!

I love to think of him not only as the meek and lowly Nazarene, but also as the conquering Christ, the one before whom the nations bow in joyful submission. From human standpoints alone, the work of Jesus was bound to fail. The founder was a despised Nazarene, born in the poorest and most downtrodden province of the world's greatest empire. He was poor and without political prestige. The religions around him were powerful, wealthy, and strongly entrenched. Can his work succeed with all this opposition? It can conquer only if it is the work of God in the world. No man alone can do it, for the odds are too great. But Jesus has been victorious in every battle. Fifty days after he had suffered a shameful death, the first gospel invitation was extended and three thousand of those who had stood at the cross and mocked him as he died were converted to the position that he is the Lord and King. In three centuries the new faith

had conquered the Roman Empire. Judaism, always a determined enemy, found itself absolutely impotent before the on-marching legions of the conquering Christ. Paganism fought hard; but it, too, was defeated and the banner of King Jesus waved in triumph over the former strongholds of Zeus and all his tribe of corrupt gods and goddesses. The barbarians swept down from the north, engulfing Rome in their mighty flood, and though they destroyed the empire they did not destroy the Church. When the struggle was over, once more the Christ was victorious. From the south a black cloud hovered over the earth and then came the swarms of Mohammed; but on the field of Tours, Charles Martel and his Christian hosts once again won gloriously the battle which has been going in favor of Jesus since the first Pentecost. Modern heathenism has been absolutely powerless before Christ, and the time is soon to come when Christ will be crowned King from sea to sea. Soon in the very center of heathenism is to be held a great gathering of Christians from all over the world; and as the capital of paganism so long ago fell before the power of the conquering Christ, so now will the capitals of the modern heathen world bow the knee to him who is Lord of all. The "Christ view" has been victorious over the "mere man view" throughout all the centuries. Voltaire thought that he could laugh Christ to defeat; but only a few years after his death, from the same room in which he had died thousands of copies of the holy Scriptures were carried out to an eager and waiting world. Strauss in his "Leben Jesu" tried to destroy the "Christ view"—but how miserable and ab-

solute was his failure! And so it has ever been. Those who have tried to reduce him to the ranks of "mere man" have failed and have been forced, as they see the world coming to his feet, to acknowledge their failures.

How wonderful has Jesus been in his achievements for the good of the world! He has Christianized the calendar of the world. The Greek tried to date time from the Olympiads, but he failed. The Roman tried to begin dates from the founding of his immortal city, but was unsuccessful. La Place tried to date from the conjunction of certain stars, but he failed. The French revolutionists tried to date from the beginning of the revolution, but failure attended their efforts. What the Greek could not do, what the Roman failed to accomplish, what La Place and the French revolutionists could not do, Jesus did. He stamped his name on the calendar of the world. Every time we date a letter or a legal document we acknowledge the Christ. And this is true in every city in the world today.

In art and literature how mighty is Christ! Take Christ out of Shakespeare, and how insipid are his writings. Take the Master out of art, and the flower of it is gone. Take Christ out of the moral life of the race, and it sinks into slime and decay. He is the very life of our modern world. Emerson is right when he says that Jesus "has plowed his name into our world." Lecky is right when he says: "The simple record of those three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhorta-

tions of moralists." Renan is right when he says that Christ has been made "the corner stone of our race." Jefferson is right when he says: "He walks down the centuries with the tread of a conqueror."

(2) How wonderful is Jesus in his power to save!

This was the great purpose of his coming. It is greater than that of any man that has lived: to regenerate the world and make of men the beings that God would have them to be. He came healing the sick, but this was not the purpose of his coming. He came cleansing the leper, but more wonderful was his mission than this. In his own words, "The son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." He came as a savior. If we fail to realize this concerning him we have not known him at all. Christ's power to save is more easily understood if we note his estimate of man and of his value as man. Christ is the great individualist. Science is cold and hard; yes, even cruel. She considers the class, "the common herd," the mass of mankind. Christ is concerned about the individual man. The kings of old thought of man as so much cannon fodder; Christ thinks of the priceless value of the individual soul before God.

And how is he to bring men to himself as savior? We have already considered this. He draws them by the power of divine love. Everywhere we can hear, and from countless thousands of lips, the song of praise that rises in mighty volume. It is the song of the redeemed. From rich and beautiful America it rises, from Europe torn by strife and sorrow it peals as a song of hope, from India—sad India—and from the depths of darkest Africa. It is the song of those

who have washed their robes and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus saves, this we know. It is not a matter of opinion. It is a certainty, the argument from experience. There have been in my own life times when I doubted, for those times come to all of us, but my doubts have been swept away by the facts and those facts are unanswerable. A great effect must have an adequate cause. That cause is the power of God, for nothing else could accomplish the results.

Give the winds a mighty voice  
    Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
Let the nations now rejoice,—  
    Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
Shout salvation full and free,  
Highest hills and deepest caves;  
This our song of victory:  
    Jesus saves! Jesus saves!



## II

# Immortality

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*Text: "If a man die, shall he live again?"—Job 14:14.*

### INTRODUCTION

The immortality of the soul of man has been one of the great hopes of the races of the world, extending almost as wide and deep as consciousness itself. The profoundest thinkers, poets, and seers have been engaged with the problem. The thought of it has produced some of the noblest and most enduring forms of literature; it has been the very ground and end of religion and has comforted the hearts of the sorrowing throughout all the centuries. Socrates and Plato, the greatest thinkers of antiquity, reasoned out the certainty of immortality to their own satisfaction, and almost two thousand years after Christ, Kant and Hegel, the profoundest philosophers of our own time, had to their joy found the solution of the problem. It is almost presumptuous for me, in this brief message, to attempt any new discussion of the vast subject. I shall merely try to give in outline the great things that have been thought and said upon this the greatest of all subjects.

The immortality of man, like everything in the spiritual realm, is in reality incapable of demonstrable

evidence. We really cannot prove that the soul is immortal. It can always be doubted by those who wish to doubt it; but while it is impossible to prove that it is true, it is likewise impossible to prove that it is not true. The doctrine has suffered much in the past from poor defense. Moreover, Christians have made a mistake when they have represented it as resting purely upon revelation. There are some who can never be reached by this kind of argument. They desire more than the mere thought of authority, and it is largely for this class that this message is given.

There have been in the past many substitutes for a personal immortality. Some of these we will mention briefly here, in order that we may guard ourselves against being deceived.

1. Racial immortality. This was the ideal of the Greeks and Romans and at one time of the Jews also. "The race will continue and be immortal while the individual will perish." This conception was also advanced by George Eliot in her "Spanish Gypsy." How there can ever be a racial immortality while the individual perishes, we have never been able to determine; for the destruction of the individual would mean the destruction of the race.

2. A social paradise here on this earth is another substitute. This was the dream of the continental socialists. The thought of heaven, according to these pseudo-philosophers, would take man's attention from the "here and now." "Let us have heaven here upon this earth." What kind of heaven these men worked out when the opportunity was given to them is demonstrated in the chaos and ruin of Russia today.

3. The immortality of mental and moral qualities was a colorless ideal advanced by Emerson. In advocating this materialistic view he says: "That my personality shall survive the shock of death is hardly probable; but that the qualities, the excellencies my body housed are immortal, is not to be questioned. I shall die; but my courage, my patience shall live forever."

4. A fourth substitute for the immortality which the soul craves is that offered by George Eliot in the "Choir Invisible." It is the so-called immortality of influence.

"Oh, may I join the choir invisible  
Of those immortal dead who live again  
In minds made better by their presence: live  
In pulses stirred to generosity,  
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn  
For miserable aims that end with self,  
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,  
And with their mild persistence urge man's search  
To vaster issues—so to live is heaven."

This is also the dramatic dream of Ibsen in his play, "The Pretenders." But how insipid is the ideal, how utterly unsatisfying. I remember an illustration from my college days. A young man, whom we all loved, recited in the class in the morning at ten o'clock and at six that evening was found burned to a crisp in his electric bathrobe. Those who knew him there in that western college will never forget him. His picture adorns one of the college walls; but how

soon after all is he forgotten! The men and women who recite in those rooms today or stroll about the beautiful campus, although they may see his portrait, will not know him. He and his memory are strangers to them. How short-lived was his immortality!

5. The immortality through memory is another substitute. This is the dream of Maeterlinck in "The Blue Bird." Two little children have gone into the land of memory and their old grandparents are living with them in memory. And yet what pain there is in remembering and not being able to have them palpably there.

How shallow and insipid are all these foolish dreams! They bring no comfort to the aching heart, they bring no hope to the soul in sorrow. After all they are simply the dodges and the evasions of infidelity. It is the same old enemy who would destroy man's noblest and best hope. The immortality of this sermon is the immortality of the individual soul, it is a personal immortality.

## ARGUMENT

### I. THE SCIENTIFIC ARGUMENT

It has been but a little while since men of science were proclaiming the fact that on the question of the immortality of the soul, science was dumb. There was no evidence of any kind for the great hope. That time has passed, however, and today men of science are thinking of immortality and trying to demonstrate its certainty more than ever before in the history of the world. The argument which we wish here

to notice is that of the Biologist, the Physicist, the Astronomer and the Psychologist.

(1) The failure to identify mind and brain.

They are not the same. The mind is spiritual while the brain is physical, subject to all the changes and laws of a physical organ. The philosophers of all centuries have recognized this difference.

Plato calls the brain the skiff, the mind the oarsman. Dr. Thompson in his book "Brain and Personality" calls the brain the tool, the mind the workman. Dr. William James calls the brain the organ pipe, the mind the note that breathes through it musically. Thus mind and brain are not identical. The one is purely a physical organ changing every four years while the other is the inner man, the soul which is eternal. There is here, therefore, a strong hint of something that is immortal, a being that will survive the shock of death.

The most powerful objection to the belief in human immortality has been the philosophy which refused to acknowledge the difference between the spiritual man and the physical man. Those who belong to this school have steadfastly contended that the soul is the resultant of bodily forces, that in reality soul and body are the same, and consequently, when death comes all is ended because the body and hence the soul goes back to dust, to dissolution and decay. That soul and body are very closely interdependent and mutually sympathetic throughout life, none will deny. Physiologically speaking, the soul seems simply to be a combination of nerves, for the nerves are studied as the very basis of the science. Soul and body develop

together and keep pace with each other step by step. Dr. Snowden in his book "The world a Spiritual System" so splendidly brings out this relationship that I must quote his words: "Every mental state or action is accompanied with a corresponding physical action and every physical change in the body induces a corresponding change in the mind. The soul is delicately sensitive to all changes in the body and is up or down with its condition. As the body fails in old age, the soul declines with it and sometimes becomes only a vestige or reminiscence of its former self. And in death the same crisis that stills the heart also seems to extinguish consciousness and obliterate the soul forever. In short we know the soul only in connection with the body and the two seem to come into existence and to perish together."

But to this powerful objection there is an answer which is conclusive. The body of man is only the tool of the spirit. The soul uses the body, commands it, handles it, resists it, masters it, and makes it bow to its will in everything. At times the soul overpowers the body and strikes through its flesh and bones with tremendous force. As old age comes on the body loses its strength and suppleness and becomes less and less responsive to the demands of the soul. But many times the mental powers are unimpaired unto the end, becoming in some cases even keener and brighter as the body becomes weaker and more impotent. The explanation of the failing mental powers of some is in the fact that the bodily mechanism refuses to do its work. The soul is as active as ever, but the tool which it uses has become blunt, the instrument refuses to

respond to the soul's bidding. This was the thought of Browning when he sings:

“So is myself withdrawn into my depths,  
The soul retreated from the perished brain,  
Whence it was wont to feel and use the world  
Through these dull members, done with long ago,  
Yet I myself remain; I feel myself,  
And there is nothing lost. Let be awhile!”

The soul is less and less dependent on the body through life. It begins by being in utter bondage to the body, for there is nothing so helpless as the tiny babe. The soul is literally buried in the flesh. But as life advances and the soul develops, the sovereignty is changed and the body gradually becomes the liege of the soul. In some instances where the body has been withering away with some foul disease the soul has flamed forth in greater intensity and power. Paul calls the body a tabernacle. It is but a temporary hut in which the soul lives. Victor Hugo expressed this beautiful thought when he passionately exclaims: “You say that the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why then is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets and the roses as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me.”

(2) The unchangeableness of personality through bodily changes is an argument for immortality.

Every four years the body undergoes a complete change. There are new bones, new flesh, new blood. Even the brain is not immune. Now, if the brain were the soul, then every four years we would have a different soul, the old impressions would be destroyed and a new personality would be created. This, however, is not the case. Although there is a complete bodily change yet personality is not affected. It is the same through all the changes that come to the body. I cannot do better just here than to quote a great passage from Snowden: "The permanence of personality is further confirmed by its persistence through all earthly vicissitudes. While it develops from germinal unconsciousness to full-blown personality, yet after emerging into selfhood it retains its central core of consciousness, which does not change with the years, but remains as the identical self. Its outward circumstances are in a state of ceaseless flux and at times pass through tremendous shocks and upheavals; its very body flows away from it in a steady stream and is constantly replaced with new tissues; its subjective experience is in a state of incessant change and development, and at intervals encounters catastrophic crisis, and is swept by terrible storms; and yet none of these roll it from its base, but its central self persists as the same personality. If it can survive such constant and deep changes and even repeatedly put off the entire body and clothe itself in a new garment of the flesh, will it not survive the still greater shock of death and weave around itself a form of body adapted to its new condition?"

The absolute breakdown and defeat of materialism

as a philosophy argues for immortality. The most determined enemy of immortality in the past has been materialism. The defeat of its greatest enemy should leave the belief in immortality stronger than ever in the minds of men. And materialism has broken down. Its greatest defeat has just been accomplished on the battle fields of France and Belgium. The greatest philosophers of today are telling us that life must be interpreted in terms of life and the spirit. The world is a spiritual system and only the backwoodsman in philosophy will any longer argue in the terms of materialism.

(3) The great law of indestructibility or of conservation of energy witnesses for immortality. This is the wonderful contribution of the chemical science to the subject.

Nothing of force or matter is ever lost. "The manifold forms of energy which we see around us in the universe are constantly being transformed into one another, but in all this transformation there is never any loss. Its volume is never increased, decreased or annihilated. "Motion becomes heat, heat, becomes electricity, electricity becomes chemical affinity, chemical affinity becomes light, and thus the protean circuit runs its endless round. But at no point in this endless circuit does one atom of force drop out and become lost. Experiment always finds the transformed energy exactly equal to the original, and any deficiency or excess in the resulting product would be unthinkable. The mind cannot find any point in the process where even the minutest unit of energy could lapse. Thus the sum total of energy in the universe

remains a constant quantity." How can it be thought, then, that the soul of man, which has such control over the forces of nature, will be destroyed if those same forces are indestructible? And man is a part of the physical universe as well as the spiritual. Nature knows no destruction, only change. This great law is then an argument, and a strong one, that the soul of man is immortal.

But just at this point there is always raised one of the most powerful objections to the thought of immortality. It is this: while we might acknowledge that the law of conservation of force and matter seems to prove the soul's immortality, yet it does not prove that this immortality is personal. It would seem rather to prove the opposite, namely that as the drop of water falls back into the sea so the soul of man will melt back into the great spirit from whence it came and whatever personality it has gained here will be lost. There is but one answer to this objection, and it is this, that the soul of man has developed personality paralleling that of the Spirit of God, and has attained through long struggle a fixity and worth of character that makes the destruction of its personality unthinkable. How long and wearisome has been the upward journey to personality! If you are an evolutionist in your philosophy, you cannot help but believe in the personality of this immortality. According to your own philosophy, how slow and toilsome has been the long rise from the ether to the atom, from the atom to the crystal, from the crystal to the cell, from the cell to the man. The highest accomplishment in all the universe is consciousness, the

full rounded intellect of man, his sensibility and will. When the means have fulfilled their purposes they are cast aside that the end may endure. The wheat stalk withers and is gone but the grain remains. If the seed itself were to perish with the stalk there would be nothing to justify both means and end, the whole process would be worse than foolish. The immense age-long process through which God has created souls is justified only as the results of this process are fixed and permanent. That the highest accomplishment of these long and tortuous processes, the wondrous personalities of men, are to be cast into the void of nothingness is a thought that puts to confusion all our ideals of right and reason.

Martineau, in his "Study of Religion," held this view when he said: "I do not know that there is anything in Nature (unless indeed it be the reputed blotting out of suns in the stellar heavens) which can be compared in wastefulness with the extinction of great minds: their gathered resources, their matured skill, their luminous insight, their unflinching tact are not like instincts that can be handed down; they are absolutely personal and inalienable; grand conditions of future power, unavailable for the race, and perfect for an ulterior growth of the individual. If that growth is not to be, the most brilliant genius bursts and vanishes as a firework in the night. A mind of balanced and finished faculties is a production at once of infinite delicacy and of most enduring constitution; lodged in a fast-perishing organism, it is like a perfect set of astronomical instruments misplaced in an observatory shaken by earthquakes or

caving in with decay. The lenses are true, the mirrors without a speck, the movements smooth, the micrometer exact: what shall the Master do but save the precious system, refined with so much care, and build for it a new house that shall be founded upon a rock?"

## II. THE ARGUMENT FROM THE INTUITIONAL SENSE OF IMMORTALITY

All tribes and tongues and peoples have had this great intuition. By this we mean that there has never been in all the world a nation or tribe that did not have some faith in the soul's continuance after the shock of death.

Prehistoric man believed in immortality. How little we really know of prehistoric man, and how much we have written about him. But if there is anything that we do know about this man of the long ago, it is this, that he did have a faith in immortality. He buried his dead in a sitting posture and facing the rising sun, that he might more easily rise when the great call should come. Also in his grave were placed the weapons of war and the implements of his domestic life so that he might have them in the future land.

Savage tribes have always had this intuition. The American Indian has always believed in the happy hunting grounds, the wide prairies where the great herds of buffalo wandered, or in the fields of yellow corn waving in the sun of an eternal day. The early Peruvians believed that the soul remained near the body for awhile, therefore they preserved the bodies

in mummified form. So it has ever been that savage men have had their faith that after this life with all its battles and storms are over, there will be a land of peace and joy. It has not always been the same kind of faith; but that there will be some kind of a future life there has never been any doubt.

Ancient nations have universally had this belief. The Persian dreamed of the beautiful land and in his dream he saw his loved ones carried across the dark abyss, over the many-hued arch of the rainbow. The ancient Chinese believed that the body or the animal part of man goes downward while the soul goes back to God. This return to God was also a return to the family, it was a glorious family reunion. The Egyptians have written their undying faith in immortality in the magnificent sepulchers all along the Nile. Six thousand years before the Star of Bethlehem shone over the Judean hills, they believed that the soul of man was ferried across the deep, dark river to the beautiful fields of Yaru. No nation of antiquity was so engrossed with the problem of life and death as were the Egyptians. The story of Osiris, Isis and Horus sounds like the story of Christ.

The Greeks believed in immortality. True, the future life to them was always dim and shadowy and cheerless, but the belief that there would be a life is firm and unshakable. It is not the character of that life which here so much concerns us but rather the fact that they believed in a future existence. Homer, although not so sure that the common run of men will have the blessing of immortality, hopes that for

the favorites of the Gods there may be a future life. Of Menelaus he sings: "The immortals shall bear thee away to the Elysian plain, to the limit of the world \* \* \* No sorrow nor wintry chill nor storm of rain comes near that happy spot, but even the ocean sends forth for refreshment the love breezes of zephyr; such a lot is thine because thou hast Helen for thy bride and Zeus for thy kin." Herodotus tells us that the Thracians mourned the birth of a child because of the sorrow that would attend its life; but when death came, they rejoiced because it meant liberation from pain and grief and an entrance into an abode of blessedness. Pindar also believed in the Elysium and painted it in glowing colors.

The Romans, hard, cold, materialists as they were, nevertheless had their moments when they could look beyond this world and see that there is to be another realm. Virgil believed that the soul is the real man and that the body is like unto a prison in which the soul is kept in defilement. Only when the soul is by death released from the body will it like a noble eagle soar into its native air. Æneas is amazed that Anchises, after he had reposed amidst the joys of Elysium, should ever desire to return to earth. Maximus of Tyre believed that the soul entered immortality at death; that death was really but the beginning of life and a life that nevermore was to end in death. Seneca nobly expressed the faith of his heart when he said: "The soul will have reason to rejoice when sent from the shade in which it is immersed. It shall see things no longer dimly but in the light of a per-

fect day, and having been restored to heaven will occupy the place which is its birthright."

Thus we might go on almost endlessly multiplying illustrations of this faith of the universal heart of man. But these are sufficient to teach us that the desire for immortality is universal. Man believes in the future life. He has ever been asking the question, "If man die, shall he live again?"

But what is the value of this intuition? Does it really mean anything as an argument for the reality of that which we so ardently desire?

The psychologist teaches us today that the race felt before it thought. We are prone too many times to look upon emotion as a weak thing in the life of man, as something which should be discouraged. But feeling is much older than thought. And the race has always felt that it must be so. Nothing has ever been able to tear this faith from the universal heart. Someone comes along and apparently destroys forever the very possibility of immortality, but still the race goes on believing just the same that it must be so.

"It must be so, Plato, thou reasonest well!—

Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after immortality?

Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror  
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul  
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?

'Tis the divinity that stirs within us,

'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,  
And intimates eternity to man."

If we are to live in the world at all we must trust our intellectual powers. We are willing to trust our physical senses and experience has proven that we are safe in doing so. While we may realize well that there is a limit to all human powers and also, perhaps, that other humans possess larger powers than we possess individually, yet we are perfectly willing to believe that our physical senses give us correct information and that our mental powers are worthy to be followed in their normal exercise. Dr. Clark has very ably expressed the practical results that have come to us because of this faith in our mental powers. "We find that we can discover and systematize the chemistry of all the worlds; we are able to trace and formulate the laws of universal motion; to distinguish the principles of mathematics that run through the universe; to trace out the vast system of classification that prevails throughout the animal and vegetable kingdoms; to explore times and places most remote, and understand what lies far beyond our experience. In all this process of knowing—to the possibilities of which no limits can be set—we are sure that our powers are to be trusted." All science therefore, yes, and every bit of the knowledge that we possess is dependent first of all upon this fact that we can trust the senses with which God has endowed us.

But are we not also safe in trusting this great religious intuition? We believe in God, we believe in immortality. Not only so, but we have found that all men believe in God and immortality. As all have been endowed with intellectual powers, so also all men

are endowed with these intuitions. Religious worship, obedience, belief in the future or aspiration are as normal to man as sensation or reasoning. There is but one conclusion, if this world is an honest world, and that is that we can trust these great intuitions, these yearnings written in our hearts by the very hand of God. There are no half-things in nature. In this world of reality every power has its counterpart, the eye has light, reason has truth, and the religious nature has God, the satisfaction of its nature.

At a certain time of the year when the leaves on the trees have turned from their green to yellow and brown, and when the first cold winds begin to sob across the plains of our northland, far aloft one hears a wild cry. The one initiated knows well the meaning of that cry. It is the parting song of the wild goose as he journeys with his comrades in the great V far above us to the southland. Although he has never been there before, yet there is something within him that tells him that far to the south, over the mountains and valleys, he will find sunny skies and pleasant fields. He trusts the intuition, and after the long journey is completed he finds the satisfaction of that desire as he revels in the warmth and sunshine of the south. The one who wrote that intuition in the breast of the wild goose and created the satisfaction of that desire in the southland will not disappoint his children in whose heart he has written the longing for an immortal home. Emerson realized this wonderful truth when he said: "The implanting of a desire indicates that the gratification of that

desire is in the constitution of the creature that feels it. The Creator keeps his word with us."

If this wonderful religious nature of man is false, if this intuition is nothing but a vain imagination, then we are compelled to admit that man is endowed with noble powers that can only mislead and disappoint him and that thus he has come into being possessed of a nature which is essentially false. But if this the highest and best part of his nature is false, then we cannot be sure of any of the powers which he possesses. How can we be sure of his intellectual powers? It is thus that we are compelled to trust our powers in the religious realm as well as in the intellectual or physical. If we are not safe in doing this we are not sure of anything at all. The intuition, "this longing after immortality," is, let us repeat once more, the unanswerable argument of the heart, one that can never be torn from the bosom of the race. Prophets, philosophers, and poets have voiced it in words that will live forever.

"My own dim life should teach me this,  
That life shall live forevermore,  
Else earth is darkness at the core,  
And dust and ashes all that is.

Here sits he, shaping wings to fly,  
His heart forebodes a mystery;  
He names the name Eternity.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,  
O, life, not death, for which we pant;  
More life, and fuller that I want."

(Tennyson)

“Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither,  
Can in a moment travel thither,  
And see the children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.”  
(Wordsworth)

### III. THE SEVENFOLD PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENT

(1) The character of God demands immortality.

God is love, and love hates death. It is the bitterest antagonist of death. This is God's world, and if it is his world then the soul is immortal because God loves man. This is reason's highest, noblest and best argument. It is the thought of Rousseau, the great Frenchman, when he says: "I believe in God as much as I do in any other truth. If God exists, he is perfect, he is wise, just and almighty. If he is just and almighty, my soul is immortal." It is also the position of Dr. George T. Ladd, of Yale: "I believe in immortality because I believe in God and this is God's world." If God is the premise, immortality is the conclusion.

This position is all the stronger when we remember that God has implanted in the heart of his children the desire to live again. If he is, as we believe him to be, a wise and loving Father, he will not create men with this desire only to disappoint them and doom them to nothingness. He will not thus make cruel sport of his children. "Who can believe," says Martineau, "that the everlasting mind fulfills its end by disappointing every other?"

“Thou wilt not leave us in the dust.

Thou madest man, he knows not why,  
He thinks he was not made to die;

And thou hast made him: thou art just.”

(2) The nature or being of man witnesses for immortality.

The fact is as we have already noticed, that man has always believed it. We cannot even think in terms of death. We shrink in horror from the very thought of extinction. This was the wail of Huxley when at the age of sixty he wrote: “It is a curious thing that I find my dislike to the thought of extinction increasing as I get older and nearer the goal. It flashes upon me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more than I did in 1800. I had sooner be in Hell.” All sensual evidence, all the evidence of appearance would seem to be inimical to the very thought of immortality, for this evidence is in favor of death. Man lives in the presence of death always, he sees the flowers, the trees, the animals around him dying, yea and even his own loved ones; yet he goes on believing in life. Thus, while living ever in the presence of death, he has stubbornly and consistently thought in terms of life. Even the little child thinks of departed loved ones in terms of life. The tiny maiden whom Wordsworth met and asked the question, “How many children are there in your family, my dear?” answered: “We are seven;” although two of the little ones were sleeping in the church yard.

The beautiful poem of John Pierpont brings out

this thought of how our loved ones, though departed from this life, are still thought of in terms of life.

“I cannot make him dead.  
His fair sunshiny head  
Is ever bounding round my study chair,  
Yet when my eyes, now dim  
With tears, I turn to him,  
The vision vanishes—he is not there.

“I walk my parlor floor  
And through the open door  
I hear a footstep on the chamber stair,  
I’m stepping to the hall  
To give the boy a call,  
And then methink me—he is not there.

“I know his face is hid  
Under the coffin lid.  
Closed are his eyes; cold is his forehead fair.  
My hand that marble felt—  
O’er it in prayer I knelt—  
Yet my heart whispers—that he is not there.

“Not there! Where then is he?  
The form I used to see  
Was but the raiment that he used to wear.  
The grave that now doth press  
Upon his cast-off dress,  
Is but his wardrobe locked—he is not there.

“He lives! In all the past he lives!  
Nor to the last  
Of seeing him will I despair!

In dreams I see him now,  
 And on his angel brow  
 I see it written—thou shalt see him there.

“Yes, we all live in God!  
 Father! thy chastening rod  
 Help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear;  
 That in the Spirit land,  
 Standing at thy right hand,  
 ’Twill be our heaven to find—that he is there.”

(3) Man’s consciousness of duty demands immortality.

Duty demands of the moral personality that it be perfect. We may try, but there is no escape from the eternal urge of duty. In this world, however, we are not able to reach that perfection which duty demands of us. Hence there must be a time, perhaps infinitely distant, where that perfection may be reached. Thus immortality is the only conclusion. This was the noble argument of Kant in his “Theory of Ethics.”

(4) The fact that man in every age is seen turning away from the transitory to what he deems the eternal, is a witness for immortality.

In all ages and among every nation we find this attitude on the part of man. Those things that he considers trifling and transitory are rejected and he strives for the things that he considers eternal. In his splendid little work, “Immortality,” Seabrook in this same connection says: “Men are seen preferring truth to ease, philanthropy to luxury, godliness to gain, deaths of undeserved pain to lives of praise. It

is the constant triumph of the higher over the lower motive. This cannot at bottom be merely a vain illusion." A glorious illustration of this was the willing sacrifice of thousands of our own brave boys in the World War. Willingly, joyfully they gave up fame and fortune, their loved ones at home, stifled their own personal ambitions, and offered their lives that liberty might not perish from the earth. Honor and virtue and liberty were of more value than mere life alone.

(5) The illimitable capacity of human nature for development, the incompleteness of that development, and the impossibility of that completeness here, argue for immortality.

Man is larger than the earth. His mind is so vast in its possibilities that it might know all that earth has for him, if it had but the time. The more a man studies the better prepared he is for learning. The worm and the ox are satisfied with their lot. Man is the only being of earth which is never satisfied. He reaches out to vaster worlds. He must have an immortality to reach his fullest and best. And how incomplete is this world! It bears the marks of a work begun but never finished. When man has reached his best here, he realizes that he has after all but just begun. He may have learned secrets from earth and heaven, yet when death summons him he knows that he has but sipped from the ocean of knowledge. Edward Gibbon died in anguish, wishing for ten more years of time that he might finish his work. While on his deathbed, Theodore Parker said to Francis Power Cobb: "I am not afraid to die, but I wish I might

carry on my work. I have only half used the powers that God has given me." In one of his sunny letters to Carlyle, Emerson writes: "What have we to do with old age. Our existence looks to me more than ever initial." Victor Hugo felt this consciousness that his work was but half done: "For half a century I have been writing my thought in prose and verse; history and philosophy; drama and satire; ode and lyric,—I have tried all. But I feel that I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others, 'I have finished my day's work,' but I cannot say, 'I have finished my life.' My day's work will begin the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley, it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens with the dawn."

Thus it is that we are never satisfied. I have often thought that heaven, to me, will be a great library or laboratory, where I may learn those things that to me have been dark. The highest aspirations of our souls

Point to some world of endless, endless truth  
Of life and light,  
Where souls renewed in an immortal youth,  
Shall know the infinite.

Man looks toward the future, his face shining for he feels himself a being who but "partly is and wholly hopes to be;" he knows that he "stands half-built against the sky," but with an unflinching faith he looks upward and forward believing that

“The best is yet to be,  
The last of life for which the first was made.  
Our times are in his hand  
Who saith, ‘As whole I planned;  
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be  
afraid.’”

(6) The triumph of the spiritual man over the dying body is a glorious witness for immortality.

The body, as it grows old and diseases take hold of it, has no power over the triumphant soul. It is often at this time that the soul blazes forth in greater intensity and power. Robert Louis Stevenson, spitting his life away on a lonely island, was brighter and more cheerful as the end drew near. His mighty soul could not be conquered by the poor, weak, dying body. Sidney Lanier, the beloved poet of the southland, had to be carried into his lecture room at Johns Hopkins University, and often the students in the class thought that the body would not last out the hour. But it was in this time when the body was slowly decaying away that he wrote his finest and best: “I am lit by the light of the sun.” Stephen, the first Christian martyr, even while the stones were crushing the life from his body could in triumph of spirit forgive his enemies, saying, “Lord Jesus, lay not this sin to their charge.” The beginnings of death that gradually weaken the body and finally destroy it do not touch the spirit.

(7) Justice demands immortality.

This world is not a place where justice reigns. Again I would quote a magnificent passage from Sea-

brook: "There is nothing in the world more evident than the maladjustment of character and circumstances. Dives, selfish and forgetful, heaps up riches; Lazarus, ragged and poor, lies at his gate. Herod reigns, while John the Baptist is beheaded in a prison cell; Nero is seated on the throne of an empire, Peter is crucified and John the beloved apostle is an exile on Patmos' lonely isle; Mary wears the crown of England, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer go to the martyrs' crowning; Socrates is the best man in Athens and he is made to drink the fatal hemlock; Huss is the bravest man in Europe of his time, and he is burned at the stake; Paul is the most splendid character of his age and he is beheaded; Jesus Christ is the sovereign spirit in history, and he is crucified between two malefactors. Some of the world's children of light live in darkness and loneliness, while some who are unworthy are honored, applauded and flattered by their fellows. The world is full of wretched outcasts, sinners because they are sinned against, scorned by their fellows while they who tempted are loved and praised; many knowing nothing in earth's life but suffering and sorrow; many sincere hearts are breaking because they are misunderstood."

I knew a little girl with a crooked back. From her infancy she was forced to suffer terrible agonies. There never was a day when she was free from pain. Was she suffering for her own sins and therefore justly? We answer, No. She was innocent. There must be a place where the wrongs that she suffered will be made right. Unless there is an immor-

tality God is not just and his universe is not moral. There must be a time where the balances of Justice will swing even. "If death gives final discharge," says Martineau, "alike to sinner and saint, we are warranted in saying that conscience has told more lies than it has ever called to their account."

While we are, in this message, bringing to bear arguments that are to prove that all souls are immortal, yet the consideration that Justice demands immortality is even more weighty when applied to the really great spirits that have lived and wrought in our world. We may not notice the pull of gravity upon an atom, but that pull becomes tremendous in the pressure of a mountain upon its base or in the pull of the moon or the sun. The more mighty and impressive the personality, the more weighty are the arguments that converge upon the hope of immortality. We do not for a moment mean that the meanest slave or the lowest savage has not within him the germ of immortal worth; but "when mighty men stride across the stage of the world and achieve works of supreme genius, or put forth deeds that reshape the ages, or win crowns of sublime heroism, or rise to summits of lofty character, or wear the blood-red robes of sacrificial service and suffering, we have a powerful conviction that these souls are of immeasurable worth and were not born to die. Socrates and Plato, Milton and Shakespeare, Cromwell and Lincoln are too great and precious, we feel, to be extinguished like meteors in the night, and we are satisfied only as we are assured that they are set as stars in the firmament of eternity." It shocks our very sense of justice that the great souls

should forever perish. Too long and hard has been the path to selfhood and from selfhood to genius for all this to be lost.

This principle rises to its greatest height in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the loftiest character of all history. With him none can compare. In him in kindness, love, honesty, virtue, sacrifice, the race reaches its highest and best. His life is the one flawless gem of all the world. His character is indisputably the proudest possession of the races of men. To quote once more from Dr. Snowden: "If that great soul and white spirit vanished in the night of death and left only a handful of dust under the Syrian stars, then we feel that we have lived in an irrational world which devours its noblest children and betrays all its promises." As justice demands an immortality in order that all the frightful inequalities and injustices of this world may be adjusted, so also it demands that the noble souls who through struggle and trial have reached the snowy peaks of character be not thrown into the eternal void, but that they rather be crowned with victory and honor and eternal life.

"All, all leads up to what we do not see:

Powers that shall ripen, worlds that yet shall be,  
Time like a twilight swallowed up at last  
In the broad radiance of eternity.

All is not buried in the great abyss.

Brains that stored truth, and love that found its  
bliss

In death itself—Oh, God himself is not so rich  
To bear such shameful waste as this."

## IV. LOVE'S ARGUMENT FOR IMMORTALITY

The philosopher reasons, the scientist demonstrates, but love trusts in simple childlike faith. It is the argument of the poets, of hearts that have suffered and lived deeply. After all, love is really the only permanent relationship among men. We do not cease to love those who have been called from us by the hand of death. We think of them as living and love them as we did when they were with us. Thackeray once asked, as he thought of this fact: If we still love those we lose, can we ever altogether lose those we love?" Tennyson answered this question in the brave words,

“If e'er when faith had fallen asleep  
I heard a voice, 'Believe no more!'  
And heard an ever-breaking shore  
That tumbled in the Godless deep,  
A warmth within the breast would melt  
The freezing reason's colder part,  
And like a man in wrath the heart,  
Stood up and answered, 'I have felt!' ”

Love's argument is the argument of hearts that have felt. And how the philosophies of men who have been of materialistic bent have changed in the presence of death and sorrow! Materialism breaks down at the side of the tomb. It stands dumb and helpless. George Eliot may deny her desire for immortality and in the "Choir Invisible" she may talk glibly about an immortality of mere influence, but just the same there is in her heart the real longing, for she too had

the God-written intuition. Shelley, the altogether lovable youth, although he said that the thought of immortality did not interest him at all, one day found a great change in his interest when death came and took from him his dearest friend. In the very depths of his despair and sorrow he utters these beautiful words of hope for Keats, his departed friend:

“Naught we know dies;—shall that alone which  
 knows  
 Be as the sword consumed before the sheath  
 By sightless lightning?—He lives, he wakes, 'tis  
 death is dead, not he—  
 Mourn not for Adonis.”

John Stuart Mill claimed at one time that he did not believe in immortality and that he had no longing for it. But sorrow came with its blighting power, destroying his materialistic philosophy, and at the grave of his wife his heart uttered its longing. Emerson professed no belief in a personal immortality, claiming that the immortality of mental and moral characteristics was sufficient. There is the wail of one who has no hope and to whom the valley of the shadow is as black as midnight:

“The south brings  
 Life, sunshine, and desire,  
 And on every mount and meadow  
 Breathes aromatic fire.  
 But o'er the dead he has no power,  
 The lost, the lost he cannot restore,  
 And looking o'er the hills I mourn  
 The darling who shall not return.”

For a while he thus is buried in the deeps of sorrow, until at last hope utters her longing and the song rings with a great new conviction:

“What is excellent,  
As God lives, is permanent.  
Hearts are dust, hearts’ loves remain;  
Heart’s love will meet thee again.”

Colonel Ethan Allen was the most vitriol-tongued skeptic of Revolutionary days. He made light of religion, claiming that it was a myth and that the thought of immortality was a fraud. But one day came black sorrow into the life of the colonel and his little daughter was stricken and death was hovering near. Placing her arms around the neck of her father she said: “Father, you have taught me that there is no hope for us after death, that there is no Christ and that religion is foolishness. Mother is a Christian and she has taught me to believe in the blessed Savior who has gone to prepare a home for those who are faithful to him. Father, I am dying, whom now shall I believe?” Colonel Ethan Allen, his body shaking with great sobs answered: “My precious baby, believe your mother.” His philosophy was impotent in the presence of death.

Dante was led by the hand of love to the victory of knowing that there is a rest from earth’s toil and sorrows in the ranks of the Rose of the Blessed, that great company of the redeemed who, like the petals of a glorious rose, assembled rank upon rank around the mystic Lake of Light. Love for God drew him

closer to Beatrice and love for Beatrice drew him closer to God. Love led the way to immortality.

Colonel Robert Ingersoll, after a life of effort to destroy the very hope of immortality, yea and the belief in all that would make life worth the living at all, by the casket of his brother utters words of hope: "There is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead, there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."

Love led Robert Browning to sing one of the bravest, noblest songs that ever passed the lips of mortal man. In "Prospice" he utters his great, manly faith:

"Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,  
 The mist in my face,  
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
 I am nearing the place,  
 The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
 The post of the foe;  
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,  
 Yet the strong man must go:  
 For the journey is done and the summit attained,  
 And the barriers fall,  
 Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,  
 The reward of it all.  
 I was ever a fighter, so—one fight mo  
 The best and the last!

I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and  
forebore,  
And bade me creep past.  
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers  
The heroes of old,  
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
Of pain, darkness, and cold.  
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
The black minute's at end,  
And the elements rage, the fiend voices that rave,  
Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be at rest!"

By the hand of love Tennyson was led from doubt to a glorious and victorious faith. There never has been in the history of men of letters a more interesting story than the story of this great journey. The whole atmosphere of his university life was of such a character as to make him a doubter and a disbeliever in immortality. He entered England's great university when it was the popular thing for men to sneer at all things religious, when "doubt was becoming a fad and faith a form of folly." It was in this same atmosphere that Arthur Clough, one of the keenest intellects of his time, became confused and drifted, becoming, as Thomas Arnold said, "the Hamlet of the nineteenth century." But Tennyson was a brave and stalwart fighter, and being familiar with every attack that could be made upon Christ and

Christianity, he fought his way through. All went well with him and life was happy and care-free until one day there came into his life its great sorrow. Arthur Henry Hallam, his dearest friend was gone. Hallam had been to him more than a brother, and his death blasted his hopes and made of his life dust and ashes. In anguish he mourns as he gazes upon the leaden sea :

“Break, Break, Break

On thy cold grey stones, oh, sea!

And I would that my tongue could utter

The thoughts that arise in me.

“Oh, well for the fisherman’s boy,

As he shouts with his sister at play

Oh, well for the sailor lad,

As he sings in his boat on the bay.

“And the stately ships go on

To their haven under the hill.

But, Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand

And the sound of a voice that is still !”

But from the ashes of his sorrow, fresh and green and strong there sprang a new hope, the hope that produced the greatest poem of the century, “In Memoriam.” From the doubter, Tennyson became the one who could say: “I cannot understand how any great imaginative man, who has deeply lived, suffered, thought, and wrought, can doubt the soul’s continued progress in the after-life.” And when at last there came from the ivory palaces the summons for his great soul to come in triumph to its eternal

crowning, how calm and beautiful was the farewell! As he "put out to sea," he left behind him his song, the song of a mighty and unfaltering faith:

"Sunset and evening star  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar  
When I put out to sea,  
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound or foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless  
    deep  
Turns again home.

"Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;  
For though from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to meet my pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar."

## V. THE CHRISTIAN ARGUMENT—THE CERTAIN WORD

While we are grateful for the contributions of Science and Reason, Intuition and Love, and while the words which they speak are mighty words, yet we realize that they have not spoken, that they cannot speak the *certain* word. We are conscious of the feeling always, as we turn over in our minds these great thoughts, that there is something lacking. We want on such a question as this a more definite word, some-

thing more sure. The inscriptions on many of the ancient Greek tombs illustrate this fact because they so often have that pathetic word "If." "If Lethe and Tartarus do not end all," "If aught of grief or love avail to move the everlasting silence of the grave," "If any consciousness abides among the dead, oh, my child." Thus we need a more certain word.

There is in the very nature of the case but one way by which the pathetic "If" could be removed and the certain word spoken. One must arise from the dead, one must come back from the everlasting silence and again dwell among men, before a word around which there would cluster no doubt could be spoken. Thanks be to God that this certain word was spoken by our Lord! He was able to speak it because he did come back from the grave. He was the victor over death. Thus the resurrection of Christ is the basis of the hope of the Christian religion.

How often the glorious hope of immortality rings through the New Testament! To have been a witness of Christ after his resurrection was one of the conditions of apostleship. No man could be an apostle unless he could preach the resurrection and preach it as an eyewitness. Peter preached this great fact as the very central theme of his wonderful Pentecost sermon. Paul preached it at Antioch in Pisidia, from the summit of Mars Hill in Athens, to the multitude in Jerusalem when he was taken prisoner, in the presence of the High Priest; of Felix; of Festus and of Agrippa. The very basis of that wonderful argument in the fifteenth chapter of I. Corinthians is the fact of the resurrection. He begins by telling of those

who are witnesses and then boldly affirms that, "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching in vain, your faith also is vain." The very foundation of the Christian's hope is the resurrection of the King. Everywhere in the New Testament it is the same teaching, whether given by John, Peter, or Paul; we are to be raised because Jesus was raised from the dead.

This same sublime hope rings like a clear-toned bell through the gospels. In his conversation with Mary and Martha just before he raised their brother from the dead Jesus gave expression to this hope when he said: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26). We hear the ringing of this bell of hope in the parable of the loving father who received the wandering boy to his heart again even though he had gone far astray. So will the Heavenly Father receive his wandering children if they will in penitence return to him.

There are two great facts upon which the certainty of our immortality rests: the love of God, and the resurrection of the Lord. If we know only that God had raised Jesus from the dead, we would be hopeless; for by that action, although he has demonstrated that he has the power to raise one man, yet he has not shown us that he will raise us. We would have a wonderful demonstration of the power of God, but there would be no hope for us in that fact alone. There must be another fact underlying this and that the granite fact of the Love of God. If God loves us,

and he had the power to raise Jesus from the dead, then also will he raise us. This is the sublimest argument of all for immortality. In that wonderful eighth chapter of Romans, Paul soars to the very clouds as he marvels at the love of God in Christ Jesus: "What shall we say then to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written,

For thy sake we are killed all the day long;

We are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:31-39). In the first letter to the Corinthians he further affirms: "And God raised the Lord, and will raise up us through his power" (I. Cor. 6:14). God has the power to raise the dead, as shown by the wondrous fact that he raised up Jesus; and if he has the power he will also raise

us, for he loves us and nothing can separate us from his love; this is the great and unanswerable argument of the apostle to the Gentiles.

## CONCLUSION

The practical value of this hope is so tremendous that it is almost worthy of being classed among the reasons for it. What would the world be, were it not for the belief in immortality? To destroy this hope would be as if the power of the Divine were to sever the chords of gravity and allow the world to stagger and reel off into the great dark void. The lives of men would sink into unnamable degradation and ruin. The only way that millions can bear "the heavy and weary weight of all this unintelligible world" is to believe that after while there is to be a better and a sunnier clime, where men shall dwell in a "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." If men believe themselves to be like beasts it will not be long until they are living like beasts. And to believe in immortality makes men better and their lives purer and holier. Upon a hope such as this, so essential to the very life and happiness of men, there is the stamp of reality. With Cicero we can say, "I would rather be mistaken with Plato than right with those who deny the life after death."

There will be a time of glorious reunion over there in that beautiful land. In the many gleaming mansions which the Lord has gone to prepare, there are countless thousands of earth's loved ones who are waiting and longing for the glint of a sail, they are

standing with outstretched arms beckoning us over the tide. Will we be ready when the summons comes to us?

“Over the river they beckon to me,  
Loved ones who’ve crossed to the other side.  
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,  
But their voices are drowned in the rushing tide.  
There’s one with ringlets of sunny gold,  
And eyes the reflection of Heaven’s own blue;  
He crossed in the twilight grey and cold,  
And the pale mists hid him from mortal view,  
We saw not the angels that met him there,  
The gates of the city we could not see,—  
Over the river, over the river,  
My brother stands waiting and watching for me.

“Over the river the boatman pale  
Carried another, the household pet.  
Her brown curls waved in the gentle gale,—  
Precious darling, I see her yet.  
On her bosom she folded her dimpled hands  
And fearlessly entered the phantom bark.  
We watched it glide from the silver sands  
And all our sunshine grew strangely dark.  
We know she’s safe on the farther side,  
Where all the ransomed angels be  
Over the river, the mystic river,  
My childhood’s idol is waiting for me.

“Over the river another stands  
Anxiously watching—her outstretched hands

To me are beckoning—her hair so white  
Gleams silven in the heavenly light.  
Ah, those dear hands, how they labored for me  
In labors of love, then I could not see!  
But I see it now since she's crossed the tide  
How her love would woo me to the Savior's side.  
Yes, I'll keep the promise I made her that night  
I'll make the start, though a struggle it be,  
For over the river, the mystic river,  
My dear old mother is waiting for me."



### III

## The Prayer That Works

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*Text: "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working."—James 5:16.*

If we strip this text of its verbiage and express its meaning in one concise statement it would read, "Prayer works." But what kind of prayer works? Most people pray now and then yet there is the feeling many times that our prayers have not been answered. While we cannot help but pray, yet we often wonder if really there is anything in prayer.

It is amazing how vast our Lord makes the scope of prayer. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9). "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matt. 7:11). "Again I say unto you that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:19, 20). "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father

may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13). "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). From these great statements it would seem that under certain conditions we may ask of the Lord whatsoever we will and he will answer us. But what are these conditions? Just how much does the Master mean it when he tells us that we may ask what we will?

'Through all the ages there has been a mighty chorus of testimony to the fact that God does answer prayer. Coe states it well when he says, "a history and psychology of prayer would be almost equivalent to a history and psychology of religion." The great heroes of faith of the past were men and women of prayer. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Lot, Samson, Hannah, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah,—these and scores of others with one mighty voice testify to the fact that God answers prayer. This is the argument of men and women who have lived richly and have experienced deeply, and know whereof they speak. Our Lord was a man of prayer. Never did he enter into any great undertaking until he had first gone to the Father in prayer. As he rose from the waters of the Jordan he was praying. Before choosing the twelve young men who were to be his messengers to the uttermost parts of the earth, he spent the entire night in the mountain in prayer. Before feeding the five thousand, he first bowed before the throne of grace. At the time of the revelation of his Messiahship he was also the praying Christ. At the last supper, in Gethsemane, on the cross he is still the man of prayer.

The church of God was born in a prayer meeting. While the expectant disciples, waiting for the promise of the Comforter, were in the upper room bowed in prayer there came the glorious messenger from the New Jerusalem with the wondrous message that the King had been crowned and that the Kingdom could now be established. After the great day of Pentecost and the establishment of the church the children of God "continued stedfastly in prayer." The New Testament church was a praying church. The apostles were all men of prayer. They felt that without the strength that comes from communion with the Father they could do nothing.

The great leaders of the Church of Christ have been praying men. The agonizing cry of John Knox, "Oh, God, give me Scotland or I die," was feared more by the bloody queen than all the armies on the continent. Martin Luther said that when he was busiest he spent three hours a day in prayer. John Wesley was known by all with whom he came in contact as a devout man of prayer.

From men of national fame also has come wondrous testimony to the fact that prayer works. Washington at Valley Forge, kneeling in prayer while his men were freezing in their poor hovels, was mightier than all the armies of Britain. Lincoln on his way to Washington to assume the arduous duties of his office, and looking ahead into the years of strife and bloodshed, the years which for human strength alone would be unbearable, said to the crowd of friends gathered to wish him godspeed, "Pray for me, for I will need it." When Lord Kitchener received the marvelous

news of the German defeat at the first battle of the Marne he cried wonderingly, "Someone has been praying."

From the mission fields has come the testimony, "Prayer works." We know because we have experienced its benefits and without it we never would have won victories amidst ignorance and sin."

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of,

Therefore, let thy voice rise, like a fountain, for me day by day.

For what are men than sheep or goats

That nourish a blind life within the brain

If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

Both for themselves and those who call them friend.

For so the whole round world is every way

Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

If our prayers are not answered there is something wrong with us or with the prayers. Here are the multitudes who have received the answers to their petitions. Can we not also know as they know? What kind of prayer is it that works? for we all would have this blessing.

## I. THE PRAYER OF FAITH WORKS

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass; he shall

have it. Therefore I say unto you, All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:22-24).

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:20).

The men of faith are always the ones used of God for the accomplishment of the work that he wishes to do in the world. In these great verses Jesus says that nothing is impossible to the man of faith. He does not mean that we will remove literal mountains of stone and earth, because that is not the divine method of removing mountains of that kind. We might have prayed for centuries for the Lord to build us the Panama canal, but that isn't the way that canals are built. We remove literal mountains of earth with powder and shovels; but the great mountains of trial and difficulty, of sorrow and pain may be removed by prayer. Prayer is the great leveler of the mountains that oppress the soul. God never does anything for us that we can do for ourselves, but when we come to the place where we alone are inadequate to the task we may throw the burden on him and he will bear it for us. We need never expect an answer from our Heavenly Father unless we believe in him, and that he has the power, and will exercise it for his children. Sometimes our prayers are like that of the old lady who, reading the verse regarding the removal of mountains by faith, decided to try it on an old hill which obstructed her view of the sea. Kneeling down in her back door facing the hill she closed her eyes and

prayed for the Lord immediately to take the hill and throw it into the ocean. When she opened her eyes and the same old hill confronted her she said, "Still there just as I expected." Her prayer was not a prayer of faith.

## II. THE PRAYER OFFERED IN THE NAME OF JESUS WORKS

"If ye ask anything in my name, that will I do" (John 14:4). By his death upon the cross Jesus made atonement for us, and now by virtue of that atonement he has become our mediator. All prayers offered to the Father now must be offered in his name. The Master's statement regarding his position is clear and unmistakable when he says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

## III. THE PRAYER OFFERED IN HUMILITY WORKS

"And when ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:5, 6).

The hypocrites of old wanted to make a great show of their piety, hence their public prayers. Some of us today are dangerously near this same attitude. We pray in order that men may hear our prayers and be impressed by our piety. I have thought some-

times, as I have heard the prayers of preacher friends, of the young minister who prayed "a very beautiful and impressive prayer to a cultivated Boston audience." I remember once hearing an old soldier tell the Lord all about the Civil War. He described minutely the position of the regiment to which he belonged and called to the memory of the Lord certain great events which doubtless the Lord had forgotten. His prayer was a parade of his knowledge of the war before the audience and was not in reality addressed to the Lord at all. Our prayers, to be heard, must not be those that are prayed simply to be heard of men, but they must well up out of a heart of need as the prayer of the publican of the long ago when he said, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner."

Our prayers to have the spirit of humility should avoid vain repetitions. So many times we repeat over and over again, thinking, as did the Gentiles, that we shall be heard for our much speaking.

Stilted and extravagantly endearing terms of address, when speaking to the Deity, are the very opposite of a proper spirit of humility. For instance, we have heard sentences such as the following: "Dear, dear God" or "Most holy and righteous and adorable Heavenly Father." Contrast with these the words of Jesus as he addresses his prayers to God: "Our Father, who art in Heaven." It is always the same majestic simplicity throughout. He speaks as a child addressing its father.

It is prayer offered with a contrite heart in an humble spirit that works, for such is the prayer that the

Father hears. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (James 4:6).

#### IV. THE PRAYER OFFERED IN HARMONY WITH THE WILL OF GOD WORKS

John beautifully expresses this great truth in his first epistle, "And this is the boldness which we have towards him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). If we would have our prayers answered, we should always try to know first that we are asking according to the will of God. That one who has surrendered his will to the will of the Heavenly Father, and who, like the Master, can say, "Not my will but thine be done" will never have any trouble about the answers to his prayers because he knows that the Father will always make his word good. Many times we think we are asking according to the will of God when in reality we are simply asking for the things we think we want and need, whether they are in accordance with the will of God or not. Our Father desires the highest and best good for us, and although we may not always be able to understand all the plan, yet we trust him who is wise and good and we know that he will work for us an exceedingly abundant glory. We must learn to pray as Jesus prayed and as he taught his disciples to pray: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

#### V. THE PRAYER OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN WORKS

James tells us this in the text. If our hearts are filled with anger and hatred, if our lives are full of

sin and disobedience, our prayers will not be heard. David expresses it correctly when he cries, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear" (Ps. 66:18). The prayer of Cornelius was heard, it went up for a memorial before God, because he was a righteous man and one that feared God with all his house.

We must have the forgiving spirit when we pray. Immediately after telling his disciples of the wonder-working power of prayer if offered in faith, Our Lord charges them: "And whensoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against anyone: that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25). Perhaps, my brother, you have not received the answer to your prayer. Ah, but how can the Lord answer the prayer of a murderer who comes but who is not penitent in his coming? And the one who has hatred in his heart is a murderer. Listen to the solemn word of John, ye who say that ye cannot forgive and yet claim that ye are children of God. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15). If we would be forgiven we must learn to forgive. Let us come before the Lord with pure hearts and clean hands and he will hear us, for

"The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,  
And his ears unto their supplication:  
But the face of the Lord is upon them that do  
evil."  
(1 Pet. 3:12.)

## VI. THE PRAYER OFFERED WITHOUT ANXIETY, BUT WITH THANKFULNESS WORKS

The exhortation of Paul to the Philippians emphasizes this truth: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

The world is too much with some of us and we are constantly disturbed about the morrow, what we shall eat and what we shall wear. We are not truly trusting the One who careth for the sparrow and who knows the numbers of the very hairs upon our heads. It is the prayer of perfect trust, of thankfulness and without anxiety, that will be heard by the Father.

## VII. THE PRAYER GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS

"And in like manner the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not how to pray as we ought: but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

The Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of every Christian, bringing a new peace and calm, and this very power helps us to say always, "Thy will be done." He is our helper and guide.

## VIII. THE DEFINITE PRAYER WORKS

Too many times our prayers are like the sawed-off shot gun, in that they scatter. Many times I have been afraid in my work to call upon certain visiting brethren to pray lest they should spoil the whole spirit

of the meeting by their scattering prayers. Pray for what you want. Pray for that which you need. When you go into a store you do not buy all the goods in the store but you purchase the thing that you want and need.

Numerous are the New Testament illustrations of definite prayer. The publican: "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." Blind Bartimaeus: "Lord, that I may receive my sight." The leper: "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The dying thief: "Remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom." Let us be definite in our praying.

#### IX. THE PRAYER BACKED BY ACTIVITY WORKS

We must pray as though we ourselves could do nothing and all depended upon God, and we must work as though God were impotent and all depended upon us. This is the winning combination. We must pray for men to be converted to the Lord, and at the same time we must work as though that conversion depended upon us. We are to pray for men but we must go teach and baptize as well. God often uses us in the answering of our own prayers. It is almost an impossible thing for us to begin to pray for men and not be urged by our very prayers to put forth every energy to lead those men to the Savior. I remember quite well one meeting which illustrates this great thought. A certain man attended the meeting every night for seven weeks. The evangelist had been praying for that man from the very beginning of the revival, but the prayers were seemingly unheard. The last night came, and with it the last invitation and the last verse of that invitation, and still the man for

whom the prayers had been offered had not come. Then it seemed that there came a voice to the minister, saying: "You have prayed for this man for seven weeks, why do you not back up that prayer this moment with a personal work of exhortation?" Stepping down the isle he took the man by the hand and led him to Christ. It is prayer backed by activity that works.

## X. THE PERSISTENT PRAYER WORKS

Many are the exhortations in the Word to persistency in prayer. "Be instant in prayer," "Continue in prayer," "Men ought always to pray and not faint," "Continue stedfastly in prayer," these are the strong words of the Divine Book.

There are many illustrations of the wonderful results which come to the one who is persistent in prayer. Jacob wrestled all night in prayer. Elijah prayed seven times for rain. Jesus prayed three times in the garden.

One of the mightiest evidences of our faith is that we are persistent and that we do not become discouraged but continue until the blessing comes.

## CONCLUSION

Have you by experience known the power of prayer? How wondrous and irresistible is the testimony of the millions who know that God answers their prayers! The same great weapon is yours and mine if we will but believe.

## IV

# The Cleansing Blood

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*Text: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John 1:7.*

The greatest truth in all the world is stated in this text. No matter what the special creed of the Christian today, there is not one who will wish to deny this wonderful fact that the blood of the Lord was shed for the remission of the sins of men. But while we all believe this, yet we are sometimes at sea when we find that the salvation in Jesus Christ is a conditional salvation. How is it, then, that although Christ died for the sins of men yet at the same time there is something that the individual sinner must do for his redemption? It is the purpose of this message to answer this question, to discover, if we can, the relationship between the atonement and a conditional salvation.

### I. LET US NOTICE FIRST THAT THERE NEVER HAS BEEN ANY REMISSION OF SINS APART FROM THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD

Why this is, I do not know, nor is there in the world anyone who does know, but it is a fact of which we are absolutely assured. Why God has chosen this

method, we cannot tell; but that he has is a truth which no one will deny. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews makes the plain statement that, "Apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission."

Among the Jews the life of the man was considered to be in the blood, and the shedding of blood, therefore, meant the taking of life. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17:11; Deut. 12:23). The payment for sins must always be death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The illustrations of this great truth are legion. Rome in all her sin and lust for blood paid for that sin in the blood of her people. The awful sins of the pre-revolution nobles of France were paid for, or wiped out, in the rivers of blood that flowed through Paris in the terrible storm that broke, carrying away in its thunder the old aristocracy.

The sin of human slavery in our own beloved land was wiped out in the blood of more than a million of the bravest men who have ever lived upon this earth. The sin of militarism was paid for in oceans of blood that drenched the sunny land of France from Lorraine to the sea. Paul says that the wages of sin is death, and throughout the ages we have been seeing this old and solemn truth illustrated again and again.

## II. WE MIGHT PROFITABLY NOTICE FOR A MOMENT THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY THE BLOOD OFFERINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The offerings of Cain and Abel illustrate the fact that the offerings to God must always be blood of-

ferings. Abel offered by faith, or according to the commandment of God, and gave the best of his flocks unto the Lord; but Cain, seeing no need of this kind of sacrifice, made a substitution in his offering and it was rejected because he had not offered according to the commandment of God and therefore according to faith.

On that dark night in the long ago when the death-angel passed over the land of Egypt smiting the first-born of the Egyptians, the children of Israel literally hid behind the blood of the Passover Lamb. What a beautiful and splendid type of that Lamb of God who was to come and behind whose blood the sin-oppressed of every land were to hide!

The sin offering was another blood offering and more clearly than any other typified the coming one who was to be the great sacrifice. It was to be a lamb without spot or blemish, and was like the blood offering of Egypt a type of the one to come,—the lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

We should remember here that none of these blood offerings of the Old Testament could take away sin. The writer of the Hebrew letter makes this clear when he says, "For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4). All the offerings of all the past could not remove the burden from man's soul. All the rivers of blood that had been shed could not bring the whiteness that he so much desired. There was to be but one power in all the universe that could remove the spots from the soul, and that the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God.

But what was the purpose of these offerings? We may answer this question in one sentence. They were to roll the sins of the people forward until the great sacrifice should be made. Christ's blood was to be shed for the sins of all mankind, hence those of the past as well as those who should live after his coming are cleansed by his blood. Before the cross, however, no sin was ever forgiven.

### III. THE GREAT DEBT WAS PAID BY CHRIST UPON THE CROSS

When Jesus came into the world he found the whole race in sin. Without a single exception "all had sinned and had come short of the glory of God." Men were dead in trespasses and sin, "all like sheep had gone astray." Not only were men in sin, but they were also under the condemnation and penalty of sin. Paul tells us that "The wages of sin is death." For man without a Savior, therefore, there was nothing but death, for all had sinned. Jesus finds the race condemned by its own folly and disobedience.

We do not desire in this message to advocate any theory of atonement. The world is sick and tired of theories; it is hungry for facts. I do not claim to know how Jesus paid the debt or how his blood can be efficacious for the blotting out of my sin, but I do accept the fact of it all. That somehow he did pay the debt I know. How many and beautiful are the wonderful words that tell us of the purpose of Calvary! "He bare in his body our sins upon the tree." "In whom we have our redemption through his blood,

the forgiveness of our trespasses" (Eph. 1:7). Or in the second chapter of this same Ephesian letter, "But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). "Unto him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by his blood" (Rev. 1:5). "For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13, 14). Paul tells us that the death of Christ for the sins of the world is one of the great fundamental facts of the Gospel: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4). That this death of our Lord was voluntary and that, therefore, it was a sacrifice and not a slaughter, is made clear by the writer of Hebrews when he affirms that "such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this he did once for all when he of-

ferred up himself" (Heb. 7:26, 27). The offering of the Lord was a voluntary offering: he gave himself gladly, willingly for men whom he loved. In his epistle to the Philippians Paul, in that passage known and loved by all Christians, brings out the thought that the death of our Lord was an obedience when he says: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8). This obedience of the Master prepared the way for the obedience of men to the law of the Lord which was afterward to be given. In his letter to the Romans the Apostle to the Gentiles tells us that we are justified by the blood when he says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him" (Rom. 5:8, 9).

We might in this sermon talk about the substitution theory or the moral influence theory or any of the other numerous theories that have been advanced to explain the "how" of the death of the Lord. But we are not concerned about the "how" of it in this message. Let us leave that to the theologian and concern ourselves with the wonderful fact that an escape has been provided, that a fountain has been opened for the healing of the nations, and that if we will bathe

in that fountain we may be clean. A man who has by mistake swallowed a deadly poison is not deeply concerned about the chemical constituents of an antidote handed to him by the physician. He eagerly, thankfully accepts the fact that the medicine will take from his system the poison and save his life, hence he drinks it with all possible speed. The great sin-poisoned world is not concerned about how the blood cleanses; it is enough to know that it does cleanse, that if it will come to the fountain it may be pure. And are not the plain statements sufficient? How clearly the great facts are set forth! We are "redeemed" by the blood, and in the blood we have the "forgiveness of our sins." "He bare in his body our sins upon the tree" and in his blood are we "loosed" or "washed" from our sins. He "died for our sins according to the scriptures" and by his blood are our "consciences cleansed from dead works to serve the living God." "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us" and in his blood we are "justified from our sins." How blessed are these wondrous statements from the Holy Word! At last the day has come toward which the men of old had looked, of which they had dreamed; the day when the sins of man may be taken away.

We rejoice at the glorious fact of redemption, but oh, what a price was paid that it might be accomplished! No blessing in the universe so costly as this! The blood of Christ: What do the words mean? You may know the answer, my brother, only by looking upon the little hill just outside the city

of Jerusalem. Upon a rude cross, with the clouds lowering over him, the earth trembling beneath him, a crown of thorns upon his brow, his face streaming with sweat and blood, every wound becoming a dead weight of agony, see your King, and in all this suffering, the terrible price of your redemption. The sun could not look upon the awful scene; the earth in protest against it all, reeled and staggered in anguish; the Father turned his face away and the Lamb was left to die alone. All alone in the darkness, forsaken by God and man, he "bare in his body our sins upon the tree." It was at this moment that the great cry of loneliness came from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He felt alone and forsaken. But you say to me, "How could he feel a consciousness of separation?" There is but one thing that can separate man and God, and that thing is sin. David spoke this truth when he said: "Our sins have separated between us and God." If Jesus was conscious of a separation between himself and the Father, it was due to sin. And whose sin? Our Lord was not a sinner. He was the lily of the valley and the fairest among ten thousand. He was the one altogether lovely. How true all this—but at that moment Jesus was dying as a sinner. Not his own sin, but yours and mine and the sin of all the world, past and future. It was sin that broke his heart, sin not his own but the sin of the races of men. When at last there came into the dying eyes a look of triumph and upon the blood-stained face a new radiance, there came from his very heart the cry of vic-

tory, "It is finished." The debt was paid and man might be free.

"Shout aloud, then, my soul,  
Let the glad tidings roll  
Even unto the isles of the sea.  
Christ has conquered the grave,  
He has risen to save,  
And the whole world through him is made free."

IV. WHILE WE REJOICE IN THE FACT THAT THE  
FOUNTAIN WAS OPENED, YET WE WOULD ALSO  
KNOW HOW THE ALIEN SINNER MAY AP-  
PROPRIATE THE MERITS OF THE CLEANS-  
ING BLOOD TO HIS OWN SOUL

Christ has made the sacrifice, yet we know that the sinner must do something for his own salvation. If there were nothing for the sinner to do, then would we all be mere machines and not men at all—men with the power to choose, made in the image and likeness of God. Hence it is that while we are told that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" yet at the same time we are to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling."

What, then, must the alien sinner do to appropriate to his own individual soul the power of the blood of Christ? Paul gives us an answer when he says: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). Since the blood of Christ is for the purpose of making men free from sin and since the law of the spirit of life in Jesus Christ is for the purpose of making men

free from sin, they must be in some manner connected. What is the law of the Spirit of life? The law of the Spirit is the law which the Spirit gave, the obedience to which would make a man free. The law of the Spirit is found in the New Testament which is the word of the Spirit, since it is "Spirit breathed" or Spirit inspired. The men who wrote the New Testament were moved by the Spirit, therefore the messages they give us are the messages of the Spirit. Now in the great sermon on Pentecost the Holy Spirit, using Peter as a mouthpiece, gave his law for the remission of sins when he tells the sin-convicted three thousand, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). He here affirms that repentance and baptism are for the remission of sins. In the great commission of our Lord as given in Mark, we have again a statement of the law of the Spirit in the words of Jesus, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15, 16). After Saul of Tarsus had met the Lord in that wonderful experience on his way to Damascus, in which the Lord had told him that in the city he would be told what to do for his salvation, and after he had in blindness been repenting for three bitter days, Ananias the minister of God came to him and gave him the law of the Spirit, saying: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16). Thus the law of the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus was always the thing that the Spirit through his inspired servants told men to do for the remission of their sins.

But what is the connection between the law of the Spirit of life and the blood of Christ? Let us read here several verses in couplets:

Remission of sins	}	Blood of Christ	“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the <i>remission of our sins</i> ” (Eph. 1:7).
		Law of the Spirit	“Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the <i>remission of your sins</i> , and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

If the blood of Christ is for the remission of sins, and repentance and baptism are for the remission of sins, they are for the same purpose and must be in some way closely connected.

Washing away of sins	}	Blood of Christ	“If we walk in the light, as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son <i>cleanseth us from all sin</i> ” (1 John 1:7). “ <i>He washed us from our sins in his own precious blood</i> ” (Rev. 1:5, Authorized Version).
		Law of the Spirit	“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and <i>wash away thy sins</i> , calling on his name” (Acts 22:16).

Since the blood of Christ is for the washing away of sins, and baptism is for the washing away of sins, they must both, since they are for the same purpose,

be inseparably connected. Can we find just what this connection is, and the moment when we may know that we have been freed from the sins of the past? Let us examine other verses bearing on this great thought.

When did Jesus shed his blood? You answer me immediately, "In his death." Then with this fact in mind that Jesus shed his blood in his death upon the cross, read the statement of Paul in the Roman Letter: "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried, therefore, with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3, 4). It is thus in the act of baptism that we come to the death of Christ and hence to his blood. We might well change the wording of the text just quoted and never lose its meaning, yea, we would even intensify its meaning if we were to read it, "We were buried with him, therefore, into the merits of his atoning blood."

But the apostle makes this wonderful connection still clearer when he tells us that "as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Before we were baptized, then, we were not in Christ and consequently knew nothing experimentally of the blessings that Christ can confer. It is only when we are in him that we can know these blessings. Since he came to save and since the shedding of his blood was for that glorious purpose, then we cannot know what salvation means until we are in him.

And Paul tells us that we are baptized into him. It must be, therefore, at this moment of obedience when we are buried with him, that the cleansing blood is applied to our hearts.

In the Hebrew Letter the inspired writer, after telling of the efficacy of the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer for the cleansing of the flesh, exclaims: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14). The blood of Christ is to cleanse the conscience from dead works. In the very next chapter he tells us when that blessed work is done when he admonishes us to "Draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). As our bodies are washed with pure water in the ordinance of baptism in obedience to the command of Christ, our consciences are cleansed by the blood of the Lord. The heart is cleansed from an evil conscience when the consciousness of forgiveness, or remission, comes to us; and the tangible evidence of that remission is the assurance in our own hearts that we have obeyed the commands of our Lord.

Paul finally sums up the argument and makes the whole connection between the blood of Christ and the law of the Spirit as clear as day when he writes to the Romans: "Thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the

heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17, 18). He is here writing to Roman Christians and talking of their experience in leaving sin and becoming followers of the King. They were made free from sin at the moment they obeyed the Lord. There is no other moment but this one where we may be absolutely sure of the fact that the past has been forgiven. The Authorized Version here brings out the meaning of the apostle a little clearer when it says, "ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you; being then made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness." When we go down into the watery grave and are buried with the Master, it is then, or at that moment, that we are made free from sin. It is in this act of obedience that Jesus meets us with the application of his cleansing blood.

We have already noted that the law of the Spirit of life, the law given by the Spirit, is faith, repentance, and baptism or obedience. This is the way to Christ, it is the road to the fountain. We have also found that that which procures for us salvation from our sins and gives us hope of eternal life is the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. This was the road that he walked for us, the road by the cross and the grave. Every sinner who would have the blessings of our Lord must walk in the way of the cross and the grave: *every conversion is a recapitulation of the events of Calvary and the new tomb.* As Jesus died so the sinner must die. "But," you protest, "we cannot die

upon a cross as Jesus died." Yet we can die, we must die, for only by dying can we live. We must die to sin. Repentance is crucifixion, crucifixion of the old man of sin. This is the meaning of the Apostle Paul in the Roman Letter, "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Rom. 6:2). In the sixth verse he continues: "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; for he that hath died is justified from sin." The act of repentance is a death, a recapitulation of the death of Christ, and it is in this act that we are said to have "died with him." But Jesus was buried in the new tomb. Must we also be buried? Certainly, for that which is dead is always buried, and the old man of sin is now dead. But how can we be buried as Christ was buried? By the great act which he himself has commanded, the act of baptism. As he was buried in the tomb so we, in baptism, are buried in a watery tomb. And how much like a burial is this act! All the solemnity of a funeral service surrounds it. As a body is lowered into a grave and hidden from the sight of men, so the body of the penitent believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is lowered into the quiet waters, for a moment the breath ceases and to all appearances the obedient one is dead. But here is at once an objection: "Brother Kellems, you do not mean to here imply that the waters of baptism forever cover the past, that they cover the sins, for it is the old man of sin that is dead." Ah, no, and here once more is the crux of

our whole message today. The waters of baptism are but a symbol of the true burial, the burial under the blood, for only the blood can cover our sins. It is here, as we have tried to bring out, that Jesus meets the sinner with the application of the blood, and the act of baptism is only the outward sign of the glorious spiritual process which is going on: the covering, the washing away, the remission of sins by the precious blood of the Lamb of God. It is clear, therefore, that as repentance recapitulates the death of Christ, so also baptism, obedience, recapitulates his burial.

But Jesus did not remain in the tomb. Early on the morning of the third day he arose in triumph from the grave, the first fruit of them that had fallen asleep, and bringing the glorious hope of immortality to the world. His body was not the same body after the resurrection; it was a new body in that it was glorified. The wounds were there, the pierced hands and feet, the gaping hole in his side; but it was in a wondrous sense a different body, a resurrected body. And as Jesus thus arose, so the sinner arises; but now not as a sinner. The old man of sin that went down into the waters of baptism with him does not come forth. That body is done away, and only the new man comes forth, forgiven and redeemed by the blood. In the Galatian Letter, Paul tells us that we are baptized into Christ, and in the second letter to the Corinthians he exclaims: "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold they are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Thus, as Christ arose we also arise into a newness of life in him. As repentance recapitulates his death

and our burial in baptism his burial so also our resurrection from the waters of baptism recapitulates his resurrection. We are told that all the beautiful work of Masonry centers in and clusters around a tragedy in the life of a great Mason. How true, also, we repeat once more, that every conversion is a recapitulation of the events of the tragedy in the life of our gracious Lord and Master.

There is one more question which we might notice for a moment. If one's baptism does not symbolize a burial and a resurrection, if in the act of it we cannot see, as it were, the burial of our Lord and his resurrection from the tomb, is it really a baptism? Answer this for yourself. If the act has not the meaning that our Lord and his apostles meant it to have, and if it has not the form which they gave it, is it the same thing? The answer must be, therefore, absolutely in the negative for it could not be a baptism unless it symbolized the burial and resurrection of Christ. Some good people have had the idea that baptism symbolized a cleansing, but this is the wrong idea: baptism does not symbolize a cleansing, it is a cleansing, in that it brings us to the blood of Christ which cleanses us from all sin.

#### V. HOW DOES THE SINNING CHRISTIAN APPROPRIATE THE CLEANSING BLOOD FOR HIS SOUL?

We do not cease sinning as soon as we become Christians. Many times, after we arise from the waters of baptism, do we stumble and fall. We need, therefore, a constant cleansing; we need a power that will constantly remove the sin-stains from the soul. In the

text we are told that "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin." This must mean the Christian as well as the sinner. In reality all men are sinners and they may be divided into just two classes: those sinners who have been pardoned by the blood and those who have not been pardoned. The only difference between the Christian and the alien is this difference: the one has been pardoned, the other has not known this joy.

The blessing of continual forgiveness is secured by repentance and prayer. When we become Christians we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. If we come to him in prayer, with penitent hearts, he will blot out our sins and remember them no more forever. We have a great illustration of this in the words of Peter to Simon, the sorcerer who had become a Christian and then had desired to buy the power of God with money. After rebuking him for his sin, the Apostle says: "Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22). We may have, therefore, the constant cleansing from our sins if we will repent and come to the Lord in prayer. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

This cleansing is also secured by coming to the Lord's table on the first day of the week. As he was instituting his supper, our Lord said: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20). As we assemble ourselves around the table, each week, we identify

ourselves once more with the events of Calvary and the thought of the cost of our redemption. Here, coming in penitent mood, we receive the blessing of forgiveness.

## CONCLUSION

What a wonderful thought that we have a Savior who by his own death has brought us salvation! If there is in all the world a power that ought to move a man to a better life, surely it should be this story of the voluntary sacrifice on the part of the Prince of Life. There is moral dynamite enough in this to shake the world. But if you and I refuse or neglect to do our duty and to appropriate the cleansing blood to our own hearts, as far as we are concerned the death of the Lord was in vain. If we understand it all and know the way, then a refusal on our part to walk in that way, is to make light of the Cross. Oh, surely we will not do this! Let us rather bow in humble surrender before the cross, and find in the fountain that flows from the wounds of our precious Master the balm we need. Let us with the Christian sing,

“When I survey the wondrous Cross,  
On which the Prince of Glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

“Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ my Lord.  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.”



## V

# The Church Described in the Book

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*Text: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."—Matthew 16:18.*

The study of the history of the church is one of the most interesting and fascinating studies in the world. If Christians would devote more time to the study of the church, union among the people of God would be brought more rapidly to a consummation. Every man who is a student at all realizes that God has set up a government, or kingdom, upon the earth. Not only is this true, but all of us are also willing to say that we believe this church or government is described in the Word. Now if we were to follow faithfully the plan of the church as it is given in the Book, we would have the same church in the world today as that organized by the Lord so long ago. It is our purpose, then, in this message, to discover if possible the church described in the Book.

### I. LET US NOTICE FIRST OF ALL THE HISTORY OF THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH

It is important that we know the time of the beginning. Several erroneous theories as to the time of the origin of the church have given birth to doc-

trines which are absolutely unscriptural and, therefore, unchristian. If it can be shown that these theories as to origin are incorrect, then the doctrines to which they have given birth will be shown also to be false.

One of these theories maintains that the church was an eternal covenant between the Father and the Son; therefore, certain ones are elected to be saved and others are elected to be lost. If this theory is false then the doctrine springing from it is false. Another theory maintains that the church was established in the days of Abraham, and since there were infants in the Abrahamic covenant, so also there should be an infant membership in the church. If the theory is false, then the doctrine also must fall. Yet another theory claims that the church was organized in the days of John the Baptist, hence it should bear his name. If this theory is untrue, the doctrine also is untrue.

(1) Before the day of Pentecost, A. D. 29, the Church or Kingdom is always spoken of as being in the future.

This was the message of John the Baptist as he comes preaching in the wilderness: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). It was near or at hand. Jesus preached the same message: "From this time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). The seventy, as they were sent out by Jesus, were to "heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:9). Not only was the kingdom

near, but the disciples of Jesus were to see it come with power, "Verily I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom (Matt. 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27). In speaking of this very time of the coming of the kingdom of God, Isaiah the prophet had said: "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:2-4). There is a clear indication here that the church was to be established in Jerusalem and that from the grand old city of God should go forth the wonderful new law that was to make man free indeed. The prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray, carries out the same idea that the kingdom is in the future: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." The Savior also indicated the place of beginning when he said, "Thus it is written, that Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46, 47). In our text Jesus gives unto Peter the keys of the kingdom or the power to unlock the doors of the kingdom. He also plainly tells us that the church is

in the future, for he uses the future tense, "Upon this rock I will build my church." It is, then, still in the future and Peter has the power to unlock it.

It should be noted, also, that the church could not be established upon the rock upon which Jesus said he would build it, the rock or truth of his divinity, until that truth had been thoroughly established. Repentance and remission of sins could not be preached in his name until he had died for sins. The hope of immortality could not be preached until he had risen from the dead, thereby demonstrating his power over death. The new dispensation could not begin until the promise of the coming of the Spirit as comforter and guide was fulfilled. To put the thought into one sentence, the church could not be founded upon the truth of Christ's divinity until he had been indisputably proven to be the son of God, by his death upon the cross and his resurrection from the dead the third day.

(2) The events of the day of Pentecost are clearly a fulfilment of the predictions made concerning the coming kingdom.

While the disciples are waiting together in the right place, the city of Jerusalem, suddenly the promised gift of the Holy Spirit is poured out upon them. Here is the divine assurance that the King has been crowned and that the new kingdom may, therefore, now be set up upon the earth. Peter, the one to whom had been given the keys, arises and preaches the first gospel sermon to an immense audience representing practically every nation under the heavens. He

preaches the great facts that have been thoroughly established by the death and the resurrection of Jesus. When three thousand of the multitude, convicted of the sin of having murdered the Christ, cry aloud in agony of soul: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter, using the power given to him by the Lord, unlocks the divine conditions of entrance into the kingdom when he answers: "Repent ye; and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Thus it is that in the right city, Jerusalem, upon the right foundation, the deity of Jesus as proven by his death and resurrection, under the proper administration, the Holy Spirit, with the proper minister, Peter, preaching the proper message, "repentance and remission of sins," the church or kingdom was established.

(3) After Pentecost, the church is always spoken of as being in existence.

From this time on we read of the church in Jerusalem, in Colossæ, the churches in Galatia, the church at Philippi, the church at Rome. Always the church is spoken of as now being actually in existence. While making his defense for going and preaching the gospel to the gentiles, Peter refers to this great day of Pentecost when he says: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). The beginning of what? Without a doubt, the church of God, or his kingdom.

It is a significant thing that the church should be founded in Jerusalem. It was here that Jesus had

suffered and died. How befitting, then, that this should also be his place of triumph. Right here where all the facts could be secured, where if any falsehood should arise it could be easily detected, was the finest place in all the world for the church of the Lord to begin .

## II. THE CONSTITUENCY OF THE CHURCH

The word "church" means "the called out of God." Those, therefore, who were "called out of God," in any given community by the preaching of the gospel message constituted the church. The gospel was preached by the apostles; men heard, believed and obeyed it, and by this act of obedience to the message were constituted Christians, or members of the church. The same acts that made them Christians made them at the same time church members. There was no such thing in New Testament times as a man becoming a saved man or Christian, and then by some other formal act becoming a member of the church. In the record of the organization of the first church we read that "the Lord added to them day by day such as were saved" (Acts 2:47). Every New Testament conversion ends with the baptism of the believer, and this act places him in Christ or makes of him a Christian. With this plain teaching of the Word agree all the great church historians. The church was constituted by the aggregate number of baptized believers in any given community. It is absolutely clear that there was no such thing in the church described in the Book as infant church-membership. Infants could not be members of the church because they could not

fulfill the conditions of church membership: faith in Christ, and obedience to Christ.

### III. THE CREED OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

It was first of all a simple creed. There was no long-drawn-out set of articles couched in theological or philosophical terms, but the creed was one that could be understood by all. There was but one article in it. George P. Fisher, of Yale, tells us that "the one article of faith at the outset was that Jesus is the Messiah. Whoever acknowledged him in this character was baptized." This creed, therefore, was intensely personal. The early Christians did not believe in baptism, or in church government, or in some special name, but their creed was Christ. They were baptized because of their creed, their faith in the Lord, and their desire to obey him. Peter confessed his faith and the faith of the whole New Testament church when he answered the Lord's question, "But who say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God" (Matt. 16:15, 16). "Christ crucified, buried, and risen in triumph from the dead" was the center of every New Testament sermon. It rings throughout all the work of the apostles and evangelists. Peter preached this wonderful message to the thousands of Pentecost and to the household of Cornelius; Philip preached it to the Samaritans and to the Ethiopian officer; Paul to the Corinthians. How beautiful in its simplicity was the creed of the early Christians! God grant that all the world will some day come back to this wonderful position!

#### IV. THE ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

(1) The organization was very slight.

In general, there were two classes of church officers: bishops or elders and deacons. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul salutes "the saints in Christ Jesus that art at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1). These bishops were the spiritual shepherds of the local flock or congregation. In his touching farewell to the elders or bishops of the church at Ephesus, Paul knowing that he will see them no more in this life, admonishes them: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Act 20:28). These men were to be the spiritual overseers of the local flock or church.

The office of the deacon was more of a temporal nature in that, in a sense, he had charge of the business affairs of the congregation. The record of the origin of this office is found in the 6th chapter of Acts, where seven men of good report and full of the Holy Spirit were chosen to attend to the daily ministration to the widows of the Grecian Jews. This was a business office; while that of the bishop was to attend to the spiritual affairs of the church.

(2) The government of the church was entirely congregational.

There is no scriptural foundation whatsoever for an episcopacy of any form. Each church was separate and apart from every other in its government. Each

congregation attended to its own affairs, and there were no so-called higher officers to interfere with them in any way. The highest officers in the church were the bishops of the local congregation. These had spiritual authority in their own congregations, but in no other.

While the churches were independent they were at the same time interdependent. In times of trial and stress they stood together and the stronger churches helped the weaker. The Jerusalem church, being the mother church, had a great influence over the other churches, but no authority whatever to force them to do anything. The so-called council in Jerusalem sometimes referred to as the basis for an ecclesiastical form of government was not, in reality, a council at all. It was simply an appeal by the members of the church at Antioch for advice from the apostles and elders of the church at Jerusalem concerning the perplexing question of circumcision as applied to members of the body of Christ. It in no way resembles the councils of modern times. Canon Farrar, a High-Churchman of the Church of England, makes this point clear in an exceptionally strong statement when he says: "It is only by an unwarrantable extension of terms that the meeting of the church of Jerusalem can be called 'a council,' and the word connotes a totally different order of conceptions to those that were prevalent at that early time. The so-called Council of Jerusalem in no way resembles the general councils of the church either in its history, its constitution, or its object. It was not a convention of or-

dained delegates, but a meeting of the entire church of Jerusalem to receive a deputation from the church of Antioch" (Life of Paul, page 253).

(3) In government, then, the church was both an absolute monarchy and a democracy.

It was an absolute monarchy in that Christ was its head (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). Whatever he had commanded must be obeyed implicitly by all the members of his body. The members had no choice regarding these things, for they belonged to him. Whatever was commanded as a condition of salvation must not be tampered with by any man, for this was the property of the Lord. "Where the Scriptures or the Lord had spoken" the members of the church must keep silent. The Lord had spoken regarding the necessity of faith; it was the business of the church to keep silent on this matter. The Lord had commanded repentance, and it was not the right of any member or set of members to change this command. The Lord had commanded that men make the good confession, and no member of the church had the authority to change this in any way. Christ had commanded baptism, and it was the business of the disciples to obey him in teaching men his word and baptizing them upon the confession of their faith.

There is a message for us today in this position of the early church. It is astonishing that there should ever be any question in the minds of those who know the gospel regarding the propriety of receiving the so-called pious unimmersed. Baptism is a command of our Lord. To do anything else than the thing he com-

manded, no matter how honest the one may be who does it, is not to obey him. I have the right to do whatever I please with those things that belong to me, but I have not the right to do as I please with those things that belong to someone else. Baptism does not belong to me, it belongs to Christ; and to be loyal to him, I must do it just as he commanded. It is ridiculous for a man to talk about receiving someone into the church. We as ministers of the Lord cannot receive anyone into the church. The Lord adds those to the church who are saved and we have nothing to do with the matter save to help them to obey his commands to the best of our ability. If a man is not in Christ, we might put his name on the church roll and engrave it there in letters of gold, but that would not make him a member of Christ's church. From the New Testament we learn that there is one way into Christ, and only one, and it is our business since Christ is the head, to point men to that way. We have no vote on this matter at all.

The church is not only an absolute monarchy, but it is also a democracy. This is seemingly paradoxical, but it is true. Christ left some things to the good sense of his people. Concerning those things that are not essential to a man's salvation, the members of the body do have a voice; they may by majority vote decide what they wish. The Lord said nothing about church buildings, organs, song books, electric lights, missionary societies, etc. The gospel must be preached to men; but in what building, or how the minister may get to the place where the message is

to be delivered, we are not told. These things are the matters that we may decide. In our own great movement, as a people, to restore the church of Christ, there has been a motto very dear to our hearts, the statement of Thomas Campbell: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak, and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." What our forefathers really meant as they tried to follow this motto, was: "Where the Scriptures speak we will be silent, and where the Scriptures are silent, we may speak." The Scriptures speak on the subject of baptism; let us be silent, we have no word here. But the Scriptures are silent on the subject of an adequate building to house the people of God; here we may speak.

#### V. THE ORDINANCES OF CHRIST AS PRACTICED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

There were two of them: baptism and the Lord's Supper. These ordinances were symbolic, or pictorial, and commemorative. Baptism was a pictorial or symbolic representation of the great fundamental facts of the gospel. Paul tells us that these facts are three: the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). When a penitent believer in the Lord, one who has turned forever from the past, is buried in the waters of baptism and rises from those waters into the newness in Christ, we have a picture, for the eye of man, of the great facts in the life of our Lord that prove him to be the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Baptism is the gospel preached to the eye of man. As Christ was buried, so the believer is

buried, and as Christ rose, so the believer rises a new man in Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:1-6; Gal. 3:27; 2 Cor. 5:17).

The Lord's Supper was a commemorative ordinance, a constant reminder of the benefits of the gospel: our freedom from sin through the death of Christ, and our glorious hope of his second coming. The Supper looked backward and at the same time forward. Every time it was observed it brought to the mind of the believer all the agony of the cross. Once more he would go through the shame and the ignominy which the Blessed Lord suffered that the world might be free. Once more his heart would be stirred by great emotions. Once more high resolutions would form themselves within his soul as he thought how much his redemption had cost. But it also looked forward to the time of a glorious return when Jesus would come to bless his waiting church. Every observance of the supper is a solemn pledge of immortality through him.

While the Lord himself had set no definite time for the observance of this supper, yet the disciples, out of their love for him, set the precedent which we today should follow of meeting every Lord's day to remember his death and suffering in this simple institution. There is no doubt concerning this in the mind of anyone who has studied the Scriptures. The Jerusalem church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayers" (Acts 2:42). The brethren at Troas "came together upon the first day of the week to

break bread" (Acts 20:7). They came for the purpose of observing the Lord's supper, and after that Paul preached unto them. It is evident that the fundamental reason for the meeting on the Lord's day was that the brethren might observe the supper. If there was one with them who could preach to them or exhort them, well and good; but if not, they met and partook of the supper anyway. No man can really be a New Testament Christian and neglect the supper. For seven hundred years after Christ the supper was observed every week.

## VI. THE NAMES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

### (1) The names of the organization.

In his first letter to the Corinthians Paul addresses them as "The church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Cor. 1:2). The same name is used in his second letter (2 Cor. 1:1). In 1 Cor. 11:22 he speaks again of the "church of God." In his farewell to the Ephesian elders he tells them that the Holy Spirit has made them bishops in the flock and asks them that they "feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28). In 1 Cor. 11:16 he uses the plural of this name when he says: "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no custom, neither the churches of God." In writing to Timothy, he says: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). In his Roman Letter he uses another name when he says: "All the churches of Christ

salute you” (Rom. 16:16). A summary of New Testament names for the organization, then, would be,

“Church of God.”

“Churches of God.”

“Church of the Living God.”

“Churches of Christ.”

(2) The names of the individual members.

In their relation to Jesus as learners or students they were called “disciples.” Jesus was the great teacher and they were followers of him. The members were called “believers,” and such they were: believers in the Lord and in his power to save. They were called “saints” or “holy ones” (Rom. 1:7). They were to be holy, since they were set apart to a holy calling. In their relation each to the other they were called “brethren” (1 Cor. 15:6). All these names occur frequently in the New Testament as applied to the followers of Christ. The crowning name of all, however, was given after the church had been established and after the great world-wide program of Jesus was first truly comprehended. It could not be given in Jerusalem because the spirit of the Jerusalem church was at first narrow and sectarian. They thought that Jesus had come to the Jews and the Jews alone. Although Peter had said that the promise “is to you and your children and to all that are afar off,” yet he had not really understood that the message was for all the world. At Antioch, however, where for the first time both Jew and Gentile met on the common plane of brotherhood

in Christ Jesus and where for the first time there was “neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free,” the new name was given and, as the Greek verb employed plainly indicates, “divinely given.” It was a name that was beautifully to express the believer’s relation to the Lord, the glorious name “Christian.” It means “one of Christ’s” or “a Christian one.” Of all the names given, this is the most beautiful and the most gloriously expressive of the position that a follower of Christ occupies. He is one of the Christ, to him Christ is all in all. The Holy Spirit lends the tremendous weight of his authority to this name when, speaking through the inspired writer, he admonishes us: “If a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name” (1 Pet. 4:16). This verse settles the matter: if a man loves the Lord, there is one name that he will wear and that the one which honors the King.

## VII. THE DISCIPLINE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

The discipline is that part of the creed which tells us how to live the Christian life. In all the modern disciplines there are certain articles that tell men how to walk as the Master would have them walk. The Word of God was the discipline of the early church. Paul affirms that “Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

The Scripture is sufficient today. We do not need more than the Word to tell us how to live the Christ life. If we will follow this, we will not have very much trouble leading that kind of a life which will be an inspiration to others and will glorify our Father who is in heaven. This is the discipline that will need no revision, for it is eternal truth. Jesus says: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35).

### VIII. THE MISSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

The mission of the church of Christ was given in the great commission of the Lord just before the ascension clouds received him from the sight of the wondering disciples. It was a world-wide program that he outlined in those wonderful words, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19, 20). Here is the work of the church: teach and baptize the nations. Because of this ringing commission, the early Christians were intensely evangelistic. They went everywhere, preaching the Word. The evangelistic and missionary zeal of the New Testament church was like a consuming fire. They lived for this one thing alone, to tell others of the Christ who died to bring remission of sins to the nations.

No man can be truly a New Testament Christian today unless he believes with all his heart in telling others the story of the Cross. There is no such thing as an anti-missionary Christian. A man cannot be a Christian at all and be anti-missionary or anti-evangelistic. The work of the early church was one constant revival, and we will never know the real joy of Christian service until this same spirit is ours today.

#### IX. THE HOPE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Was this hope the salvation of the world? By no means, because they never hoped to be able to save the world. The hope of these early Christians is written more largely in the New Testament than any other one thing. Their hope was the second coming of the Lord. One verse in every thirty in the New Testament deals with this hope. Jesus had promised that he would come again, and although he had warned the disciples that they knew not the day nor the hour, yet they expected him to come while they were still alive. Although it is clear that Jesus began his return in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, yet there is no way to explain the strong promises of another and final return save by the fact that Jesus wanted his disciples to believe that he would actually come again as they had known him, and this time in power to bless his waiting church. This is the only explanation that can apply to such statements as "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. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3).

The disciples were constantly taught that they should be ready at all times, for they knew not the hour of the Lord's return. For us today, as we try to restore the church of the Scriptures, there is a great lesson in the attitude of these first Christians. We should also be ready for the Lord's coming, that when the glorious time arrives he may find us faithful.

## CONCLUSION

This completes our study of the New Testament church. Our view of it has been brief, but at the same time we have noted the great outstanding points concerning its organization, its creed, its constituency, its ordinances and its discipline. We believe with all our hearts that the New Testament describes the church or government which Jesus set up, and that if we will follow this guide we will have on earth today the same church which he established. It is the earnest purpose of those who call themselves "Christians" only, to bring about this restoration. It is for this reason, therefore, that we have taken no name but the divine, no book but the Bible, no creed but Christ, and no ordinances but those which came from him. This is the indisputably correct position. Will you join us in standing for it?



# VI

## Baptism

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*Text: "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism."*  
—*Eph. 4:5.*

### INTRODUCTION

There are several ways in which we might approach the subject of baptism. First of all, we might discuss this subject from the standpoint of the original Greek verbs and for an hour or so we could dig out the meanings of "Bapto" and "Baptizo;" but at the close of the sermon the larger part of us would know no more about the subject of baptism than we did when we began. Very few people today make a study of Greek, and it is foolish to waste time before the average audience discussing the meanings of Greek words. We might also come at this subject from the standpoint of the great church historians and quote what they have said; but after all, when we had finished we would not feel that we had had the final word on the subject. We would constantly feel that somebody might have said something else on the other side of the question. This important question might also be approached from the standpoint of what the great preachers have said about it, but the same objection would hold good regarding this method,

namely, that the final word has not been said and we are still at sea.

We want to study baptism, in this sermon, from the American Standard Revised New Testament. The people read this book and believe that it is the revelation of the will of God. If it is the revelation of the will of God, and it is God's will that we be baptized, evidently this book will reveal baptism to us. Those who carefully study the Word of God have no trouble regarding baptism, for they have found by experience that it does make plain what the Lord means by his command. Since, then, this is preëminently a New Testament subject, it should be discussed with the New Testament as the final authority.

## ARGUMENT

### I. WHAT IS BAPTISM?

In answer to this question let us notice three passages of Scripture. "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28: 19, 20). "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15, 16). In answer to the question of inquiring sinners on the day of Pentecost when they cried out, saying, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said: "Repent

ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). From these clear statements we are justified in saying that whatever else baptism may be, it is at least a positive divine command of the Lord Jesus Christ and repeated by the inspired apostles of the Lord. Whatever Jesus commanded, he meant; and regarding our attitude toward him he said: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

## II. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM?

Since this is a discussion of New Testament baptism, we must have a New Testament answer to this question. A gentleman once said to me in answer to this question, "Brother Kellems, baptism is an outward sign of an inward grace." Well, suppose this is true, we want a Bible answer in Bible words.

(1) In his conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus says: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Baptism, therefore, according to the word of Jesus, is one of the conditions of entrance into the Kingdom of God.

(2) Speaking to Saul of Tarsus as he sat in anguish before him, Ananias, the minister of God, said: "And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16). Therefore, we must say that baptism is one of the conditions of the washing away of sins.

(3) In the verse which we have already quoted

(Acts 2:38) Peter tells the multitudes of Pentecost: “Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Baptism, then, is for the remission of sins.

(4) Paul, in writing to the Galatians, says: “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). We become “in-Christed” ones, then, by this act of baptism.

(5) Peter, in comparing the Christian time with that of Noah and the flood, and after telling how at that time eight souls were saved by water, says: “Which after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21). Baptism, therefore, doth also now save us.

In just four statements I want to tell you in this message why I believe that baptism is essential or necessary to a man’s salvation:

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded it. Everything that he commanded was necessary or he would not have commanded it. He was not here in the world asking men to do a lot of unnecessary things. To say that baptism is not necessary is to say that a command of Jesus is not necessary.

2. The apostles of Jesus preached it and practiced it. Every New Testament conversion ends with the baptism of the convert. Evidently the ministers of

the Lord thought that it was essential or they would not have practiced it.

3. Men and women in apostolic times submitted to it. They were not doing things that they thought were unnecessary. There was absolutely no question regarding it at all. They submitted to baptism because they believed in the Lord Jesus.

4. The purpose of this act as given in the New Testament shows that it is essential. If it is for the purpose of "entering the kingdom," "washing away of sins," "remission of sins," "putting on Christ," and "salvation," it certainly was essential.

### III. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED

(1) In the great commission Jesus says: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Before the minister can baptize one, then, he must have first been taught concerning the Lord. He must be a disciple, or learner of Jesus.

(2) In Acts 18:8 the significant statement is made that "Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." They heard and believed before they were candidates for baptism.

(3) Concerning the Samaritans we are told that "when they believed Philip preaching good tidings

concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12). These Samaritans believed before they were baptized.

(4) In the commission as given in Mark 16:15, 16, Jesus tells us that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." One must be a believer before he can be baptized.

(5) Lydia was baptized when her heart had been opened to the Lord so that she heard the gospel and believed it (Acts 16:13-15).

(6) According to the statement of Peter as given already, one to be a candidate for baptism must repent of his sins (Acts 2:38).

By these statements from the Holy Word, only that one who is a believer, and a penitent believer, is a candidate for baptism. If I were to meet a man on the street tomorrow who is sixty years of age, and being stronger than he is, I lead him down to the church and take him into the baptistry, and even though he fights and swears about it, yet I immerse him into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, would that be a baptism? Every man is ready to answer in the negative. The man, you say, is not a believer in the Lord and besides he has not repented of his sins. He is not in any sense a candidate for baptism. Well then, suppose I take a man who is but four weeks old, and do the same thing to him—would that constitute a baptism? Not in any sense of the term; because he is not and can-

not be according to the Word, a candidate for baptism.

#### IV. WHAT ARE THE PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS OF BAPTISM?

Right here it might be well to remark that the position we are advocating has never been under debate. We hear sometimes about the debate on the subject of baptism. There is no such debate, nor has there ever been, over baptism, but rather the discussion has been regarding those substitutes which are not baptism. An immersed believer will be accepted anywhere because all are willing to acknowledge that he has been Scripturally baptized. We are discussing the catholic position, therefore, when we bring the simple statements of the Word of God. There has never been any disagreement about Bible baptism.

(1) Bible baptism requires water. "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" (Acts 10:47). This was the question of Peter at the household of Cornelius when the baptism in the Spirit was given to the gentiles to convince the Jewish Christians that God had granted repentance unto life to the gentiles as well as the Jews.

(2) Bible baptism requires much water. "And John was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John 3:23). There are many good people who have been taught that there are three baptisms. Paul said that at the time he wrote there was but one, but there are some of us who

have been taught that there are three. Now if we were to read in the "Kansas City Star" tomorrow that a certain minister was "baptizing in Jackson County near to Kansas City because there was much water there," what would we think that that minister was doing: sprinkling, pouring, or immersing those who had come to be baptized? What do people generally do when they go to a place where there is much water? You answer me at once that they are generally immersed. If, then, there is any argument in the verse at all on the so-called "question of the mode," it is on the side of immersion.

(3) Bible baptism also requires a "going to the water." In Mark 1:9 we find that "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan" and in Acts 8:36 we are told that "as they went on their way (Philip and the eunuch) they came to a certain water: and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" In both these instances the candidates for baptism "came to the water." Now if we were to read in the "Star" tomorrow that this minister of whom we were just speaking, who was baptizing in Jackson County near to Kansas City because there was much water there, when the baptism took place "went to the water," what would we assume as to the so-called mode of the baptism that he practiced? What do men generally do when they go to a place where there is much water? You say that it is evident that an immersion took place, for men are generally immersed when they go to the water.

(4) Now the matter becomes even more clear when once more directing our attention to the illustration of Philip and the officer, we note that "he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." If we read in the "Star" about this minister who was baptizing in Jackson County near Kansas City because there was much water there, that not only did he and those who were to be baptized go to a place where there was much water, but that they went down into it, both the minister and those who were to be baptized, we would have no doubt at all as to what happened. It is clear that an immersion took place.

(5) In Rom. 6:4 Paul tells us that "We are buried, therefore, with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life;" and in Colossians 2:12 he says, "Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein also we have been raised with him through faith in the working of God, that raised Him from the dead." In both of these great statements he speaks of baptism as a burial. It is interesting to note that when Paul thinks of the one baptism he thinks of a burial, for he is the one, as we have noted, who says that there is one baptism. If we were to read in the "Star" that the minister who was baptizing in Jackson County near to Kansas City because there was much water there, went to the water, and down into it, and that the baptism was like unto a burial, what would we think he

had done? The matter would be very clear to us, indeed, that when a man goes to a place where there is much water and goes down into it, and is buried in it, that he has been immersed.

(6) In Acts 8:39 we find that after the eunuch was baptized "they came up out of the water," and in Rom. 6:5 Paul tells us that we are not only buried with Christ, but that, as he arose, so also we arise, into a newness of life. Baptism is, therefore, not only a burial, but it is also a resurrection.

(7) Jesus tells us as he speaks to Nicodemus that baptism is a birth "out of" the water and the Spirit. A form of a birth is a "coming out of." Paul gives us a hint as to the so-called form when he tells us that we should draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22).

## V. THE SYMBOLISM OF BIBLE BAPTISM

After hearing a message on baptism, a friend of mine said: "Well, all that is fine; but, really, baptism is only a symbol, therefore, the form of it makes no difference." I answered her: "Madam, I agree with you that baptism is a symbol and I would like to ask you just what your baptism symbolized?" She thought for a moment and said: "Why, my baptism symbolized a cleansing." "Do you mean to tell me, Madam, that two or three drops of water sprinkled on your head symbolized a cleansing?" No, baptism does not symbolize a cleansing, it is a cleansing or

washing (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a symbol and a symbol of the grandest facts in all the religion of Christ. Paul tells us what those facts are when he affirms "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4). He also calls these facts "the gospel which I preached unto you." Now, in that wonderful sixth chapter of the Roman Letter he tells us that baptism symbolizes this death our Lord, his burial, and his resurrection (Rom. 6:1-6). As Christ died on the cross for the sins of the world, so we in repentance die to our sins. As Christ was buried in the tomb, so also we are buried, in symbol, in the waters of baptism. As Jesus was victorious over death and on the third day arose from the tomb, so we also arise from the baptismal waters into a newness of life. We are now "in Christ," for "as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" and "if any man is in Christ he is a new creature." Therefore, the baptism of a penitent believer is a symbol of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and of the believer's own death to sin, his burial with Christ, and his resurrection into a newness of life in Christ. This is the very heart of the subject of baptism. Unless your baptism symbolized these great and fundamental facts of the gospel of Christ, it was not the baptism that Jesus commanded.

### CONCLUSION

Paul tells us in the text that there is "one baptism." In his time there was but one. It was not until long

after his time and, therefore, that of the Lord that men began to teach that there were three baptisms. Amid the confusions that exist today, is there one baptism that will give satisfaction and that will make one feel sure that he is right?

(1) There is one baptism today that always satisfies. When a man is immersed he knows that he has been baptized. There is never any question in his mind. There are thousands, however, who have been sprinkled for baptism and have not been satisfied, who later on in life have been immersed in order that they might be satisfied. Every meeting that I have held I have asked the question, when preaching on the subject of baptism, "How many are here who have been sprinkled or poured for baptism and then, later on, not being satisfied, went and were immersed?" There are always from fifteen to two hundred who stand up in answer to this question. In all my experience, however, I have never found one man who had been immersed and then, in order to be sure that he was baptized, accepted sprinkling or pouring. I wonder if Paul did not mean this baptism which always satisfies when he says, "There is one baptism."

(2) There is one baptism today which has never been questioned. If a man has thus obeyed the Lord, he may go where he will and there will be none to question the validity of his baptism. If I were to offer you a gift of twenty dollars, and in my right hand I have two bills which I tell you will be rejected by the majority of people as counterfeit, while in the

other hand I have a twenty dollar gold piece, which would be accepted the world over as good and then I tell you to take your choice, which would you choose? You answer me, "Why, the gold, of course!" This baptism which we have been talking about in this message is the gold. Why not occupy the absolutely safe position? Why have any doubts regarding a matter to tremendously important as this? Without a doubt, when Paul speaks of the one baptism he has in mind this one which has never been questioned.

(3) There is one baptism today which fulfills the Scriptural requirements of water, much water, going to the water, going down into the water, a burial, a resurrection, the form of a birth, etc. There is but one act that can fulfil all these requirements and that act is the burial of the penitent believer into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Evidently this is the one baptism to which Paul referred, for it is the only one that fulfils the Scriptural requirements.

(4) There is one baptism today which beautifully and impressively symbolizes the regeneration process. When we see a penitent believer in the Lord immersed in water, we can see, in symbol, the burial of Jesus; and as we see the candidate raised from the waters, we can see the resurrection of the Lord. Only this act can truly show forth his burial and resurrection. It is evident, then, that Paul meant this one when he speaks of the one baptism.

We ask you, then, at the close of this message, to accept the position that will always be right because

it is the one taught in the Word. If your baptism is not in harmony with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures it is not baptism at all. Why be wrong when it is so easy to be right?

# BIBLE BAPTISM

Eph. 4:4-6

WHAT IS BAPTISM { Matt. 28:18-20 } A POSITIVE  
Mark 16:15, 16 } DIVINE COMMAND  
Acts 2:38 }

FOR WHAT PURPOSE John 3:3-5. Entering into the Kingdom  
Acts 22:16. Washing away of Sins  
Acts 2:38. Remission of Sins  
Gal. 3:27. Putting on Christ  
1 Peter 3:19-21. Salvation

WHO MAY BE BAPTIZED Matt. 28:18-20. Disciples—Those taught  
Acts 18:8. Those who hear and believe  
Acts 8:12. Believers—Men and Women  
Mark 16:15, 16. Those who believe Acts 5:14  
Acts 16:13-15. Those whose hearts are opened  
Acts 2:38. Those who repent of Sin

## HOW MUST WE BE BAPTIZED

BIBLE BAPTISM  
REQUIRES

SPRINKLING REQUIRES

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Water—Acts 10:47                                    | 1. Water                    |
| 2. Much water—John 3:23                                | 2. Little water             |
| 3. Going to water—Mark 1:9;<br>Acts 8:36               | 3. Water brought            |
| 4. Going down into the water<br>—Acts 8:38             | 4. Staying out of water     |
| 5. A burial—Rom. 6:4; Col.<br>2:12                     | 5. No burial                |
| 6. Coming up out of the water<br>—Mark 1:10; Acts 8:39 | 6. Can't come out of a drop |
| 7. A form of Resurrection—<br>Rom. 6:4, 5              | 7. No resurrection          |
| 8. Form of Birth—John 3:3-5                            | 8. No form of birth         |
| 9. Bodies washed—Heb. 10:22                            | 9. Heads wet                |
|  | 10. No symbolism            |

BIBLE BAPTISM SYMBOLIZES *Christ's* { death } *our* { 1 Cor. 15:1-5  
burial } Rom. 6:1-4  
resurrection } Gal. 3:27

THERE IS ONE BAPTISM { 1. Which always satisfies  
2. Which has never been questioned.  
3. Which fulfils the Bible requirements.  
4. Which symbolizes the regeneration process.

THE FIRST PUBLIC ACT OF CHRIST WAS HIS BAPTISM; THE LAST COMMAND GIVEN TO HIS DISCIPLES WAS TO GO TEACH AND BAPTIZE. "IF ANY MAN SPEAK LET HIM SPEAK AS THE ORACLES OF GOD."



## VII

# The New Birth

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*Text: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John 3:5.*

For more than two hundred years there has been raging in the scientific world a battle concerning the origin of life. Two powerful and diametrically opposed schools of thought have been hurling their arguments against each other. One school has advocated the theory of spontaneous generation, or that life can be spontaneously generated from dead matter. The other and victorious school has defended the theory of biogenesis, or that life can only come from antecedent life. Professor Tyndall forever defeated those who believed in the spontaneous generation theory by his now famous experiment in which, in a vacuum wherein there was absolutely no life, he allowed to remain for a time those forms from which life should come. After allowing sufficient time to elapse for life to be produced, the hay and grasses were removed from the jar in which they had been contained. There was not the slightest evidence of life. From the time of this experiment, the theory of biogenesis has been the accepted theory of the origin of life.

For more than two hundred years a battle has been raging in the theological world regarding the origin of spiritual life. Like in the scientific world, so here also, there have been two powerful and diametrically opposed schools of thought, each advocating its theory. One school has defended the theory of abiogenesis or that spiritual life can be spontaneously generated in the heart that is spiritually unalive, while the other school has contended that spiritual life can only come from that which is spiritually alive. By the first school, as Henry Drummond well expresses it, "Religion is looked upon as a thing to be spontaneously generated by the evolution of character in the laboratory of common life." This heresy is preached from thousands of pulpits every Lord's day and is ignorantly swallowed by hundreds. It is voiced sometimes in the common expression, "I don't think it makes any difference what a man believes or where he goes religiously so long as he is good." This belief is the fundamental error of Unitarianism and Christian Science: that a man is saved by being good, by a certain kind of character, no matter what he may believe.

In his conversation with Nicodemus, our Lord announces the law of biogenesis as the law of his kingdom. "Ye must be born again" is the command, and it is uttered with absolute finality. No amount of goodness will suffice to save unless a man is spiritually born, unless he is born from above. There is a

great gulf between the natural and the spiritual world, and if a man would know the delights of the spiritual kingdom he must be born into that kingdom. Unless he is thus born he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The word is not, "will not," but it is, "cannot." It is a scientific impossibility. It is as impossible as for a stone or that which is inorganic to become of its own power a living thing by entering the organic world. Paul states this great scientific principle when he says: "Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged" (1 Cor. 2:14). To spiritual things the natural man is dead. He may be good; but he is not a spiritual man, for he must be born anew.

It is concerning the "How" of this new birth that we are interested in this message. Most ministers will preach upon the necessity for it, but too many of them are like the great evangelist who made the statement that since life was a thing that we could not understand, anyhow, it would be impossible to understand the new birth. After making this statement he proceeded to preach for an hour upon the very subject concerning which he had just said that we could know nothing. We believe that the new birth can be understood, or Jesus would never have made it an imperative matter by saying, "Ye *must* be born again." If we must do it, then we ought to be able to understand how it should be done. If we cannot be intelligently reborn then we cannot be reborn at all.

**ARGUMENT****I. BEFORE THERE CAN BE A BIRTH THERE MUST ALWAYS BE A BEGETTING**

Let us notice the agents in this divine begetting.

(1) First of all there is the heart in which the new life is to be begotten. Christ is to be formed in us. Paul, writing to the Galatians, says: "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4:19). There is a sense in which Christ is to dwell in the heart of the man who is to be a Christian. Not that the real physical presence of the Master is to dwell in the heart, but he is to dwell there in his Spirit and by faith. In the second chapter of the same Galatian Letter Paul exclaims: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). When a man believes in the Son of God, Christ is said to dwell in the heart. If we today believe in him, he has been formed in us, in our hearts. In the divine begetting, therefore, Christ is to be formed in the heart of the believer through faith.

(2) The second agent which we must notice is the seed of the kingdom from which the new life is to spring. Jesus tells us what this seed is when he says: "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Peter calls this the incorruptible seed, "having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible,

through the word of God, which liveth and abideth" (1 Pet. 1:23). That this word of God or the incorruptible seed is alive, or has within it the germ of life, is further attested by Paul when he says that it is "living and active" (Heb. 4:12) and also when he tells the Philippians that they are to hold forth "the word of life" (Phil. 2:16). The Word is alive because it has a living message which will produce a living faith. It is incorruptible because it will lead at last to an incorruptible life.

(3) The third agent in this begetting process is the Father from whom we are begotten. He is the author of all spiritual life, and all those who live in the Spirit are from Him. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his own great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1:3).

## II. NOTICE THE CONDITION OF THE HEART BEFORE THE DIVINE BEGETTING

Whatever else may be said about it, it is spiritually unalive. The man may be good, he may be moral, he may be one of the foremost citizens of the community, but he is simply not alive to spiritual things. He may be alive to all political questions, he may be interested in those things that affect the public welfare, but if he has not been born of water and the Spirit he is, to spiritual things, dead. John expresses his condition in one brief sentence: "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son hath not the life" (1 John 5:12). Paul says that "the mind of the flesh

is death, but the mind of the Spirit is joy and peace" (Rom. 8:6). He also tells Timothy: "She that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth (1 Tim. 5:6). To the Ephesians he says: "And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1-5). The man who has not been spiritually born is dead; he may not like to have anyone say it to him, but he is dead as far as the things of the Spirit are concerned. Thus it is that the natural world bears to the spiritual world the same relation as the inorganic bears to the organic. The natural man may be a clean and virtuous man, he may have all that the spiritual man has, but he has not the life. The agnostic, therefore, is not pretending when he says he does not know. He is right, and as long as he desires to remain merely a natural man he will not know, it is scientifically impossible in his state of mind for him to know.

In this dead heart, dead in trespasses and sins, dead to things spiritual, the Father is going to beget a glorious new life, a life that will change the whole attitude of the natural man. He is indeed to become a new creature, there is to be a complete regeneration.

### III. HOW DOES GOD BEGET LIFE IN OUR HEARTS?

The answer to this is almost self-evident. The Spirit of God is the author of life. Paul tells the Corinthians, "the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6). Jesus, in his wonderful discourse in Capernaum just before the time when many of his disciples turned from him and walked no more with him, said unto them: "It is the Spirit that giveth

life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63). The words that Jesus uttered are spirit in the sense that they are "spirit-breathed" or inspired, they are the message of the Spirit. As we have before noted, the word of God is said to be "living and active," "incorruptible and the word of life." Since it is living it has the power to bring life. It is so necessary that we follow the words of Jesus if we would live right, so necessary that they dwell in us if we would inherit the life that is eternal, that the very words that Jesus spoke are called spirit and life.

To be born of water and the Spirit really means, then, to be born of water, but begotten of the Spirit. The water is to be the sign of the birth, but the begetting is through the Holy Spirit. We say that a man is born of his father and his mother, but no man is born of his father. What we really mean by the statement is that he is born of his mother, but begotten of his father. It is in this sense that we are said to be "born of God" (John 1:12, 13). The Spirit, as we have already found, is the author of life, and the divine begetting is from him; and the symbol of the birth or coming out into the new life is an act which is some way connected with water. What this act is we will discover later on.

How does the Spirit beget life in the heart? We have already found a hint as to the answer to this question. The spirit uses his Word, which is living and active. James the apostle tells us that "Of his

own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). There is a sense, also, in which we are begotten by the minister who uses the Word or the Spirit's sword. Paul writes to Philemon: "I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus, who was once unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and me" (Philemon 1:10, 11). Paul had converted Onesimus, the runaway slave, while yet in prison, and after this conversion he considers him as his son in the gospel. The minister who brings men to the Lord is in a beautiful sense their spiritual father. Paul has the same idea in his letter to the Corinthians when he says: "In Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15). In that he brought the gospel message to them, the message which decided them for the better life, he is their father, and through this same gospel of the Lord he has begotten them. The same thought is brought out here as in the verse noted above (James 1:18), that the spirit uses the word or the gospel in begetting men.

A fuller explanation of this whole matter is in order. The minister preaches the Word of Life, the word which is "living and active," "incorruptible," the word which "endureth forever," the word which is "the seed of the kingdom." This living word through the preaching of the man of God falls into the heart which is dead in trespasses and sin. There is that within the word which is able to save: "receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your

souls" (James 1:21). When a man hears the word and receives it into his heart, faith in Christ as the Son of God Springs up within him, for "belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). The very moment that through hearing the living word the sinner begins to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God, that moment he begins to live, that moment he is begotten of God; and the new life which, if it is allowed to grow and develop, will become eternal life, has begun. This is the teaching of the apostle whom Jesus loved when he said: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God; and whosoever loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 John 5:1). In the twelfth verse of the same chapter he calls this life, thus begotten in the heart through the spirit, "eternal" life: "He that hath the Son, hath the life; he that hath not the son of God hath not the life." In his great intercessory prayer our Lord speaks of this same method of beginning eternal life when he says: "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). When we begin to believe in Christ, when we begin truly to know him, the new life has begun. It is eternal because it is spiritual life, and only spiritual life or that which cometh from above can be eternal. We may know the very moment when the new life has begun if we can know the moment when we first can say: "I believe that Jesus is the Christ and my Savior."

#### IV. HOW MAY THE WORLD KNOW WHEN A MAN IS BEGOTTEN OF GOD?

(1) We have already found that the new life begins as soon as he begins to believe in Jesus Christ. He thus can know himself when he is begotten. But how can others tell? Is there a change in the man, does he do anything that makes us know when the happy hour has come that a new life has begun?

(2) If a man is spiritually begotten, he confesses the faith that is in his heart. "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God" (1 John 2:3). When we see men confessing their faith in the Son of God we may know that they have been spiritually begotten.

(3) If a man is spiritually begotten he ceases from sin and makes a complete turn in his life. The act of repentance and the consequent change in life-purpose is one of the most easily recognizable marks of the new life. "For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5). "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin because he is begotten of God" (1 John 3:9). "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but he that was begotten of God keepeth himself, and the evil one toucheth him not" (1 John 5:18). When the spiritual life begins in the heart, the sinner is

conscious of a rising hatred of sin and an overwhelming desire to turn from it forever. Repentance, then, is an evidence of the fact that one is spiritually begotten.

(4) When the new life begins in the heart, the one begotten begins to love God and the things of the kingdom. John tells us in the fourth chapter of that wonderful first epistle: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God" (1 John 4:7). As soon as a man is spiritually begotten, he loves men more than ever before; he wants to do good whereas before he cared nothing for these things. The new life has changed his affections.

(5) The newly begotten one also finds that he has a desire to do righteousness. When we see a man who was once a terrible sinner and cared nothing for righteous deeds suddenly turn and begin to do righteousness, we may be assured of the fact that that man has been begotten of God. John speaks of this when he says: "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 John 3:10). The same thought is emphasized in the second chapter when he says: "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that everyone also that doeth righteousness is begotten of him" (1 John 2:29). Whereas once he loved the things of sin and followed the path of the sinner he now, since he is spiritually begotten, desires to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit or the works of a man who is be-

gotten of the Spirit. Paul tells us in the Galatian Letter what these are when he says: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23). A man begotten of the Spirit will bring forth these fruits; and if he does not bring them forth he is not begotten of the Spirit of God. No man can have Jesus Christ in his heart and really believe in him and follow him without living the life that Jesus teaches him to live. This is the greatest evidence of all that a man has been truly begotten from God, because he lives the divine life.

We will now consider the new birth or the coming forth into the new life.

## I. FIRST OF ALL LET US IDENTIFY THE ACT OF BIRTH

We have found thus far in our discussion that there must be a begetting before there can be a birth, and we have found how that begetting takes place in the heart through Spirit and the Spirit-breathed Word, but Jesus says that one must be born of water and the Spirit. We have found that we are begotten of the Spirit: then the birth must be a birth of water. There must be some act having to do with water which will symbolize a birth. The Greek word *ἐξ* gives us an idea of what this must be, for it means "out of." A man is born "out of" the water.

It is well here for us to remind ourselves of the fact that a birth does not give life. Life begins before birth. Birth only translates that which is already

living from one state into another. There is one great act in the Christian dispensation which has this very character of translation. This is the act of baptism. Jesus tells us in the commission that we are to baptize disciples "into" the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. If a man is baptized "into" the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, evidently he was baptized "out of" the place where he had not bowed to the authority of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here is a clear statement of a change of state or relationship. In Gal. 3:27, Paul says: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ." If we are baptized "into" Christ, we must have been at the same time baptized "out of" that position where we did not love him or serve him. Here, again, is a statement of the fact that in baptism a man's state or relationship is changed. Baptism is also the only act in which the sinner, in becoming a Christian has anything whatever to do with water. There is not a bit of doubt, therefore, that the birth "of" or "out of" the water spoken of by our Lord in his conversation with Nicodemus, is the act of baptism. It is in baptism that the man who has been begotten by the Spirit comes out in a public way for Christ. The desire to do the things that Christ would have him do, the faith in his heart as a tremendous urge, causes him to obey this simple command of the Lord and come out in a positive way before the world. We must remember that baptism does not give life any more than birth gives life: it only translates that which was already alive

into a fuller and freer existence. It only brings the new life into a sphere where it can grow and develop into the full-grown man in Christ Jesus.

## II. THE NECESSITY FOR THIS NEW BIRTH IS OBVIOUS

Unless the new life comes forth in action or obedience it will die. One of the greatest principles of psychology today is this, that unless we act upon our good resolutions, those resolutions and good impulses will die. The same thing holds good regarding our faith in the Master. The one who by the preaching of the Word has come to the place where he believes in Jesus with all his heart, must obey Jesus or that very faith will die. In a word, it will be like a still-born child. Jesus says: "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him (John 3:36). One may believe, and when he believes he is spiritually begotten; but if the new life is to live and become eternal he must obey the Son. The obedience to the command of baptism is a public declaration of faith in the heart. It is a public acknowledgment that the one baptized has aligned himself with the great principles of the Lord. The very act itself, because it is a public obedience, gives him spiritual nerve and strength. Terrible indeed is the condition of the one who believes; who, having heard the truth, comes to the realization of the fact that he ought to obey it and yet through neglect or the lack of courage kills that faith by refusing to obey the Son. Nothing

but the wrath of God can abide upon him. The only way to make the new life eternal is to obey him; for, "having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9).

This great thought of the absolute necessity of coming out in action for the truth is the message that Jesus has for Nicodemus. The learned ruler of the Jews had come to Jesus, but he had come in the darkness and solitude of night. Instead of boldly making a visit to the Master in the daytime, when he could have been seen by all the people, he comes sneaking into the dwelling place of Jesus by night and fawningly says, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." If he knew this, why then did he not proclaim this from the housetops? Why did he not tell the world of his faith in the Lord? Oh, what a regeneration this moral leader needed! He had not the least conception of the great spiritual truths of the world. His religion was a matter of form and form alone. He needed a heart-change, a spiritual renovation. What would have happened if Nicodemus had turned to the Lord in a public way? There are so many today who like this one of old are secret disciples. They believe, but they do not come forth for the King. The failure of Nicodemus to do the very thing that Jesus said he must do to enter the Kingdom of God must have destroyed what little faith he already possessed, for as far as we know today, he never became a Christian.

## CONCLUSION

The whole appeal of this wonderful conversation is an appeal to action. If you believe in the King, come out for him with all your might and before as many people as possible. Act, obey, for only by such action and such obedience can you save your soul. Faith without works is dead, being alone. Faith that does not become works or action will die. As this was a powerful appeal to Nicodemus to leave the hypocrisy and shallowness of his sect and come out into the sunlight of God's love, so today, my sinner friend, it is an appeal to you to leave the sin that weighs you down and damns your soul, and come out before the world as a humble follower of the meek and lowly one who alone can bring you rest and peace.

## VIII

# What Must I Do To Be Saved?

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*Text: "And he called for lights and sprang in and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"—Acts 16:29, 30.*

### INTRODUCTION

Can there be any more important question than this one? What must I do to be saved? Men must do something to be saved. Every man who is a thinker or an observer at all realizes that he is lost and in need of salvation. If there is anything written large in the Word of God, yes, and in the life we live daily, it is the fact that all men are in sin and lost. There are many of us who are talking about "getting religion." Religion is not something that we get, it is something that we do. Likewise salvation is not altogether something that we are to get, it is something that we do. Action is the key-word of this text, "What must I do?"

Now let us understand that if we do the same things now that men did in the days of the apostles to become saved men, we will become now what they became then, we will receive the same blessings now that they received then.

Salvation is distinctively a New Testament question. Paul tells Timothy to abide in the things which he has learned and to remember that from a babe he had known the sacred writings which are able to make him wise unto salvation "through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). It is to the Scripture, therefore, that we must appeal if we would know what the Lord would have us do to be saved. We believe that the New Testament is a revelation of the will of God. If it is a revelation of God's will, it will reveal to us today what we must do in order to be saved from our sins.

## ARGUMENT

### I. THE SINNER MUST HEAR THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

#### (1) What is the gospel?

It is not the Old Testament or the Jewish law. I remember recently hearing a certain minister of the gospel (and he was a man of considerable culture and education) tell a crowd of inquirers who were asking what they should do to be saved, "to read the book of Leviticus." If they had read the book of Leviticus and had done the things therein commanded, they would have been Jews, the last one of them. We are not under the old Jewish law today, nor are we in the Jewish dispensation at all. We are under a new law and in a new dispensation, that of the Lord Jesus Christ. A bishop of one of the great American communions recently gave it as his solemn judgment that modern Christians could better live up to the ten commandments if they were revised. Now, that

bishop is a man of great piety and, I believe, desires to see the kingdom of God advanced upon the earth; but he has never learned the great lesson that the ten commandments do not concern us today at all. As far as we are concerned, they are a dead letter. They died with Jesus upon the cross. Nine of those commandments were brought over by our Lord into his law and were amplified and explained by him. One is left out, the fourth: "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy."

The gospel means the "good news" or "glad tidings" of salvation in Jesus Christ. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10, 11). In the dream of Joseph, before the birth of the Lord, the angel said unto him: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

Paul defines the gospel in terms of three great and fundamental facts when he says to the Corinthians in his first letter: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4). He thus defines the

gospel as the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Only that gospel which emphasizes these great facts is the saving gospel, the one which Paul declares to be the power of God. If we are then to hear the gospel, we are to hear those facts that prove Jesus to be the Christ, the son of the living God.

(2) How should the sinner hear?

There are a good many different attitudes in the average audience of listeners. It is, therefore, a good thing that we follow the advice of Jesus and "take heed how we hear."

A man should first of all hear with a determination to understand. Some people come to church to be entertained; they hear, in a way, what is said, but they do not retain it, it does not go very deeply into their consciousness. Others are like the young negro who came into a negro meeting in the South. As he entered the door, his eyes rolling from side to side, the pastor asked him: "Rastus, is yo seekin' salvation?" Rastus' answer came in a frightened voice: "No, sah, I'se seekin' Sal Jackson." If, however, there is anything at all in this message, we ought to hear it with the determination to understand it.

We should also hear with alacrity. James the Apostle says: "Let every man be swift to hear." If this is a message which concerns our eternal welfare, one upon which our very soul's salvation depends, we should be glad to hear it and thankful that we have a chance at this glorious redemption.

Again, the sinner should hear without prejudice. This is not always the easiest thing to do, because all

of us are prejudiced to a greater or less degree. It is a hard thing to forget the teachings that we have heard all our lives, and try as we will, our thinking will be colored by the doctrines which we have heard as children. One of the great problems in reaching the world with the pure message of the Lord is that of blasting out the stumps of error in order that the seeds of truth may take root and grow. Let us try to come to this subject with our minds as free from prejudice as possible.

The sinner should hear consistently if he would be saved by what he hears. One reason why many are out of the kingdom and have no hope in the world is because they refuse to give the Lord a chance at their hearts. Some men will come to an evangelistic meeting for a few nights and then, as they begin to realize that a continued attendance on their part means that they will have to obey the Master, they stay out for a while and cool off. I remember an illustration in one of our meetings in Central Oregon. A certain prominent man attended the meeting every night for five weeks. He was one of the most interested listeners in the audience. Then suddenly one evening he was absent. I asked his wife at the close of the service, "Where is Brother Jim?" She answered: "Brother Kellems, he went to the movie tonight, I am sure that he would have been forced by his own conscience to come forward and obey the Lord tonight, had he been here. Therefore, he stayed away." The next day I met Brother Jim on the bridge and I asked him where he had been the night before. He

answered: "Brother Kellems, I ran away from the gospel and went to the movie show. When the show was half over I rose and went home thoroughly disgusted with myself, because I felt that I was the biggest coward in the state of Oregon." That night he came and gave his heart to Christ. The gospel is God's power, but it can do you no good if you refuse to hear it and give the Lord a chance at your life.

### (3) When should we hear?

There is but one answer to this question: "Today, if ye hear his voice, harden not your hearts." This is the most important matter in all the world, and we are foolish indeed if we endanger our own soul's salvation by delaying when the opportunity is ours now.

## II. THE SINNER MUST BELIEVE THE GOSPEL TO BE SAVED

Belief logically follows the first step of "hearing" the gospel. The average man will become a believer if he will honestly and consistently hear. Very few men fail to come to the Lord in obedience if they carefully consider the evidences of his divinity and study the conditions of the salvation which he offers.

(1) Why should we believe? Are there scriptural reasons for believing in Christ? Note several great verses carefully.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). The gospel is God's power, God's dynamite, for the Greek word translated "power" is literally

“dynamite.” The gospel is dynamite, and not talcum powder or salve. Dynamite stirs and blows up, and causes commotion.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Faith in Christ is absolutely necessary if we are to have eternal life. It is plainly stated here by our Lord as one of the conditions of immortality. It is to be noted, also, that the only promise of that which we all desire—a life after death—is given by Jesus. No other has offered a home beyond the grave.

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned” (Mark 16:15, 16). Our salvation from sin depends upon our faith. This was also the message of Paul to the Philippian jailor: “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house” (Acts 16:31).

“And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him” (Heb. 11:6). We must have faith if we are to please God. No matter how moral we may be, how well we may keep the laws of the state, how kind we may be to our families, without faith we cannot please God. Here is a verse that the so-called moral man should read over and over again until it becomes a part of his very system.

(2) What shall the sinner believe? Here is a ques-

tion that puzzles us many times. There are scores of men who will tell us that they believe in Christ if we will allow them the privilege of defining what they mean by believing in him. Some there are who tell us that they believe in him as they would believe in any great historical character, like Alexander or Caesar or Napoleon. He was a man, but merely a man; truly great and wonderful, but after all only a man as we are men. But will his faith do? There is but one answer and that the answer of the Word: "Many other signs, therefore, did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name" (John 20:30, 31). The very reason that the testimony of the evangelists was given was that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. There is absolutely no sidestepping this proposition. The only faith which the Lord and his apostles consider a saving faith is that which credits the deity of Jesus. He must be acknowledged as Lord.

### (3) How is this faith in Jesus produced?

This is seemingly a repetition of the first point in our message, but we repeat here in order that we may test the correctness of the position which we have taken. Again let us appeal to the Scriptures. These and these alone can put to silence the many theories which attempt to explain the coming of faith.

In his great intercessory prayer, after praying for his disciples our Lord prays for all Christians when

he says: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20, 21). Jesus here says that men are to believe on him through the word of his disciples. If we hear the word and believe it, we are hearing the word concerning him as given by his disciples.

At the so-called Council of Jerusalem, Peter said to the assembled brethren: "Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe" (Acts 15:7). The gentiles, then, were to believe by hearing the word of the gospel as preached by the mouth of Peter.

The people of Berea were "more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind; examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). After they had examined the scriptures, we are told in the next verse that "many of them, therefore, believed; also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of the men, not a few." They believed the word because they heard the preaching of Paul and Silas, and because they were earnest enough to examine the word of God to see if the preaching of these men was truth. If we could get men today to study the Scriptures, we would have no trouble getting them to believe.

While Paul was preaching in Corinth we are told that "Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). They believed the word because they heard it.

Paul sums up the whole matter as to the "how" of the production of faith in the hearts when he says in the Roman Letter: "So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). This is so clear that only a simpleton could mistake his meaning.

Faith, then, does not come by emotion, or an experience in which God simply takes us by the back of the neck and drags us into the kingdom; it does not come through visions of great lights, or spirits, or in any other miraculous way, but it comes by hearing the truth of God as it is preached by the minister of Christ. If we will listen carefully, we will come to the blessed time when we will believe with all our hearts that Jesus is the Son of God and our Savior.

### III. THE SINNER MUST REPENT OF HIS SINS TO BE SAVED

#### (1) What is repentance?

The Greek word, "Metanoio," from which we have in the English the word "repent," means literally, "a change of mind or will." To repent, then, means to change our minds in regard to sin. When John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, the burden of his message was: "Repent" or "change

your mind in regard to sin." Jesus took up the same message when he came, saying: "Change your mind (or will) in regard to wickedness and follow me." Repentance is a change of mind or will in regard to sin that leads to a turning from sin to Christ, and results in restitution, as far as possible, and a change of life. In one word, it means to be sorry enough for sin to quit it and do the right thing, to live the right life. It is not the sorrow, but the result of sorrow, the change of mind and consequently the change of life, that counts.

## (2) Why should we repent?

Because, first of all, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The fact that sin is the most terrible thing in all the world, damning the soul and separating man from God throughout eternity, should cause us to want to repent. When we see the misery and the suffering, the poverty and the anguish which results from sin in the hearts of men, how we should despise it! Then, also, we should repent because God commands it. Paul, in his great sermon to that audience of sneering philosophers on Mars Hill in Athens, brings out this truth with the tremendous sentence: "The times of ignorance, therefore, God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should, all, everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31). He brings out the thought also that not only does God command repentance, but

that he has likewise appointed a day of judgment and that on that day Jesus Christ, who now pleads with men as Savior, will be on the great white throne as eternal judge. As an assurance of the fact that Jesus is to hold this position God raised him from the dead.

Another reason why we should repent is found in the fact that remission of sins is conditioned upon it. This is the message of Peter on Pentecost: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). This is also the plea that he makes in his second sermon: "Repent ye, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). There is no promise of remission to the man who does not think enough of remission to turn from his sins and cast his burden on the Lord. For him there is nothing but eternal separation from the presence of God. Jesus warns those who continue unheedingly in sin: "Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish" (Luke 13:3).

#### IV. THE SINNER MUST MAKE THE GOOD CONFESSION OF FAITH IN CHRIST, TO BE SAVED.

##### (1) What is the good confession?

It is not a public confession of our sins. We are not told to confess our sins to men, or before men: we are to confess our sins to God through Christ. I remember a young friend who came to me in my home city several years ago and said: "Mr. Kellems, I

would like to become a Christian, but I hate to come forward and confess my sins." I banteringly answered him: "We don't want you to confess your sins to us. We haven't the time to hear a confession of all of them." The good confession is a confession, with the mouth, of the faith in our hearts in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, the faith which has come through the hearing of the Word. Paul emphasizes the necessity of this when he writes to the Romans: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9, 10). Jesus also tells us that we must confess him before men when he says, "Everyone, therefore, who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven (Matt. 10:32, 33).

The good confession is a public subscription to the divine creed of the church of Christ. That creed is Christ. The unshakable rock of his divinity is the foundation upon which the church is built. When we confess that we believe in him as Lord and Savior, that we believe that he is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, we are confessing that we believe in the very fundamentals of the Christian religion. Peter in his great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," was confessing the creed of the church. When Paul exhorts Timothy to "Fight the

good fight of faith, lay hold on the eternal life, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses" (1 Tim. 6:12), he is reminding him that he has confessed his faith in the great creed of the church.

(2) Why should we make this good confession?

We have already noted in the verse above (Rom. 10:9, 10) that this confession is one of the conditions of salvation. If a man make it, Paul says unto him: "Thou shalt be saved." If we make this confession, Jesus has promised to confess our names before the Father and the holy angels. Ah! what a promise this is, how exceeding rich and precious, that we shall have our names confessed by the King of glory before all the wondrous hosts of heaven. John the Apostle gives us another reason when he tells us that "Who-soever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God" (1 John 4:15). God has promised actually to dwell in our hearts by his Spirit which he has given us, if we will believe in his Son and confess that faith before the world.

(3) How should we make the good confession?

In the verses quoted above (Rom. 10:9, 10) Paul tells us that this confession should be made "with the mouth." Jesus says that it is to be made "before men" (Matt. 10:32, 33), and Paul in writing to Timothy calls to his mind that he had made this good confession "before many witnesses." All this calls for a strong, brave confession in a public manner. Some there are of a timid nature who say: "Well, Brother Kellems, I will confess my faith in the Lord,

but I want to come when the crowd is small. I will not be afraid to confess my Savior then." Ah! what a mistake to take this attitude! Make your confession before the largest audience possible. It will give you spiritual nerve and strength to start your Christian life this way. One of the great principles of the psychologist today, in teaching us how to break a bad habit and form a good new one, is that we should make a strong beginning. It is the strong brave start that carries us through unto the end and to victory. Then, also, when we think of how much the Lord Jesus has done for us that we might have life and have it more abundantly, how little, after all, he asks of us! One should be ashamed to shrink and tremble when he sees the Lord in the garden or upon the cross. If we had to die for our faith as the early Christians were forced to die in the arena or upon Roman crosses, we might well be filled with fear; but when all is on our side and there is nothing but joy for us in doing the thing that our Master would have us do, why should we be afraid?

#### V. THE SINNER, TO BE SAVED, MUST BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

There are some teachers in the world who would have us think that we are saved before this act; but this is not the teaching of the Word of the Lord, and it is to his word that we appeal today. We must remember that in the short life that Jesus lived on earth he had no time to preach those things that he considered non-essentials. He was preaching a message

which was essential in every part of it, or he would not have preached it. A lady recently said to me: "Mr. Kellems, I believe in the Christ, but I can see no reason for going down into the waters of baptism. I really believe that there are other things which are far more essential than this." My answer to that lady was short and to the point: "Madam, please do not insult my Lord. Everything that Jesus Christ commanded is essential or he would not have commanded it." In his great commission, after telling his disciples to go teach all the nations, Jesus also says that they are to baptize these disciples "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." If in no other way, baptism has a saving significance in that it is a positive divine command of the Lord.

In another message in this work we have already noted that the act of baptism is performed by immersing a penitent believer in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a symbol of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we have before mentioned, every conversion is a recapitulation of the great events of Calvary. Only that act, therefore, that can show forth the burial and resurrection of the Lord will fill the requirements of Christ and his apostles.

The significance of baptism as a saving ordinance is evident when we note the scriptural statements regarding its purpose:

"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"

(Acts 2:38). Since baptism is “unto” or “for” the remission of sins, and since no man can be saved in sin, therefore, that which helps to remove sin, or brings us to that place where sin is removed, must certainly be essential to, or necessary for salvation. Here is a plain statement of an apostle of the Son of God inspired by the Holy Spirit. The message is really the message of the Holy Spirit himself. He is the one who says that it is a saving command since it brings us to the remission of sins.

“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name” (Acts 22:16). This is the message of a divinely appointed minister to Saul of Tarsus and is, therefore, the word of the Spirit of God. If baptism was for the purpose of “washing away the sin” of Saul, it was evidently very necessary for his salvation.

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned” (Mark 16:15, 16). Jesus did not say here that “He that believeth and is saved ought then to be baptized.” Why not take the plain, simple statement of our Lord for it when he affirms that baptism is necessary to salvation?

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27). If a man puts on Christ in baptism, he is, then, not in Christ until he is baptized. We all, no matter what our creed, believe that unless a man is in Christ he has no promise. If, then, baptism brings him into Christ and, there-

fore, into that condition where he has the promise, it must be essential to his salvation.

Why should one be baptized? This seems to be a strange question to ask when we have just been considering that baptism is one of the conditions of salvation as given by our Lord. We ask it here for the sake of emphasizing once more the reasons why we should obey the Master and not try to evade his conditions by simply saying that we consider them non-essentials.

(1) Faith demands that we be baptized. We cannot truly believe in Jesus and accept him as Savior and Lord of life unless we are willing to obey him. There is no such thing as faith in Jesus without obedience to Jesus. The writer of the Hebrew Letter declares this truth when he says: "He became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9). Jesus himself says: "Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). If we truly have faith in the Lord, we will do what he would have us do as soon as we know what his will is. I have noticed in my own ministry that those who come to Christ because they really believe in him and desire to be saved by him have no trouble about the baptism question. Faith leads such to obedience.

(2) Love demands that we be baptized. Jesus tells his disciples, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Ah, here is, indeed, a secret of the willingness of so many to be buried with the

Master. They love him; and if love reigns there are no difficulties. It is an easy thing to follow him here because of the urging power of love.

## VI. THE FORGIVEN ONE MUST NOW LIVE A LIFE IN THE SERVICE OF CHRIST

The obedience to the first principles of the gospel brings the blessing of forgiveness. The past is now gone, blotted out of the book, and we are free. But as the commencement day to the college senior is but the beginning of his life's work, so the baptism of the believer is but the beginning of his service for Christ. There are many things to be learned in this service. At first some of these are difficult, but as the years go on, and we are faithful in our efforts, the hard tasks become easy until at last the victory is won. We are in the process of "being saved" and must not think that all is ended when we rise from the waters of obedience. There are battles to be fought; but we are strong in the assurance that we have one who has promised to be with us always even "unto the end of the world."

## CONCLUSION

When should one take these steps? There can be but one answer to this question, and that answer is, today. Nine men out of ten who are out of the church of God are not where they are today because they do not believe in the Christ. The majority of men believe It is because they are simply neglecting the great salvation which the Lord has given in Jesus. We have in this message been considering the ques-

tion, "What must I do to be saved?" There is one with which we might well close: "What must I do to be lost?" The answer is, "Do just as you are doing now—do nothing." The cross has been suffered for you by the King of Glory, men have worked, mothers and fathers have prayed, ministers have pleaded, but all this, as far as you are concerned, is of no avail, all the effort is lost unless you appropriate to your own heart the blessing. Repent of your neglect this day and accept him who alone can lead you into the paths of light and peace.

## IX

# The Scriptural Heart and How It Is Changed

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*Text: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."—Matt. 5:8.*

### INTRODUCTION

This statement of our Lord excludes all those whose hearts are impure. Only that one whose heart is pure can see the Father. In this simple text Jesus states the difference between the religion of the world and the religion which he had brought to man: the difference of the heart. The religion of the Jews as well as that of the Greeks and the Romans was distinctively a religion of form and ritual. The apostle described it well when he said that many of them "had the form of godliness without knowing the power thereof." The religion of Jesus was the religion of the pure heart.

God our Father knows the heart of man. In the prayer of the disciples just before they chose a successor to Judas, we have the truth expressed in the words: "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom thou hast chosen." If our hearts are pure, God knows it; if they are impure, our impurities cannot be hid.

Those who call themselves Christians only have been accused of not believing in the change of heart. I had an old aunt who used to tell me that I did not know anything at all about conversion. Her belief as regards the heart change was that there would be some kind of wonderful feeling in her physical heart and she would know by that that she was a child of God. Her whole position might be stated in the sentence, "If you get it, you will know that you have got it, but if you lose it, it's a sign that you never had it."

## ARGUMENT

### I. WHAT IS THE SCRIPTURAL HEART?

Nine-tenths of the trouble underlying the understanding of the change of heart is due to the fact that we do not define the term "heart" properly. When we speak of the heart, many of us do not know what is meant by the word as applied in a Scriptural sense. If we can find what the heart is, we can more readily understand how it is changed.

#### (1) The Intellect.

The heart, first of all, is the intellect. Many of us are afraid of what we call a "head religion," but it is a fact which we cannot overlook that no man can really be converted without there being some head religion about it.

The heart is that part of us which thinks. In his conversation with the scribes, Jesus, "Knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Matt. 9:4). After describing the powerful sword of the Spirit, the writer of Hebrews tells us

that it is “quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). Early in the history of the race the heart was considered to be the thinking part of man, for we read of man that “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). The children of Israel were warned by God to “Beware that there be not a base thought in thy heart” (Deut. 15:9). The heart is that part of a man in which his thinking is done.

Man also reasons with his heart. In conversing with the scribes, Jesus asks this question: “Why reason ye these things in your hearts?” (Mark 2:8; Luke 5:22). The heart is that part of a man in which he weighs truth, hence the intellect.

Not only do we think and reason with the heart, but it is also that part of us which understands. Our Lord, quoting the Prophet Isaiah, says:

“For this people’s heart is waxed gross,  
And their ears are dull of hearing,  
And their eyes they have closed;  
Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes,  
And hear with their ears,  
And understand with their heart,  
And should turn again,  
And I should heal them” (Matt. 13:15).

In his Roman Letter Paul writes: “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:9, 10). Thus we

find that not only do we understand with the heart, but that we believe with it also.

The heart of a man, scripturally speaking, is then the intellect: that part of him that thinks, reasons, understands, and believes. If he receives a change of heart, he will receive a change of thinking, a change of reasoning, a change of understanding, and a change of belief.

### (2) The Sensibilities.

The heart is not only the seat of the intellect, that part of a man which thinks, reasons, understands, and believes, but it is also the seat of the emotions, the affections, and the sensibilities. It is that part of a man which loves and hates, which feels sorrow or experiences joy. Jesus tells us to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" (Matt. 22:37; Mark 2:30-34). Paul writes to the Corinthians: "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears" (2 Cor. 2:4). The heart here is described as the seat of the emotions. Sorrow is in his heart. The same thought is expressed in the words of the Father to the Israelites, "Thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him" (Deut. 15:10).

### (3) The Will.

The heart is likewise the seat of the will. When Barnabas came to Antioch and saw the grace of God, he was glad and exhorted them "that with purpose of heart, they should cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23). Regarding the faith of Daniel we are told that he "purposed in his heart not to defile himself with

the king's dainties" (Dan. 1:8). In exhorting to the grace of Christian giving, Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Let each do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). If a man purposes to do a thing, he decides in his heart, or there is an exercise of the will; for to make a decision means that the will acts. Since scripturally a man purposes in his heart to do a thing it means that he wills to do it. Paul again writes to the Corinthians: "He that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power as touching his own will, and hath determined this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, shall do well" (1 Cor. 7:37). If a man has determined in his heart to do a thing he has again exercised his will. The heart, then, is not only the seat of the intellect and the sensibilities, but also of the will.

#### (4) The Conscience.

The conscience is also a part of the heart, scripturally speaking. John expresses this thought when he says: "Hereby shall we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before him: because if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God" (1 John 3:19-21). If our hearts condemn us, it means that conscience is bothering us, or accusing us. On the day of Pentecost, we learn, as Peter was preaching the great sermon, the multitudes were "pricked in

their hearts." In other words, they were condemned by their consciences for murdering the Son of God.

If a man, therefore, needs a change of heart, he needs a change of intellect, a change of sensibilities, a change of will, and a change of conscience.

## II. HOW DOES GOD CHANGE THE HEART?

Every change of heart is brought about by the power of God. Man does not change his own heart except insofar as he complies with the laws of God according to which hearts are changed. At the great so-called Council of Jerusalem, Peter tells how God purifies the heart when he says to the brethren: "Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knoweth the heart, beareth them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:7-9). The divine method of heart cleansing is the method of faith. But what does Peter mean when he says that the hearts of the gentiles were made pure by faith? We do not know how the heart is cleansed at all unless we understand the meaning of this term. If one is to experience a change of heart, it means that his intellect is to be changed by faith, his sensibilities are to be changed by faith, his will is to be changed by faith, and his conscience is to be changed by faith.

(1) The facts of the gospel will change the intellect.

Paul declares these facts to be three: the death, bur-

ial, and resurrection of the Lord when he writes to the Corinthians: "Now I make known unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4). These are the wonderful facts that prove that Jesus is really the Son of the Living God. Without his death there could have been no remission of sins, and without his resurrection there could have been no immortality. Now John tells us that the reason we have the written record of the facts of the life of Jesus is that we may believe that he is the Savior of the world, that through him we may have eternal life. "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name" (John 20:30-31).

Now let us suppose that we preach the gospel or these great facts to a man who knows nothing about Jesus Christ or his kingdom. We tell him all we know about the earthly life of Jesus. We tell him of the miracles, how Jesus healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, the power to walk to the lame, how he restored the lepers, and raised the dead. We tell him

of the transfiguration of the Lord on the sides of snowy Hermon, and of his many works of kindness and love. But our tones change as we tell him of the gathering storm, of the growing envy of the scribes and Pharisees. At last we describe the betrayal in the garden, the trial before Pilate, and then the horrors of the crucifixion. From this awful and yet sublime scene we pass to the entombment and into the darkness that enveloped the hearts of the disciples at the thought that their beloved Lord and Master had left them, as they thought, forever. But—and now there is in our story the joyous note—a glorious new day arrives, for the dark grave could not hold the Lord of life; and on the morning of the third day his body was missing from the tomb, for he had been raised by the power of God. Thus we preach unto the listener the great facts of the gospel of Christ, and with all our power try to prove to him that Jesus is the Son of the Living God and the world's Savior, its only hope. Now then, as we are thus preaching to the man, what is he doing? He is THINKING. No man can hear the great facts of the gospel without doing some thinking, and the very first step in any conversion from sin is to do some good hard thinking. Before we preached Christ unto this man he did not think of the Lord, he was busy with other things and his mind was not on the things of God at all. Now he thinks of Christ. Has he not received a partial change of heart?

Not only does our listener think about Christ, but as we are preaching to him he is also doing some

REASONING. He is weighing the arguments in his mind as he hears them one by one. He is saying to himself: "I can see how this is true, and how it must be that if God is really a loving Father he would reveal himself to his children." Before we preached unto him he did not reason; now he reasons about Christ. Again we say that he has experienced a partial change of heart. As we continue our message, at last our friend cries out: "I understand how Jesus loved me enough to give his life for me" and then, "I believe with all my heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God." He has come to the place where he believes in the Lord. Before our preaching of the facts of the gospel he did not believe. We have here therefore, a change of intellect and consequently a change of heart. Peter tells us that God purifies the heart by faith. Paul says that "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." John tells us, as we have before noted, that the facts of the gospel were recorded that we might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and that believing we might have life in his name." When, therefore, after hearing these facts preached, a man believes with all his heart in the deity of Jesus, whereas before he did not believe in him, he has experienced a change of intellect, and therefore a partial change of heart. Faith has partly changed the heart.

(2) The love of Christ instead of the love of sin will change the sensibilities.

We have just noted that faith changes the intellect; but if faith is to purify the whole heart the sensibil-

ities must also be made clean. Now it is impossible for real faith to come into the heart without love entering also. No man can truly believe in Christ and not love Christ. Again, it is an utterly impossible thing for a man really to love the Lord and at the same time love the sin that crucified the Lord. It was lust, and greed, and passion, and hate, and envy, and the spirit of revenge, that nailed Jesus to the cross; and no man who loves his master can at the same time cling to these things that caused all the suffering of Calvary. As we hear of the Lord and of his wonderful love for the children of men we cannot help but love him. Faith therefore brings love, and the love of Christ drives out the love for sin. This was the thought of Paul when he writes to the Romans: "The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us" (Rom. 5:5).

(3) The motives of the gospel will change the will.

When the sinner comes to the place where he really believes in Christ and loves him with all his heart, he has experienced a change of heart in that his intellect and his sensibilities have been changed. What about the will? The motives of the gospel are for the change of the will. When we are true believers, one of the first questions that we ask is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This desire is prompted by the love of our hearts. If we love him we will want to serve him. Jesus himself says: "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments." But we will also want to keep these commandments if we love him. So

then, when we believe in the Lord and love him enough to want to do whatsoever he would have us do, we have had a partial change of heart.

(4) Obedience will change the conscience.

Before we can find what will cleanse the conscience we should ask, "What is it that makes the conscience hurt?" The answer to this is at once evident. That which causes conscience to bother is sin. If, then, we can get rid of sin, we will get rid of that which causes conscience to trouble us. Obedience, then, to that law which cleanses from sin will make our conscience pure. But if conscience is a part of the heart, it will be purified by faith; for faith is for the purification of the heart. Exactly so; but that which makes faith alive is works or obedience, as James tells us when he says: "As the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:26). The only way that we can show our faith is by our obedience or works. Again to quote from James, "Yea, a man will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my words will show thee my faith" (James 2:18). On the day of Pentecost Peter tells the multitude, in answering to their remorseful cry, "Brethren, what shall we do?" to "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." If they repented and were baptized, they had the promise of the Father that their sins were remitted. If their sins were remitted, their consciences should also be pure; because

sin causes conscience to condemn the sinner. Now if we comply with the same law today, we have the same promise which they had then. The writer of the Hebrew Letter confirms us in the knowledge that it is through our obedience that we are freed from an evil conscience when he says: "Let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). In the same strain Peter writes in his first epistle, when speaking of the spirits in prison: "That aforetime were disobedient, when the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, and even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:19-21). Paul settles the matter forever when he rejoices that though the Roman Christians were one time servants of sin, they have, through obedience, become servants of the Lord: "But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17-18). When we obey the commands of the Lord, we are freed from sin; and being freed from sin, we are free from an evil conscience because we then have the consciousness that we are forgiven.

## CONCLUSION

If we comply with the conditions of the gospel as given by our Lord, we have the change of heart; for the gospel as God gave it is adapted to the heart as he made it. We need not worry about seeing visions or having miraculous and wonderful experiences if we will follow the plain simple plan of the Father.

Let me conclude this message with a true story. A young lady once came to one of our ministers and told him that she was wanting to become a Christian but that she was unable to experience a change of heart. As soon as she could be sure that this change had come, she was perfectly willing to enter the fold of the Master. After defining the scriptural heart to her, the minister asked her: "My young friend, do you believe in Jesus Christ?" The answer came immediately: "Yes, sir, I believe in him with all my heart."

"Well then," said the minister to her, "if you had a change of heart you would not believe in him."

"But I can't help but believe in him; the evidences of his divinity are so overwhelming that I must believe in him."

"Then as far as your faith is concerned you do not need, nor do you want, a change of heart."

"And, my dear young friend, do you love Jesus?"

"Ah yes," was the answer, "I love him with all my heart."

"But now, if you were to have a change of heart, you would be in that position where you did not love him; do you wish this?" "No, no," was the an-

swer, "I cannot help but love him because he first loved me and gave his life for me." "Then," said the minister, "as far as your love for Christ is concerned you do not need nor do you wish a change of heart."

"Are you willing to serve the Master, to do whatever he would have you do?" "Yes," was the answer, "I will follow wherever he leads me." "You do not need a heart-change here, for if you received it you would be in that position where you did not want to serve the Lord. Now let us see if you have done what he would have you do." Then the minister read to her the great commands of Christ and the promises which he had made and which he would fulfill if she would but obey him. After reading about the good confession and the ordinance of baptism, the young lady was asked: "Have you done these things?" She answered: "No, sir, up to this time I have not considered them necessary." "When you have obeyed these commands you will have the definite promise that your sins are forgiven, and with that will come the assurance that you have a change of heart." When the young woman had confessed her faith in the Christ as her Lord and Savior and had risen from the waters of baptism in obedience to his commands, she felt a great peace and calm come into her soul; she had the change of heart.

As it was with the young lady in this illustration, so it may be with some of those who read this message. You have been wanting the change of heart, and your heart has already been partially changed. What you need is simply to complete that change by an out-and-

out obedience to the commands of the Christ. God help you to do this and at the first opportunity!

CHART

The Scriptural Heart and how it is changed

Text—Matt. 5:8.

I. WHAT IS THE SCRIPTURAL HEART?

- |                   |   |                                      |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. INTELLECT..... | { | THINK, Matt. 9:4; Heb. 4:12.         |
|                   |   | REASON, Mark 2:8.                    |
|                   |   | UNDERSTAND, Matt. 13:15.             |
|                   |   | BELIEVE, Rom. 10:9-10.               |
| 2. SENSIBILITIES. | { | LOVE, Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:30-34. |
|                   |   | ANGUISH, 2 Cor. 2:4.                 |
| 3. WILL.....      | { | PURPOSE, Acts 11:23; 2 Cor. 9:7.     |
|                   |   | DETERMINED, 1 Cor. 7:37.             |
| 4. CONSCIENCE...  | { | PRICKED, Acts 2:37.                  |
|                   |   | CONDEMNED, 1 John 3:20-21.           |
|                   |   | CUT, Acts 5:33.                      |

II. HOW DOES GOD CHANGE THE HEART?

He changes the heart by faith. Acts 15:7-9.

- (1) The facts of the gospel change the intellect. 1 Cor. 15:1-4; John 20:30-31.
- (2) The love of Christ changes the sensibilities. Rom. 5:5-8.
- (3) The motives of the gospel change the will. Acts 2:37; 16:30.
- (4) Obedience changes or purifies the conscience. Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; Heb. 10:22; Rom. 6:17-18; 1 Pet. 3:19-21.

CONCLUSION.

“The Gospel as God gave it is adapted to the heart as he made it.”



## X

# Can a Man be Saved Outside the Church?

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*Text: "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. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go, ye know the way. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how know we the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John 14:1-7.*

### INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father. If we refuse to walk in the way in which he leads us, we will never dwell in eternal, heavenly felicity. His reply to the question of Thomas in the text, when the disciple not knowing where Jesus was going and at the same time puzzled that the Lord should say that they knew the way, was, that since they knew him they also knew the way to the Father, for "he was the way."

The subject of salvation from sin is distinctively a

New Testament question. The Old Testament does not deal with it save as it looks forward to the time when the deliverer should come. The New Testament is the only book in the world which deals with this subject at all. It is the great authority on the question, and as such demands our consideration of its claims. Paul tells Timothy that the Scriptures are able to make him wise unto salvation. The New Testament is not a textbook on science, or philosophy, or history. It is a textbook on religion, on the subject of salvation from sin. Before the Sanhedrin Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, makes the bold statement: "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). If we are not saved in the name of Jesus, we will not be saved at all; if we do not come to the Father by Jesus, we will not come to him, for "no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Can a man be saved outside the church? Is it not possible to come to God by Jesus Christ and never be a member of the church or have anything to do with the church? Why can I not stay at home and read the Bible, and pray, and live a good, clean, honest life, and be saved from sin, without ever joining the church? Men are asking these questions today, and many of them are doing the very thing that the questions imply: leaving the church or trying by a good moral life to come to the Father. There are many who love the Lord but hate the church. What, then, is the relationship between the Christ, the Church, and Salvation?

## ARGUMENT

### I. WHAT IS IT THAT SAVES A MAN FROM SIN ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, THE TEXT-BOOK ON SALVATION?

(1) We are not saved by words of goodness of our own.

Right here is where the majority of people are mistaken, for the current idea is that we are saved by being good. While goodness, righteousness, is a part, and a large part, of the Christian life, the Word of God nowhere tells us that we are to be saved by works of righteousness. To the contrary, it tells us that we are not saved by works, that in works themselves there is no virtue. Paul writes to Timothy: "Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, **NOT ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS**, but according to his own mercy and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal" (2 Tim. 1:8-9). To Titus he writes the same message: "But when the kindness of God our Savior, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his own mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:4-6). In the letter to the Ephesians the same great thought is emphasized and the powerlessness of works to secure our redemption: "For by grace have ye been saved

through faith; and not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:8-9). To the Galatian brethren the same message is written when he says: "Yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:16). Thus we see that even though a man may be a good man, a moral man, one of the finest citizens in the land, he has no promise for that goodness, because goodness does not save from sin. We sometimes hear the question: "Do you not think that one can be a good man out of the church?" There is not a bit of doubt that one can be good out of the church, yea, even better than a great many who are in the church; but according to the authority on the subject of salvation that goodness will not bring remission of sins.

(2) The only power that can save from sin is the blood of Jesus Christ.

In the statement just made we find the profoundest truth in all the Word of God. There is, thank God, one power that can take away the stains from the heart and life—and make us pure; there is one fountain that has healing for the nations, the fountain of the cleansing blood of the Son of God. John speaks of this fountain when he says: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ—his Son—cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Peter preached the great truth of the power of the blood to cleanse when he uttered the noble words: "Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things,

silver and gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). There is one power and one alone, for

"Naught can take away my sin,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
Naught can make me pure again,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus."

One might be good outside of the church, one might be good and never pray to God through Christ, or have anything to do with the Lord, but apart from the blood of the Lamb of God there will be no salvation. If a man wants to be saved from his sin, he must come to the application of the cleansing blood; for "apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

## II. HOW DOES THE SINNER APPROPRIATE THE CLEANSING BLOOD TO HIS OWN HEART?

(1) By faith in the Christ and in the power of the blood.

Paul preaches this fact to the Romans: "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through

faith, in his blood" (Rom. 3:21-25). It is through faith in Jesus and the power of his blood to redeem, that we appropriate the blood to our own wicked hearts.

(2) The sinner also comes to the application of the blood by repenting of his sins.

There is no forgiveness as long as we deliberately remain in sin. Sin it was that nailed Jesus upon the cross, and although the Master loves the sinner, he hates the sin. Thus it is that throughout the Word there is the constant exhortation to turn from unrighteousness and follow the Living God. Paul preached repentance from Mars Hill to the Athenians, Peter preached it on the day of Pentecost, and our Lord said: "Except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish" (Luke 13:3). By dying to sin we are preparing ourselves for the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

(3) The sinner comes to the application of the blood by confessing his faith in the deity of Jesus.

This is called the "good confession," and it is good because it leads to beneficent results and is a statement of the most marvelous fact in the world. Paul says that this confession is one of the conditions of salvation (Rom. 10:9-10), and Jesus tells us that if we will confess him before men he will confess us before the assembled hosts of heaven (Matt. 10:32, 33).

(4) The sinner comes to the application of the blood by his obedience in baptism.

This is the crowning step in conversion. It is in this step that we really come to the place where Jesus

meets us with the application of that precious blood which alone can cover our sins.

The writer of the Hebrew Letter tells us that we are saved by obedience to him: "He became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:9).

Baptism is a positive command of Jesus. "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19-20). Jesus expects us to obey this command.

Baptism, after the other steps which lead up to it have been taken, is for the salvation of the sinner, for Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). In his death upon the cross our Lord shed his blood, and baptism brings us to his blood, and consequently to salvation, because it brings us to his death. "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried with him therefore through baptism into death" (Rom. 6:3, 4).

Now, when a man has come to the application of the blood through obedience to the Lord, he is a saved man, for the blood of Jesus cleanses from sin. To be a saved man means that we have the promise from God that the past is blotted out and that we are free from all the sins that we have committed in the past. The saved man also has an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and therefore has a constant cleansing from the sins that he commits after his first obedience to the Lord. Thus when a

man has complied with the conditions which have been laid down by Jesus, he may be said to have come to the Father; he is a redeemed and ransomed soul.

III. ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT, THE TEXT-BOOK ON SALVATION, SAVED MEN HAD SOME DEFINITE DUTIES AND SOME GLORIOUS NEW PRIVILEGES.

(1) They first of all continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching.

We have an excellent illustration of this in the case of the three thousand of the day of Pentecost. They were the people who had crucified the Christ, and when they heard the sermon delivered by Peter on that occasion, they were convicted of their sins and desired to know what to do to be saved. Peter told them what the Lord had commanded them to do to become saved men and women, and that same day three thousand of them accepted the conditions and, having obeyed the Lord, were constituted saved men. After becoming saved men, they were very faithful in assembling themselves together to hear those things that the Lord wanted saved men and women to do to "keep saved." In a word, they "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching."

Now, my brother, you claim that you are saved without belonging to the church, do you continue steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles? Do you read the word faithfully and study the apostles' teaching with care? If not, I want to tell you right now that you are not a saved man at all, for this is the

way that saved men and women did it in the days of the apostles of the Lord.

(2) These saved men also continued steadfastly in fellowship.

This means that they worked together to make others saved men. If it was necessary to give, to support the divine message, they gave; and we find later on that they gave in a systematic way. Do you give to support the gospel, you who say that you are saved and yet have not, as you express it, joined the church? Unless you do this, unless you are working in fellowship or partnership with other saved men, you are not a saved man at all. This was one of the unmistakable marks of a man who had been saved by the blood of Jesus.

(3) These early saved men continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread.

They had a little supper which they attended on the first day of every week, called the Lord's Supper. This was instituted by the Lord Jesus on the Passover night on which he was betrayed, and was intended by him to be a memorial of his death for the remission of sins. Without an exception, those in early times who had been redeemed by the blood were faithful in their attendance upon this simple meal, in fact this attendance was one of the marks of a saved man. Now, my brother, if you claim that you have been saved by the Christ, and yet you do not come with others who have come to the Father by him, then you are not a saved man at all.

(4) These early saved men also continued steadfastly in prayer.

Men who were saved by Jesus in early times were praying men. Are you also a man of prayer? If not, then do not claim for a moment that you are one of the Lord's saved, for this was one of the distinguishing marks of the man or woman whose life had been hid with Christ in God.

IV. IT IS EVIDENT, FROM THE DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES  
WHICH BELONG EXCLUSIVELY TO THE SAVED  
MAN, THAT WHEN ONE BECOMES A SAVED  
MAN HE AT THE SAME TIME ENTERS  
INTO A NEW RELATIONSHIP  
BOTH TO GOD AND TO  
THE WORLD.

The same steps which make a man a saved man at the same time bring him into Christ. Paul tells us this in the Galatian Letter when he says: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." We have found that the final step in the process of conversion, which makes a man a saved man was the act of baptism. This act brings a man to the blood of Christ, and that blood removes his sin. In the passage just quoted, Paul tells us that this same act causes us to "put on Christ." The new relationship, then, of the saved man might be expressed as being "in Christ." But just what does it mean to be "in Christ?" Is not this simply a mystical expression, with no real and practical meaning to us now? Paul gives us a little clearer definition of the

meaning of these words when he writes to the Corinthians: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12). Christ's body on earth, then, is composed of many members, for he does have a real body on the earth. In speaking to the Ephesians, Paul says: "There is one body" (Eph. 4:4). In the Colossian Letter the apostle leaves no doubt in our minds regarding the meaning of the word "body," when he says: "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). In the twenty-fourth verse of the same chapter he makes it still more definite: "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." There can be no mistake here regarding his meaning. The body of Christ upon the earth is the church which he purchased with his own precious blood. To be "in Christ" means to be a member of his body or his church. In the letter to the Romans, Paul settles the whole matter when he writes: "For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:4, 5). The body of Christ is the church, Christians are members of that body corresponding to the many members of the physical body which, although they do not all have the same office, are yet members of the same

body. We as Christians have not all the same office in the church, each differs from the other in the work which he does and in the capacity for service, and yet we are members of the same great body of our Lord upon the earth.

In the epistle to the Corinthians Paul tells how we become members of the body when he says: "For in one Spirit we were ALL BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). It is the act of baptism which brings us into Christ and makes us members of his body which, we have already found, is his church. The same act which makes a man a saved man—obedience to the command of Jesus Christ in baptism—makes him at the same time a member of the body of Christ or of his church. There is simply no way to escape this conclusion. We have found that baptism is a saving ordinance in that it is a command of the Lord, and because of the fact that it brings us to the blood of Jesus which alone can take away sin. But this act also places us in the body or the church, and brings to us all the privileges that come to one who is a member of the body, as well as all the duties and responsibilities. A man cannot, then, be saved outside the church, because that would mean to be out of Christ, and out of Christ means to be lost, for Jesus tells us that "no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

But what is a man who is a member of the body of Christ and a saved man? What is the name that he wears before the world? There is but one answer to

this question: The man is "one of Christ," a "Christian" or Christian. There is no such condition as being a Christian outside the church. A Christian is one who obeys Christ, and one who obeys Christ will be in the church; he simply cannot help himself, for obedience to the Lord makes him a member of the church. I remember quite well a young man who came to me one time and asked to be baptized, but he said that he did not desire to "join the church." He had the old idea that a man first becomes a Christian and after that "joins the church." This is not the teaching of the Word, however, for when a man becomes a Christian he at the same time becomes a member of the church of Christ.

We have in the New Testament a wonderful illustration of the argument of this whole sermon. The description of the man who, although a good man, was converted to the Lord is so fine that we give it here. "Now there was a certain man in Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people and prayed to God always" (Acts 10:1, 2). Here is a model, moral man. He was devout, he was God-fearing, he was philanthropic, and he was prayerful. He was a better moral man than the average good man today out of the church. Surely, if any man could be saved because of his goodness this man would be the one. Unlike many of the so-called moral men of our time, he was a praying and God-fearing man as well as one who was righteous in other

ways. There is the religious element in his life which the average moral man does not possess at all. Yet with all these splendid moral qualities this man had to go to the trouble of sending all the way to Joppa and summoning the Apostle Peter that he might hear words whereby he and his might be saved. Peter answered the call and came, preaching Jesus Christ; the centurion, believing, was baptized and became a Christian and a member of the church of the Lord. Thus it is clear that even a fine moral man like Cornelius must comply with the gospel conditions if he is to have the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.

### CONCLUSION

Do not deceive yourself into thinking that you can come to God by way of your own "think sos" and opinions. If we are to come to the Father we must come by the path which Jesus has mapped out for us, for he is the one who came to reveal the Father's way. Let us take the attitude of humility and reverence, and where he speaks, let us be silent and obey.

# XI

## Christian Union

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*Text: "Neither for these only do I pray but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me."—John 17:20, 21.*

In this prayer our Lord included all who should believe on him through the word preached by his disciples. Christians of this day are surely included, therefore, in this fervent petition. It is Christ's desire that his people be one.

The age in which we live is preëminently the age of union. It is the age of the great corporations; the age when men on a gigantic scale are combining their capital and their intellects in the accomplishment of designs that yesterday would have staggered the imagination. This spirit of the age has also to a gratifying extent become the spirit of the Church of God. The big men in all the great denominations today are talking union, praying for union, and working for union. Conferences are being held in which the problems related to the subject are discussed and the possibilities of their solution are weighed. Surely the time for which our fathers in the restoration prayed,

is at hand. It is a glorious moment, the one in which we live, and we are to see wondrous things.

#### I. DIVISION AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD IS WRONG.

There never was a time when it was right for God's people to be divided; no amount of excuses for sectarianism can do away with the fact that division has been one of the blackest sins in the life of the Church of God. It is wrong because it is a waste of energy. Let me illustrate my own home city. In that city there are twenty churches, with twenty good, church buildings, employing twenty ministers for all their time. In one block in that city our people have erected a magnificent temple, costing one hundred thousand dollars. In the same block and right across the alley from us our Methodist brethren have built a great brick monument costing one hundred thousand dollars. We are back to back, with only the alley separating us, and so close together that when we sing, "Will there be any stars in my crown," we can hear the answer from the Methodist brethren, "No, not one, no, not one." One hundred thousand dollars wasted on one block in a little city of less than twenty thousand, while ninety miles due east across the snow-crowned Cascades there are hundreds of men and women of fine old American blood who have not heard a gospel sermon in twenty-five years and some of them never. Thousands wasted in one little city. Multiply this by the thousands of other such cases in this country of ours that might be given, and the amount of money (and the Lord's money it is) that is

thrown away in the erection of superfluous buildings and the employing of superfluous ministers is simply staggering. We have no right thus to rob our God.

Division is wrong because it is in direct opposition to the prayer of our God, and anyone who believes in him believes that his prayer is to be answered. Paul fiercely condemns division, saying that if we are divided we are carnal and walk as men. In his first letter to the Corinthians he beseeches them that they "all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions" among them, but that they be perfected together in the same mind and the same judgment. In astonishment that they should thus have begun to turn to sectarianism, saying "I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ," he asks: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1: 10-13).

Division is wrong because it retards the salvation of the world. The gospel could be more quickly preached to dying men and women in the lands that know not the Lord, in the islands of the sea, if the money which by the millions we waste every year could be used to send missionaries and build mission stations. In the homeland also, division keeps hundreds out of Christ because all the creeds and practices are confusing to the sinner. How many times have we heard the question: "Where shall I go? I would like to be a Christian, but I do not know where to go. Who is right?" So it is that

men are confused and kept from the salvation that is in Christ Jesus.

## II. CHRISTIANS TODAY CAN UNITE IF THEY WILL.

The question is not at all, "can we do it," but, "will we do it." The time has come for us to quit talking about the spirit of unity and get down to a basis of unity. It is the foundation upon which we can unite that causes the trouble and makes men to shudder.

What is to be the basis of unity? If we can solve this, we have gone a long way in accomplishing the end which we seek. It should be noted right here that when union comes, some one is going to have to give up something. This is a conclusion from which there is no escape. If we are ever to get together, we will have to find a position that will be acceptable to all; and to do that, some things which stand in the way of that getting together must go.

Now in trying to discover this basis of union, let us assume that three men who are tired of division and sick of the waste of the Lord's money and of the energy of the Church meet together, resolved to do all in their power to bring about the union of God's people. Let us assume that these men represent the three greatest protestant denominations: the Baptists, the Methodists and the Presbyterians. We have chosen these three because they are the largest and most influential, and when they come together it will not be very long until the whole protestant world will follow them. Now, since these men are business men, the first thing they do is to fix up an agreement which

shall be a guide to their deliberations, and each man signs his name to the agreement. Following is the agreement thus signed by all three: "For the purpose of bringing about the union of the people of God, in order that the salvation of the world may be accomplished, we will respectively cast aside every article of belief upon which we cannot all agree. It is further understood that if any article is proven to be without scriptural foundation, that also must go, and we pledge ourselves to unite upon the common scriptural ground of belief." The test of every article of belief therefore is, "Is it common to all and is it scriptural?"

The Methodist brother begins the discussion: "Now, Brethren, if we are to have union we will have to have a name. I have always preached that there is nothing in a name, but just the same we will have to have one. It isn't necessary, but it is essential that we have a name. It is a sort of essential non-essential, if you can imagine such a paradox. Therefore I want to suggest for your consideration a name that has been worn by all my people for generations, a name worn today by millions of earth's most saintly and consecrated souls, the grand old name Methodist."

No sooner has the Methodist brother made his proposition, than the Presbyterian brother arises and says: "I agree with you, Brother Methodist, that there is nothing in a name and that it really makes no difference at all what name you wear, so therefore I want to suggest for your consideration a name that has been worn by my people for generations and is worn

today by some of the wealthiest and most highly educated people in the world, the fine old name Presbyterian.”

As soon as the Presbyterian brother has taken his seat, the Baptist arises and smilingly confirms the strong stand taken by his two friends—that there is nothing in a name, that it really makes no difference what name you wear but that you have to have one, and therefore he suggests the glorious old name Baptist.

Does it look like Christian union? And yet this is the very thing that has been done in conferences again and again. There is nothing in a name, yet each one wants the other to wear his name. There is nothing in a name, yet human names have been one of the greatest barriers keeping God's people apart.

Finally Brother Methodist turns to Brother Presbyterian and asks: “Say, Brother Presbyterian, what are you now really in your relation to Christ?” The answer comes very quickly: “Why, I am a Christian, a redeemed disciple of the Lord.” “And Brother Baptist, are you also a Christian?” The Baptist brother answers eagerly: “Certainly I am a Christian; and now I see what you are driving at: I am a Baptist-Christian, and our brother here is a Presbyterian-Christian, and you are a Methodist-Christian.” “Exactly,” answers Brother Methodist, “we are Christians, but we are hyphenated Christians. Now I propose that we simply follow our agreement which says that we will unite upon the common ground of belief, and since we have now found a name common to all let us

cut out the hyphen and call ourselves just Christians.” There is immediately an enthusiastic assent to this simple and yet splendid solution to the puzzling riddle. The name, therefore, of the church, when united, shall be “The Church of Christ” and of the individuals as members of that church simply “Christians.”

The Presbyterian brother next arises and proposes the second proposition which is to receive the attention of the conference. He says: “Brethren, if we are to have Christian union it will be necessary for us to have a creed. I wish therefore to propose for your consideration a creed which because of frequent and careful revision is now almost perfect, the Westminster Confession of Faith. This creed contains in splendid form all the great truths of the Bible. It is distinctively a Bible creed since we got it wholly from the Bible.” He takes his seat and the Methodist brother arises and says: “Now, Brother Presbyterian, I want to congratulate you on your creed and I wish to say that it is a splendid creed and that all the great truths of the Bible are very beautifully set forth in it, but the creed which I wish to propose is also one of the oldest and finest in the Christian world, the Methodist Discipline. Like the Westminster Confession of Faith we took it from the Bible, and it is therefore a Bible creed.” In all this discussion the Baptist brother takes no part. But what shall be done? Here are two different creeds being suggested. Finally the Baptist addresses his Presbyterian brother: “Brother Presbyterian, where did you say you got our

creed?" The answer comes quickly: "Why, from the Bible, of course."

"And Brother Methodist, where did you get your creed?"

"We got ours from the Bible too."

"Well, Brother Presbyterian, I would suggest that you bring your creed and put it right back here into the Bible where you got it, and Brother Methodist, I would suggest to you that you bring your creed and put it right back into the Bible where you say you got it, and we will take the Bible, the source of both of them, as the statement of our creed." This is an excellent suggestion and one immediately followed by the Methodist and Presbyterian brethren in order that the unity of the people of God may be an accomplished fact. Christ is the center of the Westminster Confession, and Christ is the center of the Methodist Discipline, and certainly he is the center of the Word of God. Hence Christ is the creed of the church which bears his name.

Up to this time the discussion has progressed splendidly, but suddenly a change in the atmosphere is perceptible. The Methodist brother looks at the ceiling, the Baptist brother out of the window, and the Presbyterian at the floor. In the distance the low mutterings of thunder are heard, and now and then vivid streaks of lightning flash across the sky. At last the great drops begin to fall, for the subject of Baptism has arrived. And, Brethren, it must arrive. There is absolutely no escape from it, for it is a matter that must be settled.

The Methodist quietly makes the following suggestion: "Brethren, I believe that as regards this matter of baptism we should be broadminded. Let us simply leave the mode of baptism to the individual: if he wants to be sprinkled, allow him to be sprinkled; if he wants to be immersed, let him be immersed; if he wants to be poured, let him be poured. Let us leave this matter to the individual conscience." The Presbyterian extends his hand and with his face fairly beaming says to Brother Methodist: "Sir, you are a man after my own heart." But Oh! the look on the face of that Baptist! There comes from him immediately a thunderous "No! If this is the plan, I want you to count me out at once. This baptism proposition is a matter of conscience to me, and if you have called me here for the purpose of putting this over, the conference is over as far as I am concerned." Now what is to be done? The conference has proceeded in such a fine spirit and several important positions have already been agreed upon, so that it seems a shame to break up the meeting in this manner. There is only one thing that can be done, and that is to find a baptism that is common to all, in a word, to follow the agreement and cast aside every article of belief upon which they cannot all agree.

Finally Brother Methodist asks Brother Presbyterian: "My Brother, do you believe in immersion?"

"Do I what?"

"Do you believe in immersion?"

"Why, certainly I believe in it, our people have immersed a great many and our creed gives us the au-

thority because it teaches that all three modes are equally valid.”

“Well,” says Brother Methodist, “I also believe in immersion and the fact of the matter is that we are immersing more people today than we ever did before. The demand for immersion has grown to such an extent that in practically all of our new church buildings we are putting baptistries. Now, Brother Presbyterian, the matter sums itself up in about the following way: I believe in sprinkling, pouring, and immersion; you also believe in sprinkling, pouring, and immersion; but Brother Baptist believes only in the immersion of a penitent believer into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as baptism. In a word, there is a baptism common to all of us and that baptism is immersion. If we therefore are to keep our agreement in order that this union may be consummated, we will have to cast aside sprinkling and pouring and unite with Brother Baptist upon the common position, the immersion of a penitent believer into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as the only valid Christian baptism.”

This conclusion of Brother Methodist is irresistible, so it is accepted by Brother Presbyterian immediately and the discussion of the common ground for union proceeds. The next question to be answered is asked by Brother Presbyterian: “What are we going to do with the infants? I move that we accept them and immerse them now, since that is the mode decided upon by the conference.” But once more there is a vigorous protest from the Baptist brother, and to

make a long story short, in order to keep the agreement the other brethren decide to strike out the infant baptism clause altogether and simply allow children to wait until they are old enough to know Christ before they are received into his church.

“What about the Discipline or that part of the creed that tells us how to live the Christian life?” is the next question that comes before the conference. “Since we all claim, Brethren, that we took these rules of faith from the Bible, let us put them back into the Bible and take that as our rule of faith and practice,” is the answer from the Baptist. “The Bible should be sufficient anyway.” All three of the brethren are delighted with the idea, so it is agreed that from this time on there shall be no book as a rule of faith and practice save the Bible.

The rest of the great fundamental beliefs are dealt with rapidly. “How many believe in the one God?” There is at once a unanimous assent. “How many believe in the one Lord?” Of course, all believe in the one Lord. “How many believe in the one Holy Spirit?” All believe in the one Holy Spirit. “How many have the one faith?” Yes, all have the one faith in the one Lord. “How many have the one hope?” All have the one hope through the one Lord.

How happy are the three Brethren now! They have found that there is a common ground upon which they can unite, and that through all the years they have not been so far apart after all. And what a simple and yet glorious platform it is!

The Name—“Christian,” “Church of Christ.”

The Creed—Christ.

**Baptism**—The immersion of a repentant believer as a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

No Infant baptism.

The Discipline—The Word of God.

The One God.

The One Lord.

The One Holy Spirit.

The One Faith.

The One Hope.

Suddenly, however, one of the brethren calls a halt to all the rejoicing by calling attention to the fact that the agreement has not been kept to the letter, and as a business man he demands that it be kept. The agreement specified that not only must this ground be common ground, but that it must also be scriptural ground. Immediately each man picks up his Bible and begins hurriedly to turn its pages. What are they looking for? A name. At last the Methodist brother cries aloud: "Brethren, I have it. Listen to this," and turning to Acts 11 :26 he reads: "And the disciples were called Presbyterians first at Antioch." No, they were called Presbyterians first at Geneva. "They were called Methodists first at Antioch." No, they were called Methodists first at Oxford. "They were called Baptists first at Antioch." No. "The disciples were called (and the word is "divinely called") *Christians* first at Antioch.

Truly, a remarkable thing has happened. The only name upon which they could all agree, because it was the only name common to all, is the only name

in all the New Testament concerning which the word *Χρηματίζω*, or, "divinely called," is used. In a word, the only name they could all agree upon was the only name divinely given.

But the Methodist brother is not the only one who has a verse, for the Presbyterian brother with great delight reads Acts 26:28, 29, the passage where Paul has been preaching one of the greatest sermons of his life to Agrippa the King. Agrippa, convinced in spite of himself and yet wishing to hide his conviction under a semi-ironical statement, exclaims, "Paul, with but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Methodist." No. "Paul, with but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Presbyterian." No. "Paul, with but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a *Christian*. And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds." What was Paul? A Christian; and it was a Christian that he would have the king become.

But the Baptist brother also has a verse, so with great pride he reads 1 Pet. 4:16, "But if a man suffer as a Methodist, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." No. "If a man suffer as a Baptist, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." No. "If a man suffer as a *Christian*, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name."

And remember, friends, that this is the word of the Holy Spirit. His message, then, regarding the name

is that there is just one to wear, and that the one which honors Christ the Lord. Is it not a strange thing that the only name upon which these men could agree, the only name common to all, is the only name that the Holy Spirit said we should wear in glorifying our God?

Does the Scripture teach the creed upon which these brethren have agreed? Let us remember that they took the Bible as the statement of their creed; so, of course, they should be scripturally correct. It will not be amiss, however, to note here a verse or two regarding this great creed. Peter first confessed belief in Christ as his creed when he said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). Paul affirms that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). The whole Bible converges to one center and that center is Jesus Christ the Lord. He is the creed.

The Baptism question once more holds the attention of the conference, and Brother Methodist and Brother Presbyterian are very busily engaged in looking through their Bibles. After searching from the beginning to the end of the New Testament, Brother Methodist turns to Brother Presbyterian and says: "Do you know, I thought it was there." And Brother Presbyterian answers: "Yes, and I thought it was there." Then it is that Brother Baptist does the only really mean thing that he does in the whole conference; he says, "I told you so."

Sprinkling and pouring are not found in the New Testament. Water as we know water was never

sprinkled or poured upon any person for any religious purpose whatsoever. Yes, and we will go farther. Water as we know water was never sprinkled or poured in the New Testament upon any person for any purpose whatsoever. In Bible baptism both the candidate and the administrator went to the water (Acts 8:36; Mark 1:9), to a place where there was much water. Then they went down into the water, a burial took place, and they came up out of the water (Acts 8:38-39; Rom. 6:4). From the scriptural standpoint (and on the question of baptism there is no other standpoint) there is but the one baptism, and that the one which symbolizes the burial and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

What about the matter of infant baptism? They decided to refuse to baptize infants because the Baptist brother did not believe in it and they wished to keep their agreement with him. But have they done the scriptural thing in refusing to accept infants? One brother tries for a moment to bring a scriptural reference to the support of this discarded doctrine when he says: Did not our Lord say: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven?" "Yes," answers the Baptist brother, "but Jesus tells us to let them come, and when they are old enough to know Christ, I believe in allowing them to come. He did not say that you were to bring them in without their knowledge in the matter."

It is very clear that in New Testament times the candidate for baptism must be one who was a disciple

of the Lord (Matt. 28:19-20), one who had been taught (Mark 16:15-16), one who had heard and believed (Acts 18:8; 8:12), and one who had repented of his sins (Acts 2:38). Since an infant can do none of these things, he cannot be in any sense considered a candidate for baptism. The brethren, therefore, have done the right thing by refusing longer to practice so-called infant baptism.

As regards the discipline, these men are certainly correct, because they have taken the Word of God as the rule of faith and practice; so, of course, they are scripturally correct on this point. Paul affirms that the Word is sufficient when he says: "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Concerning the rest of the position adopted by these brethren, there is no doubt at all, for the Bible teaches the one God, the one Lord, the one Spirit, the one faith and the one hope. The references to these teachings are so numerous that pages might be filled with them.

## CONCLUSION

(1) Why did not these three brethren, who loved the same Lord and who were so anxious that the unity of his church be restored, get together? We know that they did not. When the next Lord's day came they went their several ways, and the same old divisions existed between them as formerly. The an-

swer is plain. They did not unite because of human names, in which they themselves said there was no virtue. The same non-essential human names kept them apart; because none of them was willing, when the final test came, to give up the name that he had worn for a long time. And human creeds, worn-out, out-grown, revised again and again, these same creeds kept them apart; for no one of them was willing to give up the creed of his fathers when the real test came. Human substitutions for baptism was the third thing that stood in the way of the glorious unity for which the Master prayed. Although the Word plainly taught that there was but one baptism, and although there was but the one that was common to all, yet when it came to really giving up the old forms which they had held for years, the Methodist and the Presbyterian brother refused. They could not forget the past. The ties of old things were too strong.

(2) There is but one conclusion, therefore, as regards these humanisms in religion. If Christian Union is ever to come, they must go. There is no use trying to mince matters, these things have long divided God's people and they are condemned. If we are to be "one" we must get back to the common scriptural ground. And this is the ground to which we all are coming. It will take time, perhaps more of it than the most optimistic of us now think, but as sure as God is reigning, union upon this ground is coming.

(3) A third conclusion that forces itself upon our attention is the fact that we are not so far apart after all. Upon the great and really fundamental things we

are one in belief now. That old worn-out statement that "we cannot all see alike concerning the Bible" is false. We have always seen alike and have always been able to agree upon Bible teachings. Where we have been divided has been upon the things that the Bible never did teach. A little more emphasis upon Bible teaching and a little less upon theological systems will tend mightily to bring Christians together.

(4) But someone is now ready to ask, "where do you people come in? In all this discussion you have not once mentioned the people with whom you are identified." What these people would be, if they would accept this position, we are now; and the reason we are what we are is that we want the people of God to be one. We have taken this position because it is common and scriptural, and because it is the only ground upon which the people of God will ever be united. Nothing of truth that has been held before will be lost when this position is embraced.

(5) "Well," someone is ready to say, "we will accept this when all the rest of the world accepts it. We believe that you are right and that this is the only ground upon which unity will ever be an accomplished fact, but we will not come alone." If this is right, then there is but one thing for the honest man to do and that is to accept it and stand upon this position even though he is the only one who has courage enough to do it. There never would have been this great movement for union, had it not been for the men of conviction who dared to stand alone for the truth. All honor to the man of this stripe, the man who will

stand for the right no matter what the opposition may be.

(6) We ask you therefore now to accept the position that is common to all those who love the Lord, the position that has never been questioned and the one that has its foundation in the very words of God. We ask you to accept God's ground for Christian Union.



## XII

### The Unpardonable Sin

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*Text: Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.”*  
—Matt. 12:31, 32.

#### INTRODUCTION

There are two modern theories regarding the unpardonable sin, one growing out of the other but both of them attempting to prove that in reality there is no such sin in the present dispensation. The first one maintains that the unpardonable sin was committed by the Jews when they said that Jesus had a devil, or that he did his wonderful works by the power of the prince of demons. It should be remembered, however, that Jesus says plainly in the text that all sins against him may be forgiven. He is the son of man referred to in the verses above quoted, and all sins against the Son of man or words spoken against him will be forgiven. The sin which is eternal is a sin against the Holy Spirit.

The second theory grows out of the first one and endeavors to prove that this sin could be committed only by those who knew Jesus personally and witnessed his wonderful works, therefore it cannot be committed today. The fallacy of this position is at once evident, however, when we consider the fact that we have a written record of the works of our Lord, one which after the most rigid and exacting criticism has been proven to be the true story of that beneficent life. Men today could thus commit this sin, if it consisted in ascribing the works of Jesus to the power of the prince of demons, because we can see his works now, through the documents left us, as well as could those of the long ago. Let us not therefore delude ourselves: we can commit this sin now; yea, some are committing it every day.

The unpardonable sin is of interest to us because it is a sin for which, when once committed, there is no forgiveness "neither in this world nor in that which is to come." It is well, also, that we consider it, because of the fact that there are those who are worried (and, I think, oftentimes needlessly worried) about their own condition, and an explanation of this sin would bring relief to them. It is a subject that is worthy of our most careful attention.

## ARGUMENT.

### I. OUR AGE IS THE AGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Since this sin is one against the Holy Spirit, it is absolutely necessary that we understand what the Holy Spirit's work is and just how he performs that

work. There have been three great dispensations of time: the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian. The first of these was presided over by God the Father. To the great men of faith he made known his will directly or through the media of certain signs and symbols. In the Jewish dispensation he spoke to his chosen people through the prophets and great preachers, the fiery Isaiah or the tender-hearted Jeremiah. This last dispensation endured until the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost, when the final dispensation was ushered in. The writer of the Hebrew Letter speaks of these dispensations when he says: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2):

With the coming of Christ there was established another dispensation which we might call the dispensation of the personal presence of Jesus. This is not in reality a dispensation as are the three great ones just mentioned, but this period of time, although belonging to both the Jewish and Christian ages, is slightly different in that, while here, Jesus was in a sense supreme. This age begins with the birth of Christ and ends with the day of Pentecost. Having all authority, Jesus here gave his great commission after having trained his twelve chosen young men for their work, and made ready for the establishment of his kingdom upon the earth. His life was the time of preparation for the wonderful age which was to fol-

low, that age when the gospel was to be preached unto all the world.

After the Lord had ascended to Heaven and with the advent of the day of Pentecost, the last dispensation was ushered in with wonderful demonstrations of divine power. This was the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Before his return to glory and while yet with them, Jesus had promised his disciples that this final age would be, and that he would let them know of the time of its beginning by the comforter which he would send from the Father. "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another comforter, that he may be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you desolate; I come unto you" (John 14:16-18). This age is to be forever, for the Spirit is to dwell with them "forever."

On that day in which Jesus was received up into heaven, he called to the disciples' minds this promise and once more told them of the comforter's coming, asking them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, "which," said he, "ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts 1:4, 5). Ten days after this promise was repeated it was fulfilled in the coming, on the day of Pentecost, of the Holy Spirit in which the waiting, praying disciples were baptized. With this coming of the Spirit the final dispensation, the one

which was to last forever, was begun. We today are in this dispensation.

## II. WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND HOW IS IT PERFORMED?

### (1) What is this work?

In his farewell discourse to his disciples Jesus answers our question: "But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeded from the Father, he shall bear witness of me" (John 15:26). In some manner the Holy Spirit is to bear witness of Christ. After forgiving the woman taken in the very act of adultery, Jesus said: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). If the Holy Spirit is to bear witness of Christ, evidently he is to bear witness that Christ is the light of the world, he is to reveal him as the world's light.

In the same farewell discourse just mentioned, the Lord tells us of another part of the Spirit's work when he says: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:7, 8). The work of convicting the world, of bringing to its conscience the horrible fact of sin, of painting the beauties and delights of righteousness, of confirming the certainty of coming judgment—this is to be the work

of the Spirit of God. In the Apocalypse another office is assigned to the Spirit, that of inviting men to accept the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, in the words: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come" (Rev. 22:17).

To sum up, then, in a sentence the work of the Holy Spirit as it applies to the salvation of the sinner, we have (1) He is to bear witness of Christ that he is the light of the world, that he is the Son of God; (2) He is to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; and (3) He is to invite men to come and partake of the mercies of the Lord as they are extended in Jesus the King.

(2) How does the Spirit do this work?

He works first of all through his powerful weapon, the sword of the Spirit. Paul admonishes the Ephesians: "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). There never has been forged in all the universe, a weapon more powerful than this two-edged sword of the Spirit. The writer of the Hebrew Letter describes this weapon when he says: "For the word of God is living, and active, and 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). Whenever this powerful weapon cannot pierce and break the heart of the sinner, and bring him to the Lord Jesus Christ, then there is no hope. If this sword cannot convince the sinning one, then there is no other power that can. The word is

to produce faith in the heart, without which one cannot please God (Rom. 10:17).

The Spirit has inspired the word, so that we may well call it the word of the Spirit. Jesus speaks of this fact when he says: "It is the spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John 6:63). The words of Jesus to us are at the same time the words of the Holy Spirit. We found in a former verse that the Spirit is to bear witness of Christ or to testify to the fact that he is the Son of God. He does this through the word which he has inspired, as is shown by John the Apostle when he tells us: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name" (John 20:30, 31). The word of God, therefore, the "living and active" word, the "word of life," the "sword of the Spirit," this is the power through which the Holy Spirit bears witness of Christ, convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, and invites men to salvation.

The Spirit also uses men and women who have been redeemed by the Lord, his people, in bringing the world to the Master. We have noted before that on the day of Pentecost the Spirit came to dwell in the church. The hearts of Christians are from now on the temples in which he lives. Paul reminds the Corinthians of this glorious truth: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God

dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16.) In the sixth chapter of the same letter he asks: "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" (1 Cor. 6:19.) Through Christians, therefore, who wield the sword and in whose hearts the Spirit dwells, the divine comforter bears witness of Christ. Every life lived in the service of the Lord in all diligence and earnestness is an unanswerable argument for the Lord. One of the most powerful forces testifying for Christ today is the life of the consecrated Christian man or woman.

Through Christians the Spirit also convicts the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come. As in the Word the sinner reads of his sins and hears them condemned, so also in a pure life he reads the condemnation of all that is wrong in his own living.

Through prayers and sermons, the words of personal exhortation and pleading, the Spirit also invites men to come and partake of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. Every time you hear the prayer of a mother for your soul you are hearing the plea of the Spirit of God. Every word of personal pleading for you on the part of a friend or loved one is an invitation of the Spirit. Every song of invitation sung to you is an invitation of the Holy Spirit of God. The Spirit today, living in the church as a body, works through the members of that body in doing the great work of God. The work of the Spirit and that of the church, then, as regards the salvation of men, is identical. If one resists the sermon of the minister of the

Word, the prayers and pleadings of loved ones, he is resisting the Holy Spirit of God. This point should be remembered, because it has a foundational bearing on the question of the committal of the unpardonable sin.

### III. THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN ELEMENTS IN SALVATION.

(1) The divine part or that which has been done by Divinity for humanity.

The part of the divine in redemption (for there are but the two parts, the divine and the human) is represented by the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father has done his part. He so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but through obedience to him might have eternal life. God certainly has done all that he could to bring man back to his great loving heart. Imagination cannot conceive of anything more that the Father could do. Christ Jesus, the Son, has surely done the best he could to bring man to salvation. He so loved man that he was willing to die on the cross of Calvary that man might be redeemed from the curse of sin. Greater love than this hath no man than that a man should lay down his life for his friends. Jesus gave his all that man might be redeemed, sanctified, and saved. Ah, certainly Christ has done his part. The Holy Spirit, through the Word and through those who have been living and preaching the Word, has been doing the best he could to lead man to salvation. Men have prayed, and worked, and pleaded with their fellows.

All that divine love and human energy could do has been done to lead humanity to the Lord.

(2) Now while the divine part has been done, and while it is true that everything that could be thought of to bring a man to a saving knowledge of the truth has been done, there is something for man himself to do. God has done everything for the sinner that he is going to do until the sinner does the thing that the Father wants him to do. Every conversion is a divine-human contract. God promises to do certain things for us if we ourselves will fulfill certain conditions. Man must hear the word of the Spirit. Not only so, but he must believe it, and repent of the sins of which he is convicted by the Spirit. He must confess the faith engendered in his heart by the preaching of the word of the Spirit. He must obey the commands of the Lord as taught him by the Spirit, and must live a life guided by the Spirit. These are the conditions to be fulfilled; this is man's part in the divine-human contract.

It should here be noted that God has prepared man for the reception of the Spirit's message. We know that we have a physical body with physical eyes with which we are to see the light and the objects in the world around us; physical ears with which we may hear the sounds of the world; physical hands, feet, and so on. At the same time we have a spiritual body, with spiritual eyes and spiritual ears and a spiritual heart. Paul speaks of the existence of this body when he says: "If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:44). When Jesus says,

“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God,” he is speaking of the spiritual heart, the one which shall be eternal. God has prepared man for the reception of the message of the Spirit, men have preached that message to him and have lived it before him, all of which he can hear and see if he wills to do so.

Now we might just here anticipate somewhat, and say that whenever a man by his own willful negligence, his own refusal to heed the word of the Spirit, his indifference to the lives of those who are guided by the Spirit, destroys his own capacity to fulfill his part in the divine-human contract of salvation, that man is eternally lost, for him there is no hope in this world or in that which is to come. The unpardonable sin must of necessity be a sin against the work that the Spirit is trying to do. We might say what we please about the Spirit and against the Spirit, but the worst thing we can do would be to make it impossible for the Spirit to do the great work which he has come to the world to do. Since his work, the bearing of testimony to Christ, convicting the world of its sin, and inviting men to be saved, is the greatest work in the universe of God, so also to make this work of no effect, even though in the soul of but one man, is the most terrible sin that could be committed. This indeed would be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and of the most horrible kind. If merely to say that Jesus did his work by the power of the prince of demons, is the unpardonable sin, we are forced to conclude that there is a sin far worse, and that for a man

by his own willful and deliberate act to make impossible the work of the Spirit in the regeneration of a soul.

#### IV. PHYSICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

There is a law of our physical world that any member of the body, unused, will be taken from us. This is the terrible law of atrophy. It is a law known to every scientist. If I bind up my eyes and refuse to use them, the time will come when it will be impossible for me to see. If I bind my arm to my side and leave it there for five years, I will find at the expiration of the time that it is impossible to use that arm at all. It has withered away and the withering process has destroyed its power. There is a classic illustration of this in the condition of the little crustacea in the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. The ancestors of these tiny fish were able to see. Choosing, however, to live in Stygian darkness, the time came finally that the power to see, being no longer needed, was taken from them. The modern descendants are blind. True, their appearance would indicate that sight is still there, but the little black specks are only shams, the wrecks of the eyes that once were. The optic nerve is nothing but a shrunken, insensate thread. Thus it is that if we refuse or neglect to use any organ of our physical body, nature removes it from us.

But there are other illustrations that are in point just here. Suppose that tonight I were to sever my arm at the elbow. I might suffer keenly and might

pray that the arm be restored, but the prayers would be unavailing. The arm is gone, it is destroyed, and no amount of longing for its return will bring it back to me. Suppose, again, that I should place two white-hot irons in my eyes. The eyes will be destroyed, and though I might fervently desire the restoration of my sight, yet the sad fact will remain that as long as this life shall last they are gone. I have deliberately committed an unpardonable sin, as far as this life is concerned, against my power to see. Notice another illustration. Let us assume that this evening I place in each eye a drop of a certain acid. The days go by and I do not notice the one dose very much, but after frequent applications of the acid, in a few months I perceive a slight failing on the part of my sight. I repeat the dose again, and again I note the weakening of my eyes. In time, by frequent use of the medicine, I reach the place where I can no longer see at all. The same result has been reached as if I had placed the white-hot irons in the eyes: they have been destroyed, the only difference being that the latter method is slower and less painful than the former.

#### V. HOW THE UNPARDONABLE OR ETERNAL SIN IS COMMITTED

Absolutely analogous to the committal of the sin against the eyes as given in the illustration above, is the committal of the unpardonable sin, or the destruction of the capacity of the soul to function in the plan of salvation. In both cases the sin is a willful and deliberate one.

The first step in the commital of this sin is that of resisting the Holy Spirit. We have found that to resist the preaching of the gospel message, the pleadings and prayers of loved ones, is to resist the pleadings of the Spirit. When we resist the truth of the powerful two-edged sword of the Spirit, we are resisting the very work that God himself is trying to do in our hearts. The resisting begins the very moment after faith comes into our hearts, if we put off our obedience to the commands of the Master. We have come, let us say, to the place where we believe, and with all our hearts, that Jesus is the Son of God and that we should become his obedient disciples. Thus convinced, we procrastinate and say to ourselves, "Plenty of time, you can obey tomorrow, there is no need of becoming anxious about this matter." The invitation of Love closes, and we have one time refused the work that the Holy Spirit would do in our hearts. The next time we hear a gospel message we take the same attitude and refuse to follow the dictates of our hearts. This is repeated over and over again. This is what is meant by "resisting the Spirit." The prophet Isaiah speaks of some who did this when he says: "But they rebelled, and grieved his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them" (Isa. 63:10). In that fiery and spirit-filled sermon when his torrent of words fell like hammer blows upon the hearts of his listeners, Stephen, the martyr preacher, accused the Jews, saying: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always

resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51). Men today, and by the thousands, are doing as did these proud Jews of old: resisting the call of the Spirit of God.

Now, there is an effect of this resistance upon the Spirit as well as upon the heart and upon the spiritual eyes and ears. The Father tells us in the first book of the blessed Word, "My spirit shall not strive with man forever." There comes a time when the spirit ceases to strive because it is of no avail to strive. Continually resisted and rejected, he turns away. There is no longer any use to strive, the powerful two-edged sword has failed to pierce the heart.

By the resisting process the heart is hardened. Every time we refuse to do the will of God when we hear the plea of the Spirit, it becomes a little harder for us to do that will. Not only does it become harder, but we become gradually more and more indifferent to the plea itself. A splendid illustration of this is found in an experience which has come to many of us. An alarm clock is set for six o'clock in the morning. When the bell rings it wakes us and we start to rise. Thinking that we may as well take a few more minutes of sleep, we turn over and promptly forget the warning. After a few refusals to heed the warning the time comes when, although the bell rings, it rings in vain, for we do not hear it at all. The alarm-sense has become hardened, and though the bell still rings it fails utterly to affect us. I remember quite well an illustration in my own life. I was situated in a western city so that a railroad train, and the fastest

on the line, passed within a few feet of my bedroom at two o'clock each morning. For a week I would awaken each morning at two o'clock as that train thundered by, whistling for a crossing about fifty yards down the track from my room. Gradually however, the waking periods became more and more infrequent, until at last I could sleep with utmost tranquillity throughout the entire night. The noise occasioned by the roar of the train and the shriek of the whistle no longer disturbed me at all. Exactly this same effect is produced on the heart by the sin of procrastination. The gospel plea that brings some to repentance, hardens others who refuse to heed the warning, until the time comes when the warning has no effect upon them. Did you ever see a piece of steel made? The iron is heated until it glows white-hot and then it is allowed to cool. The process of heating and cooling is continued for many times, until at last from the soft iron there stands forth a piece of burnished and tempered steel. This same thing is happening to the hearts of men. They hear the impassioned plea of the minister, the plea of the Spirit, but say to themselves, "Not tonight; I'll go tomorrow." Thus they resist the Spirit and go out once more among the old friends and associates and allow their hearts to cool. As they cool, they harden. The process is repeated over and over again and each time, after the heart is heated in fires of exhortation and prayer and then allowed to cool out amid the cold and careless influences of sin, it hardens, until at last it is like a piece of flint or steel.

Paul, knowing of the terrible effect upon the heart of resisting the Spirit, writes to the Ephesians: "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart" (Eph. 4:17, 18).

By refusing to see the spiritual light and to follow where it leads, the very spiritual eyes are destroyed; by refusing to heed the Spirit's warnings, the spiritual ears are eternally stopped. Our Lord says: "The lamp of the body is the eye: if, therefore, thine eye be single (or healthy), thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matt. 6: 22, 23). And how great would be the darkness in the physical body "if the light that is in thee be darkness?" There is but one answer to this question, for if the power to see is destroyed, the darkness would last all of the remainder of life. And if the "spiritual light that is in thee be darkness," if the spiritual eyes are closed, then the darkness would be eternal. In a word, to refuse to see the spiritual light and follow where it leads means a loss of the spiritual sight, and forever. The condition of this one, who by his own deliberate act has become eternally spiritually blinded, is vividly described by Paul in the Roman Letter in the terrible words: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteous-

ness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness ; because that which is known of God is manifest in them ; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity ; that they may be without excuse : because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things” (Rom. 1:18-23). Because of this consistent refusal to see the light, the time comes that though “the light shineth in the darkness, the darkness apprehendeth it not” (John 1:5). Jesus describes their awful condition when he says that “they have eyes and see not.” The eyes that they have, have been blinded by neglect and the refusal to obey.

How terrible is the condition of the soul which has thus destroyed its capacity to function in its own salvation ! Henry Drummond says of it : “One cannot call what is left a soul ; it is a shrunken, useless organ, a capacity sentenced to death by disuse, which drops as a withered hand by the side and cumpers nature like a rotted branch.” How beautiful and wonderful is the Soul, a mighty and marvelously wrought-out temple, fit for the dwelling place of God himself ! Yea, it was made for that purpose and that alone,

to be an abiding place for its maker. But ah, how useless and worthless it is when the divine guest is refused admittance! Again to quote a striking passage from Drummond: "It is like a curious chamber added onto being, and yet involving being, a chamber with elastic and contractile walls which can be expanded, with God as a guest, illimitably, but which without God shrinks and shrivels until every vestige of the divine is gone and God's image is left without God's spirit." Our Lord describes the condition of those who have brought themselves to the awful state of having committed the unpardonable sin when, in referring to the multitudes to whom he had been speaking in parables, he quotes the words of Isaiah:

"For this people's heart has waxed gross,  
And their ears are dull of hearing,  
And their eyes they have closed;  
Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes,  
And hear with their ears,  
And understand with their heart,  
And should turn again,  
And I should heal them" (Matt. 13:15).

The writer of the Hebrew Letter in unforgettable words tells of the sin of those who have known the truth, but have refused to obey it, when he says: "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries. A man that hath set at nought

Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:26-29).

### CONCLUSION

In concluding this message, I want to tell of an experience that came to my own life. In a little town twenty miles south of my home city in Oregon, a young friend and I were holding an evangelistic meeting. There was a man who attended the campaign every night, not missing a single service. I well remember how he used to come and occupy the second seat from the front and to the right of the pulpit. One evening at the close of the service he invited the young brother, who was leading the singing, and myself to dine with him the following day. We accepted the invitation and at noon the following day went to his home. We enjoyed a delightful time for an hour, and then sat down to a bounteous repast. At the close of the meal Brother D. suddenly turned to me and made an astonishing statement: "Brother Kellems, you have been laboring under a delusion while here in our midst. You have been thinking that I am a Christian." I answered in surprise: "Why yes, Brother D., I have been thinking that you were an officer in the church." Then to my profound astonishment he made reply: "No, I have never been a

Christian, although I believe it all, and as long as I live I never will be a follower of Christ. I want to tell you my story, and I want you to promise me that wherever you go you will tell it to others that they may be warned not to follow in the path in which I have so foolishly walked." He then told me one of the saddest stories to which I have ever listened. Before the recital was completed both the singer and myself were in tears.

"When I was a child of eleven years, Brother Kellems, I attended my first evangelistic meeting back in the old home-church in the East. Before the meeting had continued a week, I was convinced that I should confess my faith in Christ and live the Christian life. I will never forget the grave look upon the face of my stern old father as I went to him and asked if I might that very night give my life to the Savior. Father belonged to the old school which believed that a child ought first to become a terrible sinner before he became a Christian. He was a firm believer in the miraculous conversion, and the calm, quiet way in which I came to him convinced him that my conversion was not a real one, hence his reply to me was: 'Son, I think you are too young yet, later on you may come, but I do not believe you had better think about it now.' I turned away, bitterly disappointed, because I really wished to go that night, but I had been taught from infancy to obey my father in everything and without any questioning, therefore I said nothing further to him. The meeting went on to its close and I was out of the church. After the meeting closed

I did not think so much about the matter, and gradually I became somewhat indifferent to the question which had been such a burning one as I heard the man of God preach his powerful and heart-searching messages.

“When I was sixteen years of age I heard another great preacher in a campaign which lasted for several weeks. About the middle of the second week I once more became deeply interested in my soul, and a few days later, after thinking the matter over carefully, I decided that that very night I would make the good confession. I was very happy as I went to the church, and all the way through the sermon I was filled with a great peace because I had made up my mind that I would start to the front just as soon as the invitation song began. When at the close of the sermon we arose to sing, I started toward the end of the seat. Just as I was about to start down the aisle I saw three friends on the other side of the building, and they were smiling. I thought they were smiling at me. I found later that they did not have me in mind at all, but I was very sensitive then and I remember to this very hour how a great sullen anger swept through me as I turned back into my place. I thought they were making sport of me. The service closed, and I went to my home with a heavy heart. The meeting continued for a week or so more, but when it closed I was still out of the Kingdom.

“Two years went by, and once more I attended a great meeting, but this time the messages did not

seem to touch me as they had before, although, as I remember it now, I could sing the invitation song and even evince an interest in others as they were converted to the Lord. But the thing that now impresses me is the fact that as the days went by the sermons had less and less effect on my own heart. When the meeting closed I was farther away from the church of God than ever. To make a long story short, Brother Kellems, since that time I have heard many of the greatest evangelists and pastors in this country. But never once, although I have attended faithfully, have I felt that the message was for me. I have been entertained by your messages delivered here, and I have admired your enthusiasm in the work to which you have dedicated your life, but never once has a word of yours touched my heart. Brother, I am lost eternally, for me there is no hope! If you ever hear of my death you will know without asking that I died outside the Kingdom of God." I will never forget the look of unutterable despair on the face of Mr. D. as he made this last statement. Three years ago, while in a meeting in Northern California, I received a letter in which I was informed of the death of Mr. D. and at the bottom of the last page was this statement: "He died out of the church."

Ah, what a terrible warning in this true story! It is repeated over and over again. Men in this very audience tonight are taking the steps which lead to this awful condition. You are resisting the Holy Spirit of God, and as you resist there is going on in your heart a hardening which, if persisted in, will

lead to death eternal. Listen to the plea of the Holy Spirit as he urges you to follow the Lord: "Today, if ye hear his voice, harden not your hearts." We tremble as we invite you to come and take of the water of life, for fear that once more you will choose to continue longer in your senseless resistance to divine love.





